



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Niger Country Brief JULY 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 (March 2020 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 coupled with socioeconomic deteriorations.

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.

The first case of COVID-19 in Niger was declared on 19 March. As of 28 June, Niger had 1,074 confirmed cases of infections, and 67 deaths due to the COVID -19 epidemic. WFP response has been to prioritize lifesaving assistance, while adjusting resilience activities and interventions to comply with all COVID-19 preventative 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.

WFP has been present in Niger since 1968.



Income Level: **Low**

2019 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**

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Photo: WFP/Communication
Caption: WFP UNHAS flight arrival

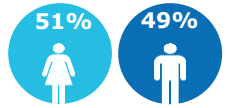
In Numbers

3,617 mt of food assistance distributed in June

USD 2.58 m cash-based transfers made in June

1,244,145 people assisted in June

USD 31 m six months net funding requirements (August – January 2021)



Operational Updates

- In Niger, the state of emergency in response to the COVID-19 emergency put in place since 27 March has been extended from 12 July 2020 for a further three months.
- WFP is collaborating with the government *Dispositif National* (DNPGCCA), UNICEF, and the World Bank to strengthen the existing social protection system in Niger, and in particular scale up the Adaptive Social Protection programme (ASP) to provide a timely response to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19. The ASP assistance is a three-month cash assistance distributed in one instalment in line with the existing World Bank-funded national ASP programme in Niger. In July, WFP undertook preparatory steps, such as fine-tuning the targeting methodology, to be able to implement the ASP COVID-19 assistance between August and September once funding will be confirmed from various donor sources.
- During the peak of COVID-19 pandemic in Niger, when a series of government preventive measures were in place, WFP Niger provided a three-month take-home ration to 150,000 schoolchildren (covering April-to-June). The Government later authorized the reopening of schools for 45 days from 2 June to 15 July to allow for the completion of the school year. However, due to COVID-19 prevention measures, school feeding activities could not resume, and the provision of take-home rations remained in place. WFP provided an additional 15-days take-home ration in July to cover the remaining school days in the schools where some stocks remained after 30 June. School grants were also provided to adolescent girls in rural areas. Schools in Niger are now closed since 15 July and will re-open in early October.
- WFP, the Government and partners are in the midst of the agricultural lean season (June – August) response. WFP is providing monthly distributions whilst encountering certain operational constraints. Humanitarian access restrictions due to insecurity and limited physical access due to road conditions during the rainy season have impacted the speed of distributions in addition to the difficulties faced in the procurement of certain commodities. Some measures have been taken to mitigate delay associated with long lead time and lack of availability at the local level during the lean season when needs are highest, including requesting a transfer from resilience (strategic outcome 4) and crisis (strategic outcome 1) activities as certain food assistance or asset activities could not be implemented as planned due to the COVID-19 preventative restrictions, this has been achieved thanks to donor flexibility.
- However, the country office still faces major food gaps for the coming months (post -lean season assistance) due to delays in delivery and cancellations from local suppliers and long lead times for international procurement.
- In Maradi region, the suspension of all humanitarian operations (including food distributions) to communities along the Niger/Nigeria border was lifted on 14 July. This decision is the result of sustained advocacy by UNHCR, WFP and key partners in the region to allow humanitarian actors to reach these vulnerable communities with much needed assistance.
- WFP has taken a series of measures to prepare for the gradual and safe return of staff to the office, including preparing a Standard Operation Plan and action plan with UN agencies, ensuring the sanitary preparation on office premises, and trainings of cleaners and security personnel. A gradual return to the office will begin on 10 August.

Country Strategic Plan (2020-2024)

2020 Total Requirement (in USD)	2020 Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
265 m	192 m	31 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.

- Access restrictions continue to affect WFP operations. In Tahoua region, in the border areas with Mali, authorities continued the ban on assistance to refugees and displaced persons in Telemces following the Intikane ZAR attack on 31 May. This was further confirmed by a joint mission of the Ministries of Interior and Humanitarian Action and regional authorities to the Intikane and Telemces sites on 20 July 2020.
- Following the security incident occurred on 24 June in Torodi (Tillabéri) where 11 staff of NGO *Action et Programme d'Impact au Sahel* (APIS), a WFP cooperating partner, were abducted, local authorities have assessed the security situation and divided the villages of Torodi department in two groups: red (not accessible by humanitarians even in "low profile" mode) and green (accessible in "low profile" mode) depending on the level of security; 49 villages out of the 55 villages classified in the "green zone" of Torodi department have become accessible to humanitarians. Thus, since July 10, WFP have resumed distributions in "low profile" mode. WFP is still collaborating with the authorities to find a suitable situation for the remaining six villages in the "red zone", which are currently not accessible for security reasons even in "low profile" mode.

Food Security Cluster (FSC)

- The results of the analysis of the impact of the COVID-19 on food and nutrition security led by the Government in April suggested that 5.6 million are projected to be affected by food and nutrition insecurity during the period June-August 2020. This analysis will be updated following technical consultations due to take place in August.
- Risk of locust invasion - the Government has put two plans in place in preparation for the risk of a locust invasion in Niger: a prevention plan and an emergency plan. The prevention plan reinforces the main activities of government actors at the national level, prevention, control and surveillance; including through aerial and drone surveillance. According to FAO, for the time being the locusts largely remain in the northwest of Kenya and Sudan and close surveillance of the Sahel summer breeding will be maintained.

Monitoring

- The situation in pastoral areas remain critical due to the erratic start of the rainy season causing delayed or failed sowing in parts of Niger, which prolonged the pastoral lean season. This is compounded by food prices that are significantly higher than normal (10-20 percent above the five-year average) due to the depletion of stocks both at household and trader level, and delays in the supply chain related to preventive measures put in place in the COVID-19 context. Moreover, a heightened risk of flooding has been noted across the country, due to unusually high river levels and significant rainfall received since the beginning of July.

Air Services

- UNHAS Niger flights have resumed as of 20 July, following authorization from the Ministry of Health and Civil aviation authorities. Standard Operational Procedures detailing the preventive measures and barrier actions against COVID-19 during flights and at the various airports served by UNHAS upon arrival has been shared with UNHAS users, along with the flight schedule.
- WFP Global Air Services as part of COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan are continuing as per the regional flight schedule.

Donors

Donors to WFP Niger in 2020 include Canada, Denmark, European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, Luxembourg, Monaco, Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK and USA. Additional support has been provided by UN CERF, UNAIDS and UNICEF.