



World Food Programme



SAVING LIVES CHANGING LIVES

WFP Niger Country Brief April 2020



Operational Context

Niger is a land-locked and food-deficit Sahelian country with a population of over 23.2 million people and an annual demographic growth of 3.9 percent, the highest in Africa. The latest food security analysis (Cadre Harmonisé) projected 2 million people to be food insecure during the upcoming lean season (Jun-Aug 2020).

Food and nutrition insecurity are driven by poverty, environmental degradation, and recurring shocks. In addition, the deteriorating security situation on the border with Mali, Burkina Faso, and Nigeria is causing large population displacements.

WFP's emergency response assists refugees, IDPs and host communities in Diffa, Tillabéri, Tahoua, and Maradi. In areas of chronic food insecurity, WFP supports resilience with an integrated package of assistance in cooperation with the Government.

WFP has been present in Niger since 1968.



Income Level: **Low**

2018 Human Development Index: **189 out of 189**

Acute malnutrition: **10.7% of children between 6-59 months**

Chronic malnutrition: **47.8% of children between 6-59 months**

In Numbers*

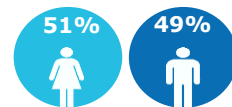
*Most of March distributions were carried out between mid-April and early-May, due to delays related to programmatic adjustments linked to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2,909 mt of food assistance distributed in February

US\$ 1.43m cash-based transfers made in February

747,839 people assisted in February

US\$ 53 m six months net funding requirements (May – October 2020)



Strategic Updates

- On 11 April, the state of emergency in Niger was extended to 11 July 2020. On 30 April, a further extension by two weeks of the preventative measures already in place (curfew, sanitary cordon of Niamey) took place. While movement of in-and-outbound cargo is permitted, movement of humanitarian actors is limited by security constraints and regional quarantine directives (which are equally applicable to short-term missions).
- WFP continues to operate in the context of its Country Strategic Plan 2020-2024 (CSP), which remains a pertinent response to the socio-economic impact of COVID-19. A WFP programme criticality and prioritization exercise developed in March 2020 was finalized in April (with a similar UN Agency joint exercise underway). WFP's priority is to maintain lifesaving programmes while adjusting resilience activities by prioritizing interventions, integrating protection and WASH measures to mitigate health risks, implementing operational and programmatic changes to activities and distributions, and adapting transfer modalities.
- Preliminary results of a multi-partner analysis of the impact of COVID-19 on food security in Niger suggested that 4.2 million people are vulnerable to the socio-economic effects of COVID-19 (April-May 2020), and 5.6 million are projected to be affected during the period June-August 2020. This estimate includes acutely food insecure populations identified by the March 2020 Cadre Harmonisé (IPC Phase 3 or above). WFP is actively collaborating with the Government and partners to revise and adjust the Government *Plan de Soutien* and ensure adequate scaling-up of the crisis response to the additional vulnerability generated by the COVID-19 crisis.
- WFP is contributing to a multi-partner effort in scaling-up the national Adaptive Social Protection Programme (ASP), which is currently under government revision for a quick start of implementation. The ASP programme will build upon the existing social protection project implemented by the *Cellule Filets Sociaux* of the *Dispositif National pour la Prevention et la Gestion de Crises Alimentaires* (DNP-GCA) and will focus both on rural and urban areas. While addressing the current food security and nutrition crisis exacerbated by the COVID-19 outbreak, the ASP is an appropriate response to the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 aiming to provide a long-term and holistic approach to chronic vulnerability.

Operational Updates

- WFP is aiming to reach 34,000 vulnerable beneficiaries targeted under lean season assistance in pastoral areas (April-June). Preparation for agricultural lean season assistance (June-August), planned to reach 667,000 beneficiaries is also underway in consultation with partners, taking into account the analyses of the impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable populations. Availability of locally produced foods and imported foods is relatively satisfactory as of April 2020. Local procurement is coordinated with Government actors. If WFP's requirements for food items exceed local availability, it may be necessary to increase international procurement, with consequent increases in lead-times. WFP is looking into alternatives options to reduce lead-times including borrowing or/and reprioritization of available stocks under different strategic outcomes.

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Photo: WFP/Communication

Caption: Participatory Community Planning exercise

Country Strategic Plan (2020-2024)

2020 Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
265 m	146.8 m	53 m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Crisis affected populations, including refugees, IDPs host communities and returnees in targeted areas are able to meet their basic food and nutrition needs during and in the aftermath of a crisis

Focus area: Crisis response

Activities:

- Provide an integrated food and nutrition assistance to crisis-affected populations (refugees, IDPs, host communities and returnees)

Strategic Outcome 2: School-aged girls and boys including adolescents in targeted food insecure and pastoral regions have access to adequate and nutritious food during the school year.

Activities:

- Provide an integrated school feeding package to boys, girls and adolescents during the school year in a way that relies on and stimulates local production (home-grown school feeding)

Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

Strategic Outcome 3: Nutritionally vulnerable populations including children 6-59 months, pregnant women and girls, adolescent girls, in targeted areas have improved nutritional status by 2024

Focus area: Resilience building

Activities:

- Support national nutrition programme through provision of preventive and curative nutrition services (including SBCC, local food fortification, complementary feeding and capacity strengthening) to targeted populations.

Strategic Result 4: Food systems are sustainable

Strategic Outcome 4: Food insecure populations and communities including those affected by climate shocks, in targeted areas have more resilient livelihoods integrated into sustainable food systems to ensure access to adequate and nutritious food by 2024.

Focus area: Resilience building

Activities:

- Provide livelihood support to food insecure and at-risk men, women, boys and girls, including the development or rehabilitation of natural and productive assets (FFA), climate risk management measures, and value chains.

Strategic Result 5: Countries strengthened capacities

Strategic Outcome 5: National institutions and other partners have strengthened capacities to design and manage integrated gender-responsive food security, nutrition and shock-responsive social protection policies and programmes by 2024

Focus area: Resilience building

Activities:

- Provide capacity strengthening to national, decentralised institutions and partners on: (i) coherent and gender-transformative intersectoral policies; ii) planning, (ii) coordination mechanisms, (iii) ownership and programme implementation, and (iv) knowledge management.

Strategic Result 8: Global partnership

Strategic Outcome 6: Humanitarian and development partners in Niger have access to common services and expertise to access and operate in targeted areas until appropriate and sustainable alternatives are available

Focus area: Crisis response

Activities:

- Provide UNHAS flight services to partners, to access areas of humanitarian interventions.
- Provide logistics, ITC and coordination services to partners in absence of alternative to ensure humanitarian assistance as well as other supply chain services and expertise on demand.

- Persistent insecurity caused by non-State armed groups attacks in the west (Tahoua and Tillabéri) and south-east (Diffa) regions, and the extension (on March 17) of the state of emergency for a period of three months in the same regions will further restrict access for humanitarian missions. A recent increase in displacements has also been observed along the border with Mali. In the Maradi region, the Rapid Response Mechanism was activated to respond to increased population movements, with 25,000 new refugees arriving between February and April 2020.

Programme Implementation in COVID-19 Context

- Distributions:** WFP revised the distribution protocol in respect of the required hygiene and health precautionary measures to help contain the epidemic and its impacts, including sensitizations, social distancing, and provision of handwashing equipment and systems. WFP is implementing a combined two-three-month (March-April-May) food and cash distribution (for both emergency and resilience activities), to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread on the field. The cumulative distribution will reach a total of 822,900 beneficiaries for all activities in the regions of Diffa, Maradi, Tahoua, Tillabéri and Zinder.
- Sensitization campaigns have been organized through community radios.
- WFP is providing face masks to beneficiaries, partners and WFP staff as a contribution to the government campaign on the widespread use of face masks.
- Nutrition:** WFP has suspended community-based nutrition activities, focusing on the prevention of malnutrition and on the screening and treatment of malnourished women and children.
- School feeding:** Due to the temporary closure of schools, WFP is providing take-home rations to children targeted under school feeding activities. This is in line with the recommendation of the Ministry of Education as a first safety net response mechanism to the COVID-19 impact in rural areas.
- Food assistance for assets (FFA):** to avoid large groupings, FFA activities are carried out at household/individual level rather than community level to avoid large groupings. Large scale waterworks and construction of new major infrastructures are suspended, as well as community-based planning activities and trainings. Urgent activities to rehabilitate some water structures are carried out by companies or technical services without involving groupings of beneficiaries.
- WFP is supporting government's technical ministries through provision of soaps, gels and ICT equipment and software to strengthen their capacity to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 while ensuring they can properly operate in teleworking during this period.
- WFP designed and operationalized its remote beneficiary monitoring system, through which monitoring activities were adapted at all stages of the distribution, process, and outcome monitoring cycles to ensure compliance with preventive measures.

Food Security Cluster

- The Food Security Cluster has submitted the Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP) and is working on the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) revision in collaboration with the Government to ensure food security responses are aligned. The Cluster is setting up a multi-partner working group to conduct a protection risk analysis of cumulative distributions.

Air Services

- UNHAS** flights are still suspended in Niger since 30 March, with negotiations still underway for authorization of domestic humanitarian flights.
- WFP Aviation Air Service** was launched on 1 May. Niger will be included in the cargo, passenger and medical evacuation service flights connected to the regional Accra Hub (Ghana) once authorizations have been received from the Government and Civil Aviation authorities.

Donors

Canada, Denmark, European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, Luxembourg, Monaco, Private Donors, Republic of Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, UN Central Emergency Response Fund, United Kingdom, United States of America.