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Early Action Protocol activation Operations update Niger: Floods

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Operation n°: **MDRNE027**

EAP number: **EAP2020NE01**

To be assisted: **3,000 HH**

DREF allocated: **250,000 Swiss francs**

Operational timeframe: **01/09/2022 -
30/11/2022**

Lead time: **4 days**

Timeframe covered by this update:
01/09/2022 – 03/10/2022

The Early Action Protocol hazard and trigger

- 17.07.2020:** EAP approved
- 01.08.2022:** Forecast monitoring started
- 30.08.2022:** Trigger reached
- 31.09.2022:** EAP Activated
- 04.09.2022:** Early actions completed
- 05.09.2022:** Issue with forecasting system first identified
- 08.09.2022:** Field visit
- 12.09.2022:** Further actions suspended



Raising the dike at Lamordé,
Photo credit: IFRC/Lamine, IFRC, 8 September 2022

EAP activation

On 31 August 2022 information coming from the Niger Basin Authority (NBA), in collaboration with the Directorate General of Water Resources and the Directorate of National Meteorological services, indicated that significant floods would occur the week starting 5 September in Niamey, Niger. As a result, the Niger Red Cross Society (CRN) activated its Early Action Protocol (EAP) for Floods.

The triggering model of this EAP is based on the flood prediction model developed by the NBA through the SATH-ORIO project, and its activation is based on the Forecast information distributed at least 96 hours before the peak of the flooding. The model provides three types of alerts: yellow, orange and red. This model will trigger the EAP activation once the water level observed reaches the orange alert level (580-619 cm).

The CRN, as part of its monitoring through the STH-ORIO project, measured that the water level at the station in Niamey, was 581 cm for two days (from 29 to 30 August 2022), indicating that the orange level was reached. CRN had been monitoring the river levels during the past weeks and shared this information with IFRC and Partner NS's through regular bulletins. Once the trigger was met on 31 August 2022, CRN alerted IFRC, and activated this EAP.

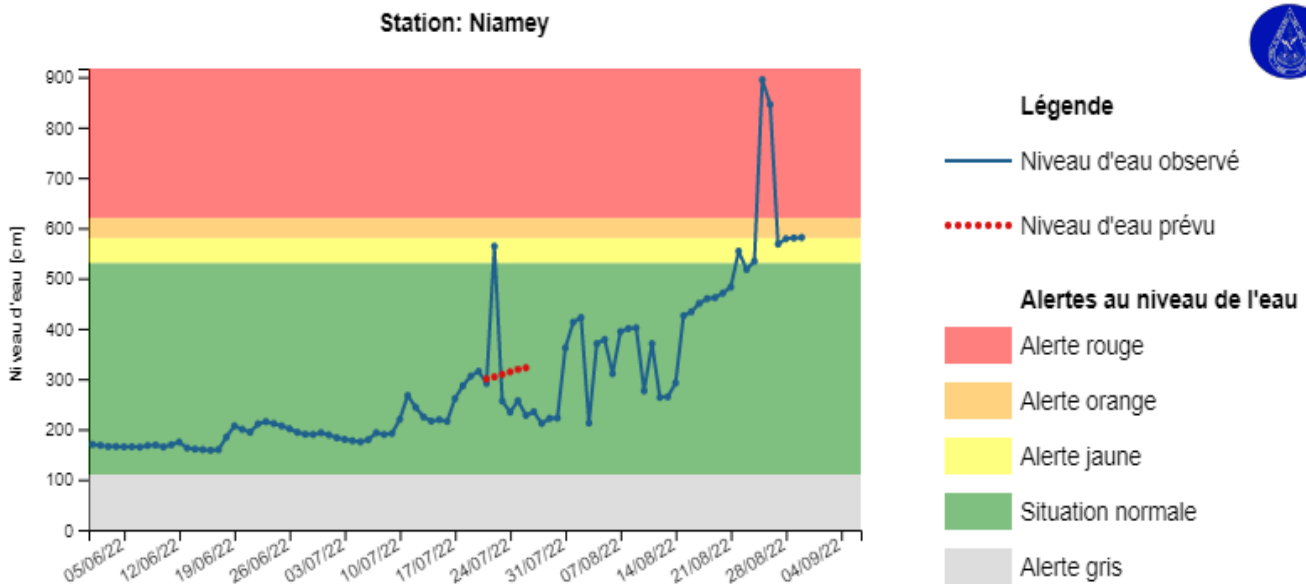


Figure1: Shows the water level of Niger river in Niamey on 31 August based on SATH-ORIO model @NBA

When the orange alert threshold was reached (figure 1), on August 30, 2022, the National and Regional Crisis Units were activated to assess the situation and develop a roadmap for early action.

In preparation, the CRN Disaster Management team mapped the at-risk areas and took inventory of the pre-positioned household items (including mosquito nets, tarpaulin, water container, etc.) in the three regions, namely: Niamey, Dosso and Tillabéry. A meeting for EAP stakeholders was organized, to bring all actors to the same level, so that they can be able to ensure their respective tasks. This was followed by refresher training for 80 volunteers who, immediately following the training, started to sensitize communities on the risks of flooding and the measures to be adopted and mitigate the flood waters.

Sensitization activities were intensified in the high risk, Niamey area, on 1 September specifically focused on the riverside neighborhoods, where 80 volunteers sensitized 406 people.

On 2 September, feedback was received from the SATH-ORIO that the Niamey hydrometeorological station temporarily malfunctioned during the period from 28 August to 3 September 2022. As a result, the water threshold in the bulletin dated 29 August 2022 was incorrect, which was the bulletin used to activate the EAP. Moreover, the wrong interpretation of the meteorological data was also influenced by the heavy rainfall recorded during the same period downstream of the river. Therefore, the EAP activation was a false alarm. At this time, based on the information from National Coordination Unit (NCU), and in coordination with the National Director of Hydraulics (DHN), early actions were paused pending further clarification.



Raising the dike at Saga, Photo credit, Lamine/IFRC 8 September 2022

On 8 September, a field visit was organized including representatives from the CRN, the Ministry of Humanitarian Actions and Early Warning Systems, Direction of Civil Protection, National Director of Hydraulics, the local Administrative Authority, Niger Basin Authority and IFRC. The field visit identified that in addition to the false alarm mentioned above, the protective embankment is being raised (work started in August 2022) to more than 650 cm (photo 2 and 3), along the river in the Niamey River by the Disaster Risk Management and Urban Development Project (DRMP-UD). Following the field visit, on 12 September, it was unanimously decided that the probability of flooding was very low (less than 20%), therefore, the EAP actions should stop.

As a next step the National Society will review the EAP for floods to account for the issues faced with the Niamey hydrometeorological station and the new high of the river protective embankment.

Activation successes and challenges

Successes:

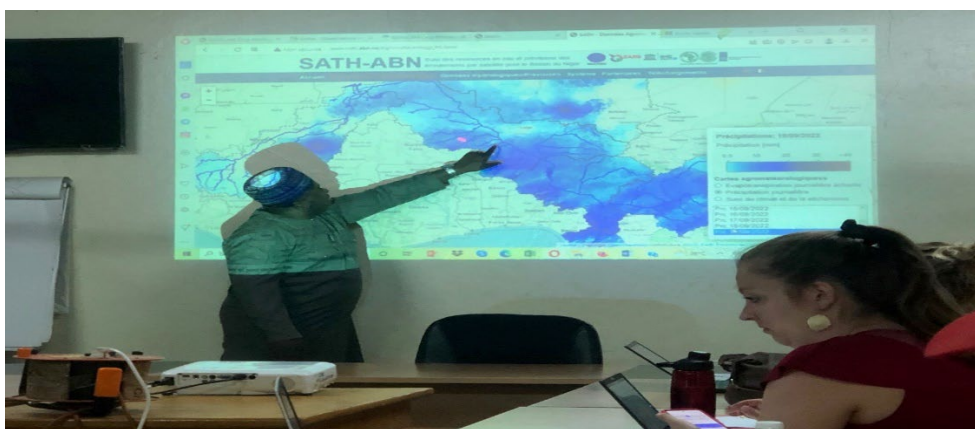
- Coordination of the activation committee (CCD, RO, Geneva) of IFRC
- Availability of the National and Regional Crisis Unit of Niger Red Cross
- Activation of the Regional Committee of the Volunteers of Niger Red Cross during the yellow phase
- Broadcasting of sensitization messages
- Close support and monitoring by the IFRC

The analysis of the information provided through the bulletin N°5, which alerted by the CRN and the IFRC demonstrates good and regular monitoring of the forecasts, which, through the FBF focal point, kept partners informed of the evolution of the situation. Also, the communities have been well sensitized on the risk of flooding and the measures to be taken to mitigate them. Overall, the following points demonstrated the effectiveness and capacity of the DM team to implement early actions:

- Daily monitoring of the water level through the SATH-ORIO project
- Good collaboration with the National Crisis Unit
- Availability of about 800 volunteers in the three regions
- Refreshment training of volunteers
- Verification of the quality of the stock

Challenges

- Communication with the National Crisis Unit
- Disfunction of measuring system and raised level of the dike



Explanation by the SATH-ORIO Project Coordinator at the NCU meeting, photo credit, Lamine/IFRC 9 September 2022

| Initial Lessons Learned: | Initial Recommendation: |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Since the dike level has been raised, the alert thresholds for the activation of the early action protocol need to be reviewed (600 cm at least) - Even if the orange threshold is reached, constant communication with branches should be done to have real time witness of water levels. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Periodic visits to analyze the realities of the field - Update the list of NCU members - Review the thresholds for triggering the EAP - Improve communication - Plan the general FbF awareness session for the year 2022 - Disseminate messages via social media - Disseminate the internal communication strategy on FbF - Collaborate with the internal press |

Sectors of intervention



Water, sanitation, and hygiene

Planned Actions:

- Awareness rising activities on waterborne diseases
- Distribution of water purification materials and mosquito nets

Achievements:

No early actions activities were undertaken under this sector within the lead time.

Disaster Risk Reduction

Planned Actions:

- Identifications and registrations of relocation sites
- Set up emergency shelters
- Evacuation to the host sites
- Monitoring mission and technical support and follow-up by the IFRC country office

Achievements:

Before the early actions were suspended, 80 volunteers received refresher training on the EAP, their role, and how to communicate evacuation messages in advance of the people of the floods. In turn, 406 people were reached with early warning messages before the early actions were stopped.

No other early warning activities were done before the early actions were suspended on 2 September 2022.

Next steps:

An EAP lessons learned workshop will be held to identify learning including what worked, and what should be done differently before revising the EAP and submitting the EAP for revalidation. The review will address the conditions for activating the EAP, including the faulty monitoring station and the raised dike, to better calculate a revised threshold for the trigger.

Reference documents

For further information, specifically related to this operation please contact:

In the Red Cross Society of Niger

For a more comprehensive description of activities see the Early Action Protocol summary.

[\[Insert link to EAP summary from appeals webpage\]](#)

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