

DISASTER
RELIEF

CASE REPORT
Niger-Floods
August 1974

Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523



More than 1,000 people were left homeless as one-fourth of the housing area in Arlit was destroyed. Temporary plastic tents were erected for the flood victims.

Foreign Disaster Case Reports are publications of the Office of the Foreign Disaster Relief Coordinator, Agency for International Development. This office has responsibility for coordinating U.S. Government foreign disaster relief responses and for the further coordination of such activities with those of the U.S. private and international disaster relief communities.

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NIGER

Floods—August 1974

Niger, suffering from a severe drought for the past five years, was inundated by torrential rains during mid-August 1974. The central region (Madoua, Maradi, and Tanout in the south, and Arlit and Agadez in the north) was hardest hit. Several major towns were affected by flash-flooding. Crops were destroyed, livestock were lost, and houses and buildings were destroyed or damaged. Damage was estimated at \$1 million.

Value of U.S. Government Assistance \$25,971

Throughout the region, approximately 16,000 people were affected by the floods. Several people drowned, 6,500 were homeless, 500 houses and schools were destroyed, and approximately 500 buildings were damaged. Over 4,500 people were evacuated from their homes, and 5,000 in Arlit were cared for by mass feeding. It is estimated that 4,000 hectares of vegetable gardens were destroyed, and approximately 10,000 hectares of millet fields were extensively damaged.

In Agadez Department, heavy rains were widespread. Out of a total of 144 classrooms (serving approximately 2,000 children, mainly nomad), 46 were destroyed and 54 were damaged. School building damage was estimated at \$200,000, with an additional loss of teaching materials valued at \$20,000 to \$25,000.

Little damage was sustained by Agadez City's residential area which is on high ground. The major damage was to administrative structures, market gardens, and two schools which were completely destroyed. A United Nations office building was destroyed. Approximately 1,500 nomads housed in tents were washed out. Food stocks were not affected. Local authorities believe that a dike (costing approximately \$360,000) will be required to protect the lower sections of the city from future floods or high waters.

In Arlit, with a population of 4,000, more than 1,000 people were left homeless when one-fourth of the housing area was destroyed. The damage was estimated at \$400,000.

Seventy houses were destroyed in Maradi and 1,000 to 2,000 hectares of market gardens were damaged.

In Madoua, 100 families were left homeless when almost all houses were washed away. Madoua was probably affected more than any other area.

Total dollar damage was estimated to be in excess of \$1 million.

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF NIGER AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS:

The Government of Niger (GON), having had to care for large numbers of its population affected by the drought, had limited resources available when the flood disaster occurred. The military immediately airlifted relief supplies to Arlit and Agadez. Food supplies on hand in these areas were distributed. In Madoua, the GON and the Nigerien Red Cross provided sorghum, powdered milk, tents, blankets, cloth, and mats. The Government Ministry in charge of relief for drought victims also provided flood relief. Local authorities organized the emergency relief operation to feed and house the homeless and administer temporary repair projects on damaged houses and buildings.

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT:

On August 26, U.S. Ambassador Douglas Heck was briefed on the flood disaster by President Kountche, who requested U.S. Government assistance. Some of the supplies already in Niger for drought relief (approx-

mately 20 tons of PL 480 Title II Food for Peace, tarpaulins, and plastic sheeting for grain storage) were committed. The tarpaulins and plastic sheeting were used as temporary shelter in the areas where houses were destroyed.

In view of the fact that immediate needs were met from stocks in country, the Ambassador's disaster relief fund of \$25,000 was used to help build temporary classrooms and replace lost school supplies and equipment in Agadez, thus permitting schools to reopen with little time lost due to the disaster. Some assistance was also given to the Nigerien Red Cross. Funds were spent to purchase gasoline for Red Cross vehicles used in relief work.

**ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY
U.S. VOLUNTARY AGENCIES:**

Church World Service—250 blankets sent to Arlit (value estimated by FDRC) \$750.00

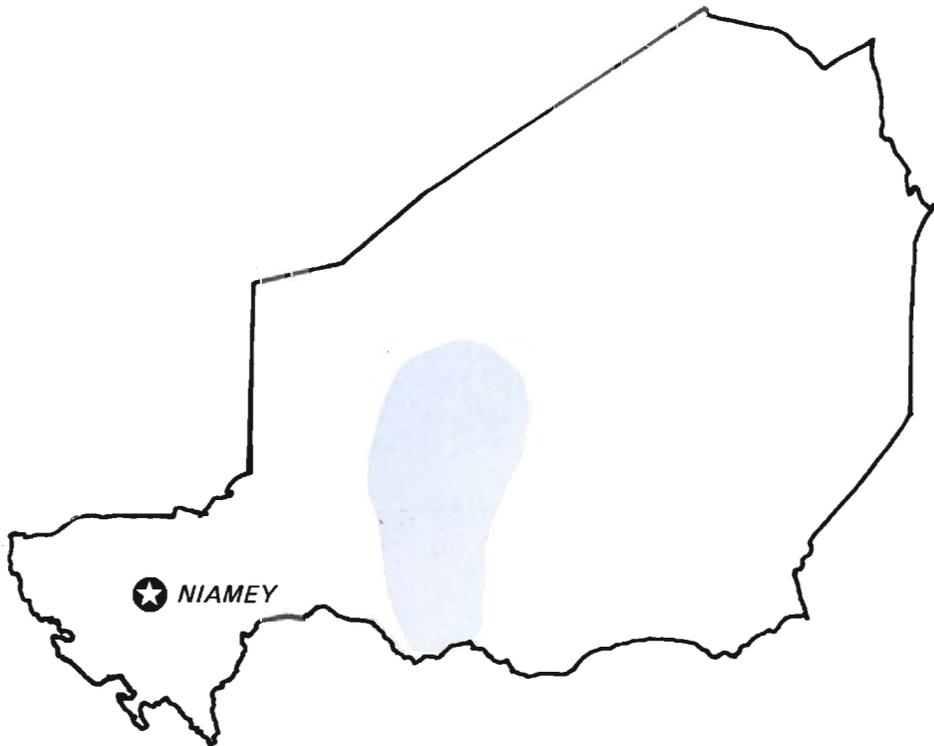
**ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:**

League of Red Cross Societies (LICROSS)—teams in country for drought relief were used to aid flood victims in Madoua area (value of assistance not reported).

OXFAM—funded costs of reconstruction of one three-classroom school in Agadez (value not reported).



Flood waters flowed through Agadez destroying administrative structures, market gardens, and school buildings. The U.S. Ambassador's disaster relief fund was used to help build classrooms and replace lost school supplies and equipment in Agadez.



NIGER