PRODUCTIVE ASSET CREATION AND SAFETY NETS IN NIGER

STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE BY INVESTING IN PRODUCTIVE ASSET CREATION

Current levels of environmental degradation linked to climate change, regional insecurity and global economic risks are seriously undermining human and institutional resilience in Niger, where nearly 80% of the population works in the climate-sensitive agricultural sector. Since 2000, Niger has been hit by four severe food crises. Every year, nearly 20% of the population cannot cover their food needs due to insufficient crop yields caused by land degradation, climatic conditions, capacity limits and growing needs linked to population growth.

PREVALENCE OF FOOD INSECURITY

MALE-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS
11.5% ARE FOOD INSECURE, OF WHICH
10.4% ARE MODERATELY FOOD INSECURE AND
1.1% ARE SEVERELY FOOD INSECURE

FEMALE-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS
22.6% ARE FOOD INSECURE, OF WHICH
20.9% ARE MODERATELY FOOD INSECURE AND
1.7% ARE SEVERELY FOOD INSECURE

HOW DOES WFP WORK IN NIGER?

In support of the Government of Niger, the World Food Programme (WFP) provides both seasonal and year-round safety nets to address the food and nutrition security of the poorest households in Niger and help beneficiaries build sustainable livelihoods. To support resilience and ensure that food security is long-lasting, WFP works with the Government to identify the needs of the poorest through a participatory analysis and planning process. WFP then targets beneficiaries based on the identified needs and facilitates continuous assistance to those same beneficiaries year-round and over the course of the multi-year project.

During the post-harvest period (November to May), WFP provides conditional cash or in-kind transfers to help the poor, particularly female-headed households, create or rebuild household and community assets and secure access to land. During the lean season (June to September), when the poorest households have exhausted their food stocks, WFP provides the same beneficiaries with unconditional cash or in-kind transfers to cover immediate food needs, protect the assets created and avoid negative coping strategies.

WFP works closely with communities, with equal representation of women and men, to plan asset creation activities and strengthen local capacities to withstand and recover from climatic shocks and other national disasters. WFP climate services in Niger include promoting land regeneration, pond rehabilitation and water harvesting/irrigation to increase local production. Female smallholder farmers are targeted and activities responding to their needs are prioritized.

WFP also works with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) to strengthen the technical capacities of beneficiaries and provides information on key family practices, gender and the environment.

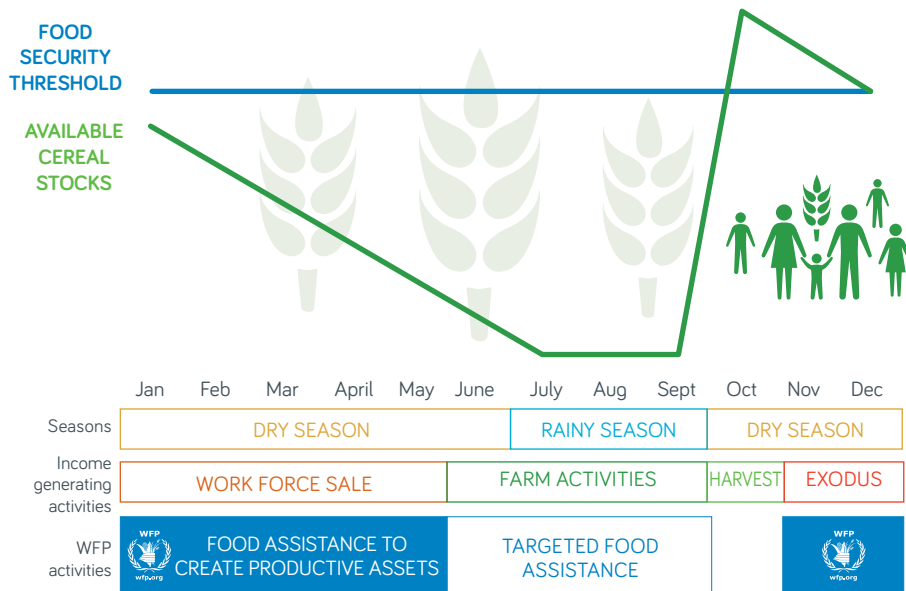## PRODUCTIVE ASSET CREATION AND UNCONDITIONAL SAFETY NETS IN NIGER

WFP productive asset creation and unconditional safety nets involve a multi-sectoral, integrated and geographically concentrated community-based approach. Programmes aim to empower the poorest households facing food and livelihood insecurity by covering their immediate food needs, while building assets over the long-term and equipping beneficiaries to cope with crisis. WFP also supports the Government to design, implement and evaluate cost-effective food security and nutrition-sensitive safety net and social protection mechanisms for the poorest populations.

PRODUCTIVE ASSET CREATION AND SAFETY NETS IN NIGER

VULNERABILITY AND ADAPTATION STRATEGIES OF A VULNERABLE RURAL HOUSEHOLD

FOOD SECURITY THRESHOLD

AVAILABLE CEREAL STOCKS

	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Seasons	DRY SEASON						RAINY SEASON			DRY SEASON		
Income generating activities	WORK FORCE SALE					FARM ACTIVITIES			HARVEST		EXODUS	
WFP activities	FOOD ASSISTANCE TO CREATE PRODUCTIVE ASSETS					TARGETED FOOD ASSISTANCE						

"My land was totally degraded. Thanks to WFP's support, my field was rehabilitated. Thanks to the cash transfers, I was able to work on my field and did not have to migrate during the lean season. I have doubled my production and invested in complementary farming activities that I could not afford for over 10 years."

-Ado Issoufou, a 50-year-old father of seven young children from Boussaragué

PARTNERSHIPS FOR INNOVATION AND RESILIENCE

Since 2014, with the financial support of Food for Peace, WFP and FAO have jointly implemented an innovative 'watershed' approach and complementary infrastructural works to improve water management and support land rehabilitation. The approach is based on a comprehensive understanding of the territory and of the interactions between the agro-ecological units composing the territory: the plateaux, the slopes and the lowlands.

As part of this effort, the weir construction programme supports the mobilization of water for irrigation agriculture, fisheries and general availability for the population and has contributed to the diversification of income sources and the reduction of women's chores (e.g. fetching water). WFP is also supporting community-based programming and planning to capture and integrate specific community needs through environmental, livelihood and gender lenses. Initial result indicate strong progress in regards to livelihoods and the environment.

KEY RESULTS

- In 2015, WFP strengthened the livelihoods of more than 250,000 people through asset creation activities and more than 500,000 people through unconditional safety nets.

- Since 2014, more than 60,000 hectares of degraded land (agricultural and forestry/pastoral) and more than 190 ponds have been rehabilitated, with a high impact on productivity.

- WFP's regular surveys show solid trends on key indicators. For example, the proportion of households using negative coping strategies related to livelihoods has decreased from 31% in 2014 to 10% in 2015.

PRODUCTIVE ASSET CREATION AND UNCONDITIONAL SAFETY NETS:

An integrated framework for achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2

Social protection systems and nutrition-sensitive safety nets directly contribute to reducing vulnerability, including poverty and hunger, and improving access to better nutrition, health care and education. Social protection must be considered a high-return investment that meets immediate needs and produces long-term benefits for society.

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