

**NIGER: UN EMERGENCY FUND GIVES US\$8 MILLION FOR UNDERFUNDED
HUMANITARIAN OPERATIONS**

(Niamey/Niger, 20 October 2014): The United Nations humanitarian chief, Valerie Amos, has allocated US\$7,962,500 (equivalent to 3.8 billion CFA) to support critically under-funded aid operations in Niger.

Like other Sahelian countries, Niger faces food insecurity and malnutrition. More than 4 million people are food insecure and about 880,000 children under-five are at risk of malnutrition. The country is also prone to disease outbreaks and natural disasters and hosts hundreds of thousands of refugees, returnees and migrants from neighbouring Mali, Nigeria and Libya.

“This allocation shows that the International community continues to support the efforts of the Government to address humanitarian needs in close partnership with partners. The funds will help to continue the provision of humanitarian assistance and reduce the vulnerability of people in need,” said Fode Ndiaye, the Humanitarian Coordinator for Niger.

This grant from the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) will allow the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the World Food Programme (WFP), UN’s Children Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO) and their partners to provide life-saving assistance for close to 920,000 people.

As part of the Niger Strategic Response Plan (SRP) for 2014, the funds will cover humanitarian needs in the sectors of food, nutrition, health, education, protection as well as water, sanitation and hygiene. About eight per cent is allocated to the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service enabling it to continue its crucial operations in the vast territory of Niger, where security conditions and road infrastructures limit access to certain areas.

Thanks to donors’ contributions, \$186 million (or 61 per cent) of the \$305 million requested by aid agencies for 2014 are mobilized to date. However, additional resources are needed to continue to respond to the humanitarian needs while strengthening the resilience capacity of populations.

The allocation to Niger brings total CERF funding for the country in 2014 to \$13.1 million. In July, CERF supported aid agencies in Niger with more than \$ 5.1 million for immediate assistance to displaced people in Diffa due to insecurity in northern Nigeria.

This new grant is part of a \$75 million allocation from the second of two annual rounds of allocations from the CERF Underfunded Emergencies window which this year aimed to boost relief work in two of the world’s most neglected regions: the West African Sahel and the Horn of Africa.

Countries in the Sahel will receive \$30.5 million of which the largest single allocation went to Niger. Humanitarian agencies in Cameroon, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Nigeria and Gambia were granted \$4.5 million, \$4.5 million, \$4 million, \$3.5 million, \$3.5 million and \$2.5 million respectively and Mali had received \$11.4 million from CERF in January 2014. The CERF pools donor contribution in a single fund so that money is available to start or continue urgent relief work. Since 2009, CERF has allocated more than US\$100 million to Niger as part of the response to various crises. These resources have helped save lives and strengthen the response capacity of the humanitarian community.

For more information, please contact:

Bamouni Dieudonne, Head of Office, OCHA Niger, dieudonneb@un.org, Cell +227 96009498

Katy Thiam, Public Information Officer, OCHA Niger thiamk@un.org, Cell +223 75 99 34 97

Tomas de Mul, CERF secretariat, OCHA New York, demul@un.org, Cell: +1 917 250 8400

Boubacar Hamani Abdoualye Public Information Assistant, OCHA Niger boubacarhamanil@un.org, Cell +227 97869615

OCHA press releases are available online www.reliefweb.int, <http://www.unocha.org>, <http://niger.humanitarianresponse.info> and www.unocha.org/niger