



With its network of volunteers present in every community, the Red Cross Society of Niger has been able to respond to all of the food and nutrition crises that have hit Niger over the last decades. Photo, IFRC.

Appeal No: MDRNE026	IFRC Secretariat Funding requirements: CHF 3 million Federation-wide Funding requirements: CHF 5 million	
Glide No: DR-2022-000210-NER	People affected/at risk: 4.4 million people	People to be assisted: 283,830 People (40,547 households)
	Appeal launched: 09/05/2022	Appeal ends: 31/04/2024

Niger is currently being affected by the worst food security crisis of this decade, with 4.4 million people in need of immediate humanitarian assistance. This crisis is in the context of continued deteriorating security in the Sahel region, which further aggravates the socio-economic vulnerabilities of the population. In line with the IFRC's Pan-African Zero Hunger Initiative, the IFRC is launching this Food Insecurity Crisis Emergency Appeal to support the Red Cross Society of Niger (RCSN) to mobilise resources to scale-up its humanitarian assistance in the country's affected regions.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

In Niger, over four million households are facing the devastating effects of food insecurity caused by consecutive failed rainy seasons and decades of increasing desertification of the Sahel. Men, women and children have no adequate access to food, and are exposed to several threats harming their well-being. These threats are natural hazards (climate, droughts, wildfires), epidemics (measles, malaria, meningitis and cholera) and insecurity, leading to population movements and competition over resources.

The severe food insecurity situation is confirmed by the *Cadre Harmonisé*¹ findings, which reported that between 2.5 and 3.3 million people are currently food insecure countrywide (Phase 3 to 5 as per the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification – IPC), and that between 3.6 and 4.4 million people will be food insecure in June – August 2022 period due to a delayed 2022 rainy season and irregular distribution of rainfall, long dry spells, and high risks of flooding that can lead to losses in crops, material goods, and animal and human lives in exposed localities.

The pastoral season in Niger is taking place early in the year as a result of difficulties in livestock feeding, watering conditions and fodder deficits. Herd movements are also disrupted due to the security situation. Consequently, livestock is concentrated in secure areas which leads to risks of conflict between farmers and the emergence of animal diseases.

¹ Joint analysis of food security and the livelihood situation in the Sahel and West Africa sub-regions is conducted every six months by governments and stakeholders, including the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement.

There was a decline of 39% in cereal production in the 2021-2022 cropping seasons, which is currently recording a gross deficit of two million tons across all regions of Niger.² Agricultural markets are being disrupted due to the failed agricultural season, closure of borders due to the COVID-19 pandemic and insecurity. This has inevitably led to an increase in inflation and a rise in prices of main food staples and livestock, in some cases, by more than 40% compared to the last five-year average for food staples. The impact of the ongoing Ukraine crisis can lead to further price increases for agricultural products, especially wheat, rice and fertilisers.

The population of Niger has been facing challenges in nutrition due to the lack of uptake of essential nutrients and inadequate nutritional practices. According to the Niger government, a total of **2.3 million people need curative or preventive nutritional support while there are 457,200 children under the age of five suffering from severe acute malnutrition (SAM)**. Due to insecurity in Niger, many health centres in rural areas have been closed, services are disrupted, or they face a lack of access to medicines. This situation is set to deteriorate during the lean season.

Only 56% of the population has access to a source of drinking water, 13% has access to basic sanitation services, and open defecation is practiced by more than 71%.³ These sanitary conditions are conducive to the development of diseases which will have high negative impacts on the nutritional situation of the population.

Without decisive action, there will be a steady increase in food insecurity, malnutrition levels, and related opportunistic diseases, and increased exposure to epidemics. The number of people living in food insecurity will increase as more farmers lose their crops and livestock due to agricultural practices insufficiently

² As an example, the available production of all cereals (millet, sorghum, maize, fonio and rice) is 2,946,231 tons against consumption needs of the population for all these crops, which is estimated at 4,950,711 tons.

³ UNICEF, 2022.

adapted to the consequences of climate change. Cases of diseases and epidemics like malaria, measles and meningitis will increase as people experiencing food insecurity and

malnutrition have a weakened immune system, are more vulnerable to infections and suffer from severe symptoms leading to possible deaths.

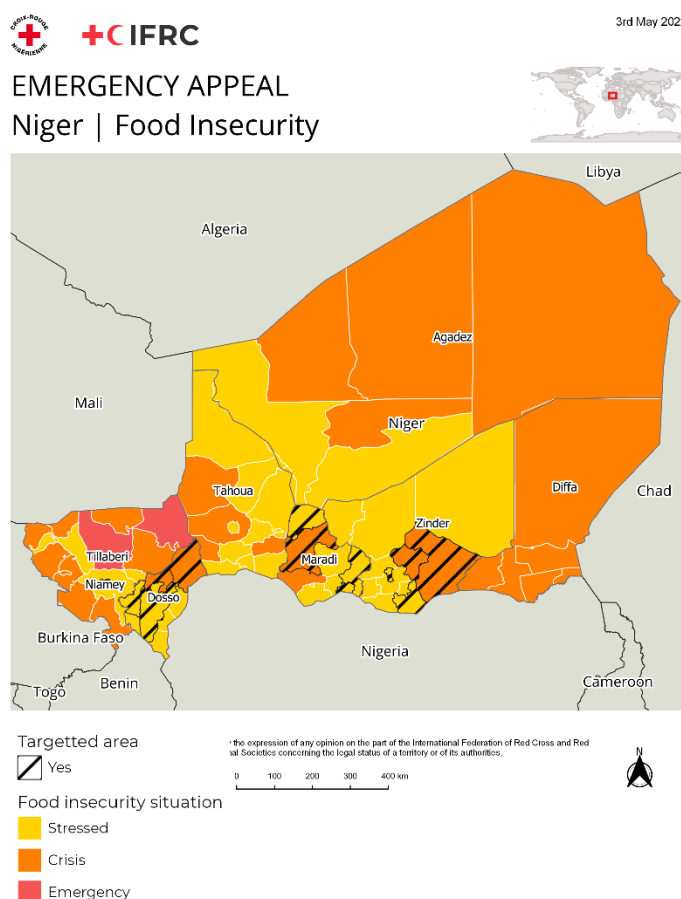
TARGETING

In line with the government's 2022 National System for the Prevention and Management of Food Crisis (DNP/GCA), RCSN⁴ developed a Food Security Plan of Action aiming at providing countrywide emergency support and to strengthen the resilience of approximately 880,000 people.

To implement this plan, the RCSN appealed to Movement partners and, based on criteria such as field presence, ongoing programmes, food security risk classification and security risks, partners took responsibility to support the National Society (NS) in different geographical areas. The ICRC positioned itself in insecure areas, such as the Tillabéri, Diffa, Tahoua and Agadez regions. The IFRC and Participating National Societies, through the current IFRC-wide Emergency Appeal, aim to intervene in the following regions and districts (see map): **Niamey** (Niamey), **Dosso** (Dogondoutchi, Dosso, Loga, Boboye), **Maradi** (Bermo, Dakoro, Gazaoua, Tessaoua) **and Zinder** (Zinder, Damagaram Takaya, Dungass, Goure, Magaria).

Within these districts, the IFRC supported appeal will prioritise departments with a higher number of people in phase 3 and 4, except those non-accessible.

- i. Out of a total of 1.4 million⁵ food insecure people in these departments, the Emergency Appeal is targeting 20%, equal to **283,830 people** (258,695 in Phase 3 and 25,135 in Phase 4) or **40,547 households** for a period of **24 months**⁶. The gender ratio in Niger is 101 men to 100 women (101:100) or 1.01, which makes a total 144,753 men and 139,077 women targeted. However, during the targeting, particular attention will be given to pregnant and lactating women and children, especially those who are malnourished given the alarming malnutrition situation with almost 43.5 percent of children under five suffering from chronic malnutrition and 12.5% from acute malnutrition. National Society regional committees in collaboration with community leaders will allow to identify most vulnerable groups.



⁴ CRN: Croix Rouge Nigérienne

⁵ As per March 2022 CH, the total population in the 14 targeted districts in phase 3 and 4 is 1,419,147.


⁶ According to IFRC Unified Planning, this Emergency Appeal will transition to the Country Plan, after lifesaving activities are implemented.

In the implementation of the action, complementarities will be sought with ongoing IFRC support, including the Early Action Protocol activated on 19 April in two districts of Zinder region,⁷ and other Red Cross Movement partners' interventions, whose presence in the field is known and summarised in a 4W matrix (who, what, where and why), and with humanitarian stakeholders represented in the Food Security cluster. The same applies for the selection of villages, which will be prioritised on the basis of vulnerability criteria and complementarity with other actors. Although the main aim is to address food insecurity, the targeted population includes those also affected by other shocks like floods and insecurity that contribute to internal population movements.⁸

PLANNED OPERATIONS


The Food Insecurity Crisis Emergency Appeal aims to support the RCSN in responding to the hunger crisis by saving lives and protecting livelihoods of the most food-insecure people. The Emergency Appeal (EA) will be focusing on high impact activities such as cash distributions, support to farmers and pastoralists, saving groups and nutrition support. Considering the significant impact of food insecurity on the most vulnerable and exposed groups, coupled with the deteriorating security situation in Niger and continuous population movements, activities will be very sensitive to protection issues through a mainstreamed protection gender and inclusion (PGI), and community engagement approach. Communities will be at the centre of the response by being involved at every stage of the implementation of the Appeal. Collecting feedback is an important aspect to ensure the continuous improvement of activities and adaptation to changes in the operational context. Moreover, protecting communities, particularly those most at risk, and ensuring their safety and access to opportunities are essential to meeting the needs and rights of the most vulnerable.

The Government of Niger has called on national and international partners and humanitarian organisations to provide support at all possible levels (technical, human, financial, organisational, and institutional). This operation is part of the Niger government's "2022 Support Plan for Vulnerable Populations" that targets severely food insecure people and paves the way to a multi-year food-security strategy with the objective of "Contributing to the improvement of the resilience of vulnerable populations through the anticipation, prevention, mitigation, management, and early recovery from food, pastoral and nutritional insecurity affecting vulnerable populations". In the government's plan, attention is given to pregnant and lactating women, and children, especially those who are malnourished.

	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Integrated assistance (Livelihood and Multi-purpose Cash) 148,000 persons reached through livelihoods and basic needs activities</p> <p>Immediate humanitarian support is needed for families to help them meet their daily food needs during this lean season. It is also essential to safeguard livelihoods from further deterioration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multipurpose cash and voucher assistance (CVA) to 16,000 households to increase their purchasing power and meet their basic needs.
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⁷ On 19 April, one of the two triggers⁷ defined by the Drought Early Action Protocol (EAP) approved in July 2021 for the Zinder region, was met. As such, on 21 April, the EAP was activated to conduct activities related to i) the replenishment of cereal bank reserves to be sold at a 50% subsidised price. Such anticipatory actions are supported through the DREF and its Anticipatory Action window.

⁸ In December 2021, the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) was evaluated by governmental technical services, in light of the evolution of the security situation in the emergency zones, at 264,257 people.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to 5,000 farmers, pastoralists and their households to improve stocking and management of assets and resources (e.g., seeds, tools, fodder and stock). • Support 500 women-headed households through the creation of 20 saving group schemes (i.e., mother's clubs).
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Health & Care 187,000 persons reached through nutrition activities</p> <p>Nutrition activities will identify and address malnutrition, promote sustainable reduction of health and nutrition risks, and improve the overall nutrition practices of targeted communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up and run 20 community nutrition centres using the FARN/ANJE approach doing screening and referral of malnourished children to health centres. • Promote Infant and Young Child Feeding Practices with mothers and caregivers, and healthy nutrition practices through sensitisation by community volunteers and through community radios and other communication channels.


Sustainability and linkages to longer-term resilience programming

This strategy is aligned with the IFRC-wide Pan-African Zero Hunger Initiative that undertakes an all-inclusive approach to food security including both short and long-term interventions, recognising that food security and climate-induced disasters are directly interconnected. Droughts destroy agricultural and livestock infrastructure, assets, inputs and production capacity. They interrupt market access, trade, and food supply, reduce income, deplete savings, and erode livelihoods.

While activities implemented under this EA address acute and emergency needs, and protect livelihoods, community-led vulnerability and capacity assessments will be carried out to design long-term plans to address the root causes of hunger and break the cycle of aid dependency. This plan, aligned with the government's multi-year strategy, will be articulated in proposals for longer-term funding requirements and implemented in coordination with this Appeal.

Enabling approaches

The sectors outlined above will be supported and enhanced by the following enabling approaches:



	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>National Society Strengthening</p> <p>Support the implementation of the National Society Capacity Strengthening Plan, especially in those areas linked to the action, to ensure the quality of implementation, giving particular attention to financial management, planning and monitoring, and human resource management. The latter includes reinforcing staffing through continuous capacity building and creating conditions to retain them. Attention will be given to improve volunteers' management, ensure duty of care through the provision of trainings, equipment, and an insurance package. Stronger links will be made with the Preparedness for Effective Response (PER) and Africa Red Ready programmes in strengthening the National Society.</p>
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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Coordination and Partnerships</p> <p>Facilitate engagement and coordination with Participating National Societies and the ICRC in the design and implementation of the response, leveraging the expertise and resources available through a Red Pillar approach, and ensure alignment with relevant external actors, including the government's mechanisms for climate and drought, social safety nets, food security, emphasising the auxiliary role of the RCSN. Implement a robust humanitarian diplomacy and communications plan, with appropriate links to national, pan-African and international climate and humanitarian policies.</p>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Secretariat Services</p> <p>The IFRC's coordination services will be strengthened through a start-up mission of an Operations Manager, focusing on facilitating an effective Federation-wide response throughout its implementation, and a Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Officer. In the field, the IFRC Operations Manager shadows his/her National Society counterpart and supports partners in the implementation of activities.</p>

The planned response reflects the current situation and is based on the information available at the time of this Emergency Appeal launch. Details of the operation will be finalised through the Operational Strategy to be released in the upcoming days. The Operational Strategy will also provide further details on the Federation-wide approach, which includes response activities of all contributing Red Cross / Red Crescent National Societies, and the Federation-wide funding requirement.

RED CROSS RED CRESCENT PRESENCE IN COUNTRY

Niger Red Cross Society (CRN)

 <p>Core areas of operation</p>	
	
Number of staff:	100
Number of volunteers:	10,000
Number of branches	8

The RCSN was created on 13 July 1963. It has eight regional branches with 100 employees and about 10,000 community volunteers throughout the country. The NS is recognised as auxiliary of the public authorities and works closely with several ministries of the Niger government like the Ministry of Humanitarian Action and Disaster Management, Ministry of Public Health, and Ministry of Hydraulics and Sanitation. RCSN has developed its 2022-2026 Strategic Plan structured around five strategic objectives.⁹

As auxiliary to the public authorities, the RCSN has always been present in the response to all of the emergencies in the country. In accordance with its mission, the NS intervenes throughout the national territory in the areas of health, including community-based health and epidemics; nutrition; Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH); first aid; volunteer promotion; communications; humanitarian principles and values; disaster preparedness and response; protection and Restoring Family Links (RFL); education; food security and livelihoods. Where relevant, the NS uses Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) modalities in its responses. The NS has extensive experience in managing operations funded by the IFRC, Participating National Societies, the ICRC and other donors.

The RCSN is part of the Sahel+ Group, a regional network of 10 National Societies aiming to strengthen cooperation and coordination in the Sahel. The Sahel+ Food Security and Livelihood technical working group is particularly active and provides the opportunity for peer-exchanges between its members, and develops sub-regional plans. Both the IFRC and the ICRC hold an observer status in this network, allowing for technical inputs, programmatic guidance, joint planning, and financial support.

IFRC Membership Coordination

This EA promotes a Federation-wide approach, inclusive of the NS and all Participating National Societies present in Niger (Belgium, French, Danish, Italian, Luxembourg and Spanish Red Cross Societies). It builds on their expertise, capacities, and resources in the targeted areas, and on the experience in implementing joint programming like the ECHO Pilot Programmatic Partnership (PPP).¹⁰ Therefore, in the implementation of this EA, the IFRC will focus on building a holistic approach to programming, reporting, risk management, information management, joint organisational capacity strengthening, resource mobilisation and external communications. The IFRC has a strategic coordination role within the Movement and vis-à-vis government, and humanitarian and development partners in the country. The IFRC also consolidates and provides updates about Red Cross/Red Crescent operations to UN partners.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement Coordination

There is an active Movement coordination and cooperation structure in Niger, with the presence of the RCSN, ICRC, IFRC and in-country Participating National Societies. With regards to the current food security crisis, in coordination with the ICRC, a Red Cross Movement Technical Committee, led by the

⁹ **SO1:** Vulnerable communities, including local populations and displaced persons in target areas, anticipate and respond promptly to crises and disasters while ensuring their sustainable recovery in a protective environment by 2026;

SO2: Vulnerable populations affected by conflicts and disasters, including children aged 6 to 59 months, girls and pregnant women and adolescent girls residing in target areas, have access to quality health and nutrition services, including in emergency situations;

SO3: The NRCS has a network of competent volunteers who remain faithful to their mission;

SO4: The NRCS maintains good strategic partnership relations with the actors of the Movement and outside the Movement;

SO5: The NRCS improves the quality and impact of its programmes by 2026.

¹⁰ The Luxembourg Red Cross leads the ECHO PPP consortium in Niger composed of the Niger Red Cross Society, the French Red Cross and the Belgian Red Cross, with the IFRC maintaining a strategic coordination role.

RCSN was created to share information on the food security situation in the country, and to develop a Movement Food Security Plan of Action. Movement meetings are held on a regular basis to ensure leverage of existing expertise and complementarity of actions. A 4W matrix, specifically for food interventions, was developed and a more general one to be used for the complementarity of intervention pillars. At this stage, the ICRC has allocated around CHF 4.5 million as a contribution to this plan to respond to the crisis in the regions of Tillabéri, Diffa, Tahoua and Agadez.

A Red Cross Movement food security communications campaign is also planned, including a press release and the organisation of a press conference with governmental authorities and diplomatic representations. The *#NigerCriseAlimentaire* handle will be used throughout the implementation of the Emergency Appeal to communicate on Twitter.

External Coordination

The NS participates in inter-agency coordination and working group meetings for various sectors (i.e., cash and health) and is an active member of the Food Security Cluster. Many international organisations are active in the response to food insecurity, such as the World Food Programme (WFP), Concern, and Save the Children. They all operate under the robust coordination of the National System for the Prevention and Management of Food Crisis (DNP-GCA) and align their actions with the 2022 Support Plan for Vulnerable Populations targets which serves as the basis for partner engagement in emergency, recovery and resilience building activities. A 4W matrix on interventions, actual and planned, of humanitarian actors is being updated continuously. As of 24 April, the data collected do not allow for a complete overview, either in terms of activities or zones, on intervention. As such, continuous coordination and prioritisation of actions will be required, with adjustments of targets throughout the implementation of the EA.

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Reference



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