



Niger is one of the poorest countries in the world with a rural poverty rate of 51.4 percent (World Bank, 2017) and is ranked at the bottom of the United Nations Human Development Index (UNDP, 2020). With a high prevalence of child marriage and early pregnancy, the country currently has a fertility rate of nearly seven children per woman, representing the highest rate of population growth (3.8 percent) in the world (IFRC, 2020). Niger is a landlocked country in the Sahel, a region that emits less than three percent of the greenhouse gases the United States does, but temperatures are rising 1.5 times faster than the global average (IPCC, 2018¹, Climate Watch n.d.). As a result, covariate shocks such as droughts and floods, the two main climatic hazards affecting the country, are growing longer and more frequent, undermining food production (Mouhamed, L. *et al.*, 2013)². Severe climate-related food and nutrition crises since 2000 have exacerbated Niger's vulnerability to food insecurity.³ Climate change is causing increasingly irregular rainfall, rising temperatures and desertification, which impact agricultural productivity and food insecurity. While only 12.5 per cent of land is arable, nearly 80 percent of the population work in agriculture and pastoralism, making this sector particularly vulnerable to climate-related hazards. As a result, Niger is among the countries most at risk of drought worldwide. Drought conditions and water scarcity during crucial stages in the growing season, as well as the recurrence of shocks, are a major determinant for low agricultural productivity, crop damage or yield reduction, low livestock productivity, and resulting food insecurity. The high sensitivity of the agricultural sector to agro-climatic hazards and the high poverty rate are the main sources of Niger's vulnerability to food insecurity and malnutrition. Even in good agricultural years, between four and five million people experience food shortages (ECHO, 2018). In addition to this, progressive desertification is also hampering agriculture-dependent livelihoods.

¹ https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/02/WGIIAR5-Chap22_FINAL.pdf

² <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2212094713000066>

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<https://www.wfp.org/countries/niger#:~:text=Nearly%2020%20percent%20of%20the,constraints%20and%20high%20demographic%20growth.&text=Four%20severe%20climate%2Drelated%20food,Niger's%20vulnerability%20to%20food%20insecurity.>

Niger also faces extreme climate variability on a regular basis. For example drought in 2010, and exceptional rainfall in 2012 and 2020. The 2010 drought stands out for its magnitude, affecting almost 7,900,000 people, mostly in the Region of Zinder, followed by Maradi and Agadez (IFRC, 2021). Droughts have been endemic since the 1960s. Notable drought episodes include the 1970s and 1980s Sahelian droughts that adversely impacted pastoral livelihoods; and the damaging drought of 2003–2004; the 2010 drought whose effect has been compared to the 2005 crisis in Niger, where tens of thousands of children needed treatment for acute malnutrition; the Sahelian drought in 2019 in which Niger was the worst affected country. While floods have become increasingly recurrent, climate change makes it harder and harder to anticipate flooding scenarios. Floods are concentrated in the South along the Niger River and its tributaries, whereas the western part of Niger is associated with highest flood risk. The upper catchment areas increasingly face problems with soil erosion and land degradation. Flood impacts range from losses in agricultural production, critical damage to infrastructure and housing in urban areas, as well as loss of life. In addition to floods and droughts, further pressure on livelihoods is caused by storms, heatwaves, locust infestations, and wildfires. Heavy flooding in 2020 affected thousands of people and destroyed tonnes of rice production. In June 2021, Niger was affected by floods due to heavy rains, causing several deaths and widespread damage across all regions (UN OCHA, 2021).

In the Sahel pastoralism provides a livelihood for more than 20 million people who are particularly vulnerable due to a combination of factors that are exacerbated by climate change. This includes recurrent drought, conflict, limited basic services and non-supportive development/investment policies. Niger has the largest livestock population in the Sahel region and in rural areas, around 87 percent of the population make their living from livestock farming (SDC n.d)⁴. The 2010 drought is estimated to have killed more than 4.8 million cattle, approximately 25 percent of the herd, amounting to an economic loss of more US\$700 million for the country (World Bank, 2020)⁵. In recent years, pastoralists in the region of Tillabéri, Maradi and Tahoua have had to deal with the growing insecurity in some of the Sahelian countries which has led to more restriction on movement and disrupted traditional herd management methods. Despite its crucial economic, social and cultural impact, pastoralism remains poorly funded by successive governments - forming only one percent of the national budget in 2009, versus 35 per cent for farming activities. Strategies are still poorly understood and badly integrated in policy design (IIED n.d.)⁶.

Niger is also facing a complex humanitarian crisis. The Lake Chad Basin, located where Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger and Chad meet, is facing multidimensional and interlinked challenges and is considered one of the greatest humanitarian crises since 1945. The region of Diffa in the Lake Chad basin region suffers from extremist violence and the effects of climate change. Climate change is increasingly recognised as a 'threat multiplier' that interacts with and compounds existing risks and pressures (Adelphi, 2018)⁷. Niger is currently hosting over 300,000 refugees and displaced persons fleeing the crises rocking neighboring countries (Nigeria, Mali, and Libya)⁸. The Diffa region hosts 265,696 Nigerian refugees, internally displaced persons, and Nigerien returnees (UNCHR, 2020).

⁴ <https://www.eda.admin.ch/countries/niger/de/home/internationale-zusammenarbeit/projekte.html/content/dezaprosjcts/SDC/en/1998/7F01193/phase6?oldPagePath=/content/countries/niger/de/home/internationale-zusammenarbeit/projekte.html>

⁵ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/immersive-story/2020/09/21/where-climate-change-is-reality-supporting-africas-sahel-pastoralists-secure-a-resilient-future>

⁶ <https://www.iied.org/niger-pastoral-livelihoods-climate-change-adaptation>

⁷ <https://www.adelphi.de/en/publication/climate-fragility-profile-lake-chad-basin>

⁸ <https://ida.worldbank.org/results/niger>

In terms of politics, a new government has been in place since 2021 after Mahamadou Issoufou stepped down after two terms. This means Niger will have the first democratic transition between elected leaders since it became independent from France more than 60 years ago. For administrative purposes Niger is divided into seven regions⁹ and Niamey, which is subdivided into 36 departments and 265 communes.

Legislation and policy environment

In 2010, a new constitution was drafted after a military coup took place in response to Tandja Mamadou's attempts to extend his Presidency beyond the constitutional limit allowed. The constitution states that "*the State shall protect and improve the environment and safeguard the water, air and land, forest and wildlife of Nigeria*". However, there is currently no explicit Disaster Risk Management (DRM) or Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) legislation in place. Legislation relating to DRM includes: Order N° 0158/PM of 04 October 2013 modifying and supplementing Order N° 00207/PM of 28 August 2012 pertaining to the powers, organisation and operation of the Food Crisis Unit; Order N° 0032/PM of 20 January 2014 modifying and supplementing Order N° 00208/PM of 28 August 2012 pertaining to the establishment, powers, composition and operation of the National Mechanism for the Prevention and Management of Disasters and Food Crises (*Dispositif National de Prévention et de Gestion des Catastrophes et Crises Alimentaires*, DNPGCCA); Order N° 00210/PM of 29 December 2016, reorganising the National Food Crisis Prevention and Management System; Order N°. 0183/PM of 17 October 2017 reorganizing the National Food Crisis Prevention and Management System (DNPGCCA) ; Order N°. 0113/PM of 27 July 2018 amending and supplementing Order No. 183 /PM reorganising DNPGCCA. Legislation relating to drought is Decree N° 2011/057/PCRD/PM of 27 January 2011 modifying and supplementing Decree N° 2000/0072/PRN/PM of 04 August 2000 pertaining to the establishment, powers, composition and operation of the Food Crisis Unit from the Disaster Management Agency (DNPGCCA) (DNPGCCA, 2019)

Pastoralism, given the social and economic value, is enshrined in numerous multilateral agreements, declarations, and policy frameworks. In 1998, the Commission of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was the first regional organisation in Africa to adopt legislation governing the passage of livestock between member states through a transhumance Protocol¹⁰. The implementation of the Protocol has varied between Member States, as only some such as Niger have integrated its provisions into national policies. The '**Code Rural**'¹¹, adopted in 1993, is considered to be a pioneering piece of legislation because it brought together the diverse legislation that regulated rural areas¹². It explicitly raises customary law at the same status as statutory law and recognises customary property rights (Matouri and Tan, 2008). In 2010, a decree on pastoralism '**Code Pastoral**', which complements the guiding principles of the *Code Rural*, was adopted (Boureima, A, and Flury, M., 2016). However, although the numerous **pastoral codes** adopted by the Sahelian States over the years have been mere declarations of intent and never guaranteed the rights of herders¹³. Legal reforms in Niger, for example, legitimized customary practices by affording Nigerien pastoralists the right to have primary access to communal land and water in their home areas¹⁴. The 2010 Water Code further expanded access rights for pastoralists by making public water access points, governed by a Management Committee accessible to all, including pastoralists from other countries. However, although Niger has one of the more progressive legislative frameworks governing livestock mobility, there are problems of implementation (Matouri and Tan, 2008).

⁹ Agadez, Diifa, Zinder, Maradi, Tahoua, Tillabéri

¹⁰ Guaranteed the right to free passage of all animals (cattle, goats, camels, horses) across the borders of Member States.

¹¹ This constitutes a legal and institutional instrument founded by ordinance No. 93-015 establishing the guiding principles of the Rural Code. <https://www.foncier-developpement.fr/acteur/code-rural-du-niger/>

¹² Supported by the *Permanent Secretariat of the Rural Code*

¹³ <https://ideas4development.org/en/sahel-future-pastoralism/>

¹⁴ https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Pastoralism_and_Conflict_Toolkit_Search_for_Common_Ground_2021.pdf

Hydromet and DRM services in Niger are covered by National Directorate of Meteorological Services (DMN), General Directorate of Water Resources (DGRE), General Directorate of Civil Protection (DGPC), DNP-GCA and the Ministry of Humanitarian Action and Disaster Management/Crisis Management (MAHGC). Over the years, the GoN has gradually strengthened its drought management system against disasters and food crises. This work is led by the **DNP-GCA**, which sits in the Prime Minister's Office. It is responsible for evaluating government and donor assistance that is required in different districts based on food insecurity and vulnerability (IFPRI, 2020). It is also responsible for disaster prevention and management and its mandate has been expanded to include early warning systems, prevention, social safety nets and humanitarian aid coordination. In 2017, DNP-GCA went through its latest reorganisation in order to integrate a new specialised unit, a Safety Net Unit (*Cellule Filets Sociaux-CFS*), in addition to the Coordination Unit of the Early Warning System (CC/SAP), the Food Crisis Unit (CCA)¹⁵.

The building blocks of the GoN's long-term vision include the National Strategy for Food Security, Nutrition and Sustainable Agricultural Development (SANAD) titled the "Nigeriens feeding Nigeriens Initiative" (*Nigériens Nourrissent les Nigériens- I3N*) initiative and its Priority Action Plan¹⁶, the National Resilience initiative (2015-2035), Economic and Social Development Plan (PDES) 2017-2021, the first five-year plan of Niger's Sustainable Development and Inclusive Growth Strategy by 2035 and national policies on nutrition, social protection and gender. The I3N of 2012 stems from a strong political will to combat hunger and poverty¹⁷. It was the GoN's centralised initiative to combat hunger. The DNP-GCA Strategy, which guides humanitarian interventions, is currently being revised for the period 2021-2025 (WFP KIIs). The addition of the CFS is considered to be an important step towards a better balance between shock-response and core safety nets (World Bank, 2019). Since 2012, the DNP-GCA has contributed to the implementation of the national SANAD policy/I3N, as the project manager of its Axis 3 "Improving the resilience of populations in the face of climate change, crises and disasters".

There is a National Plan to Combat Desertification and Natural Resource Management and a National plan to fight against drought which was finalised in 2018 by the Ministry in charge of Hydraulics (DNP-GCA, 2019). Although the GoN has contingency plans, they currently focus on floods since they are a major concern especially after this year (OCHA, KII). Under the Africa Disaster Risks Financing Programme (ADRFi)¹⁸, the intention is to provide technical assistance to strengthen Niger's capacity to assess drought risks, prevent drought-related food crises and develop contingency plans.

Disaster Risk Financing

Niger has a limited number of disaster financing instruments. The DNP-GCA has various sources of funding, with amounts varying from one year to another depending on the severity of the crises and the extent of the needs. From 2016, in order to encourage Niger's commitment to sustainability, some partners, led by the European Union who historically contributes 70 to 75 percent of the amount of the Common Donor Fund (DCF), opted for budget support for the SANAD sector to encourage Niger's commitment to sustainability. Currently, funding for DNP-GCA constitutes an action within Program 3 of the Multiannual Programming Document for the 2019-2021 Expenditures of the Prime Minister (DPPD). The budgets allocated to the functioning of the structures of the DNP-GCA have been reduced significantly in recent

¹⁵ DNP-GCA consists of 3 cellules (Early Warning System; Food Crisis; Social Nets) + 1 Permanent Secretariat + 4 Support Directorates

¹⁶ <http://www.initiative3n.ne/> The High Commission for the Nigeriens Nourish Nigeriens Initiative - HCl3N (*Office of the High Commissioner for the 3N Initiative*) was created by Decree N°2011-407/PRN in 2011.

¹⁷ Decree 2012-139/PRN of 18th April 2012

¹⁸ <https://projectsportal.afdb.org/dataportal/VProject/show/P-NE-A00-008>

years. But there are plans to create a secure fund for DNP-GCA to allow for the implementation of priority activities.

The DNP-GCA also manages the National Reserve Stockpile (SNR), consisting of the National Security Stock (SNS), a Strategic Food Reserve (RAS) in kind (100 000 T) and a Financial Reserve (equivalent to 50 000 T of cereals), or a Food Security Fund (FSA) as an intervention tool (DNP-GCA, 2016).

In terms of sovereign risk transfer in 2014, Niger joined the inaugural Risk Pool I of the **Africa Risk Capacity (ARC)** alongside Kenya, Mauritania and Senegal. Niger received a drought payment of approx. US\$3.5 million, which was to be paid out according to an approved contingency plan which stipulates how payouts would be utilised (GoN, 2014). In addition to this it joined Risk Pool II (2015-2016); Risk Pool III (2016-2017) (ARC, n.d.)¹⁹. However, although there were localised drought impacts in Central and South-Western Niger at the end of the 2016 agricultural season, the trigger selected by the Government (2.8 million people affected) was not reached. *Africa RiskView*, the tool used by ARC, estimated that only 570,000 people were affected (out of a potential 6.1 million vulnerable people) (ARC, 2016). Niger re-joined the risk pool covering the 2019/2020 agricultural season²⁰. It is unclear what the status is currently, but there could be assistance through the ADRIFi. At the regional level, in 2017 ECOWAS signed a MoU with ARC to build resilience against climate-related disasters in the region²¹.

Social Protection

Sub-regional

At sub regional level, the ECOWAS has followed the African Union's lead in working towards the extension of social protection for all (ISSA, 2014).

National

At the national level, Niger has demonstrated strong political will to place social protection at the centre of the national development agenda. The 2010 constitution of the State, affirmed the right to social protection and the following year the state adopted the National Social Protection Policy (NSPS)²². The objective of the NSPS is to reduce poverty and improve social protection, giving priority to vulnerable groups²³. This was reinforced in the Economic and Social Development Plan (PDES) 2017-2021, the first five-year plan of Niger's Sustainable Development and Inclusive Growth Strategy by 2035 (IOM, n.d.).

The Government decided to set up a permanent social protection system to address chronic poverty and food insecurity, after years of relying on emergency humanitarian response. The stabilisation of the political situation brought back the return of donor funds. In 2011, the national cash transfer program, the **Safety Nets Program (SNP)** was operationalised through the World Bank's Adaptive Social Safety Net project '*Projet Filets Sociaux*' (PFS)', which is the operational arm of the Safety Net Unit (CFS). The program is targeted at poor rural households and comprises monthly payments of 10,000 XOF (US\$15.95) for two years and a cash for work element. Between 2012 and 2019, the programme reached 100,000 beneficiary households and was rolled out in three main phases across all regions. Although the cash transfers are

¹⁹ Plans only available for Risk Pool I (2013) <https://www.africanriskcapacity.org/countries/arc-risk-pools/> Accessed 6 August 2021

²⁰ https://www.africanriskcapacity.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Niger-Operations-Plan_ARC_EN_2019_modifs.pdf

²¹ <https://www.preventionweb.net/news/african-risk-capacity-and-ecowas-sign-memorandum-understanding-strengthen-west-african-climate>

²² August 2011

²³ The Constitution of the Seventh Republic of Niger of 25 November 2010 stipulates that "[t]he State has the duty to provide assistance to the most vulnerable groups through a policy of social protection". Furthermore, it "mentions the exercise of collective and individual rights and well-being among the fundamental values of society, and advocates provisions offering safeguards to rights regarding social protection in several areas."

unconditional, behaviour change (volet comportemental) measures to promote investment in children are included (World Bank, 2021). Through a process of targeting, the poorest households within selected villages were identified²⁴. The development objective of the Adaptive Safety Net Project Phase 2 (2019)²⁵ is to improve the capacity of the Niger adaptive safety nets system to respond to shocks and to provide access for poor and vulnerable people to safety nets and accompanying measures²⁶.

There has been evidence of the successful expansion of core safety nets in response to shocks. For example, the national safety net project was horizontally expanded to respond to floods in Tohaua, (2012-13), to the Boko Haram security crisis in Diffa (2016-17) and to livestock losses in Agadez (2017). These experiences demonstrate how existing core safety nets can be used to improve timeliness and effectiveness of shock responses (World Bank, 2019). There could also be some see potential in investigating how humanitarian funds for anticipatory financing can be linked to a multi-donor trust fund managed by the World Bank, Sahel Adaptive Social Protection Program (SASPP)²⁷. The programme consists of policies and programs to help several Sahelian governments including Niger to strengthen social protection systems that allow vulnerable families to be more resilient to the effects of climate change.

As a result of COVID-19, WFP, UNICEF and the World Bank have been working with the DNP-GCA to strengthen the existing social protection system in Niger and how to make the system shock responsive over the longer term. A note to outline the Adaptive Social Protection (ASP) vision, should form part of DNP-GCA's new strategy. This new strategy aims to reinforce coordination and ensure more coherence in the response, and strengthen the social protection system through the consolidation and scale up of existing activities (WFP, 2021). The DNP-GCA has been leading a consultation process for the development of a Unified Social Registry (USR) for the Safety Nets program. This vision of this registry has not been clarified yet, but some work has started to collect data in rural areas, with the support of WFP, to feed into the database (WFP KII).

Anticipatory Action Pilots

Many organisations and agencies of the United Nations System have been working for several years in the field of AA.

OCHA CERF Pilot

The pilot for drought will focus on priority communities identified in 28 vulnerable municipalities in the Regions of Zinder, Tillaberi, Tahoua, Maradi and Diffa, which are the most vulnerable to drought. Although US\$ 15 million has been allocated for the implementation of the pilot, the framework at the time of writing still needs to be validated by the Humanitarian Coordinator and approved by the Coordinator of Emergency Relief Officer. The lessons learned will be documented as “proof of concept” to improve Niger's future AA.

²⁴ Within each region the communes with the highest poverty are selected. Within the communes public lotteries are organised to select beneficiary villages after which beneficiary households are determined using poverty targeting methods.

²⁵ <https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/project-detail/P166602>

²⁶ This project has four components. 1) The first component, Strengthening the Adaptive and Scalable Safety Net System, has the following three subcomponents: (i) Strengthening national systems; (ii) Supporting policy dialogue and inter-sectoral coordination; and (iii) Delivery tools, implementation, and monitoring of safety net interventions. 2) The second component, Cash Transfers and Accompanying Measures, has the following three subcomponents: (i) Cash transfers; (ii) Accompanying measures; and (iii) Cash transfers for shock response. 3) The third component, Cash for Work for Resilience, aims to support the implementation of Cash for Work (CfW) programs, which will provide additional income to people in communities affected by food insecurity caused by persistent or recurrent weather and climate change-related shocks. 4) The fourth component, Project Management, aims to cover expenditures related to the procurement of goods, works, services, and consultants necessary for the management of the project.

²⁷ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/sahel-adaptive-social-protection-program-trust-fund>

OCHA has adopted a nationally owned forecast tool developed by DNM in collaboration with IRI of Columbia University²⁸ with support from WFP. For this pilot, it was recommended to choose a threshold of 35 percent to respond to a drought occurring approximately once every three years in Niger. Five UN agencies (FAO, WFP, WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA) have identified AA in five sectors : food security, health, nutrition, WASH and education. The pilot was built by consensus of a group of partners that include experts from FAO, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, Nigerian Red Cross, International Red Cross , World Bank, UNICEF, DMN and Management of National Meteorology, CC/SAP. In order to provide Niger with a framework within a short period of time, the group of experts opted to work from the existing instead of creating new criteria or tools. WFP and FAO are the key players responsible for the timeline crisis that is defining the framework. The CERF framework was finalised at a time, when according to the crisis timeline, it would have been too late to implement AA. In order to ensure sustainability, discussions were held with the World Bank to ensure a link to a large social safety net program that it supports. In addition, one of the criteria that was retained in the choice of municipalities is the intervention capacity of agencies (WFP, FAO and UNDP) in potential municipalities. This criterion was retained in order to guarantee continuity of these activities by these intervention agencies at the end of the pilot (Draft OCHA AA Framework, 2021). Although the protocol was finalised, the trigger conditions were not met this year. This provides the opportunity to review the framework in November 2021, fine-tune the IRI model and monitoring indicators and review the crisis timelines so that the AAs fit within the timeline (OCHA KIIs).

At the government level engagement has been with the DNP-GCA. At the start both drought and floods were being considered. However, the Head of the DMN, who was part of the conversation at the beginning, advised that the tool being used to monitor floods has not been tested enough and needed another year (OCHA KII).

World Food Programme (WFP) Niger's work on AA started in 2019. WFP Niger is collaborating with government stakeholders such as the National Framework for the Prevention and the Management of Food Crises (DNP-GCA), the AGRHYMET Regional Centre (CRA) and the National Meteorological Agency (DMN) on the development of a forecast-based financing (FbF) system for drought. The objective is to increase the capacity of national stakeholders to use climate forecasts for a more anticipatory approach, to address agricultural drought risk, in order to minimise its damages on local communities and avoid the occurrence of a humanitarian disaster. The FbF project is being implemented in Dogo, situated in the Zinder Region which is highly affected by high food insecurity levels and recurrent drought. Moreover, Dogo is a commune of convergence (C2C)²⁹, which provides an interesting opportunity to test a multi-sectoral and multi-partner approach to mitigating drought impacts on the main livelihoods of the target population (i.e. agriculture and livestock). In terms of drought forecast triggers, WFP is working closely with Columbia University's International Research Institute (IRI) and AGRHYMET to support DMN with: i) improved downscaled forecasts in Zinder, utilising agro climatic variables (e.g. total seasonal rainfall, lengths of the rainy season and dry spells, start and end dates of the rainy season, number of wet days); ii) validation of climate forecasts with historical drought impacts in Zinder by comparing them against independent drought vulnerability indicators (e.g. farmers surveys, IPC data, and crop production data); iii) development of a national decision-making tool (Maproom) that provides access to national and subnational historical and forecast climate information, supports the development of triggers and thresholds, and enables the visualisation of this data to support both forecasts and analysis for future climate-related programs. In collaboration with national and local stakeholders, a set of priority AAs for both crop and livestock producers was developed (WFP Communication).

²⁸ <http://iridl.ldeo.columbia.edu/fbfmaproom/fbf/niger>

²⁹ Under the leadership of the High Commissioner for the 3N Initiative (*Nigeriens Nourish Nigeriens*), the C2C approach aims to create programmatic, thematic and geographical synergies among stakeholders to improve the resilience of vulnerable communities, through government-owned, community-driven responses.

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Previous work in Niger on AA has included supporting pastoralists in the Regions of Zinder and Tahoua³⁰ in 2017 when, due to long periods of dry spells and a sudden deficit of rainfall in many departments, the agro pastoral season failed to meet herders' expectations in terms of grain and forage production. 49,000 beneficiaries were supported through two early actions: the provision of livestock feed and the vaccination of animals against three of the most prevalent animal diseases before the peak of the lean season.

Currently anticipatory work is being supported by the German Government and the European Union. There is a partnership between FAO-Niger and the DNP-GCA for strengthening national capacities on anticipatory action and institutionalise AA systems for drought. In particular, given the multiplicity of actors currently intervening in the field, FAO is supporting the DNP-GCA in strengthening the coordination of the numerous initiatives that are taking place. FAO and DNP-GCA are collaborating to test different approaches to trigger AA for drought in Niger, and a set of training on FAO's AA tools will be rolled in 2022. Following the set-up of the pilot AA system for drought, if triggers are reached FAO's internal AA funding mechanism will provide resources to implement early actions and attract further funding from partners. At the same time, FAO Niger is supporting the DGPC to improve the coordination of data collection in flood management in Niger (WFP KII). In terms of sustainability, FAO's approach often relies on readily existing indicators and EWS, which are refined through the pilot initiatives to trigger anticipatory action and better link warnings to concrete implementation. Through the numerous pilots carried out by FAO on drought, working with national authorities and institutionalisation have remained key pillars of FAO's approach. While implementation of early actions takes place at local level, often the triggering and strengthening of EWS is mostly carried out through the national level stakeholders. In order to better ensure buy-in from decision makers and push for institutionalisation and policy reforms. A key component of the advocacy on anticipatory actions are final evaluations carried out through the FAO's Return on Investment methodology (FAO KII, FAO Communication).

Niger Red Cross Society (RCSN) (Croix Rouge Nigerien - CRN) The Early Action Protocol (EAP) for floods was approved in 2020 (Budget: 250,000 CHF), whereas the one for drought was approved July 2021 (Budget: 350,000 CHF). The EAPs will be funded from IFRC's Forecast based Action by the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF).

The Drought EAP aims to anticipate a slow onset drought using a two-phase trigger approach.

Trigger 1: In anticipation of the impact of an upcoming poor rainy season. Each April, the ECMWF publishes an online seasonal forecast (SEAS5). If this forecast shows a 40 percent (or greater) probability of precipitation in the lowest tercile ("below normal"), the conditions for the first trigger will be met and the CRN will launch the first round of early activity. The first trigger in April, anticipates poor rainfall ahead, and induces a response in May preceding the rainy season. Prickly Millet and Cowpea have been selected for seed distribution³¹. The target for this action is 1000 particularly vulnerable households, each of which will benefit from 10kg of millet and 10kg of cowpea for 1 hectare. Targeting for communities receiving the seeds will be done in a participatory and inclusive approach with total accountability of the community. Targeting will be done according to the Household Economy Analysis (HEA) approach³².

³⁰ <http://www.fao.org/resilience/noticias-eventos/historia-detalle/es/c/1128593/>

³¹ People seed from farmer selection was prioritised. These are seeds adapted to drought and purchased locally. As for cowpea, it is short-cycle seed from agronomic research

³² This is done during a village assembly where households are classified into four socio-economic groups (affluent, middle-income, poor, and very poor) according to the community's own determination criteria. The same community assigns the category to which a particular household belongs according to pre-established criteria, by reviewing the names of the community members, and in a village assembly.

Trigger 2 : In anticipation of a food crisis the following year due to a poor harvest

When in November, for the Zinder region- The current Food Insecurity Assessment (Oct-Dec) indicates "crisis phase" and/or more Food Insecurity (i.e., phase 3 to more of the IPC) per department for the following year's lean season (June to September); When the Synthesis of Production Conditions indicates the "poor and/or below (Red)" level, combined with the previous rainy season's "below 50 percent" anomaly in relation to the historical average, using the GEOGLAM crop monitor, then the second set of early actions are triggered. The second trigger in November anticipates a future food crisis based on the food insecurity assessment observed by the Harmonized Framework/CPI and the assessment of production conditions in addition to the assessment of the previous rainy season (GEOGLAM).

The replenishment of the Cereal Bank (CB)³³ reserves involves supporting functional cereal banks in the localities that will be identified for interventions to increase the volume of their cereal reserves. These reserves will then be sold at a 50 percent subsidised price. This action will allow 4,000 households to have access to cereals from November until the next harvest, at a reduced price and in sufficient quantity to meet their needs. Each of the 4,000 beneficiary households will receive 63 kg of cereals from these banks for three months. The selection of beneficiaries for the Conditional Cash transfer (in vouchers) will be done in a participatory and inclusive approach with full accountability of the community, according to the HEA approach. These two key measures will allow families to better understand, as early as November, the food and nutrition crisis to come in March of the following year.

Flooding - The EAP is a five-year pilot project that aims to mitigate or even prevent the impacts of river flooding through the implementation of this EAP in the three regions crossed by the Niger River Basin (Niamey, Tillaberi and Dosso) covering 3,000 households, or about 21,000 people. The EAP is triggered by a forecasting model (SATH-ORIO) provided by the Niger Basin Authority (NBA) in collaboration with the Directorate General of Water Resources (DNRE) and the National Meteorological Directorate. In Niger, the available lead time for floods is four days (the margin of error is about 0.05 percent), and the PAP ensures that early actions will be implemented within four days between the forecast and the potential disaster according to the trigger model. The monitoring is based on the alert coasts ("colored scales") provided by the Water Resources Branch in terms of daily monitoring of river levels for flood prevention. EAP actions include: priority distribution of empty bags to be filled with sand for the protection of dykes to protect homes; distribution of aqua tabs (for three months), jerry cans and mosquito nets for the prevention of diarrheal diseases and malaria; identification of sites and establishment of emergency shelters and evacuation of at-risk households to reception sites. The main criterion considered in the beneficiary selection process is vulnerability, which is taken as a criterion for all beneficiaries before considering other criteria. It should be noted that the established criteria will give priority to very vulnerable households, particularly those headed by women (widows or divorced), people living with disabilities, people suffering from chronic illnesses, the elderly, and those with children under the age of five. The type of dwelling will also be taken into account by giving more priority to households with dwellings more vulnerable to flooding. Finally, targeting will also take into account the degree of exposure of the household. The EAP is aligned with the existing Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) plan and the national contingency plan. In terms of sustainability it is hoped that the PAP will become an important component of national and local contingency plans for both the GoN and NRCS. Stakeholders involved and/or consulted included during the development of the EAP includes the NBA, the DNM, the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs (MAH) the DNRE, AGRHYMET, ACMAD, OCHA,

³³ This is a community-based scheme that mainly serves a social purpose. Its purpose is to solve the food problems faced by an organized community during a given period. The period considered is the one that corresponds to the lean season in the crop calendar. Depending on the results of the previous season, it can extend over one to three months. The purpose of the cereal bank is therefore to provide the community with a stock of cereals to cover its food needs for at least one month. To ensure this function, the cereal bank constitutes the seat of a certain number of operations: collection, storage, conservation and transfer of cereals. The management is done by the community itself through a management committee formed around each CB. The purchase of cereals for the banks' stock is done when prices are low and there is an opportunity. The stocks are thus sold during the lean season.

UNDP, WHO, and representatives from the municipalities in the three regions. (IFRC, 2020; IFRC Communication).

In Niger the **Climate Risk & Early Warning Systems (CREWS)**³⁴ initiative is supporting the GoN (MAHGC) to improve its early warning services, including enhancing its food security early warning system and establishing flood and extreme weather warnings mainly in urban areas and along the Niger and Komadougou Rivers. The three-year CREWS project entitled “Niger Strengthening Early Warning Services” is implemented by the World Bank and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and builds upon a World Bank project that identified at-risk populations living in flood-prone neighbourhoods of Niamey. It specifically seeks to achieve delivery of timely, impact-based warnings to at-risk populations and activate location-specific preparedness plans in Niger by 2020. In July and August 2019 alone, floods killed 45 people, injured 55 and left more than 66,000 displaced, mainly across the regions of Maradi, Agadez and Zinder. In 2016, Niger was hit by very severe flooding due to heavy summer rains created by El Niño weather patterns, which resulted in 92,000 people displaced mostly in the regions of Agadez and Tahoua. The World Bank supports the CREWS Niger project by providing climate early warning technical expertise to support specific areas based on the existing legal framework for disaster risk management in the country.”

Collaboration

Although a Flood Technical Working group has been set up under the lead of the DGPC, there appears to be limited collaboration. Implementing agencies appear to be trying to launch new pilots with different methodologies, therefore the CERF process was an attempt to bring together all the projects under a common framework (OCHA KII). FAO will seek to strengthen national authorities' leadership in AA by supporting the DNP-GCA on coordination of these different initiatives and creating opportunities for comparison of triggering approaches (FAO KII).

Development/Resilience Projects of Relevance - Regional and National

Examples of regional and national development programmes include:

Resilience in the Sahel Enhanced (RISE II) - USAID's RISE II initiative seeks to address the root causes of persistent vulnerability for key populations in Burkina Faso and Niger. It is a comprehensive set of programs that expand economic opportunities in and outside of agriculture, strengthen natural resources, conflict and disaster risk management and improve health, nutrition and human capital in areas of Niger and Burkina Faso subject to recurrent humanitarian crises (USAID Communication).

World Bank - Regional Sahel Pastoralism Support Project (PRAPS). Deployed in 2015 in six countries of the Sahel—Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal—PRAPS aims to protect pastoral systems by improving resource management and animal health, facilitating access to markets, diversifying sources of income for pastoral households and managing conflicts. It is supported by US\$248 million in financing from the World Bank through the International Development Association (IDA), and coordinated by the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS).

G5 Sahel - The Sahel Alliance³⁵, comprising the five Sahelian countries (Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso and Chad) was announced in 2017 to provide an appropriate, ambitious and effective response to the challenges facing the G5 Sahel member countries. In 2020, the Alliance announced the enactment of

³⁴ <https://www.crews-initiative.org/en/projects/niger-strengthening-early-warning-services>;
<https://public.wmo.int/en/media/news/niger-making-progress-towards-flood-early-warning-system>

³⁵ <https://www.alliance-sahel.org/en/sahel-alliance/>

the Alliance goals through the implementation of over 800 projects by 2022, with global funding of €11.6 billion.

The Joint Programme for the Sahel³⁶ in Response to the Challenges of COVID-19, Conflict and Climate Change (SD3C) aims to consolidate the livelihoods of small producers, in particular women and youth living in cross-border areas of the six targeted countries. It is implemented in partnership with FAO and WFP and the G5 Sahel. It seeks to address the trilogy of challenges posed by COVID-19, conflict and climate change in the Sahel. The programme covers six years into two phases (Phase 1: 2021-2023 and Phase2: 2024-2026). In Niger, Tillaberi and Diffa are the intervention regions (USAID communication).

Analysis

Although there is political will around DRR, the legislation and institutional framework needs to be strengthened. Although there is a willingness for the implementation of AA (FAO KII), in general, the persistence of the predominance of reactive management still persists over prevention. There is a fragmentation of the institutional framework and the weakness of the coordination and consultation mechanisms of actors in the prevention and management of disaster risks (MAH / GC and DNP-GCA), and other ministries such as *Ministère de l'Agriculture* (MAG) and *Ministère de l'Élevage* (MEL) highly concerned by the effects from droughts or floods . The current status of the DNP-GCA and the horizontal organisation of the institution leads to the compartmentalisation of the different cells , which prevents an integrated and unified management of the system . The creation of the CFS in 2017 was not accompanied by the necessary human and financial resources - until recently, CFS was manned by one official (WFP KII). There is limited capacity in the national and decentralised structures for the prevention and management of crises and disasters to ensure adequate monitoring of risks. Financing mechanisms to manage risk appear to be limited and DRR and CCA appear to be weakly integrated in development policies, strategies, tools and programs. There appears to be limited collaboration among implementing partners engaged in AA. The building of the ASP should be seen as an opportunity to link AA actions to ensure sustainability and ownership by the government. Overall, there is low adaptive capacity in the country and dire need for resilience-building activities.

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