

Project Number: 200792 | Project Category: **Single Country Special Operation**  
Project Approval Date: January 05, 2015 | Planned Start Date: January 01, 2015  
Actual Start Date: January 01, 2015 | Project End Date: December 31, 2017  
Financial Closure Date: N/A

**Contact Info**

**Hugo Mvumbi, UN Humanitarian Aviation Service Officer**  
hugo.mvumbi@wfp.org

**Country Director**  
**Benoit Thiry**

**Further Information**

<http://www.wfp.org/countries>  
**SPR Reading Guidance**



**Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in Niger**  
**Standard Project Report 2016**

World Food Programme in Niger, Republic of (NE)



**World Food Programme**

wfp.org

# Table Of Contents

## **Country Context and WFP Objectives**

Country Context

Response of the Government and Strategic Coordination

Summary of WFP Operational Objectives

## **Country Resources and Results**

Resources for Results

Achievements at Country Level

Supply Chain

Implementation of Evaluation Recommendations and Lessons Learned

## **Knowledge Management: WFP's promotion of national hunger solutions in Niger**

## **Project Objectives and Results**

Project Objectives

Project Activities

Operational Partnerships

Performance Monitoring

Results/Outcomes

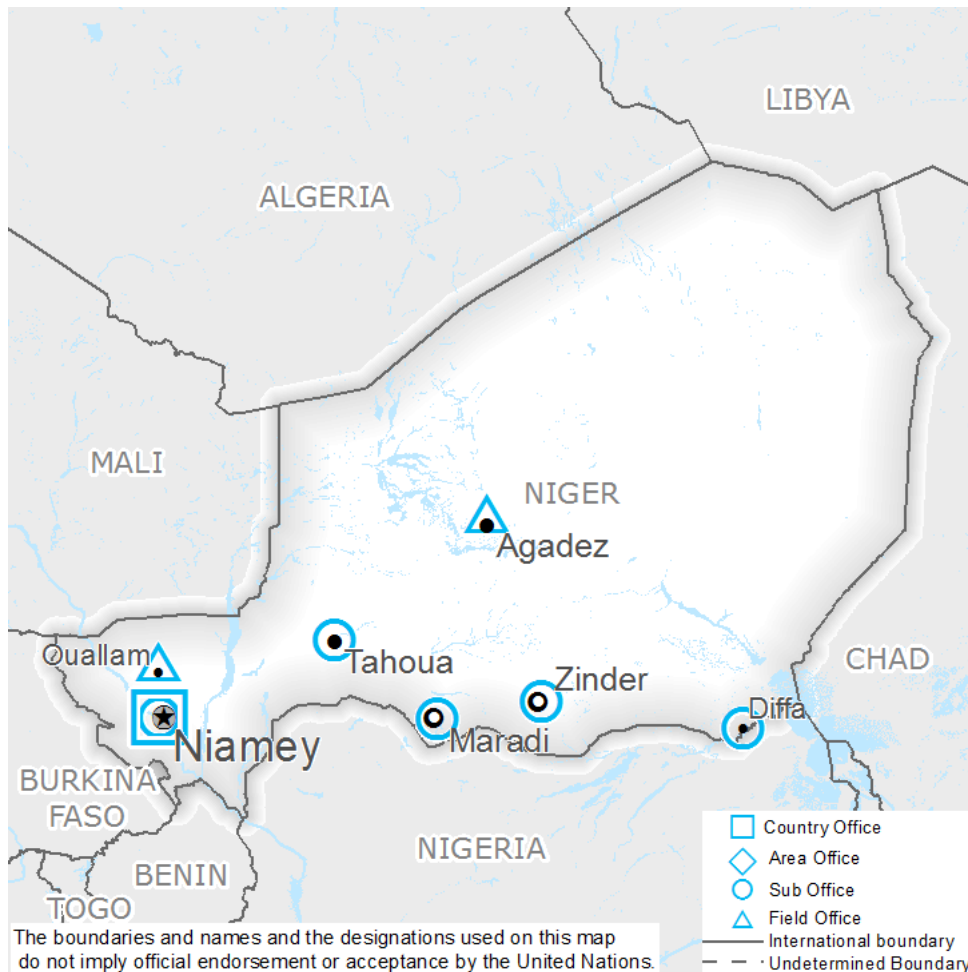
Story Worth Telling

## **Figures and Indicators**

Data Notes

Project Indicators

# Country Context and WFP Objectives



## Country Context

Niger is a land-locked, low-income and food-deficient country in the Sahel, with an estimated population of over 18 million. It ranks last (188 out of 188 countries) on the 2015 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index. Its annual population growth of 3.9 percent is one of the highest rates in the world.

In Niger, it is estimated that some 1.5 million people are affected by food insecurity [1]. From 2010 to 2016, nearly 20 percent of the population were not able to cover their food needs because of insufficient food availability associated with inadequate production due to drought, flooding, security constraints, demographic growth and other factors. This figure reaches nearly 25 percent during periods of poor rainfall.

Children chronically malnourished are calculated to be 46.6 percent, with a national global acute malnutrition rate of 10.3 percent for children aged 6-59 months, and some regions reaching more than 14 percent [2].

Four severe climate related food and nutrition crises since 2000 have exacerbated the vulnerability of poor households with low adaptive capacity. Seasonal variations of rainfall also affect food security and nutrition, even in good years. Furthermore, events in the region have strong influences on security, migration and humanitarian needs, with a special attention on the Lake Chad area for the moment. Economic and health related shocks further impede food availability and access, and resilience of communities and individuals.

The average years of schooling are 1.5 years whilst only 5.2 percent of the population has some secondary education. This drops to 2.4 percent for girls who have a clear disadvantage compared to boys (7.8 percent). Families' ability to cover food needs and better cope with shocks, is directly connected to improving school

enrolment and retention, particularly for girls.

Gender inequality in Niger is high: Niger ranks 188th out of 188 on the Gender Inequality Index [3]. Persistent gender disparities continue to challenge development, especially in literacy, mortality, morbidity, access to assets, gender-based violence and early marriage. Women, especially in rural areas, are overloaded by domestic chores and are particularly affected by food insecurity, with 24.4 percent of all households headed by women affected by food insecurity against about 11.9 percent of households headed by men.

The country is highly exposed to climate change, facing irregular rainfall, increase in average temperature, desertification and frequent climate shocks. With nearly 80 percent of the population working in the climate-sensitive rural sector, climate change has a negative impact on lives and livelihoods, which – given the low adaptive capacity in Niger – is expected to worsen unless resilience-building activities are implemented.

Finally, Niger must deal with significant capacity constraints. The country is confronted with limited national budgets for food security and nutrition. More general constraints on national capacity also impede the Government's response. Logistics and transport present an important challenge in this context.

[1] Emergency Food Security Assessment, August 2016.

[2] SMART survey, August/September 2016.

[3] Gender Inequality Index, Human Development Reports, UNDP, 2015.

## Response of the Government and Strategic Coordination

The integrated response for resilience building requires a strong partnership which can ensure the complementarity and the multi-sectorial contributions of engaging actors. *Les Nigériens Nourissent les Nigériens* (3N, Nigerians Feed Nigerians) initiative provides the framework and the platform for the Government's renewed political commitment to long-term food security and nutrition supported by donors, international and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs). It is also axed on key strategic and operational partnerships which have been developed by WFP with the United Nations (UN) Rome-based agencies (RBAs) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Over the past three years, resilience-building programmes are implemented with local, regional and national authorities, and different partners (UN agencies, NGOs, institutions with academic and technical expertise) to address vulnerability, food insecurity and malnutrition. PRRO activities contribute to the Government's *Plan de Développement Economique et Social* (PDES) 2012–2015, extended to 2016, and the 3N initiative and its 2016–2020 action plan. The Resilience Priority Paper provides the overarching strategic framework on resilience. The newly adopted Nutrition Security Policy and its action plan will support more strategic and targeted action to tackle the nutrition related challenges and support overall coordination. WFP actively participates and contributes to support the Government bodies: *Le Dispositif National de Prévention et de Gestion des Catastrophes et Crises Alimentaires* (DNPGCCA) that acts as disaster management authority and guides humanitarian interventions; *La Cellule de Coordination du Système d'Alerte Précoce et de Prévention des Catastrophes* (CC/SAP/PC) that monitors food security and nutrition for the early warning system; and *La Cellule Crises Alimentaires et de Gestion des Catastrophes* (CCA/GC) that coordinates partners' activities. Once the preliminary yearly harvest results are known, national response options are planned based on WFP, CCA/GC and the local network, *Cellule Filets Sociaux* (CFS), activities in order to coordinate interventions and support social safety nets. Annual joint vulnerability assessments are undertaken by the Government, with the technical and financial support of the European Union, WFP, UNICEF, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Permanent Interstates Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS).

Since 2012, WFP liaises with Save the Children International, Oxfam and the Cultural and Humanitarian Association, to promote the household economy approach and outcome analysis for vulnerability analysis and the targeting process through the DNPGCCA, Early Warning System, *Cadre Harmonisé* and the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC). WFP contributes to the Unified Social Register working group regularly and shares lessons through the Cash Learning Partnership (CaLP) with NGOs, FAO and UNICEF to enhance resilience. School meals, nutrition and agricultural production are entry points for a package of interventions in areas affected by chronic vulnerabilities, notably in the so called '*Communes de Convergence*'. WFP's interventions overlap with a part of these communes and integrate others considered to be particularly vulnerable. To this effect, WFP's interventions take place in 37 communes throughout Niger with an integrated approach to self-reliance and resilience building activities. In this context, the government's National School Feeding strategy framed school meals as a cardinal entry point to build safety nets that help to ensure that every child – even those from the poorest



households – has access to education, health and nutrition. In line with this strategy, WFP school meals programme helps households break the cycles of poverty and hunger and better cope with shocks and stresses, while supporting children to concentrate in class, build their potential and develop into healthy adults. It connects with the local purchase programme, preferring whenever possible to purchase locally. This contributes greatly to the integrated approach to build self-reliance and resilience.

WFP activities are integrated in a multi-sectorial and multi-actors framework linking emergency and development activities in a holistic approach. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2014–2018 and the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) guide partners' interventions. WFP and FAO co-lead the Global Food Security Cluster and WFP is an active member of the nutrition and education clusters.

A resilience technical working group strengthens UN coherence on the implementation of the joint High Commissioner 3N (HC3N-UN) *Commune de Convergence* approach, which guides resilience intervention in collaboration with RBAs – FAO, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and WFP – and UNICEF. The implementation of the approach is supported by strong operational partnerships, especially with RBAs and UNICEF, which have been reinforced by joint projects and funding proposals. Joint programme aiming at Rural Women Economic Empowerment (RWEE) implemented with FAO, IFAD and United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), and the joint programme supporting development of the Maradi region in collaboration with eight other agencies including UN Women and United Nations Population fund (UNFPA) allow more inclusive interventions prioritising gender and women empowerment.

A nutrition working group is also in place where WFP, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and UNICEF discuss nutrition strategies for refugees, to ensure coherence and complementary between actors.

WFP continues to play a key role in supporting the coordination of the lean season response. In 2016, coordination meetings were held with all actors throughout the response, including non-WFP partners, to avoid duplication, ensure good coverage of different zones and guarantee quality of the programme through timely sharing of distribution monitoring and food basket monitoring outcomes. WFP will do the same in 2017, also aiming to enhance coordination in the different regions. Coordination with the different government actors remains a particular focus. A fruitful collaboration has continued between WFP and the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) supported Cash Alliance. The first combined post-distribution monitoring (PDM) assessment took place during the lean season of 2015, and further alignment of strategy and harmonisation of tools were carried out in 2016. In 2017 WFP will continue to co-lead the Global Food Security Cluster Information Management Tool, initiated in 2015 with 15 humanitarian actors and the Government, to improve the coordination and efficiency of the response.

In and out of camp populations receive assistance under the Diffa emergency response activities. Refugee and displaced response interventions are discussed with the main government counterpart, *Commission Nationale d'Eligibilité au Statut de Réfugié* (CNE) and UNHCR.

WFP and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) have an agreement in place to avoid duplication of assistance through sharing and coordinating food needs of refugees and returnees. Both WFP and ICRC use geographical distribution method of zones of intervention. Refugees and displaced populations – returnees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) – as well as host populations in areas of high insecurity are assisted by ICRC, resources permitting. WFP has complemented ICRC's food basket to facilitate assistance to vulnerable populations following a 'transfer agreement' in 2015 and 2016. The same approach will be promoted in 2017 to ensure an efficient response in areas with high levels of insecurity.

WFP and UNICEF are working on a joint action plan, together with the Ministry of Health and other actors, to improve the nutrition situation in the Diffa region. The objective of this joint plan is to ensure a comprehensive nutrition response in and out of camps, including the linkages with water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and health sectors.

## Summary of WFP Operational Objectives

WFP implements both resilience and emergency operations in Niger. The former, through the PRRO – along with relief assistance to Malian refugees, included until 2015 under the Malian regional emergency operations – and the latter, through emergency operations in the Diffa region as part of the regional emergency response (EMOP 200777). Furthermore, United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) special operation provides air services to the humanitarian community in the country.

Activities are carried out through a multi-sectorial integrated community-based approach to household and community resilience with the objective to reduce the impact of seasonal stresses and prevent malnutrition. The

PRRO aims at triggering change and preparing for progressive phase-out through three inter-related and mutually reinforcing pillars: i) an integrated resilience package that supports the identification of successful scalable models; ii) strengthening of national capacity; and iii) building strategic partnerships.

The integrated response comprises of Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) creation programmes coupled with nutrition prevention and treatment activities. It also includes school meals and related programmes such as school vegetable gardens, local milling and processing initiatives, and the promotion of local production of smallholder farmers and local purchases. Activities are implemented in the pre- and post-harvest period to assist rural communities in revitalising infrastructure, improving agricultural production and diversifying rural incomes.

WFP aims to bridge the gap between humanitarian and development assistance through the combination and adoption of sequenced assistance to protect achievements during the most difficult period over the year, and build resilience and self-reliance over time. Critical building blocks are now in place to create a path for change in Niger and building resilience has become a major focus of the global, regional and country level discussions.

Current operations are characterised by strong leadership and engagement of the government, including a renewed political commitment, which favours long-term food security and nutrition. These efforts are supported by donors, international and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and key strategic and operational partnerships.

Preparation for hand-over focuses on capacity strengthening and partnerships. Technical assistance is provided to government institutions at a centralised and decentralised level through trainings, joint field monitoring and support to policy and strategy development. Support is also provided to improve nutrition targeting, monitoring and evaluation, community based activities, assistance modalities, outreach health services and women leadership.

Efforts made during PRRO 200583 will be continued in 2017 with the beginning of the new project. Building on current operations, WFP will continue to respond to the needs of poor women, men, girls and boys through an integrated and geographically concentrated safety net approach that applies participatory seasonal programming and combines protective, preventive and promotional actions. Capacity development progressively ensures effective leadership and ownership by government and communities in preparation for future hand-over. In 2017, by further fostering its partnership, WFP will support government efforts to build national knowledge and ensure an evidence base for decision-making.

As for emergency activities, they are carried out within the Lake Chad Basin regional emergency response, EMOP 200777. Through the Regional EMOP, WFP aims to meet the urgent food and nutrition needs of vulnerable people and communities in crisis. In particular, it aims to stabilise the nutrition situation of crisis-affected children through robust prevention programmes adapted to nutrition indicators of population groups, and to ensure the food needs of crisis-affected populations, with implementation modalities adapted to specific local contexts. In 2017, WFP will further support recovery and resilience building efforts, especially in stabilised crisis areas. Conditional activities are gradually being integrated in the response as a means of transition from emergency to recovery where the situation allows. The shift aims at promoting livelihood's activities of the first generation of internally displaced persons (IDPs) living in secured areas and where local environment is conducive to promotion of agro-pastoral activities. It is expected that, unless conditions change, the group of beneficiaries involved in conditional activities will transition to being assisted through a new scheme and no longer be part of the emergency response.

# Country Resources and Results

## Resources for Results

Throughout 2016, WFP struggled to secure funding for all operations. WFP's main operation in Niger, PRRO 200583, continued to suffer from large resource shortfalls: it was funded at around 25 percent of the budgeted needs of USD 205 million. Furthermore, earmarking of funds for specific activities sometimes did not allow to cover gaps when it was most needed. To assure that activities could be carried out to reach the most vulnerable population in Niger, WFP adjusted the operational and geographical targeting as well as the content of the package. Notwithstanding these difficulties, WFP was able to continue providing assistance to the people most in need and not lose the commitment or gains achieved throughout the three years of implementation of self-reliance and resilience building activities.

Focusing on municipalities prioritised by the government and the United Nations (UN) and those with strategic partnerships – the PRRO was scaled down from 119 to 37 municipalities. These WFP identified municipalities partly overlap with the 35 government identified *Communes de Convergence* and partly take into account the municipalities considered particularly in need and vulnerable to shocks and where strategic partnerships were created. This geographical focus allowed to secure an integrated and multi-sectoral approach. The aim was to concentrate resources and interventions and to ensure better integration of activities with a higher impact on self-reliance and resilience, to secure a holistic response to the multi-dimensional nature of vulnerability. During the lean season the same communities assisted under food assistance-for-assets (FFA) programme (either in the form of food or cash transfer) benefited from WFP unconditional targeted assistance through in-kind and cash-based transfer (CBT). However, the contingency measures in place during the lean season in 2014 and 2015, assisting additional transitory seasonal food insecure households, were not carried out in 2016 due to funding constraints.

On the asset creation activities, WFP continued to assist the same number of communes identified as most in need. However due to insufficient funding, from March to May 2016, the beneficiaries worked part-time and received half-rations of food assistance.

Funding constraints also affected nutrition, in particular moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) treatment activities. As of May 2016, rations were cut by half, followed by re-targeting to include only malnourished children aged 6-23 months and pregnant women. Additionally, pregnant and lactating women received a half-ration under blanket feeding assistance during the lean season.

WFP school meals programme likewise suffered from insufficient funding. Planned take-home rations were not provided throughout the whole period of the project. A distinction between priority (35 percent) and non-priority (65 percent) communes had to be made.

With the start of the school year in October 2015 (2015/16), WFP provided assistance to all priority communes but only 50 percent of the planned number of days of school meal distributions were carried out. Furthermore, meal rations were revised, particularly for breakfast. This affected children's attendance (drop of 2 percent), especially of nomadic pupils, and provoked overall absenteeism in the evening. Complementary activities (school mills, gardens) were also negatively affected.

With the flexible donor support, WFP benefited from multilateral contributions as well as an effective utilisation of the WFP internal advance financing mechanism, which permitted timely purchase and delivery of food and cash. Focus on joint projects under the '*Commune de Convergence*' (C2C) approach in addition to other joint projects with strategic partners including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), optimised the use of resources in reaching the critical mass and generated additional resources.

Regarding the emergency operations in the Diffa region, the activities fall under the regional emergency operations of the Lake Chad Basin, launched by WFP in January 2015 for countries dealing with the growing displaced population arriving from Nigeria. The Regional EMOP 200777 went through various budget revisions as needs increased and was extended until the end of 2017 (budget revision eight). After several attacks in the Diffa region, WFP continued to gradually scale up its operations. Refugee operations in the Lake Chad Basin under the Regional EMOP 200777 continued to expand. Funding constraints were compounded by security and access issues which did not allow for the full implementation of planned activities. For example, it was not possible to increase geographical coverage or increase targeted beneficiaries in communes where WFP was already operating. In 2016, coordination between partners was enhanced in Diffa and Niamey. This allowed to optimise the response, avoiding duplication. Emergency school meals were also provided, however not all targeted children were reached. In particular, difficulty of access to certain areas of the region hindered the implementation of a coordinated plan with

the Government to relocate children in difficult areas in order to guarantee their education. This strategy is ongoing and will be carried out throughout 2017.

In 2016, a fully funded WFP-managed United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) special operation allowed WFP to respond to challenges posed by vast distances, a lack of safe and reliable air service as well as poor road conditions in Niger, which make travel to affected populations very difficult. Throughout the year, UNHAS provided safe, efficient, and effective air transport services from its main hub in Niamey to five regions in Niger (Agadez, Diffa, Maradi, Tahoua and Zinder), serving over 114 humanitarian organizations comprising non-governmental organizations (NGOs), United Nations agencies, donors, the diplomatic community and the Government. For example, humanitarian stakeholders are using the Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) to access beneficiaries in locations where static operations cannot be established due to insecurity. UNHAS is a critical part of this response to ensure uninterrupted access to the affected population.

## Achievements at Country Level

Under the PRRO, WFP supports the Government in implementing a multi-actor and multi-sectorial, integrated community-based approach to building household and community resilience, supporting the same vulnerable beneficiaries through a flexible combination of conditional and unconditional food assistance activities over a three-year period. In line with the *Les Nigériens Nourrissent les Nigériens* (3N) initiative – United Nations joint *Commune de Convergence* (C2C) approach, in which humanitarian and development partners bring their efforts together in 35 targeted vulnerable communes, and further targeting the communities most in need, WFP carried out activities in 37 municipalities throughout Niger. WFP's three-pronged approach (3PA) [1] participatory planning tools, namely: Integrated Context Analysis (ICA), Seasonal Livelihood Programming (SLP) and Community-based Participatory Planning (CBPP) were used in collaboration with other actors under this approach with the leadership of the Government. This approach also contributed to support women and girls' equal participation in decision-making processes in their communities.

This WFP integrated effort is recognised by many actors, namely the Government and donors, with positive preliminary results and trends emerging from several internal and external assessments, and has the potential to be put at scale within the country.

As a concrete example, baseline (2014) and midline (2016) survey results highlighted that in 90 percent of cases the assets created by WFP were made productive, and in September 2016, 88 percent of surveyed households said that they had access to the assets created. Continuous assistance has also limited the use of negative coping strategies (from 31 percent in 2014 to 10.4 percent in 2016) and protects the livelihoods of very poor households. Quantitative survey conducted by the *Réseau National des Chambres d'Agriculture du Niger* (RECA) also showed an increase in agricultural production at the food assistance for assets (FFA) sites, confirming positive results. Furthermore, mobile Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (mVAM), phone call surveys to beneficiaries in the Diffa region, continued on a regular basis. Collection of food consumption score and food prices took place.

According to anthropological qualitative survey conducted by the *Laboratoire d'Etudes et de Recherche sur les Dynamiques Sociales et le Développement Local* (LASDEL) in integrated sites in July 2016, WFP intervention has contributed to increase the attendance level in health centres, improve breastfeeding and complementary feeding practices and strengthen the nutritional status of children. The adolescent girl pilot project has also demonstrated positive results, including decreasing anaemia rates (61.7 percent to 59.9 percent for boys and 63 percent to 57.9 percent for girls between 2013 and 2015) and improving school performance, and is to be scaled up under the new PRRO in 2017.

The promotion of local production and purchases through the integrated school meals initiative via the Purchase from Africans for Africa (PAA) programme, driven by the High Commissioner 3N Initiative and the Minister of Primary Education, is also part of the PRRO. The Government developed the national strategy of local purchase from smallholder farmers with close support of WFP. WFP's support to school meals programme helped move from traditional school meals based only on food distributions to a national school meals agenda integrating local purchases with social safety net objectives as well as complementary activities, such as awareness sessions on key family practices and access to school mills and vegetable gardens.

Some cross-cutting positive trends of WFP's resilience activities include: improvement of communities ability to ensure their food and nutrition security; development of economic activities; increase of income; reduction of economic migration; women's empowerment; improvement of social cohesion; and environment protection.

Since January 2016, WFP assisted Malian refugees under the PRRO after the end of the emergency response, as the humanitarian situation within Niger for Malian refugees started to stabilise. A number of discussions on a new strategy took place and is still ongoing with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees



(UNHCR), focusing on targeting on the basis of vulnerability, and strengthening and developing the livelihoods of Malian refugees to help build their resilience. Furthermore in 2016, WFP Niger launched its first e-voucher distribution through SCOPE, WFP's digital beneficiary and transfer management platform – an innovative mechanism for remote distributions, moving from paper to electronic vouchers.

Regarding the Lake Chad emergency response, in 2016 WFP continued to support vulnerable refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees and host population out of camps, and refugees in camps. The food security response was linked from the start to WFP's blanket feeding activities to ensure that the most vulnerable children aged 6-23 months receive the micronutrient and caloric value needed to prevent an increase in malnutrition and mortality. Furthermore, vulnerable schoolchildren were reached through emergency school meals.

WFP first established the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) special operation in 2008 to complement humanitarian efforts in response to security challenges across the northern and eastern parts of the country. Since then, UNHAS has been recognised as the safest and most reliable means through which humanitarian staff can gain prompt access to fragile populations in the country.

In 2016, some 114 user organizations comprising non-governmental organizations (NGOs), United Nations agencies, donors, diplomatic missions and the Government rely on UNHAS to implement and monitor humanitarian activities in Niger.

[1] Three-pronged approach (3PA) is an innovative programming approach developed by WFP in consultation with governments and partners. The aim is to strengthen the design, planning and implementation of programmes in resilience building, productive safety nets, disaster-risk reduction and preparedness.

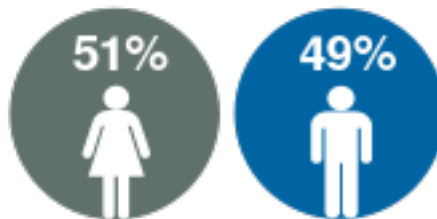
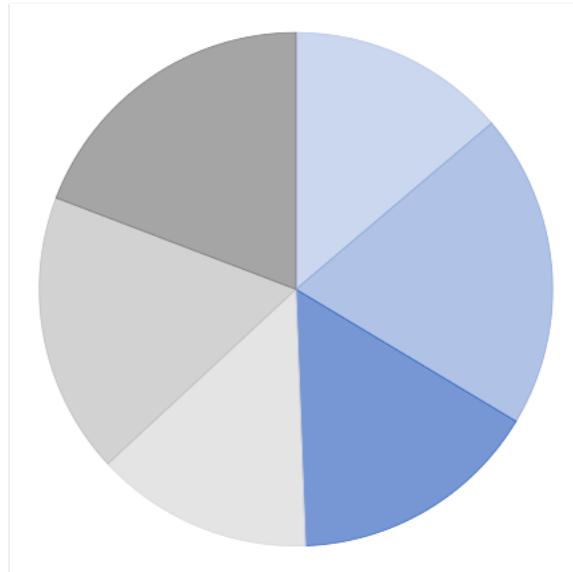


## Annual Country Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries	Male	Female	Total
Children (under 5 years)	242,231	240,476	482,707
Children (5-18 years)	347,548	310,688	658,236
Adults (18 years plus)	277,337	337,017	614,354
<b>Total number of beneficiaries in 2016</b>	<b>867,116</b>	<b>888,181</b>	<b>1,755,297</b>

Country Beneficiaries by Gender and Age

- Children (under 5 years)
- Children (5-18 years)
- Adults (18 years plus)
- Children (under 5 years)
- Children (5-18 years)
- Adults (18 years plus)



## Annual Food Distribution in Country (mt)

Project Type	Cereals	Oil	Pulses	Mix	Other	Total
Regional EMOP	15,362	1,535	5,239	2,996	178	25,309
Single Country PRRO	19,987	2,353	5,213	12,438	197	40,188
<b>Total Food Distributed in 2016</b>	<b>35,349</b>	<b>3,888</b>	<b>10,451</b>	<b>15,434</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>65,497</b>

## Cash Based Transfer and Commodity Voucher Distribution (USD)

Project Type	Cash	Value Voucher	Commodity Voucher
Regional EMOP	2,166,861	-	-
Single Country PRRO	4,441,815	1,117,873	-
<b>Total Distributed in 2016</b>	<b>6,608,677</b>	<b>1,117,873</b>	-

## Supply Chain

WFP local purchases aimed to stimulate the local economy and support local smallholder farmers. Purchases from local sources also enabled WFP Niger to reduce lead time compared to international procurement. In 2016, WFP's procurement of local commodities increased significantly. Most local purchases concerned cereals, pulses and small quantity of salt. WFP Niger supplied Plumpy'Sup from the *Société de Transformation Alimentaire* (STA). Furthermore, WFP continued to purchase commodities from smallholder farmers for its programmes, in particular for school meal activities. This helps to strengthen a convergence of efforts to stimulate local economy, agricultural investment and ultimately self-reliance and resilience of local population.

In addition to the purchase itself, WFP provided technical support to farmers' organizations in collaboration with other agencies, namely the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The objective was to ensure inclusion of the poorest farmers and their access to the institutional market. WFP used the global commodity management facility (GCMF) to buy commodities from smallholder farmers as well as from commercial suppliers. WFP aims to continue on this path and further enhance capacity development of smallholder farmers, farmers' organizations and the government counterparts to promote local purchase initiatives in Niger. Internationally and regionally procured commodities arrived in land-locked Niger through the ports of Cotonou, Benin and Lomé, Togo. Transport from port was exclusively handled by forwarding agents sub-contracting commercial transporters. Dispatch to final distribution points was handled by a combination of cooperating partners, commercial transporters and the WFP fleet. WFP's fleet in Niger consists of one truck per region. They serve to reach particularly challenging destinations or when the tonnages are too small to be commercially interesting. It sometimes occurred that, due to congestion of ports or long road times, food could arrive late. In these occasions, WFP resorted to dispatches from internal warehouses, to counter the effects of the delay.

Storekeepers and tally clerks are assigned by the Government and are important participants of WFP Niger capacity development programme. In 2016, as an important part of capacity development activities, day labourers were included in the trainings delivered in all regions of the country.

As far as warehouse capacity is concerned, a large part consists of mobile storage units (Wiik halls and Rubb halls), which however proved to adapt poorly to the heat and violent winds in the country. To improve storage conditions, WFP is progressively replacing mobile tents with more robust mobile storage units of aluminium (Flospan). In 2016, five Flospan tents were already set up. This is an important addition to improve storage capacity and conditions for the conservation of specialised nutritious food.

On the other hand, WFP also started the construction of five concrete warehouses in four extended delivery points (EDP). This will help to improve the storage conditions of specialised nutritious food, which should not be stored in the mobile warehouses.

The Commodity Movement Processing and Analysis System (COMPAS) was successfully replaced by the new Logistics Execution Support System (LESS). The new system offers advantages such as real-time tracking of goods, a more efficient tracking system from the production phase to partner hand-over, and increased transparency of the supply chain. The installation went smoothly, without major disruptions and was up and running since May 2016.

WFP Niger was able to avoid any significant losses in 2016 for storage and handling. Compared to 2015, losses have decreased and this can be attributed to the improved tracking of expiry of food now possible with LESS.



## Annual Food Purchases for the Country (mt)

Commodity	Local	Regional/International	Total
Beans	2,279	-	2,279
Iodised Salt	281	136	417
Ready To Use Supplementary Food	130	-	130
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,690</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>2,826</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>95.2%</b>	<b>4.8%</b>	

## Annual Global Commodity Management Facility Purchases Received in Country (mt)

Commodity	Total
Beans	818
Corn Soya Blend	2,982
Ready To Use Supplementary Food	2,317
Rice	1,995
Sorghum/Millet	6,413
Vegetable Oil	931
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,456</b>

## Implementation of Evaluation Recommendations and Lessons Learned

In order to ensure an effective capitalisation of experience and evidence-based project implementation, different externally-led innovative analyses were carried out beyond the external evaluation of PRRO and EMOP. The focus was not only on improving WFP's operations, but also searching for effective scalable models to be transferred to the Government and sustainable hunger solutions. Moving towards nationally owned safety nets to facilitate the development of effective government-owned responses to long-term hunger, WFP put strong focus on following dimensions: targeting, knowledge management and learning, partnerships, capacity development, government leadership and ownership, gender, climate change and coordination.

Geographical targeting of PRRO is in line with the *Commune de Convergence (C2C)* approach that defines the commune as an entry point. However, given the limited resource, there is a need to converge efforts to reach the critical mass at the commune level. Furthermore, WFP will converge its efforts by developing synergies with other actors at the site level to strengthen the integrated approach.

Regarding beneficiary targeting, the evaluation of the EMOP [1] found that targeting both displaced and host populations for food assistance contributed to equity, reduction of tensions between them, and alignment with the national framework. Targeting the same beneficiaries for more than one year of PRRO intervention showed positive trends. A reduction of the percentage of "very poor" amongst the beneficiary households of PRRO multi-year assistance was observed by, amongst others, the target study on households progress carried out in 2016 which shows that 56 percent of households used to be "very poor" became "poor" in some integrated sites.

Development of leadership and ownership generated by the use of participatory planning tools, i.e. Seasonal Livelihoods Programming (SLP) and Community-based Participatory Planning (CBPP), was observed in the past



years. WFP will further support and accompany the government counterparts and community to promote these tools, and strive to integrate them into the national procedure in collaboration with other United Nations (UN) agencies and partners.

Strategic partnerships, collaboration with Rome-based agencies (RBAs) – in the domain of land rehabilitation and value chain for food security and with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in nutrition sector – enabled WFP to increase efficiency and effectiveness of its operation. Partnerships with academia (University of Agronomy) and institutions with agricultural expertise, such as the *Réseau National des Chambres d'Agriculture du Niger* (RECA), contributed to improve the quality of food assistance for assets (FFA) activities. The collaboration with a local research institute, *Laboratoire d'Etudes et de Recherche sur les Dynamiques Sociales et le Développement Local* (LASDEL) allowed to capture positive qualitative trends linked to the PRRO resilience integrated approach. WFP will further strengthen these existing partnerships and also strive to create new partnerships especially in the areas such as gender, nutrition, land tenure, environment and climate change.

Following recommendation received of the lessons learned exercise, gender was further mainstreamed throughout programmes, and partnerships were reinforced, for example through the joint WFP, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) programme with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), in which the agencies worked together on rural women's economic empowerment. The study on linkages between FFA creation activities and gender showed that beneficiaries perceived an improvement of women's empowerment and nutritional status. Women were greatly involved in the FFA activities and benefited also from seed distributions including the ones for vegetable gardening of partners, namely FAO and IFAD. The village committees ensured that criteria for very poor households took into account women's access to assets and basic social services and specific needs, as well as women's status and social position in making decisions at household and community level. Women's consultations in the design process of FFA activities succeeded in influencing the types of assets created and increasing their control over these assets (for example, participating in community redistribution of asset generated revenue, or distribution of land).

Better knowledge managing and developing national capacities are essential to move beyond an implementation approach for WFP and towards nationally owned hunger solutions. Knowledge management and innovation have been given priority in line with the 2015 external evaluation recommendations. WFP strengthened its internal capacity in the area, adopted a knowledge management strategy and launched several capitalisation exercises. It invested also in capacity development in support of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), by not only focusing on strengthening operational capacities in its sectors of intervention, but also investing in supporting national processes contributing to the prioritisation of the Zero Hunger agenda. The support to the development of the Investment Plan of the *Les Nigériens Nourrissent les Nigériens* (3N) initiative, National Nutritional Security Policy and its action plan, National Local Purchase from Smallholder Farmers Policy and its standard operating procedures, as well as the reflection on a social protection and national safety nets programme constitute important pillars to prepare the transfer and progressive exit. In light of the context in Niger, it will need to be coupled more with emergency preparedness and disaster risk reduction, for which WFP has also provided important support to the Government. Investments in this area will need to be scaled up, and new elements, such as climate insurance and collaboration with the African Risk Capacity (ARC) [2], will be integrated at the national as well as decentralised and community level to ensure sustainability.

Regarding climate change, analyses are being carried out with the aim of identifying climate risks, finalising a gap analysis and mapping all initiatives tied to climate change carried out in the country. WFP will continue along these lines in the new PRRO starting in 2017, focusing on policy and advocacy, capacity development and skills development and trainings, knowledge management and production of information materials regarding climate issues.

Particularly under the Regional EMOP, strong coordination at the national and regional level, between all the different actors, is key to ensure timely, efficient and effective implementation of assistance. Good relationship with the national counterparts plays an important role. Further efforts on strengthening coordination and collaboration with other actors will be made in order to better accompany the recovery phase and develop synergies to support self-reliance.

[1] External evaluation carried out in April 2016 and published in February 2017.

[2] ARC: African Risk Capacity, is an institution of the African Union focused risks analysis tied to climate shocks such as drought.

# Knowledge Management: WFP's promotion of national hunger solutions in Niger

Within the framework of WFP Niger's vision to reinforce its focus and positioning on capacity development and partnerships, moving beyond WFP's role as implementer, knowledge management became a key feature to accompany WFP's paradigm shift. In fact, this orientation is based on the recognition that knowledge is essential, not only to improve the performance of WFP, but also to support the development and scale up of national hunger solutions.

It is within this framework that WFP Niger decided to put knowledge management at the centre of its strategy. A knowledge management unit was created and developed a knowledge management strategy articulated around three dimensions.

The first dimension relates to internal knowledge management to ensure getting the right knowledge, in the right place, at the right time to improve evidence building, efficiency and effectiveness of WFP Niger's policies and programmes and strengthen capacity of its staff. The vision is to promote a culture of learning and innovation. In 2016, it thus involved trainings and information management and sharing, but also capitalization exercises including lessons learned and best practices publications, amongst others, on certain innovations such as local purchases from smallholder farmers or breaking the intergenerational malnutrition cycle by targeting adolescent girls.

The second dimension is knowledge management with the external actors, namely Government, other agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and donors with the objectives of capitalizing results obtained by the resilience community, and sharing WFP's experience, lessons learned and good practices and learning from other partners. It includes participation in knowledge management platforms and initiatives, like the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)-funded Sahel Resilience Learning (SAREL) project or the Resilience in the Sahel Enhanced (RISE) network. Within this pillar, WFP also ensures joint coordinated approaches, between joint Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)/International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)/WFP capitalization and training exercises carried out in 2016 to relay the success and good practices from the field. It led to the identification of four best practices of this joint FAO/IFAD/WFP collaboration which will be captured in practice notes at the beginning of 2017. Furthermore, partnerships with academic, research and technical institutions, such as the *Réseau National des Chambres d'Agriculture du Niger* (RECA) in the domain of land rehabilitation technique to improve quality of assets created through food assistance for assets (FFA), and with the *Laboratoire d'Etudes et de Recherche sur les Dynamiques Sociales et le Développement Local* (LASDEL) to conduct social-anthropological studies, allow WFP to further develop the knowledge and bring opportunities to identify good practices to be scaled up and replicated.

Lastly, seeking replicable and scalable models which can be transferred to the Government by testing WFP approach and models, ensuring the strengthening of national systems and capacities in order to develop a progressive exit strategy is the third dimension. This leads to government-owned sustainable hunger solutions in the long-term. WFP put special attention on conceiving its programmes in a way to not only implement but also promote learning and capacity development by capitalizing on WFP's experience to develop scalable efficient and effective models. In 2016, local purchases from smallholder farmers constituted an important area of support, not only in terms of policy but also capitalizing on WFP's Standard Operating Procedures to support the development of Government procedures.

To facilitate the knowledge sharing component, WFP also invested in making the knowledge available in a light and accessible format, by launching its "knowledge series", composed of four pagers summarising key policy issues, capitalization exercises and analyses and surveys.

# Project Objectives and Results

## Project Objectives

In line with WFP's Strategic Results Framework, the objectives of the Special Operation 200792 in 2016 were to: (i) provide access to affected populations through the provision of a safe, efficient and effective inter-agency air transport service to non-governmental organizations (NGOs), United Nations (UN) agencies, donor organizations and diplomatic missions in Niger; (ii) ensure the transport of light cargo, such as medical supplies, information and communication technology (ICT) equipment; and (iii) carry out safe and timely medical and security evacuations upon request.

This special operation responded to the needs of the humanitarian community to implement life-saving activities throughout Niger, thereby contributing to WFP Strategic Objective 1, Save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies.

Vast distances and undeveloped road infrastructure in Niger make overland travel to beneficiary populations impracticable. At the same time, there are no safe and reliable air service providers in the country. Furthermore, insecurity remains a grave concern in the country and the entire sub-region due to the crises in Libya, Mali and Nigeria. Several attacks have been recorded both in the local communities and on the humanitarian community. From 1 January to 22 September 2016, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported 42 attacks and clashes, five mine explosions and four suicide attacks linked to Boko Haram in Diffa Region.

Road travel is therefore extremely dangerous, especially in the northern part of the country and vehicle convoys are mandatory for travels between Niamey and the two regional capitals of Tahoua and Agadez. Hence, the entire humanitarian community relies on the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) to access people in need.



## Approved Budget for Project Duration (USD)

Cost Category	
Capacity Dev.t and Augmentation	20,412,603
Direct Support Costs	2,186,693
Indirect Support Costs	1,581,951
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,181,246</b>

## Project Activities

Since the state of emergency was declared in Diffa region in 2015, the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) has enhanced its flexibility to support off-schedule flight requests in line with the operational imperatives of the aid organizations on the ground. As of February 2016, UNHAS increased its number of flights and cargo from 3 to 5/6 rotations per week. In October, for instance, an additional crew was added on top of the two contracted sets to support the high level of demands from/to Diffa. As a result of a performance management process, the current fleet is due for replacement in the beginning of 2017. The currently available 19-seater will be replaced by a 37-seater aircraft. In the meantime, user organisations have continued to scale up their interventions in Diffa region. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and humanitarian stakeholders are using the Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) to access beneficiaries at locations where static operations cannot be established due to insecurity. UNHAS is a critical part of this response to ensure uninterrupted access to the affected population.

In 2016, the operational fleet consisted of two 19-seaters (Beechcraft 1900) operating out of Niamey with the ability to respond to air travel needs in the field. UNHAS remained the only key player in enabling more than 114 organizations to reach at least six destinations in Niger on a regular basis.

UNHAS operated regular flights from its main hub in Niamey to Agadez, Diffa, Maradi, Tahoua and Zinder. Following special requests from the humanitarian community and government counterparts, two specific flights and 19 special flights were added to the schedule. The flights were conducted jointly by the Government Humanitarian Cell (CCH) and the humanitarian actors based in Dirkou on 11–12 April 2016. A partial cost recovery modality was applied to those additional flights.

In addition, nineteen special flights were conducted on partial or full cost recovery basis. These flights were requested by government counterparts, donor representatives and the Humanitarian Coordinator for monitoring missions, transport of medical supplies and field visits to the Diffa region to evaluate the growing displacement of populations affected by the violence in northern Nigeria, as well as other project sites within the country such as Agadez, Maradi, Tahoua and Zinder.

In 2016, UNHAS Niger served 114 user organizations from non-governmental organizations (NGOs), United Nations agencies and donor/diplomatic representatives. UNHAS transported over 933 passengers (excluding transits) and 3.2 mt of light humanitarian cargo on a monthly basis. The significant increase of passengers transported will impact this component target for 2017. The overall aircraft occupancy rate was about 71 percent, while the effectiveness response was 92.8 percent. The transport of light cargo increased slightly compared to 2015 and represented 84 percent of the targeted figure estimated at 3.8 mt. Furthermore, UNHAS responded to 100 percent of the requests for evacuations and conducted a total of seven medical evacuations.

The UNHAS User Group Committee (UGC) met four times during the year as required by Niger's standard aviation operating procedures, three times in Niamey and one time in Diffa. The UGC defined the requirements and priorities in terms of air transport needs and also monitored the quality of services rendered. In addition, the Steering Committee meeting held in Niamey in December 2016 assessed the need for a fleet change and supported the allocation of additional resources through a fundraising mechanism.

The number of minimum monthly hours of service were exceeded since the UGC requested to increase the weekly flight frequency. This was tied to the establishment of the state of emergency in Diffa and the deployment of additional organizations in the region, and thus the demand for air transportation significantly increased.

## Operational Partnerships

The User Group Committee (UGC), established under the co-leadership of the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator and WFP, played a strong role in the overall direction and management of the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) Niger in 2016. The terms of reference for the UGC are limited to administrative matters, and include decisions on destinations to be served and matters relating to the quality of the service. In addition to the UGC, the Steering Committee, implemented in late December 2016, focused on strategic and urgent political matters involving donors and stakeholders.

Similar to previous years, members included the representatives of United Nations agencies – Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and WFP; donor representatives, including the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), Sweden, Spain and the Swiss Cooperation; non-governmental organizations (NGOs) represented by Concern International, *Médecins sans frontières* (MSF) and Save the Children UK.

## Performance Monitoring

The overall operation was measured through the Performance Management Tool (PMT) including the reliability of the fleet for in-country operations. In 2016, the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) Niger was deemed one of the most effective and efficient operations. It provided an effective service of 92.7 percent on average with an operational cost of USD 0.65 per passenger per km compared to USD 0.81 in 2015.

The PMT has been rolled out to closely monitor the fleet performance and utilisation. Based on that, UNHAS was able to add one more crew in October, in addition to the two contracted ones. This boosted the operations efficiency and increased the quality of the service provided to users.

Needs assessments were conducted throughout the year to ensure that user demands were met and that the operation was efficient and effective. One provision of access satisfaction survey and one customer satisfaction survey were carried in November 2016 measuring user level of satisfaction and access on UNHAS flights. Recommendations included an increased sitting capacity. During its meeting held on 20 December 2016, the



Steering Committee acknowledged that UNHAS provided a good service in 2016.

Due to continued increase of demand in the Diffa region, the PMT provided key indicators to explain the need of fleet expansion. One bigger aircraft will be brought into the operations to respond to the additional needs.

## Results/Outcomes

In 2016, Special Operation 200792 achieved its aim and ensured prompt access to beneficiaries in remote and inaccessible areas. The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) Niger was responsive to users requests and augmented the frequency of flights in order to meet the increased demand by the humanitarian community. Furthermore, the fleet composition maintained service reliability, enabled more flexibility through the deployment of additional crew members in October. Overall, UNHAS conducted safe, efficient, reliable and cost-effective passenger and cargo air services for the humanitarian community by providing, out of its hub Niamey, access to six destinations: Agadez, Dirkou, Diffa, Maradi, Tahoua and Zinder.

## Story Worth Telling

In Niger, the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) is the life line for over 100 humanitarian organizations across the country. On 20 May, UNHAS saved the life of a PLAN International Niger staff member by performing an emergency medical evacuation from Diffa to Niamey. It all started in the early hours of the morning, when UNHAS received an alarming phone call from PLAN International Niger describing a staff member complaining of severe abdominal pain. Even though all the flights from Diffa to Niamey were fully booked that morning, UNHAS worked quickly to share the payload of two aircraft allowing the patient and her accompanying colleague to evacuate as soon as possible. The country director of PLAN International Niger, Mr Johnson Bien Aime, expressed deep gratitude:

“On behalf of Plan International Niger, please allow me to present our sincere thanks following the remarkable air medical evacuation of our colleague on 20 May 2016. The PLAN team expresses its gratitude for the continued support UNHAS provides to our organization.”

# Figures and Indicators

## Data Notes

Cover page photo © WFP/ Hugo Mvumbi

Mission departing to the field from Niamey airport, boarding a UNHAS flight.

## Project Indicators

### Output Indicators

Output	Unit	Planned	Actual	% Actual vs. Planned
<b>SO1: Special Operation (Air Ops)</b>				
Average no. of passengers transported monthly by air	individual	700	933	133.3%
Average weight of light cargo transported monthly	Mt	4	3	84.2%
Number of agencies and organizations using humanitarian air services	agency/organization	110	114	103.6%
Number of locations served	site	6	6	100.0%
Number of needs assessments carried out	assessment	6	6	100.0%
Percentage of passenger bookings served	%	100	100	100.0%
Percentage response to medical and security evacuation	%	100	100	100.0%