Operational Context

Niger is a land-locked and food-deficit Sahelian country with a population of over 25.1 million (UNFPA, 2021) and an annual demographic growth of 3.8 percent, the highest in Africa. The results of the November 2021 Codre Harmonise estimated that 2.5 million people were food insecure during November-December 2021 period and 3.6 million will be food insecure over the next agricultural lean season (June-August 2022).

Food and nutrition insecurity throughout the country are driven by poverty, environmental degradation, socioeconomic effects of COVID-19 and recurring shocks. In addition, the deteriorating security situation on the border with Mali, Burkina Faso, and Nigeria is causing large population displacements as well as the deterioration of the socioeconomic situation.

WFP has been present in Niger since 1968 and is currently implementing its activities under the 2020-2024 Country Strategic Plan (CSP). In 2022, WFP will continue providing support to refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and host communities through its crisis response activities. Furthermore, WFP will continue reinforcing the resilience of people in areas of chronic food insecurity with an integrated package of assistance, in cooperation with the Government.

WFP has adjusted its activities to comply with COVID-19 preventive requirements. This includes integrating protection and WASH measures to mitigate health risks, implementing operational and programmatic changes to activities and distributions, and adapting transfer modalities.

Strategic Updates

• Given the ongoing food and nutrition crisis, the Government set up an emergency response plan of USD 280 million to be implemented between November 2021 and March 2022. The estimated funding gap of this plan is 71 percent (USD 200 million). In February, an updated response plan will be set up by the Government covering the needs until December 2022. WFP is revising its budget to scale up activities for 2022 and target 2 million people under crisis response, and 1.8 million under the integrated resilience package.

• WFP, FAO and UNICEF held a joint donor meeting on 25 January to inform donors of the unfolding crisis and advocate for urgent funding. As of the end of January, the overall funding gap for the three agencies is at USD 257 million for 2022.

Operational Updates

• Due to insufficient funding, WFP has been forced to gradually reduce the ration size provided to beneficiaries, first by 20 percent in May 2021, then by 30 percent in October 2021, and finally by 50 percent in January 2022. The latest ration cut is impacting over 586,100 people.

• In January, UNHAS transported 943 passengers and 2.7 metric tons of cargo. UNHAS operations are only funded until 27 March 2022. Urgent funding is required to continue the provision of UNHAS services to the humanitarian community.

• In response to the crisis, WFP received USD 5.2 million from the Underfunded Emergency Window (UFE) of the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). On 5 January, OCHA approved the Framework for Collective Anticipatory Action Pilot in Niger, which will use forecasts of a possible drought to trigger collective humanitarian anticipatory action through multi-sectoral activities. WFP’s proposal to CERF was approved in January. USD 5.2 million will be allocated to WFP if drought parameters are triggered. With the funding from CERF and the Government of Norway, WFP plans to reach 200,000 people in 29 vulnerable communes to mitigate the effects of a forecasted drought.

• Food assistance for assets (FFA) activities resumed in mid-January in the 2018-2021 sites, while the new sites for 2022 are being identified. WFP is currently reaching 650,000 people through FFA activities and plans to scale up to 1.2 million under the ongoing budget revision.

• In the framework of the Great Green Wall initiative, RBD organized a workshop on 21 January to introduce the Africa Integrated Climate Risk Management Programme project, and discuss the components to be implemented, the insurance, and the upcoming steps. The project will be implemented by WFP in collaboration with IFAD, the Green Climate Fund, the African Risk Capacity, and the African Development Bank.
**WFP Country Strategy**

**Country Strategic Plan (2020-2024)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2022 Total Requirement (in USD)</th>
<th>2022 Allocated Contributions (in USD)</th>
<th>Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>331 m</td>
<td>103 m</td>
<td>98.7 m</td>
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*Six-month net funding requirements as of 20 August 2021.*

**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.

**Focus area:** Resilience building

**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 Outcome 3:** Nutrientally 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; (iii) coordination mechanisms; (iv) ownership and programme implementation; and (v) 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.
- Adaptive Social Protection programme: in coordination with UNICEF, the World Bank and the Government's Social Safety Nets Unit, WFP is planning to continue strengthening the capacity of national social protection systems. WFP and partners have started organizing coordination meetings to plan household targeting, and WFP will provide monthly cash transfers of FCFA 15,000 (USD 25) for 12 months to more than 105,000 people located in villages around former resilience sites, starting from March. This approach is aligned with the Government’s Safety Net Programme approach.

**Assessment and Monitoring**

- Staple food prices continued to be 30 percent above the five-year average, in part due to the 2021 regional drought. The ECOWAS sanctions and the closure of the borders with Mali, as well as the coup in Burkina Faso in January, are expected to cause a significant drop in supplies in Niger’s western markets, thereby worsening the situation.

- Monitoring data suggests that WFP’s integrated resilience package is helping communities mitigate the impact of the drought, in particular thanks to the consumption and sale of vegetables produced in irrigated market-gardens. This is made possible by the rehabilitation of natural resources, improved access to regenerated land and water, and strengthening social cohesion.

**Challenges**

- Access remains an issue of concern, as several areas remain inaccessible without armed escort. Despite efforts made by the Government to improve humanitarian access, the Humanitarian Country Team continues to advocate on the importance of unhindered access.

- Pipeline break: WFP continues to experience critical commodity shortfalls triggered by supply chain and food procurement constraints, especially for nutritional products.

- Over 750 schools in Tillabéri remain closed as of 26 January 2022 due to insecurity, disrupting the education of more than 72,000 students. This includes two schools under WFP’s school feeding programme. Only 9,800 students of IDP families have restarted their studies. The Ministries of Education and Security are addressing this situation, and have requested WFP’s support in setting up assembly schools and providing food for the canteens of those schools.

**Voices from the Field**

“We fled Mali with our dad due to armed conflict back in 2013. Thanks to WFP’s assistance, my sister and I were able to continue our schooling in the Tillabéri region where we are slowly rebuilding our lives. I am currently a scholarship holder in the Adolescent and Nutrition Project, which has enabled me to go to college. In addition to the financial support that this project gives us for our studies, it has taught us about our role in society as young girls and future mothers.” - Zohra Chaibou

**Donors to WFP Niger in 2022** include Canada, European Commission, France, Germany, Monaco, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Private Donors, Romania, Spain, Switzerland, UK, and USA. Additional support has been provided by UNCRF and UNICEF.