



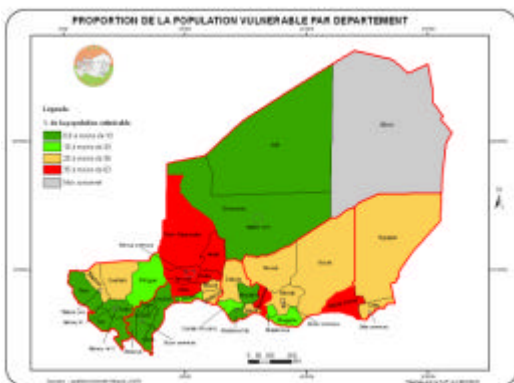
Food Crises Prevention Network (FCPN)

Food Crises Prevention Network (FCPN) (www.food-security.net)

Information Paper on Food Security - NISA-35

Subsequent to the deficits in production announced earlier on, the food situation looks as if it is going to be a difficult one in the sahelian strip of Niger and the West of Chad. Poor agricultural and pastoral production prospects to the east of the Sahel that were announced in November 2009 during the consultation meeting on agricultural productions in West Africa have been confirmed for Chad and Niger and have translated into very huge production deficits (agricultural and pastoral) at both the national and local levels.

In Niger, the rapid vulnerability survey on the food insecurity of the households that was conducted last December by the National Statistics Institute reveals that **20.0% (which is about 2,700,000 persons) are in a situation of vulnerability and 38.2% (which is about 5,100,000 persons) are in a state of moderate vulnerability.** Those households that are not affected only represent a small fraction of the population surveyed, which is 9%. The households that are most affected are characterized by very little cereal stocks intended only for self-consumption (10 days at the maximum) and these households are localized in the regions of Tahoua, Diffa, Zinder, the desert agro pastoral and pastoral zones as shown on map 1 below.



The survival strategies developed by the households affected such as the reduction of the daily food ration, the reduction of the number of daily meals, spending a whole day without food, resorting to begging and unusual consumption of rare foods as well as indebtedness are elements which constitute the degree of severity of the food situation and which calls for emergency intervention.

Moreover, the generalized rise in price of cereals (particularly up to 24% for millet, 23% for sorghum

as compared to the five (5) year average) on the market has further worsened the situation and made it more crucial when compared to two months ago. This situation risks deteriorating considering the institutional purchases being carried out by the Niger Board for Food Products (OPVN) as an assistance measure planned by the Nigerien Government in coming to the rescue of the affected populace. However, according to the recent joint evaluation missions (CILSS/FEWS-NET/WFP/FAO/Governments), the situation of replenishing Niger from Nigeria and Benin is very favourable to Niger this year as opposed to 2005. Since the month of October, there have been substantial flows of cereals mainly maize coming from the coastal countries (Nigeria and Benin) as replenishment to Niger.

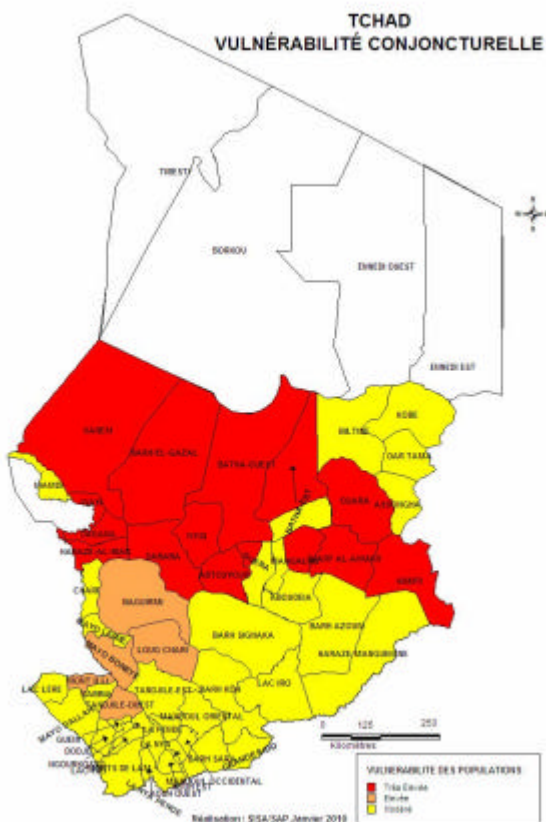
Between December 2009 and January 2010 on the other hand, the cattle market has witnessed a rise in its presentations (from +2% to +48% according to the markets) and the sales range (from +5% to +50%) following a depletion and presence of buyers from Niger. This situation resulted in the degradation of the terms of trade which is explained by the rise of the average price of the 100 kg bag of millet by 5%. This high demand triggered a rise in price (between 3% and 24% according to the markets in December and January) for the bulk of the veterinary inputs that were monitored particularly cattle feed. At the beginning of 2010, the livestock breeders believe that they are undergoing huge losses with respect to their cattle owing to the lack of grazing land as experienced in the 2004/2005 season which witnessed a colossal livestock death rate. In fact, the cattle feed needs have been evaluated by the national livestock Network Committee of the Chambers of agriculture of Niger at 32,000 tonnes, out of which only 1,000 tonnes is available on the territory. There is a risk that the pastoral



situation will further rapidly deteriorate particularly as a result of the breakdown in the collection of bush hay observed in certain zones and this therefore calls for an urgent and important response in this regard.

In Chad, the food situation such as revealed by the results of the joint missions CILSS/FEWS/WFP/FAO/Governments is precarious. According to estimates emanating from the national early warning system (EWS) **nearly two million affected persons would be in need of either food or non aid in the course of the year 2010**. The cereal needs are estimated at 80, 000 tonnes.

Food insecurity is more pronounced in the western zone of the Sahel which is composed of the regions of the Lake, Kanem, Bahr El Gazal and Hadjer Lamis and this is due to poor performances subsequent to the 2009-2010 cropping season (more than 50% of harvest losses) as well as a high cattle mortality which intervened in the course of the 2009 pastoral lean period. The populations in this zone present a very high vulnerability level as depicted in map 2 below.



The most affected segment of these populations runs the risk of being confronted with serious food difficulties as from March 2010. Consequently,

they will be in need of assistance of a multi-faceted nature and targeted to cover their needs during the lean period upon their return from transhumance and the seasonal exodus. However, the possibilities for diversifying the activities do exist with respect to those undergoing moderate vulnerability and these will enable the populations to meet their needs up to the start of the next season.

With regards to nutrition and the already very high rates of malnutrition that have been recorded in the course of sample surveys carried out by the Government of Chad /WFP/FAO (April/June 2009) and Nutrition/Child survival (Government of Niger/UNICEF/WFP/HKI/FIDA, May/June 2009) there is a risk that the malnutrition rate will further deteriorate during the next pastoral lean period in 2010 if certain measures directed at alleviating the situation are not taken.

In fact, the overall acute malnutrition rate surpasses the « critical » threshold of 15% according to the WHO in the Sahelian zone of **Chad** and in the regions of Diffa and Zinder in **Niger**. In Chad, the administrative districts of Biltine and the regions of Agadez, Dossou, Niamey, Maradi and Tahoua Kanen in Niger are also manifesting high rates of malnutrition (10-15%).

Finally, the poor agricultural and pastoral production prospects to the east of the Sahel that were announced in December 2009 during the (FCPN) the Food crises Prevention Network have been confirmed and can be explained in the form of substantial drops in cereal productions by 34% and 31% respectively relative to last year.

In Niger, the authorities have just addressed a tender for a total amount of **89 164 706 400 CFA** to the international community with still a difference of **59 509 234 065 FCFA** that should be searched for.

The donors are mobilizing and have started to give signs pertaining to aid by taking account of the response capacities of the countries.

Parallel to the interventions already mentioned, a sample survey on vulnerability to food insecurity of the households in the urban and rural milieu will be conducted in the month of April so as to better set up the system and show the food prospects for the incoming months for the entire country.

However, this situation which prevails in this Eastern part of the Sahel concerns the decision makers and requires that a certain number of

measures be taken if the vulnerability of the households affected is to be alleviated.

What actions ?

In the face of this situation, some emergency measures need to be taken in order to mitigate the effects of the lean period both in respect of the duration as well as its severity so as to enable the populations living with a risk to overcome a possible food crisis in the Sahel this year. In the case of Niger where the tender has already been launched, the emergency pertains to the mobilization of aid especially its improved coordination according to the principles of the food aid Charter ([Charter 1990](#)).

In so doing, the implementation of the emergency plan for that segment of the populace that is affected is necessary.

In the case of Niger and Chad, this will be a matter of immediately implementing some curative measures among which are:

- Ensuring an improved coordination of the mobilization and implementation of food aid in Niger according to the principles of the Charter;
- Assist the populations that find themselves in a situation of extreme vulnerability. This aid could be provided in the form of targeted distribution, reconstitution of cereal banks, training against work, food for work, etc;
- Start sales at moderate or subsidized prices to the under privileged households that are

confronted with problems pertaining to the replenishment of stocks from the markets owing to the instability of prices of food products;

- Ensure an availability of as well as a subvention on cattle feed in order to facilitate their access and delivery to the livestock breeder organizations following the difficulties encountered this year on the pastoral plane in certain countries;
- Ensure improved support for cases of severe and moderate malnutrition according to the procedure in force in the countries.

In the Eastern part of the Sahel, preventive actions should be implemented which should be directed at:

- Anticipating the preparation of the next 2010/2011 cropping season by placing sufficient inputs (fertilizers, seeds, phytosanitary products, etc) at the disposal of the producers;
- Closely monitor the evolution of the degree of vulnerability of the agro-pastoral and pastoral households;
- Ensure a sanitary monitoring of the animals considering the risks of mortality linked to insufficient feeding;
- Analyze the behavioural structure and performance of the cereal markets;
- Monitor and analyze the strategies developed by the different stakeholders of the regional market;
- Strengthen the programmes on prevention of malnutrition such as the Essential Actions on Nutrition.

For purposes of access to food and nutritional information in the Sahel and in West Africa

With the objective of encouraging access to information in respect of the food and nutritional situation in the region for purposes of decision making for action, the FCPN (food crises prevention network) has created a Web site . For your questions regarding the food and nutritional situation and particularly your needs for analytical documents as regards the issue, this site is henceforth at your disposal : www.food-security.net

This FCPN analytical paper was written on the basis of information or analyses provided by different specialized institutions whether or not members of the Network. More information can be obtained on their respective Web sites .

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