

USAID/NIGER

OPERATIONAL CLOSEOUT PLAN

SEPTEMBER 1997

I. INTRODUCTION

USAID/Niger's Programmatic Closeout Plan (Annex A) was prepared in compliance with the instructions contained in 96 STATE 198217. The Plan formed the basis for a Action Memorandum to the Administrator from the AFR Bureau seeking his approval for a strategic plan to continue certain designated USAID assistance activities which were in the national interest until December 31, 1998. The Administrator approved this focused, continuing program on March 19, 1997. The Programmatic Closeout Plan is being revised to conform to these decisions and will be resubmitted within the next 60 days. USAID/W approval of the Programmatic Closeout Plan is expected in January 1998.

This Operational Closeout Plan outlines the actions USAID/Niger plans to implement the Administrator's decisions. Since many closeout actions were initiated soon after the *coup d'etat* in January 1996, this Plan addresses the remaining actions that will lead to the final closing of the Mission and the formation of a small USAID/Niger staff and operational structure under the direction of a USAID Representative who will manage the program.

II. ADMINISTRATIVE CLOSEOUT

A. Organization and Staffing: As of September 30, 1997, USAID/Niger has a total of one U.S. Direct Hire (USDH) employee. The new USAID Representative arrived in-country in August 1997. All FNPSC staff were RIFed by April 1, 1997. FN staff necessary for completing closeout activities were retained on short term purchase order. FN staffing for the restructured USAID/Niger has been approved by Washington. Five FNPSCs will form the residual staff, with contracts running through the final closeout on December 31, 1998. The positions include:

- Development Assistance Specialist (Health)
- Development Assistance Specialist (Democracy/Governance)
- Administrative Assitant
- Secretary/Records Manager
- Administrative Clerk/Driver

B. Administrative Closeout

1. Administrative Services

USAID/Niger purchases certain services pouch (health, cashier and security) from the U.S. Embassy Niamey. Other administrative services are provided by USAID/Niger itself. The staffing noted above are considered adequate to maintain essential services and internal controls for the remaining mission operations through closeout.

2. Real Property, Office and Housing

- **USAID Office:** USAID owns its current office building. The USAID Mission will continue to occupy a portion the building. The utilization of the remaining space in the building will be subject to agreement among the agencies which comprise the U.S. Mission Niamey.
- **Housing:** The Mission holds one residential lease as of September 30, 1997. This lease will be retained for the USDH USAID Representative.

3. **Mission OE-funded Property:** Immediately after the coup USAID/Niger placed a moratorium on all non-expendable property and vehicle procurement. Disposition of existing property is described below.
 - **Residential Furniture and Appliances:** The Mission has redistributed unused furniture and appliances to other missions. Additional furniture and appliances which have been declared foreign excess property have been sold through grants-in-aid and public auctions or donated to US PVOs working in Niger to implement the USAID assistance program. Residential furniture and equipment retained for use by the USAID Representative will be offered to other USAID missions upon closure, or will be otherwise disposed of in accordance with USG regulations.
 - **Office Furniture:** All excess furniture that is of interest to other missions has been redistributed in accordance with 6 FAM 227. Any surplus has been sold at auction. Office furniture and equipment retained for use by the ongoing USAID mission will be offered to other USAID missions upon closure, or will be otherwise disposed of in accordance with USG regulations.
 - **Vehicles:** As of September 30, 1997, the Mission had four OE funded vehicles remaining. Two vehicles will be retained for use by the residual USAID staff: one 4 wheel drive vehicle and the USAID Representative's official vehicle. The two remaining vehicles will be transferred to the U.S. Embassy as an offset against the FY 1997 FAAS bill. The 1997 bill was reduced by \$32,000 in connection with this transfer.
 - **ADP:** The Mission will retain a fully operational Banyan Vines local area network (LAN) with workstations and assorted peripheral equipment including CD drives, printers, scanner, etc. Hardware and software support services will be provided by the U.S. Embassy under ICASS. ADP equipment no longer required has been redistributed or disposed of according to IRM and OMS instructions. Retained equipment will be disposed of upon closure, in accordance with IRM and OMS instructions.
 - The VSAT was designated by IRM for transfer to another country, and has been packed and shipped.
4. **Program Funded Property:** All property from completed projects has been transferred to the GON or PVOs in accordance with project documentation and 6 FAM 227.
5. **Records Management:** USAID/Niger had 686 cubic feet of records (official and working files). All files except working files and active project files have been shipped to REDSO/WCA.

III. FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

- A. **Transfer of Accounting Station:** USAID/Niger closed down its accounting station at the end of FY 1996 and all the books were transferred to REDSO/WCA in Abidjan. The Administrative Assistant serves Mission liaison with WAAC with responsibility to manage the day-to-day processing of financial documents such as transmission of vouchers, travel advances, audit reports, etc. Preparation of all Agency financial reports will be done by the WAAC with input from USAID/Niger.

The Embassy Budget and Fiscal Office is currently providing certification services for cashier transactions and DATEL payments processed through the RAMC in Paris. This service will continue and guarantees the availability of a petty cash service needed by USAID/Niger. The USAID Representative has been designated a sub-cashier, to minimize workload on the embassy B&F Officer for processing of petty cash vouchers.

- C. Audit Actions:** Non-federal audit reports were received for three projects: Agricultural Sector Development Grant (ASDG) II, Niger Economic Policy Reform Program (NEPRP) and Niger Health Sector Support (NHSS). Two of the reports are being discussed with the audit firm. Draft audit recommendations for NHSS have been prepared.

There are only three open audit recommendations on the Niger program as of January 1, 1997. They resulted from a Non-Federal Audit of the Disaster Preparedness and Mitigation Project's Counterpart Fund. The Mission is awaiting RIG and REDSO/WAAC input before acting on these recommendations.

IV. RESOURCES REQUIREMENTS

- A. Operating Expenses:** With assistance from the WAAC, USAID/Niger prepared an estimated Operating Expense Fund requirements budget of \$550,000 for FY 98, and \$238,000 for FY 99.
- B. New Obligation Authority for FY 1997 and 1998:** The following OYB was approved by the Administrator in the Programmatic Closeout Plan for FY 1997 and provisionally approved for FY 1998. The NOA for FY 98 is contained in the FY 1998 Congressional Presentation.

	FY 97	Proposed FY 98
Democracy/Human Rights 116(e)	\$200,000	\$200,000
Ambassador's Self Help Program	100,000	100,000
Women in Politics*	0	400,000
Consortium for Elections/Political Processes Strengthening*	300,000	300,000
CARE/North Child Survival	750,000	750,000
Peace Corps Child Survival	120,000	120,000
Niger Credit Union Development	330,000	0
TOTAL	\$1,800,000	\$1,870,000
Regional Activities:		
CHS/Quality Assurance II	550,000	430,000
CHS/BASICS/Integrated Case Management	400,000	200,000
Deob/Reob of DPM Funds:		
AFRICARE Agadez North	\$2,000,000	0

* These activities are tentative, pending the outcome of an assessment currently planned for late December 1997 or early in 1998.

V. TECHNICAL BACKSTOPPING FOR USAID/NIGER

USAID/Niger will be staffed with personnel to manage the continuing program. However, additional technical backstopping will be required from time to time. It is proposed that this backstopping come principally from REDSO/WCA, but, in some cases, this service can be better provided by other entities within the Agency. A discussion of the backstopping responsibilities follows.

A. REDSO/WCA

1. Contracting: No change in current arrangement
2. Legal Services: No change in current arrangement
3. Participant Training: The Mission is not authorized to start new training activities. REDSO/WCA/HHR took over responsibility for the ongoing programs as of March 31, 1997. As of March 31 there were 37 active trainees.
4. Mitigation Activities and Monitoring Counterpart Fund Activities: The Regional Food for Peace Officer will follow up on any PL 480 resources made available to the mitigation efforts. No other monitoring is required from REDSO.

B. REDSO/WAAC - West Africa Accounting Center

1. Audits: While there are no new audits scheduled at this time which are not already underway, there may be a reason to schedule one at some time in the future. If additional audits are required, USAID/Niger will seek the assistance of WAAC to schedule and oversee the audit process. Similarly, any RIG audit activity would have to be backstopped by the WAAC.

C. USAID/W - Africa Bureau (AFR)

1. Office of West African Affairs (AFR/WA): The CDO position for USAID/Niger will be based in this office. While the workload associated with backstopping the Niger activities will diminish after the formal closeout, the basic coordination, information and programming functions will remain the same as they have historically been.
2. Office of Sustainable Development (AFR/SD): Some technical backstopping will be provided by this office in the fields in the environment and in democracy and governance. As there are no AFR/SD activities being implemented as part of the approved residual program in these sectors, requests for assistance will be strictly ad hoc.

However, this office will provide more direct assistance in the field of immunization and disease control. Because of the importance of Niger as an epicenter of epidemics, two TDYs from AFR/SD per year are anticipated to monitor the situation and support local implementation of regional activities.

3. Office of Development Planning (AFR/DP): To the extent that AFR/DP currently provides technical backstopping to the Mission in the fields of program monitoring, evaluation, strategy development and budgeting, these responsibilities will continue in support of USAID/Niger. They are estimated to be minimal.

D. USAID/W - Global Bureau

1. Center for Population, Health and Nutrition (G/PHN)

- a. Office of Population (G/PHN/POP): The Office of Population will backstop the Demographic and Health Survey and the JHPIEGO grant. Both of these are significant parts of the HIV/AIDS control activities carried out by the Mission. In-country monitoring will be assumed by an FN Project Officer within USAID/Niger. Overall management will be provided by the cognizant technical officer in G/PHN/POP.
- b. Office of Health and Nutrition (G/PHN/HN): G/PHN/HN will provide backstopping for the Quality Assurance and the BASICS projects, as well as for all other regional child survival activities that are outlined in the Programmatic Closeout Plan. In-country monitoring will be assured by an FN Project Officer within USAID/Niger.

2. Center for Democracy and Governance (G/DG): As part of the residual program, the Agency has approved a strategic objective to strengthen civil society. G/DG is considering initiating activities under the Democracy Sector Support Project (936-5468). An assessment of possible activities is planned for late calendar year 1997 or early calendar year 1998. That assessment is expected to result in the identification of additional activities to be conducted in support of greater democratization in Niger. Additional activities may also be undertaken by USIA, in connection with the media. In-country monitoring of any activities approved will be carried out by an FN Project Officer within USAID/Niger. Overall management of the grants will be provided by the mission and/or the project officers within G/DG.

E. USAID/W Bureau for Humanitarian Response (BHR)

1. Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (BHR/OFDA): Niger lies in a disaster-prone region of the world. Historically, OFDA has been very active in Niger in response to crop failures, floods and epidemics. In view of the frequency of these occurrences, the Mission is proposing to retain the services of an FN to deal with these disasters as well as oversee the residual mitigation activities and the FEWS activity. While OFDA will not be tapped for ongoing backstopping responsibilities with respect to the residual program, its services will almost assuredly be required to help with the Agency's response to the next disaster.
2. Office of Food For Peace (BHR/FFP): The Office of Food for Peace will have ongoing backstopping responsibilities with respect to any emergency food provided to the PVO consortium under Catholic Relief Services Title II Emergency Food Proposal. Additional support will be required from DHR/FFP to plan and monitor the Agency's response to any future disaster.

3. **Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation (BHR/PVC):** BHR currently supports two NGO activities in Niger: the CARE/Sanu Yara (Zinder) integrated health project, and the Helen Keller, International, micronutrient grant. Both of these projects are fully funded, have been approved in the Programmatic Closeout Plan, and are well supervised from the BHR Washington office. No additional support is expected at this time.