



World Food Programme

WFP Niger Country Brief

March 2022

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES



Operational Context

Niger is a land-locked country in the Sahel region with the lowest **human development index (HDI) in the world**. Its population of 24.9 million people is growing at 4 percent a year – one of the highest rates in the world. On average, a woman in Niger has **6.2 children** during her lifetime.

According to the final results of the March 2022 Cadre Harmonisé (CH), More than **4.4 million people** in Niger will face **acute severe food insecurity** during the 2022 lean season (June- August) – representing over **17 percent of the population**. **6.8 million people are also chronically food insecure** and do not have enough to eat all year round, every year.

In addition, **43.5 percent of children** under 5 years of age in Niger are **chronically malnourished (which places the country in an emergency according to the WHO classification)** and **over 12 percent are acutely malnourished** (above the 10 percent of the alert threshold set by the World Health Organization (WHO)), placing the country in a situation of alert).

WFP has been present in Niger since 1968 and is currently implementing its activities under the 2020-2024 Country Strategic Plan (CSP). WFP continues to provide support to refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and host communities through its crisis response activities. Furthermore, WFP is 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.



Income level: **Low**

2021 Human Development Index ranking: **189 out of 189**

Global Acute Malnutrition: **12.5% of children between 6-59 months**

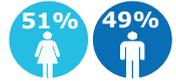
Chronic malnutrition: **43.5% of children aged 6-59 months**

In Numbers

2.2 million* people assisted

in March 2022

- 873,000 through crisis response
- 1,380,000 through resilience building



USD 75 million six-month (April-September 2022) net funding requirements.

4,800* metric tons of food assistance distributed
USD 4,6 million* cash-based transfers made

** Preliminary figures.*

Strategic Updates

- **The March 2022 Cadre Harmonisé (CH)** results revealed an alarming food and nutritional security situation in Niger where 3.3 million people face acute severe food insecurity (phase 3 and 4), representing 13 percent of the total population and about 90% compared to the same period last year. A further deterioration of the situation is anticipated in June to August as 4.4 million people, or more than 17 percent of the population, are projected to face acute severe food insecurity with two departments in emergency (phase 4). The gravity of the situation has triggered a notable increase in negative coping strategies such as the consumption of less expensive but less preferred food, the reduction in the number of meals per day, or even the selling of houses and last female animals.
- **The Government's response plan** ('Plan de Soutien') which was launched in mid-February has been adjusted to reflect the Cadre Harmonisé results of March with 4.4 million targeted to be assisted during the lean season. The budget devised for the response rose from USD 481 million to USD 502 million.
- **A third budget revision to WFP's Country Strategic Plan** was approved in March 2022. The budget revision increased the number of beneficiaries under crisis response and food assistance for assets (FFA) activities by 170 percent and 77 percent respectively.
- Led by the imperative to urgently respond to the crisis, **the Food Security Cluster (FSC) and the Food Crisis Unit** (Cellule Crises Alimentaires - CCA) as of March, now convene bimonthly meetings to improve coordination for lean season planning and response.
- Lastly, the elaboration of the **UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework** is underway in support of the Government's Economic and Social Development Plan (PDES).

Operational Updates

- WFP aimed to reach 2 million vulnerable people through its crisis response activities in 2022, however, due to low funding availability, only 1,5 million people have been prioritized. In March, **WFP provided emergency assistance** to close to 875,000 people including refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and host communities. This assistance was coupled **with activities to prevent and treat malnutrition**. In addition, WFP Niger defined a prioritization plan with four different scenarios, including ration cuts based on available funding. More than 586,100 people benefitting from both food and cash assistance are affected by the ration cuts.
- **As regards school feeding**, more than 250,000 children benefitted from WFP's school feeding assistance including cash assistance for adolescent girls. WFP continues its **nutritional support** and in March reached 133,040 children aged 6-23 months and 37,500 pregnant and lactating women to treat moderate acute malnutrition (MAM). Similarly, in **FFA** activities, 218,810 people received food assistance while 489,250 people benefitted from cash transfers, raising the total number of participants receiving conditional assistance to 708,060.
- In March 2022, **UNHAS** transported 1,081 passengers and 1.9 metric tons of cargo, performed two medical evacuations, and carried out one special flight. Altogether 22 flights were cancelled due to bad visibility. **Urgent funding is needed to maintain UNHAS in Niger beyond May 2022.**

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Photo credit: WFP

Caption: Digital farm, Maradi, Niger

Further information: www.wfp.org/countries/niger

Country Strategic Plan (2020-2024)

2022 Total Requirement (in USD)	2022 Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six-month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
331 m	119 m	75 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.

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 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, (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.

Assessment and Market

- **The Cadre Harmonisé of March 2022** depicted a never before seen picture in Niger since the inception of this analysis in 2012. For the first time, two departments in conflict-affected areas were classified in phase 4 (emergency). Moreover, 46 percent of the departments in phases 3 and 4 are located in hard-to-reach areas while only 15 percent of the population reside in those hard-to-reach areas.
- **Market trends in March continued to deteriorate** with the trends already observed since 2021 being further aggravated by the Ukraine crisis. Stocks of cowpea, the staple source of non-animal protein, were remarkably lower (40-95 percent). The war in Ukraine has further deepened the ongoing price crisis in Niger, in particular for imported products such as wheat and vegetable oil.

Challenges

- As of end of March, the Ministry of Education indicated that due to growing insecurity, about **800 schools remain closed in Niger, disrupting the study of close to 59,000 schoolchildren**. Most of the schools and children affected are located in the region of Tillabéri (720 schools and about 52,000 children). As the Ministry of Education **operationalizes the 'grouping centres'** aimed at providing a safe place for conflict-affected schoolchildren in Tillabéri to continue their education, WFP assisted nearly 10,000 of these schoolchildren under its emergency school feeding component.
- **Prevailing insecurity and limited access** are hindering WFP's operations. Over the month of March, several consecutive incidents - including attacks by non-state armed groups on WFP's cooperating partners - were reported and presented risk factors for WFP's operations, particularly for cash assistance. These incidents underscore the continuous security challenges affecting humanitarian operations, particularly in Tillabéri region.
- WFP operations in Niger are affected by **significant funding constraints** as available funds do not nearly match the steep rise in needs. Exacerbated by high food prices, long lead times for procurement and the effects of the war in Ukraine, WFP's efforts to scale up its response in Niger is being significantly undermined.

Voices from the field



In Tillabéri region, southwest of Niamey the capital of Niger, lies the commune of Balleyara which hosts a camp for refugees and IDPs who have fled attacks by non-state armed groups. Today, many of them depend on the emergency assistance from WFP. This is the story of Adamou Alassane who has been internally displaced following attacks in his village.

"My name is Adamou Alassane, and I am 36 years old. I had a wife and a child, and both passed away during a terrorist attack in my village (Deykoukou, Balleyara commune, Tillabéri region) in 2021. The survivors, including myself, fled and found a safer place in the department of Balleyara. We spent almost two weeks without any support but survived nonetheless thanks to the host communities. Fortunately, since September 2021, I have been benefitting from food assistance offered by WFP. While waiting for the violence to subside in my village so I can resume my activities, I am grateful for this support which is life-saving."

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 UN CERF and UNICEF.