

CRISIS IMPACT OVERVIEW

- Since May 2024, **Niger has been facing its worst flooding since 2020**. By 20 August, authorities had reported that over **46,500 households and more than 353,200 individuals had been affected, with 217 deaths and 200 injuries** across the country (Sputnik 24/08/2024; CARE 23/08/2024; France 24 23/08/2024 a). The floods have led to fatalities, injuries, and significant damage to infrastructure and agriculture, including the loss of livestock and crops (Sputnik 24/08/2024; OCHA 05/08/2024; CARE 23/08/2024).
- While all eight regions of Niger have been affected by heavy rains, **Maradi, Tahoua, and Zinder** (in southern Niger) have experienced the greatest devastation in terms of affected people and damaged houses (MoHADM 19/08/2024; CARE 23/08/2024). By 31 July, over 75,700 people in Zinder region alone had been affected, with nearly 6,900 homes destroyed by floods (UNHCR 26/08/2024).
- By 22 August, rising floodwaters from heavy rains had left Niger's capital, Niamey, almost completely isolated. Major roads leading to the city have been submerged, forcing residents to use canoes for transportation. By 25 August, several localities around Niamey had also been cut off (France 24 23/08/2024 a; Punch 22/08/2024; Focus Guinee 25/08/2024; Arab News 23/08/2024).
- Material damage between 6 May and 16 August 2024 has included **the destruction of nearly 3,800 hectares of arable land and the loss of more than 16,700 head of livestock** (MoHADM 19/08/2024; CARE 23/08/2024).

Table 1. Flood damage from 6 May to 16 August 2024

REGION	SMALL RUMINANT LOSS	LARGE RUMINANT LOSS	FLOODED CROP AREAS/HA
Agadez	887	63	50
Diffa	1,142	29	0
Dosso	66	3	440
Maradi	522	12	26
Naimey	0	0	0
Tahoua	9,826	93	57
Tillabery	712	116	2,996
Zinder	3,188	107	216
Total	16,343	423	3,785

Source: MoHADM (19/08/2024)

ANTICIPATED SCOPE AND SCALE

- On 23 August 2024, the Niger River at Niamey reached 628cm, corresponding to a red alert risk of major flooding and threat to people and property. Niamey had reached yellow alert (558cm) on 10 August and orange alert (580cm) on 18 August (ABN 19/08/2024; SATH-NBA accessed 25/08/2024).
- The risk of major flooding is expected to increase as forecasts show continued above-average rainfall until the end of the rainy season in late September (IRI accessed 25/08/2024; WMO accessed 25/08/2024; Copernicus accessed 25/08/2024; OCHA 16/08/2024). Above-average rainfall and excess runoff in many river basins will heighten flooding risks, threatening crops, property, and lives (IFRC 20/08/2023). Affected basins include the Niger River Basin in Tillabéri and Dosso, Niamey's major watercourses in Maradi and Zinder, and the Komadougou River in Diffa (FEWS NET 09/07/2024).

- From June–September 2024, most people in Niger will face Stressed (IPC Phase 2) levels of food insecurity. From October 2024 to January 2025, however, flood-affected households are expected to face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) levels of food insecurity. In flooded areas of conflict-affected zones in Diffa, north Tahoua, south Maradi, and Tillabéri, less than 20% will face Emergency (IPC Phase 4) levels of food insecurity (FEWS NET 09/07/2024).
- In areas unaffected by flooding, above-average rainfall during the rainy season is expected to benefit the agricultural sector, leading to increased employment opportunities and improved food access. Between October 2024 and January 2025, enhanced food availability from good harvests is projected to improve food security from Stressed (IPC Phase 2) to None (IPC Phase 1) for most people not affected by flooding (FEWS NET 24/02/2024).
- Attacks by armed groups – such as Islamic State-Shale Province (ISSP) and the Jama’at Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM) – are expected to decrease in August–September as a result of increased constraints on movement associated with flooding. Following the rainy season, however, attacks by armed groups are expected to increase slightly until at least January 2025 (FEWS 09/07/2024).

HUMANITARIAN CONSTRAINTS

- By 25 August 2024, many major roads in Niamey had been submerged, isolating the city. Most transport companies have suspended routes, leading to significant disruptions and forcing residents to rely on canoes for transportation (France 24 23/08/2024 a and 23/08/2024 b; Focus Guinee 25/08/2024; Arab News 23/08/2024).
- Long travel distances to health centres, poor transportation, insecurity, and lengthy procurement processes limit humanitarian coverage in the country. Over 40% of acutely food insecure individuals reside in inaccessible areas, limiting humanitarian and overall response efforts (WFP 02/04/2024).
- The security situation in Niger, driven by non-state armed groups (NSAGs) and cross-border crime, severely restricts humanitarian access, particularly in the Maradi, Tahoua, and Tillabéri regions, which are also affected by flooding. Military operations against armed groups further limit access to populations in need of assistance. Security measures, including travel bans, complicate food assistance distribution, requiring military escorts that increase operational costs, disrupt coverage, and lead to inconsistent geographic and demographic assistance. This significantly affects household food security, especially for poor and displaced populations in remote areas (FEWS NET 09/07/2024).

CRISIS IMPACTS

Shelter and NFIs

- By 15 August 2024, over 15,000 homes had been destroyed by severe flooding, according to the Ministry of Humanitarian Action and Disaster Management. Based on historical flood data, affected populations have basic, urgent needs, such as blankets, mats, soap, and mosquito nets (IFRC 20/08/2023; Le Monde 15/08/2024).

Protection

- Women, children, the elderly, and people with disabilities face heightened protection risks during emergencies, including sexual and gender-based violence, trafficking, and exploitation. Flood-affected areas are particularly vulnerable to child recruitment by armed groups, family separation, and coping strategies with potentially negative effects, such as child marriage and child labour, because of armed groups’ active presence in these regions (IFRC 20/08/2023; OCHA 01/03/2024; UNICEF 10/08/2023).

Livelihoods

- In Niger, 80% of the population relies on agriculture for their livelihoods, making them vulnerable to climate issues affecting food security and the economy (FAO 25/03/2024; PIK et al. 2020; WFP accessed 22/04/2024). Floods have disrupted the planting season and livestock activities, causing significant agricultural losses, threatening food security, and severely affecting livelihoods and basic social services (CARE 23/08/2024; IFRC 20/08/2023; OCHA 16/08/2024; WFP 25/07/2024). By 20 August, floods had killed over 16,900 livestock, destroyed more than 3,000 hectares of crops, and resulted in the loss of 21.5 tons of food.
- Off-season irrigated crop campaigns, rainfed crop maintenance, and improved agro-climatic conditions as a result of above-average rainfall from June–September offer agricultural employment opportunities. A reduction in planted areas, high labour supply resulting from displacement, and insecurity in Tillabéri and Tahoua regions, however, have limited income-generating potential (FEWS NET 24/02/2024).

Health

- In Niger, floods create stagnant, polluted waters that breed mosquitoes, facilitating the spread of malaria and waterborne diseases such as cholera (IFRC 20/08/2023). Niger is already facing several epidemics, including measles, meningitis, and diphtheria. In the first half of 2024, there was an outbreak of 4,292 measles cases (20 deaths), 3,239 meningitis cases (237 deaths), and 2,113 diphtheria cases (93 deaths) (UNICEF 16/08/2024). Floods are expected to further aggravate the situation by damaging WASH infrastructure and shelter, leading to overcrowding, deteriorating sanitation, and an increased likelihood of water contamination.
- The nutrition sector estimates that 1.9 million children aged 6–59 months will face acute malnutrition in 2024, including 436,000 cases of severe acute malnutrition. Food insecurity in Niger stems from high food prices, localised climate shocks such as drought and floods, and conflict-induced displacement. Flood-affected population's food security is expected to deteriorate from October 2024 to January 2025, aggravating the malnutrition situation in the country (FEWS NET 09/07/2024; WFP 02/04/2024; UNICEF 16/08/2024).

WASH

- Access to drinking water in Niger is severely limited, with only 56% of the population (14.5 million people) having access. Only 13% of the population (3.3 million people) has access to basic sanitation services, and over 71% practice open defecation, increasing the risk of disease and contamination (UNICEF accessed 25/08/2024; UNICEF 20/03/2022).
- Floods contaminate water sources, increasing the risk of waterborne diseases such as cholera, acute diarrhoea, and malaria. Flooding in 2018, 2020, and 2021 saw cholera outbreaks in Dosso, Maradi, Niamey, and Tahoua. Women, people with disabilities, displaced people, and children face heightened risks, as they are more likely to live in areas with poor WASH infrastructure and have higher malnutrition levels, affecting their immune system (IFRC 20/08/2023; UNICEF accessed 26/08/2024; IRC 19/07/2024).

Education

- Niger's education system faces significant challenges as a result of demographic pressures and limited resources, leading to low enrolment and high dropout rates. By 11 June, eight schools had been destroyed by flooding, and by 15 August, an additional 40 classrooms had been destroyed, further straining the education sector (ECHO 19/06/2024; UNOPS 26/07/2024; WFP 02/04/2024; UNICEF 13/04/2024; Le Monde 15/08/2024).

DRIVERS OF THE CRISIS

Rainy season

- Floods in Niger typically result from river overflow or flash floods caused by heavy rains, normally in late August–September. River-induced floods usually happen in November–December. Data from 2020–2022 indicates that the rainy season affects an average of 250,000 people annually (ANP 21/08/2023; IFRC 20/08/2023).

COMPOUNDING/AGGRAVATING FACTORS

Conflict and internal displacement

- Armed group attacks on security forces and villages have triggered massive population displacement, farmland abandonment, and livestock losses, severely affecting household livelihoods. In July 2024, attacks by NSAGs resulted in the internal displacement of 2,179 people in Tera department, Tillabéri region, which, by 31 July, was already hosting over 223,900 IDPs (UNHCR 26/08/2024).
- By 31 July, there were an estimated 507,400 IDPs and over 46,600 other people 'of concern to UNHCR', including Nigerien returnees, within Niger (UNHCR 26/08/2024; UNHCR accessed 25/08/2024; ECHO 18/11/2015; OCHA 26/07/2023; ICCT 04/08/2023). Tahoua and Maradi, two of the worst flood-affected regions, were hosting over 114,000 and over 18,600 IDPs respectively (UNHCR 26/08/2024).
- Insecurity has restricted farmer and pastoralist access to lands, reducing crop cultivation and livestock grazing. Market disruptions and cross-border trade flows have further limited food availability and access (FEWS NET 09/07/2024; Insecurity Insight 03/11/2023; HRW accessed 25/08/2024). Flooding is expected to make more agricultural land in the country inaccessible.
- Conflict remains the primary driver of food insecurity in Niger, leading to IPC 3 levels of food insecurity in conflict-affected areas of Diffa, Maradi, Tahoua, and Tillabéri regions. Some very poor households are even facing IPC 4 levels of food insecurity in these regions (FEWS NET 09/07/2024).

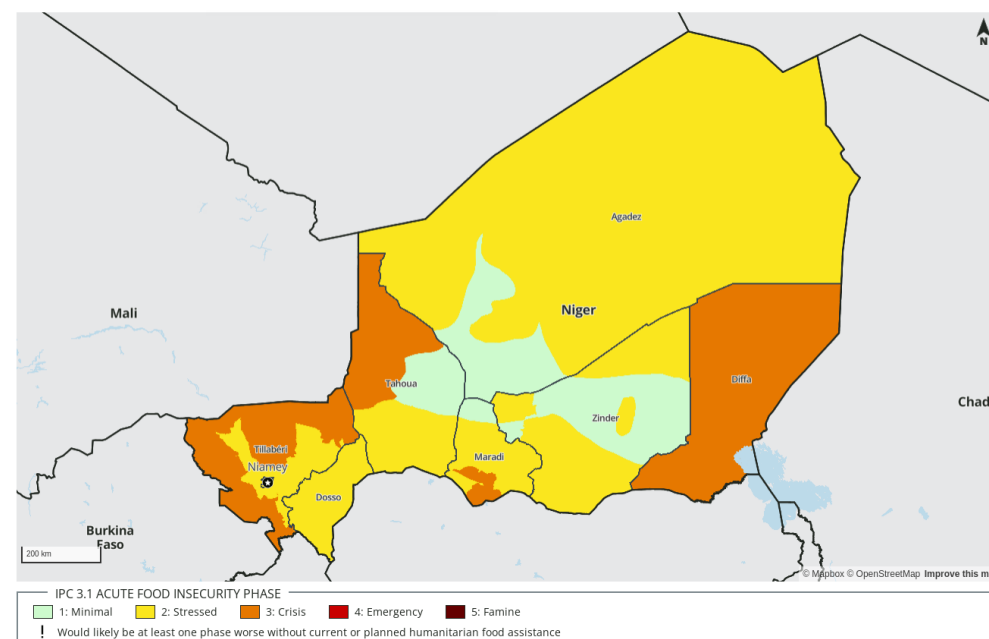
Cross-border displacement into Niger

- Niger has become a key transit and destination country for displaced populations from neighbouring countries in West and Central Africa. By 3 July 2024, Niger was hosting approximately 413,900 refugees and asylum seekers, primarily from Nigeria (over 57%) and Mali (over 31%), with others from Burkina Faso (9%), Chad, and Sudan (UNHCR 26/08/2024). The Tahoua region was hosting over 81,100 refugees and more than 10,400 'other people' (mainly returnees), while Maradi was hosting over 79,700 refugees from Nigeria, who were also likely facing the impacts of flooding (UNHCR 26/08/2024).
- Since 2015, increased violence by Islamic militant group Boko Haram, and intercommunal conflicts on the Mali-Niger border and Diffa region, has led to significant internal displacement. The humanitarian response in Niger has been insufficient to meet rising needs, especially for shelter and NFIs (OCHA 05/08/2024). As such, there is limited capacity to respond to the needs of those displaced by flooding.
- Displaced people seeking local jobs have increased the labour supply in secure areas of Niger, where agricultural demand is moderate. This influx intensifies competition for employment in host communities, significantly affecting local economies (UNICEF 16/08/2024; FEWS NET 24/02/2024; FEWS NET 09/07/2024). Flooding is expected to increase displacement, and even cause multiple displacements, adding further pressure on labour demand in host communities.
- By 26 August, Nigerien military operations along the border with Mali were continuing in the context of the recent mutual security pact signed by Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger. These operations, together with the activities of NSAGs in Mali, could lead to further displacement from Mali to the Abala, Tassara, Tchintabaraden, Tera, and Tillia departments in Niger's Tillabéri and Tahoua regions (UNHCR 26/08/2024). By 31 July, Tillabéri region was hosting over 41,100 refugees, mainly from Mali, and over 37,400 asylum-seekers, mainly from Burkina Faso (UNHCR 26/08/2024).

FUNDING AND RESPONSE CAPACITY

- In Niger, the Ministry of Humanitarian Action and Disaster Management leads hazard response efforts. While the Government has provided initial food and cereal assistance to people in need, the humanitarian response is insufficient to meet rising needs, especially for shelter, NFIs, and essential food supplies such as sugar, salt, and oil, highlighting significant gaps in assistance (OCHA 05/08/2024).
- Assistance in Niger will be limited from June 2024 to January 2025 as a result of insufficient funding and security restrictions in conflict-affected areas. International aid has been drastically reduced since the July 2023 coup, with an estimated USD 1.2 billion in external aid suspended in 2023. Reduced financial support will significantly limit the geographic coverage and number of people benefitting from assistance, aggravating the humanitarian crisis (FEWS NET 09/07/2024; WFP 02/04/2024; Reuters 29/07/2023; UNHCR 10/04/2024).

Map 1. Niger Projected food security outcomes, July–september 2024



Source: FEWS NET (09/07/2024)