



NIGER: HARSH WEATHER IN BILMA

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The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 183 countries.

In Brief

This DREF Bulletin is being issued based on the situation described below reflecting the information available at this time. CHF 48,000 (USD 38,400 or EUR 29,629) has been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to respond to the needs in this operation.

This operation is expected to be implemented over 3 months, and will be completed by 1 May 2007. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

[<Click here to go directly to the attached map>](#)

This operation is aligned with the International Federation's Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

The Situation

In August 2006, Bilma – located in the Agadez Region, about 1,600 km from Eastern Niamey, Niger – experienced flooding, following what was reported to be the highest rainfall recorded in the area since 1923. The floods caused the destruction of more than 1,194 homes and rendered 4,369 people homeless (including 1,520 children). Following the flooding disaster, the Government of Niger (GoN) launched an appeal to humanitarian organizations and well-wishers to assist the affected populations.

As from the beginning of January 2007, temperatures of less than 10° Celsius began being registered in areas earlier affected by floods, particularly at night. Considering that the floods-affected people have been staying in temporary emergency shelters since they were left homeless in 2006, the cold spells have complicated their already precarious conditions. Efforts made by the government and humanitarian organizations to assist them during the emergency phase can no longer assure them of their dignity, as well as maintain their health conditions, as they are now threatened by this new element brought about by harsh weather.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Following the government's appeal in 2006, the Red Cross Society of Niger (RCSN), in collaboration with the Federation regional delegation in Dakar and the field delegate, deployed volunteers to assess the situation and to mobilize resources in order to respond to the needs of the affected populations. A plan of action was developed to respond to the needs of the affected people, including supporting them to get ready for the next rainy season.

With support from the Irish Red Cross, the RCSN – through its Agadez branch – provided 45 metric tonnes (MT) of food and 40 tents to the floods-affected people. The Irish Red Cross has also provided a motorbike to the national society's Bilma sub-branch, and an ambulance to the Bilma health department. Red Cross volunteers were mobilized to distribute food and to provide psychological support to the beneficiary populations.

The needs

Despite the intervention and support provided during the floods emergency phase, more than 600 households are still in a precarious situation as they currently have to survive in conditions of extreme temperature variations. There is, thus, an immediate need to provide blankets and warm clothing, especially for children. Furthermore, sensitization activities on preparedness for potential future flooding need to be conducted.

Coordination

To coordinate the floods response, a crisis committee was set up, with the local Red Cross committee as member. The role of this committee, which is headed by the prefect of Bilma, was to coordinate the distribution of food and non-food items (NFIs) to the affected populations.

During the emergency phase, the Niger government provided 187 MT of food, 90 tents, 1,798 blankets, 232 pharmaceutical parcels, 100 shovels, 100 picks and 250 heaps of charcoal. It also availed 5 trucks, 1 earthmover, and 140 barrels of diesel oil.

Apart from the RCSN, other partners have provided support as follows: World Food Programme (WFP) donated 30 MT of food; the Libyan government donated 373 blankets and 146 tents; the Chinese Embassy contributed XOF 7,000,000 (CHF 17,182) and the Mine Industry XOF 4,000,000 (CHF 9,818). On 23 January 2006, the United Nations Development Fund (UNDP) gave USD 695,000 (CHF 861,756) to the government towards – among other courses – rebuilding the commune of Bilma which was extensively devastated by the August 2006 floods.

Plan of action

With the evening cold spells now complicating the situation for the floods-affected people, the RCSN will continue providing the assistance it initiated during the emergency phase. In order to reduce the effects of the harsh weather conditions on the beneficiaries, the national society will provide them with blankets and warm clothing. This will be done alongside sensitization activities for preparedness to potential future flooding.

In order to enable the RCSN respond to the needs in this operation, the Federation has allocated CHF 48,000 from its Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF). The NS will implement activities over a three months period.

Objective: Contribute to improving the living conditions of the affected populations, during the cold season, and promote preparedness for future potential floods among the populations.

Activities

- Procuring NFIs, including blankets, clothes and mats.
- Distributing NFIs, including blankets, clothes and mats.
- Recruiting new volunteers;
- Training the new volunteers on good practices in disaster management and community-based first aid;
- Social mobilization on floods preparedness, including building dykes and gutters.

Expected results

- RCSN volunteers distribute blankets and warm clothes to 10 households in Bilma.
- Affected populations have gained adequate knowledge on floods preparedness.
- The Bilma local Red Cross committee has built its disaster management capacity.
- Volunteers are motivated and are able to follow up community floods preparedness activities.

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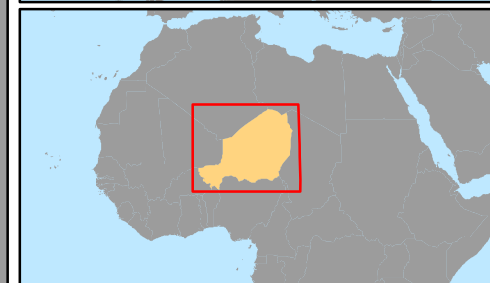
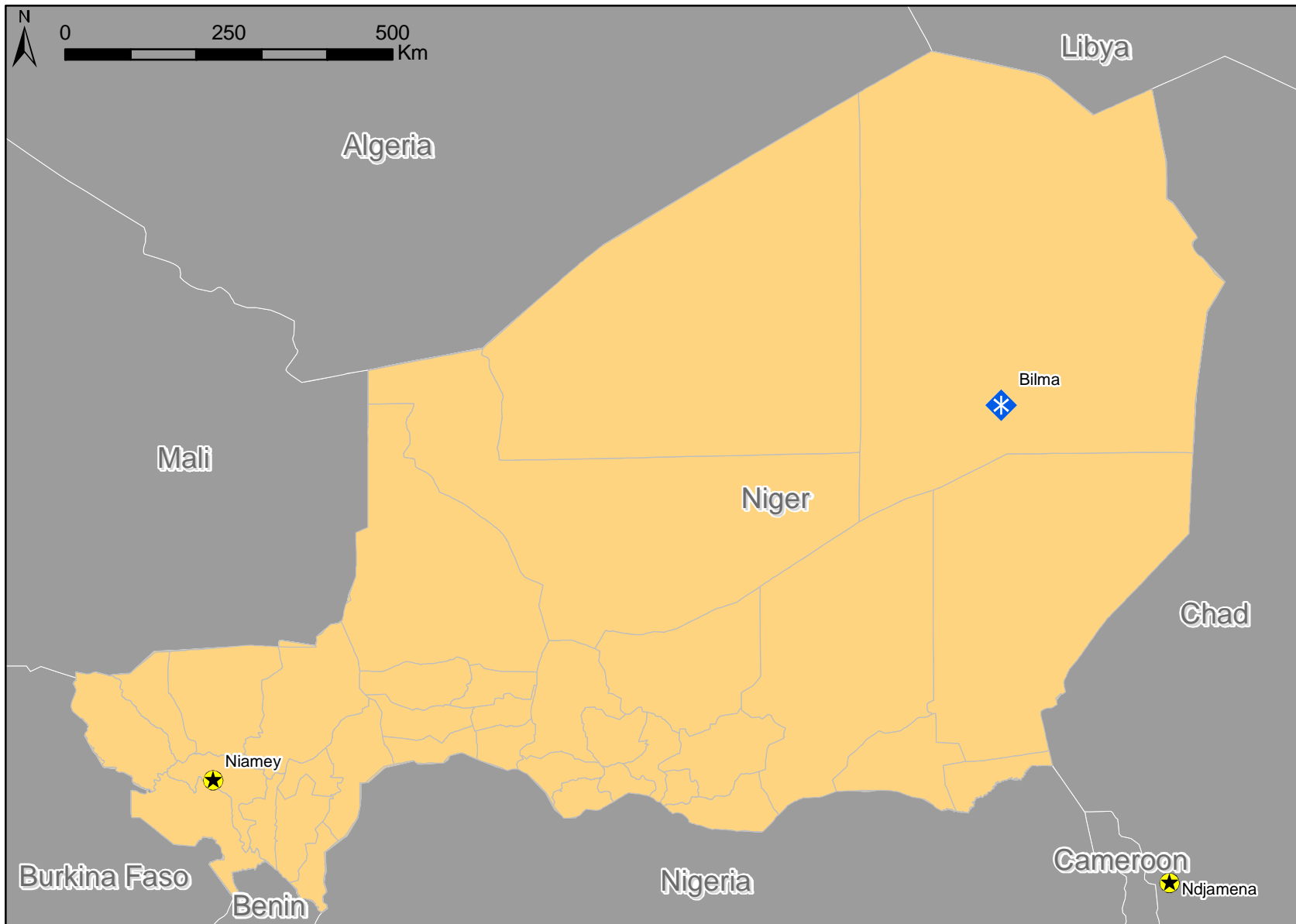
All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.



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[<Map below; click here to return to the title page>](#)



Niger: Cold in Bilma



-  Cold in Bilma
-  Capitales