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Disaster relief emergency fund (DREF) Niger – Food Insecurity

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

DREF operation n° MDRNE010 21 December, 2011

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is a source of un-earmarked money created by the Federation in 1985 to ensure that immediate financial support is available for Red Cross and Red Crescent emergency response. The DREF is a vital part of the International Federation's disaster response system and increases the ability of National Societies to respond to disasters.

CHF 126,768 has been allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Red Cross Society of Niger (RCSN) in delivering immediate assistance to some 6,500 most vulnerable households in the affected villages of four regions (Tillabery, Tahoua Dosso, and Diffa), and to assess the needs of the population in the most affected areas of 6 Regions (Tillabery, Tahoua, Dosso, Diffa, Zinder and Maradi). Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

Summary: This DREF aims to mitigate the effects of food shortage due to bad harvests in 2010/2011 affecting about 3 million people. The DREF is issued to respond to a request from the Red Cross Society of Niger (RCSN) to support sectors of food security and nutrition for about 6,500 households with activities aimed at substituting lost livelihoods and meeting essential food needs through cash for work, cash transfers, and food distribution, as well as support to nutrition centres.

According to estimates from the Niger Ministry of Agriculture and the Director of statistics, the 2011/12 agro-pastoral campaign is marked by a deficit of 519,639 tons in cereals equivalent to 14 percent cereal needs of the population and 10,222,308 tons for forage. As a result, it is anticipated that the lean season will start in January instead of the usual March.

This operation is expected to be implemented over a period of 2 months, and will therefore be completed by 20 February, 2011; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by 20 May, 2012). A needs assessment team is in the field and its recommendations will be considered in making a decision on the potential launch of an emergency appeal to extend the activities until the harvest time in October or November.

[<click here for the DREF budget; here for contact details; here to view a map of the affected area>](#)

The situation

Due to the combined effects of dry spells and pests (grasshoppers, caterpillars, leaf miners) several villages are experiencing significant declines in cereal production. According to FAO, the variation in nominal retail millet prices between October and November 2011 is +15 percent in Niamey. The situation will worsen from December/January when the stocks of cereals are expected to have been depleted (two months earlier than



Young girl carrying cereals freshly ground from the mill. Photo: Nathalie Bonvin/IFRC

usual). The poorest households will start buying food items on the markets from December instead of February. This will extend the period of purchasing food to 2 or 3 months, as well as the period of the lean season (FEWS 10/11).

This has unfortunately been aggravated by the socio-political crises that have occurred in Libya, Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria and which have caused massive return of over 250,000 Nigeriens who were living and working in those host countries, leading to a substantial loss of remittance income for those families. The unexpected mass return in critical conditions increases the vulnerability of host households and the entire community.

In August 2011, significant rainfall caused severe flooding that affected 5,423 households, especially in the regions of Tillabery, Tahoua, Dosso and Maradi. All this has contributed to increase the vulnerability of the population and has exposed them to a very critical food insecurity situation. The main regions with cereal and forage deficit and with high risk of food insecurity are Tillabery, Diffa, Tahoua, Zinder, Maradi and Dosso.

The nutritional status of children under 5 years remains a concern in Niger. The situation remains critical even during the years and periods considered as normal. The global acute malnutrition rate (GAM) remained at levels ranging from 10 to 12 percent since 2005. According to the results of the investigation "Nutrition for children 6-59 months" conducted in May and June 2011, all regions recorded a rate between 10 and 14 percent except for the urban centre of Agadez.

The chronic malnutrition rate is between 40 and 50 percent, except for Tillabery, Niamey and Agadez urban centres. The rates of acute and chronic malnutrition among children under 5 in Niger are structurally high even in areas usually with a surplus of crop production. The causes include inadequate feeding practices of both adults and children and child care practices, inadequate access to health care, poor hygiene practices, the socio-economic status of women and other socio-cultural constraints.

In the 6 most affected regions, there are 228 vulnerable areas with 6,981 villages and about 3 million people:

- Diffa (departments of Diffa and N'Guigmi);
- Dosso (departments of Douthi, Loga)
- Maradi (departments of Aguié, Guidan Rounджи, Madrounfa and Mayahi);
- Tahoua (departments of Bouza, Illéla, Konni and Madaoua);
- Tillabéry (departments of Fillingué, Ouallam, Téra and Tillabéry);
- Zinder (departments of Gouré, Matamèye and Tanout).

Coordination and partnerships

The authorities set up a crisis committee lead by the Prime Minister and coordinated by OCHA. The RCSN and International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners have participated in meetings, along with UN agencies (WFP, UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA, FAO) as well as national and international NGOs.

A preliminary assessment of the situation was made in September 2010 by the Ministry of agriculture and a short-term plan of action focusing on four areas was developed to assist vulnerable populations from October 2011 to March 2012:

- Cash for work, cash transfer, food for work, cereal banks;
- Nutrition: the care of children with moderate and severe acute malnutrition, pregnant and lactating women, blanket feeding;
- Non-food: distribution of seed, "cultures de contre saison", food and health of livestock in pastoral areas in deficit.
- Reconstruction of national stocks.

The RCSN with the support of the IFRC country representative and PNSs are currently conducting a food security needs assessment to identify priority areas and action. The IFRC Sahel Regional Office and the Zone Office are assessing how best the IFRC can support RCSN to respond to the needs of the affected population. A plan of action will be developed once the report of the assessment is issued and an emergency appeal may be launched following the results of the assessment.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The RCSN is working closely with IFRC through its Country Representation based in Niamey, supported by the Sahel Regional Representation and the Zone Office. The RCSN has activated its contingency plan on food security since November 2011; a supervision mission visited nine of the 10 villages that benefited from cereal banks during the food security crisis of 2010 to assess their ability to supply their members with cereals. Similarly, some beneficiaries of improved seeds have been visited.

A coordination meeting of the Movement partners was organized in November to discuss the intervention strategy and the support to the RCSN. All Movement partners participated in the discussions: the French, Spanish and Irish Red Cross, the Qatari and Iranian Red Crescent as well as the ICRC and the IFRC. At regional level, local branches of the RCSN regularly attend meetings of the regional crisis committees. The ICRC plans to distribute 500 tonnes of cereal to about 5,000 families in 27 villages in the departments Oualam and Filingue (Tillabery region) before the end of 2011. The results of the needs assessment mission and the vulnerability analysis of populations in the most affected areas will provide further information on the possible scale-up through an emergency appeal.

The Niger RC has extensive experience in food security interventions, including livelihood programming, Cash Transfer Programs and nutritional programs. The NS has managed food security and drought interventions during the last 14 years. A number of DREF operations and emergency appeals have been launched during this time to reach vulnerable populations affected by drought and food insecurity, including in the targeted areas (such as Dosso, Tahoua, Zinder and Diffa). Significant experience and knowledge has therefore been developed in the implementation of these operations and there is already an existing relationship and trust in the RCSN from the affected communities.

The needs

Selection of people to be reached: This plan aims to assist 6,500 households in 43 villages in the most vulnerable areas of the regions of Diffa, Tahoua, Dosso and Tillabery.

The immediate needs are:

- Funds to support cash for work; community based activities (the construction of terraces/benches for eroded land, sand dune stabilization, other anti-erosion control). The immediate cash injection through cash for work will allow households to compensate for lost income and meet immediate needs while having the additional benefit of improving their main productive asset (land) for their future livelihood.
- Cash transfer for 300 heads of families unfit for field work (physically disabled persons, elderly people, chronically ill persons and pregnant women), in areas where food is easily available in the market. The cash transfer will amount to the price of a 100 kg. bag of millet (approx. CHF 50).
- Food; supplementary food distribution to around 2,000 households for one month (sourcing of food to be negotiated with partners) in areas where there is limited access to food through markets.
- Distribution of food for livestock (about 1,000 small farmers)
- Strengthen cereal banks
- Strengthen the capacity of the Nutrition Centres of Integrated Health Centres (IHC)
- Referral of children under 5 as well as pregnant and lactating women,

The proposed operation

To assist about 6,500 most vulnerable households, the RCSN with the support of the IFRC and the PNSs intends to initiate a preliminary programme to reduce the risk of food insecurity in targeted villages with high risk of food insecurity, and simultaneously assess the needs of people living in deficit areas. The priority activities are those that increase the resilience of populations and discourage unsustainable coping mechanisms, including migration to seek food or grazing, consumption of seed stock and selling off of livestock.

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)	
Outcome: Enable access to food and livelihoods to 4,000 households	
Outputs (expected results)	Activities planned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rate of exodus and seasonal migration is reduced in the targeted areas; • 4,000 households can meet their food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilize and recycle 60 volunteers / supervisors (training on communication, distribution, and screening techniques) • Support 1,000 small farmers with animal

<p>needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted communities have anti-erosion infrastructures and benches. 	<p>feed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate and sensitize farmers on the conservation of fodder and pasture. Market assessments to check availability and price of essential goods (cash feasibility) Distribution of cash to 300 heads of families unfit for field work Income/livelihood substitution through a cash for work programme (CFW) for dune fixation, benches, making anti-erosion infrastructure (~1,700 beneficiary households) Distribute supplementary food to 2,000 families in coordination with other partners Build the capacity of cereal banks and strengthen existing management committees in targeted areas Monitor main commodity prices regularly and make cash-transfer programme adjustments as necessary
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Emergency health

<p>Outcome: Contribute reducing malnutrition among children from 6 months to 5 years, and pregnant and lactating women in the targeted areas (about 2,500 households with children under 5).</p>	
<p>Outputs (expected results):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All children from 6 to 59 months in the targeted villages are screened and the malnourished are referred to IHC Women of childbearing age, pregnant and lactating know the importance of breastfeeding The IHC in the targeted areas receive and care of all referred children malnourished cases The rate of acutely malnourished children is held below the national average 	<p>Activities planned</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit and train/ or recycle 215 community based volunteers at a rate of 5 per targeted village (training in screening of children and mother) IEC about good nutritional practices and breastfeeding Demonstration of food preparation for children Strengthen the screening, baseline and followed malnourished in the community Visit the Integrated Health Centres (CSI-CRENAM, CRENI; CRENAS) in targeted areas, and assess their ability in the management of malnourished children

Needs assessment and vulnerability study

<p>Outcome: Identify the needs of the most vulnerable households in main affected areas.</p>	
<p>Outputs (expected results)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The mission report is available and the needs of vulnerable populations are known Movement partners use the report to develop their food security response strategies 	<p>Activities planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a needs assessment mission in the most affected areas Finalize the evaluation report Elaborate (if necessary) an action plan to respond to the 2012 food insecurity in Niger

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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Click here

1. DREF budget **below**
2. Click **here** to return to the title page

How we work

All IFRC 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 the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.

DREF OPERATION

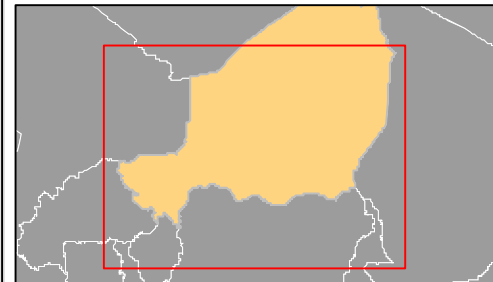
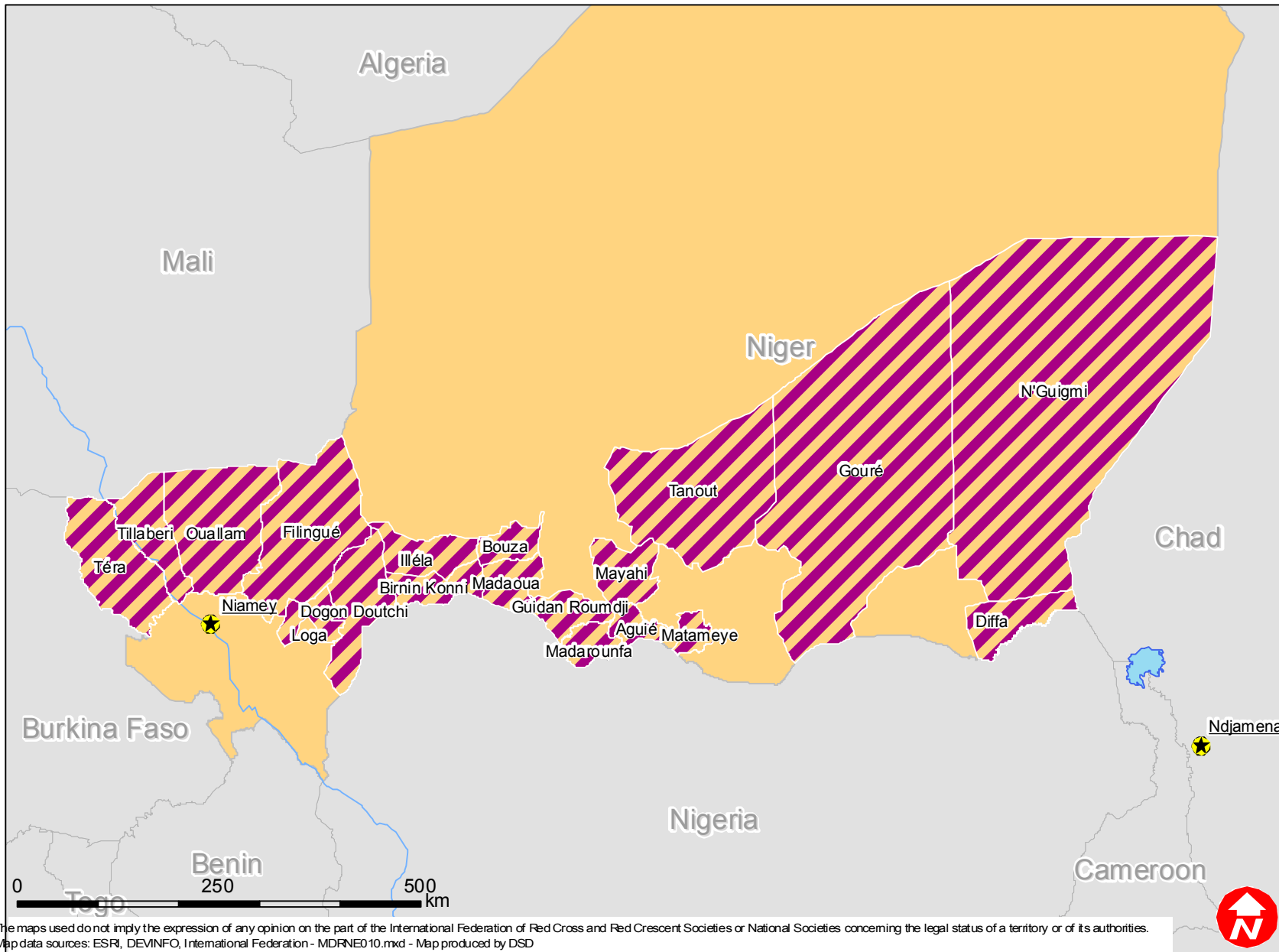
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Niger – Food Insecurity (MDRNE010)

Budget Group	DREF Grant Budget CHF
Shelter - Relief	0
Shelter - Transitional	0
Construction - Housing	0
Construction - Facilities	0
Construction - Materials	0
Clothing & Textiles	0
Food	7,000
Seeds & Plants	0
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	0
Medical & First Aid	0
Teaching Materials	2,981
Utensils & Tools	8,400
Other Supplies & Services	0
Emergency Response Units	0
Cash Disbursements	53,320
Total RELIEF ITEMS, CONSTRUCTION AND SUPPLIES	71,701
Land & Buildings	0
Vehicles Purchase	0
Computer & Telecom Equipment	0
Office/Household Furniture & Equipment	0
Medical Equipment	0
Other Machinery & Equipment	0
Total LAND, VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT	0
Storage, Warehousing	0
Distribution & Monitoring	0
Transport & Vehicle Costs	5,680
Logistics Services	0
Total LOGISTICS, TRANSPORT AND STORAGE	5,680
International Staff	6,000
National Staff	0
National Society Staff	2,550
Volunteers	12,060
Total PERSONNEL	20,610
Consultants	0
Professional Fees	0
Total CONSULTANTS & PROFESSIONAL FEES	0
Workshops & Training	3,900
Total WORKSHOP & TRAINING	3,900
Travel	10,300
Information & Public Relations	1,640
Office Costs	1,000
Communications	800
Financial Charges	1,600
Other General Expenses	1,800
Shared Support Services	0
Total GENERAL EXPENDITURES	17,140
Programme and Supplementary Services Recovery	7,737
Total INDIRECT COSTS	7,737
TOTAL BUDGET	126,768



Niger: Food Insecurity



 Most affected departments