

برنامج  
الأغذية  
العالمي



Programme  
Alimentaire  
Mondial

World  
Food  
Programme

Programa  
Mundial  
de Alimentos

**Executive Board  
Third Regular Session**

**Rome, 19 - 22 October 1999**

# REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ON OPERATIONAL MATTERS

**Agenda item 8**

***For information***



Distribution: GENERAL

**WFP/EB.3/99/8-C/4**

17 August 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

## BASIC ACTIVITY WITHIN A COUNTRY PROGRAMME, APPROVED BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (1 JANUARY–30 JUNE 1999)— NIGER 6106.00

### Multi-purpose Rural Development

Number of beneficiaries 66,220

Duration of project Four years

#### Cost (United States dollars)

Total cost to WFP 14,180,119

Total food cost 7,704,815

## NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

**This document is submitted for information to the Executive Board.**

The Secretariat invites members of the Board who may have questions of a technical nature with regard to this document, to contact the WFP staff focal points indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.

Regional Director:                      M. Zejjari                                      tel.: 066513-2201

Chief, OSA/3:                              O. Sarroca                                      tel.: 066513-2505

Should you have any questions regarding matters of dispatch of documentation for the Executive Board, please contact the Documentation and Meetings Clerk (tel.: 066513-2641).



1. The Country Programme for Niger, approved by the Executive Board in October 1998, included a “Multi-purpose Rural Development Programme”, to run for four years. A Country Programme Agreement was signed between the Government of the Republic of Niger and WFP in February 1999.
2. In accordance with decision 1999/EB.A/2 of the Executive Board, WFP focuses its development activities on five objectives. This activity addresses objectives 2, 3, 4 and 5 (enable poor households to invest in human capital through education and training; make it possible for poor families to gain and preserve assets; mitigate the effects of natural disasters, in areas vulnerable to recurring crises of this kind; and enable households which depend on degraded natural resources for their food security to make a shift to more sustainable livelihoods).
3. Niger has a population of approximately 10 million people, 63 percent of whom live below the poverty threshold. Of these, 34 percent live below the extreme poverty threshold. Moreover, 86 percent of the poor people live in rural areas. When the head of the household is a woman member of the household, inactive or unemployed, 73 percent of the people concerned are poor, and 50 percent are extremely poor. The country has seasonal food deficits during the lean season, when many of the small farmers no longer have any cereals, and food prices are high as a result of widespread and acute shortages caused by natural disasters (drought, locusts, etc.). Only a small portion of the national territory is arable: a mere 12 percent in the south over a strip of land 200 kilometres wide running from east to west. Since 1980, the average yearly increase in cereal production has not risen above 1.6 percent, while the population has been growing at a rate of over three percent. This means that chronic food crises are unavoidable in most poverty-prone areas.
4. The rural sector in Niger has deteriorated as a result of the increased degradation of the agro-ecological potential of the country which accentuated the encroachment of desertification. WFP will give priority to combating desertification, improving the food production system, water management, and diversifying agricultural production. Rural development basic activities will be in support of areas where structured and supervised projects are being financed by other partners, mainly United Nations agencies. In the region of Tahoua, WFP-supported activities will expand agro-pastoral areas through land recovery, water management and increased water availability for cropping, reducing waterborne and airborne erosion, opening up roads, improving technical know-how in agriculture and raising fodder production, and increasing the availability of fuelwood. In other areas, WFP will support UNDP activities in creating cereal banks. In addition, along with IFAD, WFP will give responsibility to the village units under the supervision of agronomists and village land management officials for community works established by the people themselves.
5. The total quantity of food required for this basic activity will be 22,981 tons of cereals, 796 of vegetable oil and 1,592 of pulses. A total of 66,220 workers will receive assistance; of these, 75 percent will be women. Among expected outputs, 7 million trees will be planted over four years and a wide range of rural infrastructure will be set up, including 8,400 hectares of land reclamation, 379 cereal banks and 24 dams.

