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**Draft country programme document for the Niger
(2014-2018)**

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I. Situation analysis

1. The economy of the Niger¹ is still very fragile, with a gross national product (GNP) of 370 dollars per capita. The GNP, driven by the agricultural sector, depends heavily on rainfall, which can be irregular. The Niger, which is one of the poorest of the least developed countries, had a Human Development Index of 0.295 in 2011, placing it 186th out of 187 countries ranked.² In 2008,³ the poverty rate nationwide was an estimated 59.5 per cent and, in rural areas, 63.5 per cent. The Gini coefficient has moved in a favourable direction, from 0.43 in 2005 to 0.36 in 2008. Despite the drop, inequalities persist, with a significant portion of the population still lacking access to basic social services in 2011. There are significant disparities in level of access to essential goods and services among income quintiles in the Niger. From 2008 to 2011, economic growth averaged 4.8 per cent, well below the 7 per cent required to halve poverty by 2015. Despite some headway, only two Millennium Development Goals will be met by 2015, numbers 4 (reduce child mortality) and 6 (combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases).

2. The country faces complex, multidimensional challenges: (a) high population growth (3.3 per cent) resulting in high socioeconomic demand, in particular in the area of youth employment; (b) meagre economic empowerment of women (who represent 51 per cent of the population), as indicated by their participation⁴ in family, community, administrative and political decision-making, with estimated participation rates in 2010 and 2011 averaging a mere 12, 20 and 23 per cent in Parliament, Government and the upper ranks of the civil service, respectively; (c) serious security and cross-border threats related to international terrorism, religious fundamentalism and drug and weapons trafficking affecting the subregion, compounded in the Niger owing to a porous border and the situation in Mali and in the Sahel; (d) natural resource degradation and the negative effects of climate change, combined with recurrent and increasingly frequent droughts, floods and other crises and disasters, as well as the spread of food and nutrition crises (2 million inhabitants experience chronic food insecurity, and one child in five between 6 and 24 months of age suffers from severe acute malnutrition); (e) low rates of access to modern energy sources (7 per cent of households); (f) constraints on democratic governance, the promotion of human rights, decentralization and local governance, despite advances in enhancing democracy and respect for freedoms; (g) constraints on administrative governance capacities and staffing, as indicated by the low resource absorption rate and policy and strategy implementation shortfalls. Overall, challenges have to do with institutional and community capacity shortfalls in crisis and disaster prevention and management, natural resources and food security, on the one hand, and in governance, peace and security, on the other.

3. In the light of these challenges and given the country's various potentials (in the mining industry, water resources and democracy consolidation), the Niger has adopted an economic and social development plan 2012-2015 that is designed to improve the population's economic, social and cultural well-being and serves as the

¹ It is a landlocked country with seven international borders and 16.7 million inhabitants in a territory of 1,267,000 km².

² Human Development Report 2011, UNDP.

³ Most recent available data.

⁴ Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy outcomes, 2008-2012.

frame of reference for the Government's development agenda. The economic and social development plan, of which the 3N initiative,⁵ supported by the Millennium Development Goals Acceleration Framework, is a major core strategy, was wholeheartedly endorsed by technical and financial partners at the Paris round table (November 2012).⁶

II. Past cooperation and lessons learned

4. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) country programme document for the Niger 2009-2013 is keyed to capacity-building in three thematic areas: good governance, including crisis prevention and recovery; poverty reduction and accelerated achievement of Millennium Development Goals; and natural resource management.

5. Despite challenges that are contextual (a military coup d'état and political tensions), time-bound (nine elections to be held in as many months), procedural and influenced by the various factors in play, the UNDP contributed, in a manner satisfactory to participants, to the re-establishment of constitutional order and to the establishment of credible institutions, by means of technical and financial support and good coordination by partners, as well as to the facilitation of dialogue among the various actors leading to peaceful, consensual elections. This action made possible a renewal of dialogue with partners, a process that culminated in the raising of funds in excess of the 100 per cent financing deficit for the 2012-2015 economic and social development plan, through a process prepared and organized jointly with UNDP. Along the same lines, the Programme supported the elaboration of new short-, medium- and long-term strategic development frameworks (Interim Framework Programme of Government Action, Niger Vision 2035 — Sustainable development and inclusive growth strategy).

6. The important challenge of sustainable food security was addressed through critical support to the Government as it implemented the plan of action for the MDG Acceleration Framework centred on goal 1 and on support to the 3N Initiative. The Government estimates at 2 billion dollars the cost of implementing the priority investments programme for the 3N Initiative that includes the acceleration framework. Vulnerable communities' livelihoods were developed in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. To build communities' resilience to climate change and to address the need for sustainable land management and biodiversity preservation, the programme has, along with other partners, including the Global Environment Facility, supported the country as it draws up draft documents to raise some 130 million dollars. This support from the Office has enabled development of income-generating activities and adaptation capacity-building in the agricultural sector and resulted in the recovery of nearly 35,000 hectares of degraded land each year and the designation of between 8 and 14.29 per cent of the national territory as protected areas.

⁵ Nigerians nourishing Nigerians. A structural response to the food crisis.

⁶ Total cost, 12 billion dollars, with a 10.8 billion dollar priority plan of action and a funding deficit of 4.7 billion that, at the conclusion of the round table, had been met at a rate of greater than 100 per cent.

7. Lessons learned⁷ from country programme assessments show a high degree of relevance, flexibility and ability to adapt on the part of the beneficiary populations and institutions. However, effectiveness of capacity-building, including improvement of gender equality, remains somewhat unpredictable. In the new programme, the Office must therefore improve its human capacities, including through South-South cooperation, with prospects for broadening the skills transfer initiative by surgeons who are international United Nations Volunteers to doctors from the Niger; emphasize operational activities with greater thematic and geographical concentration; and streamline the portfolio by strengthening the programme approach and communication on management procedures. Cooperation and partnership with donors have been most productive and have facilitated significant resource mobilization for the electoral process, the MDG Acceleration Framework, the Maradi Joint Programme and peacebuilding. Partnership with the Government, non-State actors, the United Nations system and the other development partners must therefore be stepped up.

III. Proposed programme

8. The country programme addresses two key challenges: institutional and community capacity-building to achieve greater resilience in the face of crises, disasters, vulnerabilities and climate change as well as food security, on the one hand, and improved governance, peace, security and development, on the other.

9. The 2014-2018 programme is based on experience gained from ongoing partnerships between the Niger and the United Nations Development Programme and takes into account the goals of the 2012-2015 economic and social development plan and the 2014-2018 United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), which is structured around three cooperation areas aimed at achieving the implementation of the economic and social development plan: (a) resilience, which includes food and nutritional security, environmental management, risk and disaster prevention and management and strengthening livelihoods and social safety nets; (b) social development and human capital; and (c) governance, peace and security. Moreover, it is coordinated with the priority areas for action identified in the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020,⁸ in which the Niger participated.

10. UNDP action with regard to the “resilience” component will involve institutional capacity-building to develop and implement policies, plans and programmes, and community capacity-building, especially for more vulnerable groups such as women and young people, for socioeconomic activities, with: (a) improved production and livelihoods, especially for women and the most vulnerable households, through targeting based on the extent to which essential needs are being met; (b) assistance to rural producers to teach them to master agricultural techniques that will lead to improved crop yields and diversified

⁷ Rapport sur l'évaluation des résultats des activités de développement 2012, examens et évaluations 2012.

⁸ The plan of action identifies the following priority areas of action: productive capacity, particularly in the areas of infrastructure and energy, support for agriculture, food security, human and social development, crisis management, good governance and mobilization of financial resources.

revenue streams; (c) advice- support, financial and logistical support for the national risk and disaster prevention, reduction and management system, to achieve enhanced management of the food and nutrition system; (d) preservation and sustainable management of environmental resources through implementation of a national climate change policy and sectoral strategies, as well as by harnessing innovative funding, improved public access to modern energy sources in the context of the Sustainable Energy for All initiative, with a scaling-up of the multifunctional platforms project and promotion of access to cooking gas (women's economic insertion and empowerment).

11. UNDP support for the "Government, peace and security" component will involve capacity-building in democratic, administrative, economic and local governance and peace and security capacity-building for State and non-State actors, especially vulnerable communities, women, young people and civil society. In the area of democratic governance, the programme will work on organizing norm-compliant elections in 2015, outreach with women and improved representation of women in democratic institutions and policy-making bodies. Electoral support will take a more ongoing electoral cycle approach and draw on lessons learned during the UNDP-supported 2010 election. In addition, the rule of law will be enhanced by our contribution to improving access to justice and to respect for human rights.

12. Through training, support and implementation of the Aid Management Platform, UNDP will help facilitate coordination, transparency and harmonization of development partner interventions and increase resource absorption capacity so that the economic and social development plan is well executed. By enhancing State service expertise, support structures and the capacities of decentralized entities, as well as through targeted technical and financial support, UNDP will bolster decentralization, local economic development and governance of mining industries (improved income management for development).

13. Based on targeted analyses of the structural causes of conflicts and assessment of support needs of State and non-State institutions, religious and traditional leaders, State bodies and grass-roots community organizations, especially youth and women's organizations, will receive technical and financial support in their efforts to contribute to peacebuilding.

IV. Programme management, monitoring and evaluation

14. The two areas of the country programme (resilience and governance; and peace and security) benefit from support from the United Nations system. Joint programming and joint programme conditions will be improved based on context and lessons learned. Coordination with the World Bank, the African Development Bank, regional institutions (such as the West African Economic and Monetary Union), the European Union and bilateral partners will be bolstered based on programmes now under way.

15. The programme approach will be stressed, through appropriate institutional arrangements, in keeping with the delivering as one approach that is part of the reform of the United Nations system. The administrative and financial management and monitoring-evaluation of the country programme will be consistent with national procedures, in conformity with the principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, Ownership, Harmonization, Alignment, Results and Mutual

Accountability. To that end, UNDP and the system will apply the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers. The national implementation modality will be promoted for programme implementation. The direct execution modality will be used, in compliance with procedures. The choice of execution modality will be based on: (a) the outcomes of an assessment of partners' implementation capacities and those of the Office; (b) audit recommendations; (c) the specific nature of projects and the associated risks.

16. Lessons learned from various considerations of monitoring-evaluation, harmonization with the monitoring-evaluation system of the economic and social development plan and of UNDAF, as well as support for national data collection and analysis will facilitate better accountability, greater ownership and improved transparency. Communication about development outcomes will be based on these elements. On that basis, the resource mobilization strategy will support Government initiatives and those of UNDP.

17. To ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of programme management, the country office will implement the recommendations of project and programme evaluations (assessments of development results or mid-term reviews), audits and analyses of partner implementation capacities in the context of the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers. Annual audits of projects and programmes will remain systematic and obligatory. A joint implementation partner audit plan, which could be developed with other organizations of the United Nations system that have adopted the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers and the synergy between the assessments/examinations of the draft country programme and UNDAF will be updated. The main risks would be security threats related to the conflict in Mali, recurring natural disasters and other partners' lack of resources. The Office will build its own internal capacities and efficiency and develop a resource mobilization strategy with the United Nations system, the Government and other technical and financial partners, based on co-financing and fiduciary fund management.

Annex

Results and resources framework for the Niger (2014-2018)

<i>Government partner contributions</i>	<i>Other partner contributions</i>	<i>UNDP contributions</i>	<i>Indicators, baselines and targets for UNDP contributions</i>	<i>Indicative country programme outputs</i>	<i>Indicative resources by outcome (in United States dollars)</i>
Priorities or national objectives — Segment 2 of the economic and social development plan: Establishing the conditions needed for balanced and sustainable development — Segment 3 of the economic and social development plan: Food security and sustainable agricultural development.					
Effects of UNDAF/country program: Effect 1. By 2018, vulnerable households and targeted communities increase their resilience by sustainably enhancing their livelihoods and their food and nutrition security, while better managing their environment, with access to social safety nets.					
Indicators of results — 1.1: The prevalence rate of severe and moderate food insecurity for households (disaggregated by sex). 1.2: The percentage of people living below the poverty level. 1.3: Annual agricultural production growth rate. 1.4 Annual livestock production growth rate.					
Effect 2. By 2018, supported national, regional and local institutions use systems and mechanisms appropriate for risk/disaster prevention/management, sustainable environmental management and food security.					
Indicator of results — 2.1: The average financial performance rate of projects and programmes in the framework of risk/disaster management/prevention. 2.2: The average financial performance rate of national policy projects and programmes on sustainable environmental management and promotion of access to modern energy services.					
Starting in 2013, the Government will draft and implement a pilot programme called Hunger Zero and, starting in 2014, will launch large-scale 3N initiative programmes to boost the population's resilience to food shocks, thus operationalizing the resilience segment of the economic and social development plan. The Government will raise resources and strengthen implementation of specific programmes for sustainable management of natural resources and biodiversity starting in 2013. The Government will develop emergency	The United Nations system and the World Bank, in partnership with bilateral and multilateral organizations such as the EU: provide technical and institutional capacity-building (support-advice, training, coordination, monitoring-evaluation, equipment and material, funding); develop joint programmes to support strengthening the resilience of communities, NGOs and civil society organizations; and contribute to fostering awareness, communication and advocacy for the	UNDP supports government bodies (Cabinet of the Prime Minister, Minister of the Environment, the High Commissioner for 3N, the National Environmental Council for Sustainable Development) and communities (towns, regions) in drafting, implementing, monitoring and evaluating programmes (food and nutrition security, sustainable natural resource management, biodiversity conservation in natural areas) and working towards achievement of communities' technical and financial resilience. UNDP develops capacity-building activities for government bodies to	Indicator 1. The number of policies, strategies and plans of action developed and implemented with UNDP support (food security, sustainable land management, climate change, biodiversity, energy, food and nutrition security) (baseline: 0 in 2014; target: 15). Indicator 2. The percentage (men/women) of the population with access to modern energy services, especially women in the target areas (baseline: <1% in 2011; target: 40% in 2018). Indicator 3. The number of UNDP-supported annual operational plans of the national food security mechanism (baseline: 0 in 2011; target: 5 in 2018). Indicator 4. Rate of increase in the food consumption score (differs according to the sex of the head of the family) (baseline: 0%: target: 10%).	P.1 Policies, strategies and plans of action (food security, sustainable land management, climate change, biodiversity, energy) are designed and implemented with supporting targeted expertise. P.2 A multifunctional platform project is provided to improve public access to energy. P.3 National, regional and local institutions managing the national food security mechanism have appropriate disaster risk prevention and management capacities to develop annual plans. P.4 Rural beneficiaries' household food consumption level improves.	Regular resources: 30 900 000 Other resources: 24 845 000

<i>Government partner contributions</i>	<i>Other partner contributions</i>	<i>UNDP contributions</i>	<i>Indicators, baselines and targets for UNDP contributions</i>	<i>Indicative country programme outputs</i>	<i>Indicative resources by outcome (in United States dollars)</i>
warning and coordination mechanisms, as well as crisis and natural disaster management mechanisms.	effectiveness of development actions at the grass roots (UN system financing, inter alia).	contribute to effective, efficient resilience programmes. UNDP supports initiatives to mobilize resources and launch innovative projects.	Indicator 5. The number of men and women who have received assistance, support and advice in agricultural techniques (Farmer Field Schools, inputs) (baseline: 0; target: not determined).	P.5 Producers' agro-technical capacities improve.	
National priority or objective: Segment 1 — Sustainable conditions for balanced, inclusive development. Segment 2 — Consolidation of public institutions' credibility and effectiveness. Segment 4 — Promotion of a competitive, diversified economy for accelerated, inclusive growth.					
Effects of UNDAF/country program: Effect 1. National and local institutions, communities and targeted groups are equipped by 2018 with capacities for guaranteeing good governance and the rule of law. Indicator 1.1: % of key democratic institutions — Parliament, the Office of the Ombudsman, the Higher Communications Council, the National Council for Political Dialogue, the Constitutional Court, the National Commission for Human Rights and Basic Liberties, the Court of Audit, the High Authority for Peace Consolidation and the National Commission for Social Dialogue — that have an operational activities programme. Indicator 1.2: % of sectoral expenses that are integrated into the midterm overall expense framework. Indicator 1.3: The Niger's rank in the Corruption Perceptions Index (Transparency International). Indicator 1.4: Participation rate of women (Parliament, Government, senior civil service posts).					
Effect 2. National and local institutions and target communities guarantee, by 2018, the security of goods and persons and the operation of peacebuilding mechanisms. Indicator 2.1: Rate of reduction of conflicts in risk areas. Indicator 2.2: % of national bodies responsible for peace equipped with operational conflict prevention and management mechanisms.					
The Government will develop programmes consistent with the national budget to raise the resources required, with an eye to operationalization of the peace, security and development strategy in the Sahel and Sahara region (sustainable development strategy) and governance, peace and security programmes as part of the economic and social development plan. It will coordinate and streamline resource management to implement the programme to strengthen the credibility of	Financial support for democratic governance and elections (EU, France, Spain, Denmark, Belgium, Luxembourg, Japan); support-advice from the United Nations system; support-advice, advocacy and financing for economic governance from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund; financial contributions from the EU for a legal aid agency; support-advice from Belgium, Switzerland and France on national decentralization policy	UNDP plays a key role in economic governance for strategic development management (public finances and reforms through development of aid coordination tools and mechanisms, such as the Aid Management Platform, the aid coordination module and the economic and social development project operational system). It provides support by co-chairing as sectoral strategies and programmes on youth and financing of job creation initiatives are developed. UNDP does capacity-building for national institutions such as	Indicator 6. The amount of expertise provided (by type/quality) for implementation and monitoring-evaluation of the economic and social development plan (base: 0; target: not determined). Indicator 7. The number of young entrepreneurs trained (M/F) with UNDP support (base: 0; target: 50, with 50% male and 50% female). Indicator 8. The number of tools (teaching modules for oversight of government action) developed and made available to representatives (base: 3; target: 15). Indicator 9.1. The degree of compliance with international electoral rules and standards (target: compliant 2015 elections). Indicator 9.2. The number of	P.6 Expertise is provided to the Planning Ministry to develop tools for planning, funding and monitoring-evaluation of the economic and social development plan. P.7 Young people of both sexes are trained in setting up their own enterprises. P.8 Representatives have the capacity (teaching modules, equipment, training) to carry out their oversight responsibilities. P.9 The institutions responsible for organizing elections have the capacities (electoral lists, biometry, procedures, human rights training, financial management) to manage the	Regular resources: 20 600 400 Other: 26 343 000

<i>Government partner contributions</i>	<i>Other partner contributions</i>	<i>UNDP contributions</i>	<i>Indicators, baselines and targets for UNDP contributions</i>	<i>Indicative country programme outputs</i>	<i>Indicative resources by outcome (in United States dollars)</i>
national and democratic institutions. It will operationalize the administration's and local authorities' capacity-building programme (modernization and results-based management) so that there is effective monitoring-evaluation of the national economic and social development plan.	and advocacy to mobilize resources; monitoring and evaluation by the United Nations system, the World Bank, the IMF, and the African Development Bank; implementation of the sustainable development strategy with support (EU, Denmark, UN system). The technical and financial partners will ensure coordination of the partnership's overall and sectoral framework (Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development). Civil society organizations oversee public action and organize public training and awareness events jointly with development partners.	Parliament, the National Commission for Human Rights and Basic Liberties, civil society organizations, the ministries responsible for justice and decentralization, the National Council for Political Dialogue, the Office of the Ombudsman and the High Authority for Peace Consolidation, with a view to consolidating democracy, peace and the rule of law.	UNDP-supported National Assembly South-South cooperation initiatives (baseline: 0; target: 5). Indicator 10. The % of norm-compliant reports adopted and submitted to the UN treaty bodies and special procedures (baseline: 50%; target: 80%). Indicator 11. The rate of judicial assistance coverage of penal institutions (baseline: 24%; target: 75%). Indicator 12. % of national peace bodies (the High Authority for Peace Consolidation, the Office of the Ombudsman, the National Human Rights Commission, the National Commission for the Control and Collection of Illicit Arms, monitoring-evaluation/sustainable development strategy, local communities) that have capacities (programme of activities and plans of action, communication and partnership, monitoring-evaluation, analyses) (baseline: 33.3%; target: 100%).	electoral process in compliance with regulations. P.10 The Ministry of Justice, the National Human Rights Commission and civil society organizations are provided with capacities as requested (tools for training in human rights, communication, gender and access to justice) to promote human rights and access to justice. P.11 Defendants enjoy legal assistance in order to have access to their rights. P.12 National peace and security bodies have operational mechanisms enabling them to promote peace and peacebuilding.	