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Project Information Document (PID)

Appraisal Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 04-Apr-2025 | Report No: PIDIA00825

**BASIC INFORMATION****A. Basic Project Data**

Project Beneficiary(ies)	Region	Operation ID	Operation Name
Niger	WESTERN AND CENTRAL AFRICA	P179770	Southern Niger Connectivity and Integration Project
Financing Instrument	Estimated Appraisal Date	Estimated Approval Date	Practice Area (Lead)
Investment Project Financing (IPF)	03-Apr-2025	15-May-2025	Transport
Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency		
Republic of Niger	Ministère des Transports et de l'Équipement		

Proposed Development Objective(s)

The Project Development Objective (PDO) is to improve climate-resilient road connectivity and to enable value chain logistics development in southern Niger.

Components

Climate-resilient improvement of Niger's transport backbone
 Enabling environment for southern Niger basin logistics
 Institutional strengthening and project management
 Contingent emergency response component (CERC)

PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US\$, Millions)**Maximizing Finance for Development**

Is this an MFD-Enabling Project (MFD-EP)? No

Is this project Private Capital Enabling (PCE)? No

SUMMARY

Total Operation Cost	370.60
Total Financing	370.60
of which IBRD/IDA	363.60
Financing Gap	0.00



DETAILS

World Bank Group Financing

International Development Association (IDA)	363.60
IDA Credit	343.60
IDA Grant	20.00

Non-World Bank Group Financing

Counterpart Funding	7.00
National Government	7.00

Environmental And Social Risk Classification

High

Decision

The review did authorize the team to appraise and negotiate

Other Decision (as needed)

B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

1. Niger, a landlocked Sahelian country that stretches over 1,267,000 kilometers (km)² and is home to 27.2 million inhabitants,¹ heavily depends on its road infrastructure and the agropastoral sector to drive socioeconomic development, fight food insecurity, prevent conflict, and mitigate forced displacement. The country’s economy relies on agriculture, which employs 71 percent of the workforce and is the main contributor to GDP at 44.6 percent, compared to 18.6 percent for industry and 36.8 percent for services.² Poor road connectivity and rural access, as well as logistical challenges, impact agropastoral sector performance and economic prospects to fight the pervasive food insecurity.³ In Niger, 40.8 percent of the population lives below the national poverty line and 20.4 percent live in extreme poverty. Ensuring that the youth, women, and other vulnerable groups, such as refugees and host communities (RHC), including internally displaced persons (IDPs),⁴ are gainfully employed can reduce poverty and put communities on a trajectory of recovery and economic growth (in the Transport sector women hold less than one percent of jobs; although data on the share of women in technical roles is not available, this share of women is expected to be even lower⁵ due to lack of

¹ World Bank Group. 2022. Data. Population, Total – Niger. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=NE>.

² International Development Association. N. d. Niger. <https://ida.worldbank.org/en/country/niger?text=Agriculture%20and%20the%20rural%20economy,for%2040%20percent%20of%20GDP>

³ Recent data from the World Food Program indicates that over 3.3 million individuals were classified as acutely food insecure during the 2023 season (June–August). An estimated 4.3 million people (2.4 million of whom are children) require humanitarian assistance. Additionally, Niger’s global acute malnutrition rate is estimated at 12.7 percent, and 42 percent of children under 5 years old are stunted. Severe recorded food crises in 1980, 1988, 1990, 1997, 2001, 2005, 2009, 2011—<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/37620>.

⁴ When referring to host communities in this document, IDPs are considered part of the host population.

⁵ ILOSTAT. 2022. https://rshiny.ilo.org/dataexplorer0/?lang=en&segment=indicator&id=EAP_2WAP_SEX_AGE_RT_A.

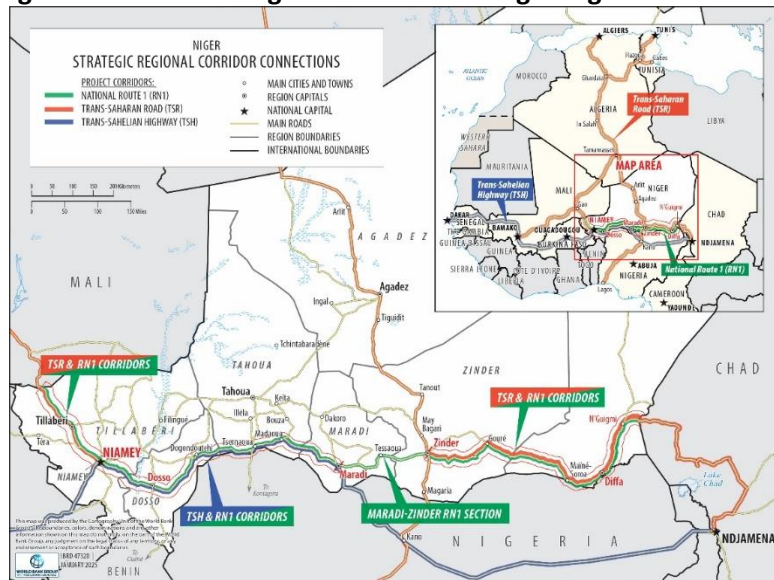


adequate skills and strong gender norms). Employment also lowers fragility and reduces the incidence of conflict, especially in the context of climate change, which exacerbates these challenges.

2. Women face major mobility barriers in accessing maternity care in Niger. In sub-Saharan Africa, the travel time for women to access obstetric and general health care is about 180 minutes.⁶ In a comparable country like Nigeria, women may travel up to 240 minutes to access obstetric care.⁷ It is expected that this travel time is longer in Niger particularly in the project areas which are mainly rural. Contributing factors are among others, limited access to reliable transportation and poor-quality roads that are safe and reliable.⁸ Gender-based violence and harmful practices such as child marriage are prevalent in the country, with 76.3 percent of girls aged 20 to 24 married before the age of 18 and 28 percent before the age of 15.⁹

3. Niger relies on access to its strategic corridors to improve its international trade, particularly with Nigeria and other neighboring countries. National Road 1 (RN1) is the lifeline of the country and the backbone of its economy, serving as the artery for about 70 percent of its population, supporting close to 88 percent of its agricultural activities,¹⁰ and connecting the borders of Mali, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, and Chad. As illustrated in **Error! Not a valid bookmark self-reference.**, the RN1 comprises the following: (i) the Malian border–Niamey section, which is part of the Trans-Saharan Road (TSR);¹¹ (ii) the Niamey–Maradi section, which is part of the Trans-Sahelian Highway (TSH);¹² (iii) the Maradi–Zinder section, which connects the TSH and TSR within the RN1; and (iv) the Zinder–Chadian border section, which is also part of the TSR corridor. The Maradi–Zinder section of the RN1 serves approximately 16.4 million people, 5.2 million in Niger and 11.2 million in Nigeria.¹³ Ensuring all-year resilient connectivity between the RN1, the TSH and the TSR corridor will improve access, agropastoral produce flow, and the trade potential of selected value chains at the subregional level.

Figure 1 – Southern Niger’s RN1 and Strategic Regional Corridors¹⁴



⁶ P. Florio, S. Freire, and M. Melchiorri. 2023. “Estimating Geographic Access to Healthcare Facilities in Sub-Saharan Africa by Degree of Urbanisation.” *Applied Geography*. doi:
⁷ A. Banke-Thomas et al. 2021. “An Assessment of Geographical Access and Factors Influencing Travel Time to Emergency Obstetric Care in the Urban State of Lagos, Nigeria.” *Health Policy and Planning* 36: 1384–1396. <https://doi.org/10.1093/heapol/czab099>.
⁸ J. Blanford et al. 2012. “It’s a Long, Long Walk: Accessibility to Hospitals, Maternity and Integrated Health Centers in Niger.” *International Journal of Health Geographics* 11: 24. <https://ij-healthgeographics.biomedcentral.com/counter/pdf/10.1186/1476-072X-11-24.pdf>.
⁹ Girls Not Brides. Niger. <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/learning-resources/child-marriage-atlas/atlas/niger/>.
¹⁰ P. Thenkabail et al. 2016. Global Food Security Support Analysis Data (GFSAD) Crop Dominance 2010 Global 1 km V001 [Ddata set]. NASA Making Earth System Data Records for Use in Research Environments (MEaSUREs) NASA EOSDIS Land Processes DAAC. <https://lpdaac.usgs.gov/products/ghsad1kcdv001/>.
¹¹ The Trans-Saharan road corridor is one of the oldest transnational road corridors in Africa. It is 4,500 km long, crossing the Sahara Desert and linking Algeria, Chad, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Tunisia.
¹² The Trans-Sahelian Highway, also known as Trans-African Highway 5 (TAH-5), links Dakar in Senegal with N’Djamena in Chad through Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, and Nigeria. The key Niger TSH section connects Niamey with Maradi, and both cities to Burkina Faso and Nigeria, respectively.
¹³ These figures correspond to populations located within a 150-km radius from the Maradi–Zinder section of the RN1 (WorldPop, 2020).
¹⁴ World Bank International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. 2025.



4. Niger, which is classified as a fragile and conflict-affected situation, is grappling with increasing forced displacement.

This is due to internal fragility and cross-border insecurity from neighboring Mali, Burkina Faso, Chad, and Nigeria. When Niger first accessed the IDA18 Window for Host Communities and Refugees, it hosted 340,000 persons forcibly displaced by conflict. As of February 2025, Niger hosted 975,694 forcibly displaced persons, including 421,809 refugees and asylum seekers and 507,438 IDPs, highlighting the continued cross-border spillover conflict dynamics (see map, **Error! Reference source not found.**).¹⁵ Forcibly displaced populations are mainly in the Tahoua, Maradi, and Diffa Regions (Nigerian refugees) and in the Tillabéry and northern Tahoua Regions (Malian and Burkinabè refugees). More than 80 percent of refugees are women and children. The government's out-of-camp policy, continued by the new authorities, facilitates local integration and self-sufficiency, with most refugees living in informal settlements or with host communities in rural and peri-urban areas. While poverty rates are high across all groups, they are highest among refugee and IDP households. The inflow of refugees and IDPs into these rural communities exacerbates existing challenges, straining already limited resources and increasing poverty, unemployment, human capital deficits, and inadequate basic services. The existing poor infrastructure, including degraded roads, further hinders access to basic social services and disrupts agropastoral value chain activities in these communities. Despite barriers to accessing land and assets, agriculture remains one of the most viable pathways for refugees to achieve self-reliance and economic integration. The sociocultural similarities between RHC in Niger support social cohesion. Niger's robust legal framework (1997 Refugee Law) grants refugees rights to work and access to health care, education, and justice, among others. However, further steps are needed, including the adoption of a revised asylum law and its implementation decree, and the implementation of the 2023 Global Refugee Forum commitments.¹⁶ The World Bank, in consultation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), confirms that Niger's protection framework for refugees continues to be adequate. Ongoing conflicts in neighboring countries are expected to drive a continued increase in refugees and IDPs in the medium term, leading to evolving challenges in hosting and reinforcing the need for sustained international support.

5. The Nigerien government has undertaken a comprehensive approach to improve the institutional environment and advance long-term solutions for RHC.

This approach materializes in the pursuit of a policy of alternatives to camps, closing refugee camps and developing humanitarian land allocation comparable to social housing and villages of opportunity to facilitate the controlled resettlement of refugees and promote integration, assisting over 45,000 refugees in finding durable housing outside of camps since 2019. This strategy includes signing international conventions on refugees, displaced persons, and stateless persons, and adopting associated legal instruments to ensure refugees are treated equally with citizens regarding key socio-economic rights such as property, security, access to courts, basic services, freedom of expression, and free movement. The government has internalized the Kampala Convention through a national law for the assistance and protection of displaced persons (December 2018) and, in the absence of a parliament, an ordinance to revise the 1997 law establishing the status of refugees and its 1998 implementing decree governing the rights of refugees and asylum-seekers to enhance efficiency and fairness. A decree (n°2019-463) has been enacted to allow systematic registration of civil status events in refugee camps, and prima facie refugee status has been granted to Nigerian nationals fleeing insecurity in certain northern states (arrêté n° 00571 / MISP / D / ACR / SG / DGECEM-R du 9 juillet 2020). Coordination and cooperation have been strengthened through collaboration between several governmental institutions and UNHCR, focusing on improving service delivery, knowledge transfer, and monitoring and evaluation. To address land access issues, a memorandum of understanding was signed with the Ministry of Urban Planning (January 31, 2020) to strengthen legal access to land for housing, leading to the creation of "lotissements à but humanitaire" (humanitarian land allocations) or urbanized sites providing land titles or deeds guaranteeing free occupancy. Infrastructure development has been a priority, with investments in housing (over 6,426 houses built on humanitarian land allocations using the Hydraform technique) and plans to further develop infrastructure through IDA20 funding, focusing on transport and economic inclusion near villages of opportunity. Efforts to improve access to basic services (water, education, health, energy) for

¹⁵ UNHCR. 2025. UNHCR Niger - Map Population of Concern - Janvier 2025. <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/114354>.

¹⁶ As per the IDA20 WHR guidelines, the updated strategy note of the Government of Niger describing the concrete steps taken toward long-term development solutions for RHC was finalized on XXX and can be found in Annex 4.



both RHC include expanding social safety nets and capacity-building projects. The government also plans to support the return and resettlement of displaced populations in their villages of origin and when the security situation improves, providing assistance with transportation, food, supplies, habitat rehabilitation, and agricultural inputs. Additionally, the Niger has committed to improving access to education and strengthening adaptation to climate change, including with green shelters, resilient crops and clean energy solutions, through its pledges at the Global Refugee Forum held in December 2023. This comprehensive strategy represents a long-term vision to address the challenges faced by refugees and host communities, with continued support from the World Bank considered essential for implementing these political reforms and institutional changes.

6. Climate change and associated disasters have detrimental impacts on the road network and connectivity, farming, livestock herding, markets, and food value and supply chains. Niger's vulnerability to climate change is evident from the recent increases in sandstorms, rising temperatures, extreme heat, droughts, and floods. The agropastoral sector in Niger is highly susceptible to these severe climate shocks, which adversely impact water resources, soil quality, agricultural production, livestock herding,¹⁷ human livelihoods, food security, and economic growth. The 2024 rainy season, which has been linked to climate change,¹⁸ caused extreme floods that led to landslides, destroyed homes, trees, and businesses, caused hundreds of deaths and injuries, and damaged drinking water and road infrastructure, including the Maradi–Zinder section of the RN1.¹⁹

Sectoral and Institutional Context

7. Niger suffers from infrastructure deficits that have been detrimental to primary-sector value chains, especially in the Eastern Plains.²⁰ About 95 percent of domestic and foreign trade is transported by roads. Niger's trade system is informal, with fragmented transport services;²¹ the lack of professionalization and formalization of the transport and logistics sector, combined with a weak regulatory environment and a lack of transparent procedures, results in low competitiveness. A combination of inadequate road infrastructure and logistical challenges results in economic losses, food shortages, and high spoilage rates in Niger's most productive agropastoral zones.

8. Poor road quality, high transport costs, and cumbersome border-crossing procedures hinder agropastoral trade, access to basic social services, and deepens inequality and poverty among RHC and non-RHC. The road network comprises approximately 22,787 km of roads, of which under 25 percent are paved (along primary links and trunks), with a national average Rural Access Index of 38.1 percent,²² with southern Niger exhibiting considerably higher levels of connectivity compared to the northern regions.²³ In some areas, unpaved roads become impassable during the rainy season, which coincides with the peak period when RHC transports their farm produce to markets or to storage facilities. The lack of roadside emergency assistance further compounds this challenge. Poor quality roads lead to higher transportation costs due to the resulting increased fuel consumption, vehicle wear and tear, and higher maintenance requirements. Conversely, the limited extent of paved roads in the country impacts the conditions under which goods are transported to remote areas and exacerbates accessibility gaps. This predominantly impacts rural communities under the pressure of refugee inflow, limiting access to basic social services and markets to promote agropastoral value chain activities, which are a major source of livelihood for RHC. Frequent border closures and stringent customs regulations disrupt the flow of trade and create uncertainty for traders.

¹⁷ Livestock rearing provides primary or secondary employment for 87 percent of the workforce in the country.

¹⁸ According to [World Weather Attribution](#), the 2024 rainy season mirrors the 2022 flooding, whose attribution study concluded that "due to human-caused global warming, similar events are no longer rare, and are expected to become even more frequent with further warming."

¹⁹ As of October 16, 2024, bad weather had affected 1,438,627 people (195,697 households) and caused 391 deaths across the country. Damage included the collapse of 152,232 houses, the destruction of 242 classrooms, and the loss of 25,728 head of livestock ([OCHA Niger Flash Update # 2](#)).

²⁰ The Eastern Plains, also known as the national breadbasket, is located at the Maradi–Zinder basin. Its primary-sector value chains are cowpeas, millet, sorghum, peanuts, nutsedge, onions, livestock, and fish.

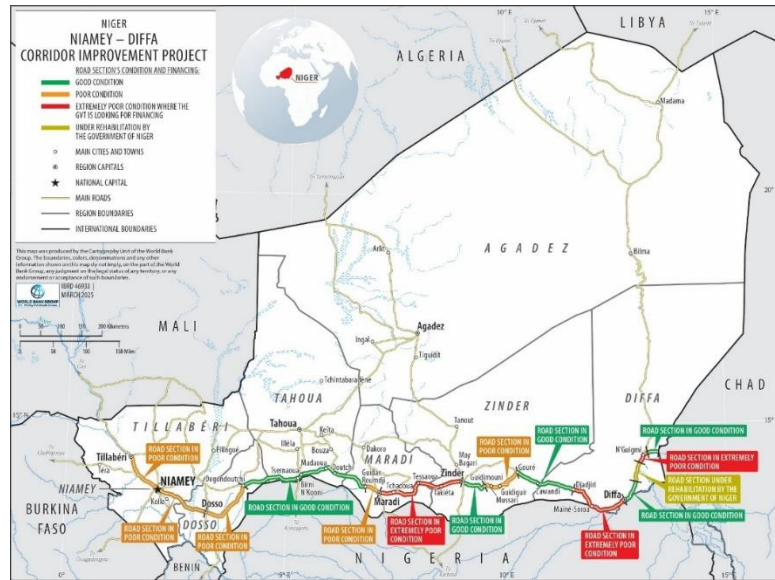
²¹ Eighty percent of the system is informal, with vehicle ownership limited to one truck per person. There are a limited number of commercial companies operating an average fleet of 30 trucks and organized into unions.

²² World Bank Group. 2025. *InfraSAP Niger*.

²³ There is a relatively high concentration of all-weather roads along the southern border with Nigeria and the axis connecting Zinder with the export hub of Magaria. Districts along these routes have accessibility indices exceeding 25 percent, with urban centers such as Maradi and Zinder nearing full accessibility at 100 percent. This underscores the importance of these districts for trade routes and their higher development status, supported by established agricultural production zones.



Figure 2 – Road Conditions and Financing Needs along the RN1 Basin



9. The RN1 is under increasing pressure from climate change impacts. The increasing frequency and intensity of flooding events and extreme temperatures are accelerating the deterioration of RN1. The vulnerability and degradation of road infrastructure pose significant challenges for both agropastoral logistics and access to secondary city markets in Niger. The frequent occurrence of extreme climatic events contributes to the structural failures of the already fragile and aging road network, underscoring the need for urgent rehabilitation and improved maintenance planning. The RN1’s most vulnerable sections are critical to its all-season accessibility. While certain sections are in good condition and others are undergoing rehabilitation, there are still sections that require significant capital expenditure. The Maradi–Zinder section has been identified by the Government of Niger as its highest priority due to its high risk to climate change,²⁴ overall bad existing condition and crucial role in sustaining both the local and national economy. The condition of the RN1 sections and their associated financing needs are illustrated in **Niger suffers from infrastructure deficits that have been detrimental to primary-sector value chains, especially in the Eastern Plains.** About 95 percent of domestic and foreign trade is transported by roads. Niger’s trade system is informal, with fragmented transport services; the lack of professionalization and formalization of the transport and logistics sector, combined with a weak regulatory environment and a lack of transparent procedures, results in low competitiveness. A combination of inadequate road infrastructure and logistical challenges results in economic losses, food shortages, and high spoilage rates in Niger’s most productive agropastoral zones.

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²⁴ In 2024, as of September 4, the Ministry of Humanitarian Action and Disaster Management registered a total of 710,767 people impacted by flooding in Niger. Maradi and Zinder were among the most affected regions, with 96,526 people affected in Zinder alone. Health and education infrastructure were impacted by floods, limiting access and forcing the relocation of critical medical equipment to prevent damage. Classrooms were also used as shelters for displaced people. The lack of adequate sanitation increased the health risks for the population during the floods. Floods destroyed 13,289 hectares of crops, killed 17,979 head of livestock, and destroyed approximately 21,145 tons of food, contributing to food insecurity in affected regions (source: [UNICEF](#); ReliefWeb; FloodList).



requirements. Conversely, the limited extent of paved roads in the country impacts the conditions under which goods are transported to remote areas and exacerbates accessibility gaps. This predominantly impacts rural communities under the pressure of refugee inflow, limiting access to basic social services and markets to promote agropastoral value chain activities, which are a major source of livelihood for RHC. Frequent border closures and stringent customs regulations disrupt the flow of trade and create uncertainty for traders.

11. Figure 2. Driven by climate change adaptation as its main objective, the project aims to strengthen Niger's resilience to climate shocks by upgrading and rehabilitating the Maradi–Zinder section of the RN1 and selected feeder and rural roads in the region to climate-resilient standards²⁵ and supporting the adoption of climate-resilient road asset management practices.

12. Despite road maintenance reform efforts,²⁶ financial sustainability as well as annual maintenance planning and execution remain a key sectoral challenge. Managed across several institutions, namely the Road Network Management and Monitoring Directorate (DGSR), the Road Maintenance Fund (FER), the Project Management Agency for Road Maintenance (AMODER), and the Road Maintenance Audit Organization (CACER),²⁷ coordination and programming are hindered by insufficient sector revenue and underperforming road asset management systems. Road maintenance faces significant challenges due to a combination of factors, including: a vast and deteriorated road network; extreme weather conditions; limited financial resources; capacity constraints; planning delays; and governance and contractual management issues.²⁸ This conjunction of factors has resulted in maintenance backlogs and an accelerated continuous loss of road asset value. Equally challenging, investment priorities and funding are frequently directed toward reconstruction rather than targeting maintainable sections of the road network that would maximize the value for money in a constrained budget environment vulnerable to climate change.

13. A transition to medium-term planning and multi-year contracting for routine and periodic road maintenance can improve investment efficiency. This approach would create greater efficiency and effectiveness of road maintenance operations, ensuring better infrastructure quality and connectivity in Niger, as well as strengthening preparedness and response for urgent works due to climate change impacts. However, this requires the DGSR to transition from the current reactive approach, which prioritizes reconstruction and rehabilitation, to proactive risk-informed strategies that emphasize climate resilience and extend the lifespan of assets. The recently established Second Generation Road Maintenance Fund²⁹ managed by FER collected only about US\$20 million³⁰ to partially finance a US\$75 million annual program (2024) of periodic and routine maintenance and emergency works for the total network.³¹ However, while the road reform process currently stipulates that 90 percent of the revenue allocation is to be dedicated to road maintenance, only about one third of the funds collected in 2022 were allocated to FER, while the remaining stayed in treasury. Furthermore, AMODER was only able to commit approximately 50 percent of the available resources through an inefficient annual contracting approach. To further advance Niger's road asset management reform agenda, it is essential to institutionalize additional funding streams, enhance programming robustness, and improve contract management. Addressing CACER's annual and past audit recommendations for strengthening internal controls and performance could also significantly enhance the effective implementation of road reform and maintenance quality in Niger.

14. Improved climate-resilient road connectivity and subregional trade facilitation would enhance opportunities between Niger and Nigeria. Trade between Niger and Nigeria is vitally important to regional economic integration. In

²⁵ Climate-resilient standards address current and projected extreme heat, sandstorms, droughts, and flood episodes, as well as changing rainfall patterns, and include the use of nature-based solutions, soft measures, and innovative technology for (i) systems planning and financing; (ii) engineering and design; (iii) operations and maintenance; (iv) contingency programming; and (v) institutional capacity and cooperation.

²⁶ According to the provisions under Directive No. 11/2009/CM/UEMOA on harmonization of road maintenance strategies in West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) member states, Niger's road maintenance cycle has four distinct stages: (i) financing; (ii) programming; (iii) implementation and monitoring; and (iv) audit and verification.

²⁷ DGSR is tasked with collection of data and annual needs planning; FER is tasked with fund collection, appropriation, and contract payments; AMODER is tasked with procurement, supervision, and validation of maintenance works; and CACER is tasked with auditing and validating throughout the different processes of the annual maintenance campaign.

²⁸ World Bank. 2025. Infrastructure Sector Assessment Program (InfraSAP) for Niger on Road Asset Management.

²⁹ The fund has been designed to (i) better secure road maintenance resources and (ii) introduce more accountability to road users through mandatory financial and technical audits, private sector participation in its supervisory board, and a performance contract for the managing director.

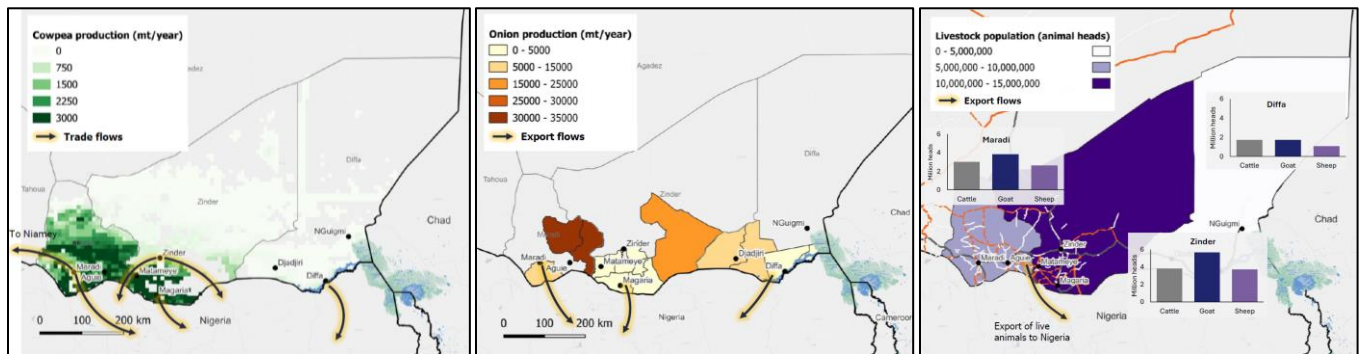
³⁰ Mainly through a fuel levy, tolling fees, and fines for overloaded trucks.

³¹ These funds cover less than 25 percent of the network's routine maintenance needs and fall short of covering needed periodic maintenance to extend the life of key infrastructure.



2022, Niger officially exported US\$91.6 million to Nigeria while importing \$287 million.³² Southern Niger’s agropastoral production represents an important share of the trade flows to northern Nigeria, especially for cowpeas, onions,³³ and livestock,³⁴ as illustrated in **Error! Not a valid bookmark self-reference.** For instance, Maradi and Zinder account for 45 percent of the total national production of cowpeas, with average yields of 479 kilograms/hectare and 459 kilograms/hectare respectively,³⁵ with women serving as the main actors in their processing and selling. However, total trade volumes and values are likely underreported, highlighting the level of informal cross-border activities and inefficiencies in the management of formal border facilities. As such, strategic investments in the southern RN1 corridor basin, together with surrounding feeder road connections, can unlock the economic potential of the rural catchment areas and densely populated border areas through improved access to larger markets.

Figure 3 – Agropastoral Products Trade Flow from Niger: Cowpeas (left); Onions (center); Livestock (right)³⁶



15. The proposed dry port in Maradi will complement ongoing rail investments between Nigeria and Niger toward increasing trade opportunities and potential private sector participation. Significant volumes of cowpeas, onions, and dairy products are expected to be shipped to Nigeria from Maradi Region, which presents a prime opportunity to capitalize on the railway linking Maradi, Niger, to Kano, Nigeria, which is fully financed by the Government of Nigeria and scheduled for completion in June 2026.³⁶ Coupled with the planned dry port in Maradi, this infrastructure could create a seamless, efficient export corridor to Nigeria, eliminating last-mile connectivity challenges.³⁷ Rail transportation offers substantial advantages over traditional road transport as transport bulk cargo in high volumes leads to substantial economies of scale, reducing unit transportation costs.

16. Escalating security challenges and climate-related risks have altered migration patterns in the Maradi area, further affecting food security and financial inclusion for RHC. Despite the region’s productive agropastoral resources, food insecurity remains a challenge, especially for RHC which suffer from poor access to essential services such as healthcare, education, and markets. This particularly affects underserved areas in need of assistance during extreme weather events, which can lead to food shortages and consequent humanitarian crises such as forced displacement.³⁸ Security concerns, particularly in border areas with Nigeria plagued by insurgency and banditry, further complicate the situation. To foster social cohesion, it is critical to include all these communities in development projects; however, limited access to improved technologies and finance undermines opportunities for RHC and rural communities overall. All weather road infrastructure

³² Observatory of Economic Complexity. 2022. Nigeria/Niger. [https://oec.world/en/profile/bilateral-country/nga/partner/ner#:~:text=Niger%20Nigeria%20Trade%3A%20In%202022,and%20Bovine%20\(%24245.36M\)](https://oec.world/en/profile/bilateral-country/nga/partner/ner#:~:text=Niger%20Nigeria%20Trade%3A%20In%202022,and%20Bovine%20(%24245.36M))
³³ Women dominate the processing node of the onion value chain in Niger, as the artisanal processing of onions, including drying and crushing onions, is mainly carried out by women. They also professionally process onions, mainly in Niamey, where they produce onion strips, powders, and purees for markets such as Senegal.
³⁴ About 95 percent of the total livestock products exported from Niger to Nigeria (equivalent to 2 percent of Niger’s GDP) through informal channels due to the openness of the border and non-tariff barriers (World Bank. 2017. *Niger – Systematic Country Diagnostic: Priorities for Ending Poverty and Boosting Shared Prosperity*. Washington, D.C. <https://documentsinternat.worldbank.org/search/29166651>.
³⁵ World Bank. 2024. *Global Facility for Decarbonization of Transport (GFDT)’s Regional Decarbonization & Resilience Assessment of Rural Logistics & Accessibility in the Sahel*. Component 4: Southern Niger Deep Dive. GRID Engineers.
³⁶ January 2025 pre-appraisal mission discussions with the Government of Niger.
³⁷ A self-funded pre-feasibility study in July 2024 proposed two dry port design scenarios: a lower capital expenditure (CapEx) scenario of 5 to -7 billion FCFA and a higher CapExAPEX scenario of 27 billion FCFA, with a short-term return on investment of 25 percent and 20 percent, respectively.
³⁸ For instance, Maradi faces significant displacement, though it is less severe than in other regions. Approximately 80 percent of these displaced populations are women and children, with children comprising over 55 percent. This insecurity, along with measures implemented by the Government of Niger to combat it, has crippled the region’s economic activity by restricting access to productive land, fisheries, transport, and cross-border trade.



facilitates the transport of goods and services, which is essential for the economic integration of refugees. By connecting agricultural production zones to local markets, roads help RHC engage in trade and improve their livelihoods. Improved road infrastructure is also critical for the delivery of humanitarian aid and relief to refugees in affected areas as it ensures that aid can reach those in need promptly, especially during emergencies. For instance, an UNHCR report³⁹ indicates that all three villages of opportunity in the Maradi region lack reliable all-weather road access to markets, agropastoral production sites and essential services, which ultimately disproportionately affects refugees in the region of Maradi. While lack of access also affects non-refugees, refugees in Niger are more likely to live in poverty compared to the host population due to the poor economic environment, which depends on road connectivity and rural access.

17. Logistics are constrained by inefficient intermediate modes of transport as well as inadequate agglomeration facilities. Local transport services in Niger are organized as follows: (i) from production sites to consolidation markets (primary collection centers) using donkeys, camels, carts, or vans; (ii) from consolidation markets to large urban centers (secondary collection centers) using vans; and (iii) from urban centers to importing countries using trucks with capacities of 10 to 40 tons. However, 65 percent of rural transport from production sites to villages and 21 percent to markets is done by women on foot.⁴⁰ The transport of goods depends on the typology of the value chain.⁴¹ Logistical challenges disproportionately impact women and remain numerous—they include the following: (i) an absence of cold storage facilities for meat and fish products, leading to inconsistent meat quality and an increased risk of contamination;⁴² (ii) a lack of refrigerated isothermal vehicles to maintain appropriate temperatures during the transport of fish, leading to distribution delays, spoilage, and foodborne illnesses; and (iii) poor dry storage conditions for agricultural products that can cause food to spoil quickly⁴³ due to the local climate conditions. To fulfill Niger’s potential for the development of relevant value chains, and to mitigate food insecurity, investment in constructing or rehabilitating logistics centers for sustainable storage solutions for locally produced agricultural products can be complemented by facilitating intermediate modes of transport mobility options.

18. The growth of a nascent logistics sector is also hampered by the lack of access to finance for informal value chain operators and the absence of institutional coordination. In 2021, only 14 percent of the population used formal banking, microfinance, and e-money.⁴⁴ Access to banking services for the agropastoral sector also remains limited, both in absolute terms and as a proportion of total lending.⁴⁵ Similarly, a coherent financing framework that integrates commercial borrowing and microfinance institutions is missing. Such a framework could potentially offer suitable financial products and services tailored to informal logistics service operators and micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), including women and RHC. This opportunity requires institutional coordination to facilitate stakeholder ownership incentivized through access to capital for intermediate modes of transport and agglomeration facilities in the southern Niger RN1 basin. This would also help stabilize food availability throughout the year and reduce the seasonal spikes in food insecurity after harvest, as well as improve subregional flow of agropastoral products from surplus production areas to deficit areas.

19. Niger confronts significant road safety challenges in part due to poorly maintained and aging vehicle fleets. Official statistics from the Road Safety Agency of Niger (ANISER) reported 1,152 fatalities in 2023, though more dire assessments by the World Health Organization (WHO) would place the annual mortality rate estimate at 6,278 people.⁴⁶ Niger’s fatal road crashes are often caused by a combination of inadequate or poor road infrastructure, unroadworthy vehicles, excessive speeding, overloading of trucks, and poor road user behavior. Total vehicle registrations in 2020 were 354,723,

³⁹ UNHCR. 2021. Report on the study of market systems and value chains analysis with the perspective of improving the livelihoods of host populations and refugees in the Maradi region - November

⁴⁰ Ministry of Transport of Niger. 2015. *Study on Intermediary Means of Transport for Rural Logistics* (French).

⁴¹ Cattle are often transported to livestock markets, consolidation points, and border assembly areas by foot; export of cattle to Nigeria is also done by foot. Similarly, dairy is distributed by foot, as well as by cart and motorcycle. Conversely, sheep, goats, and other small ruminants are primarily transported using informal vans or trucks (89 percent without proper documentation), with a cost of US\$4.67 per head by van and \$2.4 per head by 10-ton truck.

⁴² Open-air *kilichi* production is laborious and time consuming, taking two or three days or longer during rainy seasons.

⁴³ Transporting onions can require time, taking up to 15 days, and may result in a 6 or 7 percent loss.

⁴⁴ International Monetary Fund. 2022. *Financial Inclusion in Niger: Challenges and Opportunities*.

⁴⁵ The Food and Agriculture Organization Corporate Statistical Database reports that commercial banks’ loan portfolio share or both agropastoral production and logistics amounted to only US\$15.61 million, equivalent to 1 percent of the total outstanding loan portfolio—the lowest in the UEMOA region.

⁴⁶ WHO. 2023. *Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023*. Available at: https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/country-profiles/road-safety/road-safety-2023-ner.pdf?sfvrsn=dd3f54fa_3&download=true



with 11.7 percent being registered in Maradi and Zinder Regions. Though Niger has regulations on the import of used vehicles, and an import age limit of five years that requires inspection, periodic inspections are poorly regulated and not currently enforced.⁴⁷ The SNCA (National Society for Automobile Control) operates one station in Niamey, which has inspection lines for both light vehicles and heavy vehicles. The GUAN (Niger Automobile Single Window) also operates one station with dedicated light vehicle and heavy vehicle inspection lines. However, regional directorates do not have any technical inspection stations, relying on visual inspection when registering vehicles. Establishment of vehicle inspection centers in Maradi and Zinder could enable a gradual improvement of the quality of regional fleet stock operating within the RN1 basin.

Synergies with Other Programs and Projects

20. Guided by the National Strategy for Transport (2017–2025) and the National Strategy for Rural Roads, the proposed operation focuses on building local resilient connectivity while improving access at national and regional levels. The Ministry of Transport and Equipment (MTE)⁴⁸ leads the implementation of the transport strategy, which aims to improve the climate-resilient connectivity of Niger’s road network. This includes better connecting cities, increasing rural accessibility for villages with over 500 inhabitants, and enhancing transport links between Niger, Nigeria, and neighboring countries. Furthermore, the National Strategy for Rural Roads aims to contribute to the government’s objective of building and rehabilitating 1,000 kilometers of rural roads per year to reduce the country’s internal isolation. The project complements both initiatives by investing in the RN1 catchment area between Maradi and Zinder through a “basins of integration” approach⁴⁹ to unlock the economic potential of the subregion.

21. Project-financed activities will complement and seek synergies with ongoing interventions that support critical needs in Maradi and Zinder. Ongoing interventions financed by World Bank operations collectively aim to: (i) enhance access to essential services, including electricity, water, sanitation, health, education, and digital connectivity, in underserved rural areas; (ii) address poverty reduction; and (iii) support economic development, particularly through agricultural productivity in Maradi and Zinder. The proposed project supports the objectives of these interventions by improving resilient road connectivity between Maradi and Zinder and within the RN1 basin, thus ensuring reliable access to these services. The proposed project will further complement investments from strategic operations while avoiding duplication, including the following: (a) the Niger Rural Mobility and Connectivity Project (PMRC, P164498), which is financing rural roads in selected communities, including in Maradi and Zinder; (b) the Enhancing Niger Northeastern Connectivity Project (PACNEN, P171793), which is improving connectivity between Zinder and Agadez; and (c) the Lomé–Ouagadougou–Niamey Economic Corridor Project (PCE-LON, P168386), which is improving regional connectivity with Burkina Faso and Togo; (iv) the Livestock and Agriculture Modernization Project (LAMP, P179276) Multi-Phase Programmatic Approach (MPA), which currently invests on the production, storage and processing of agropastoral goods and on the rehabilitation of markets in Niger, including the Maradi-Zinder region; and (v) the Energy Niger Accelerating Electricity Access Project (HASKE, P174034) MPA which also share a focus on supporting refugee populations and host communities in Maradi through improved infrastructure access. The selection of rural roads and to be financed by this project will be informed by the LAMP’s and HASKE’s investments to ensure all-year climate adapted connectivity and accessibility. The synergies with these World Bank–financed transport projects and projects from other sectors are summarized in Annex 3.

22. The Directorate General of Civil Status, Migration, and Refugees (DGECMR) under Niger's Ministry of the Interior, Public Security, and Territorial Administration (MIPSTA) is responsible for managing civil status events, regulating migration, and coordinating refugee protection and assistance. It oversees the registration of births, marriages, and

⁴⁷ The provisions of Article 94 of the 2017-518/PRN/MT decree of June 16, 2017, regarding the application modalities of Law No. 2014-62 of November 5, 2014, on the Highway Code stipulate: "The age of vehicles to be imported is set by a joint order of the Minister in charge of Transport and the Minister in charge of Commerce." Similarly, the provisions of Article 15 of Law No. 2014-62 of November 5, 2014, regulate the age of all vehicles at the time of importation. As a result, the MTE has already confirmed that the importing age limit will be set to 5 years; however, this regulation is yet to be developed and adopted.

⁴⁸ The MTE manages the development of transport infrastructure, including roads, waterways, and dry ports, as well as transport services, road safety, and regulation.

⁴⁹ "Basins of integration" is a concept that aims to invest in both hard and soft transport and logistics infrastructure within a basin and with a backbone corridor to enable the basin's population and businesses to connect to the regional, national, and international markets as an enabler of resilience and economic and social prosperity.



deaths, formulates migration policies, and ensures the rights and integration of refugees into host communities. The DGEICMR collaborates with national and international organizations to address the needs of refugees and displaced persons, ensuring their access to essential services and support.

23. Public sector investment in the road sector in Niger is essential, as the country currently lacks the necessary reforms and traffic volumes to attract private investment. The current project is part of a larger program proposed by the MTE, with a range of interventions around the rehabilitation of the RN1 basin, which has the potential to mobilize the participation of other financial partners, including donors and the private sector. The project will also support road asset management reform and provide extensive capacity building to ensure the viability of RN1 investments and the sustainability of the country's road network. The project is not expected to directly contribute to Maximizing Finance for Development Enabling (MFD-E) and Private Capital Enabling (PCE).

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

Development Objective(s) (From PAD)

The Project Development Objective (PDO) is to improve climate-resilient road connectivity⁵⁰ and to enable value chain logistics development in southern Niger.⁵¹

Key Results

Improve climate-resilient road connectivity in southern Niger:

- **PDO indicator 1** – Direct users that benefit from and inferred beneficiaries of improved access to sustainable transport infrastructure and services (Number of people, gender-disaggregated, youth-disaggregated).⁵² **Baseline: 0; Target:**⁵³ **772,000 direct users (390,000 women; 581,000 youth); 1,412,000 inferred beneficiaries (713,000 women; 1,059,000 youth).**
- **PDO indicator 2** – Refugees, internally displaced persons and people in host communities supported with accessing and utilizing services and livelihoods⁵⁴ (Number of people, gender-disaggregated, youth-disaggregated).⁵⁵ **Baseline: 0; Target: 80,080 refugees (20,020 women; 52,850 youth); 18,697 IDPs (2,990 women; 12,900 youth); 2,561,000 hosts excluding IDPs (1,293,000 women; 1,935,000 youth).**⁵⁶
- **PDO indicator 3** – Reduced travel time between Maradi and Zinder (Hours). **Baseline: 5.5; Target: 4.0.**

Enable value chain logistics development in southern Niger:

PDO indicator 4 – Adoption⁵⁷ of value chain development initiatives in southern Niger (Yes/No). **Baseline: N; Target: Y.**

D. Project Description

24. Component 1: Climate-resilient improvement of Niger's transport backbone (US\$355.5 million; US\$309.0 million PBA IDA credit, US\$19.5 WHR IDA credit, US\$20.0 WHR IDA grant, and US\$7.0 million counterpart funding). This component benefits indirectly 80,080 refugees, 18,697 IDPs and 2,561,000 hosts excluding IDPs in the Maradi region (not in Zinder) through the rehabilitation/construction of key roads and drainage works in the Maradi-Zinder RN1 basin to improve climate-resilient connectivity and access to basic infrastructure, services and job opportunities towards enhanced living conditions for displaced populations and their host communities in Niger.

⁵⁰ "Climate-resilient road connectivity" is defined as roads which are usable year-round and in all weather conditions that have also been climate risk informed in their design and operations.

⁵¹ Southern Niger is defined as the RN1 basin around Maradi and Zinder.

⁵² This indicator assesses the number of people that experience improved access to climate-resilient road infrastructure, defined as being climate risk informed in its design and operations.

⁵³ The population data for Maradi and Zinder Regions in Niger indicate that the ratio of women to men is 50.5 percent to 49.5 percent. Therefore, considering a 2030 total target of inferred beneficiaries of 772,861 people, it is estimated that roughly 390,000 are women. The population aged 0 to 24 in Niger is estimated at roughly 75 percent of the total population, so a target of approximately 581,000 youth beneficiaries is proposed.

⁵⁴ This indicator measures number of refugees, IDPs, and hosts excluding IDPs (disaggregated by gender and youth) with improved access to health centers, schools and markets and enhanced employment opportunities.

⁵⁵ The host community population does not include IDPs to avoid double-counting.

⁵⁶ UNHCR reports that 25 percent of the refugee population in this region are women, while 66 percent are youth. UNHCR also reports that 16 percent of the IDP population in this region are women, while 69 percent are youth. The disaggregation of female and youth populations for host communities in the Maradi region is calculated using the same ratio assumed for PDO indicator 1 (i.e., 50.5 percent women and 75 percent youth).

⁵⁷ Adoption in this indicator refers to the active engagement and participation of the targeted stakeholders in the designed value chain development initiatives, leading to improvements in their institutional capacities and plans to implement them.



• **Subcomponent 1.1: Climate-resilient rehabilitation of the RN1** (*US\$304.0 million; US\$292.0 million PBA IDA credit, US\$11.5 WHR IDA credit*). This subcomponent will strengthen the resilience of Niger’s road network and the communities it serves through the rehabilitation and upgrading to climate-resilient standards of the existing RN1 Maradi–Zinder (232.89 km) road section. A detailed climate vulnerability analysis of the project area was carried out by the World Bank⁵⁸ and identified the RN1 Maradi-Zinder Road section as its most vulnerable section to climate change, as evidenced by recent years’ damage and indirect losses due to climate-exacerbated events. This rehabilitation and upgrade will unlock systemic resilience at the road network by reducing climate change vulnerability in areas with high agropastoral potential and RHC concentration, while improving all-year climate-adaptive connectivity in southern Niger. Adaptation interventions to be implemented include mainstreaming nature-based solutions (NBS), stabilizing dunes, improving drainage structures, and other risk reduction measures that will be reinforced during routine and periodic maintenance phases to ensure all-year climate-adapted connectivity and accessibility.⁵⁹ The project will also finance facilities for non-motorized transport (NMT) such as cycling and walking, including pedestrian crossings, pathways, and sidewalks with solar-powered street lighting at urban crossings following violence prevention environmental design criteria. Design-stage road safety audits will ensure that upgraded roads integrate effective speed management strategies, including traffic-calming measures and appropriate road safety horizontal and vertical signaling for safe and climate-resilient road connectivity. While this component will benefit both RHC and non-RHC populations, approximately 15 percent of the indirect beneficiaries of the Maradi-Zinder road section are part of the RHC population. Given that the RHC population will benefit from improved connectivity due to the rehabilitation of this key road section, it is proposed that less than 5 percent of the financing needs be covered by the WHR IDA credit. The improved connectivity to this corridor plays a vital role in enhancing the quality of life for refugees in Niger by providing better access to essential services, economic opportunities, and ensuring their protection and integration into the host communities. Improved corridor infrastructure helps stabilize fragile areas by enhancing the presence of the state and integrating refugees into the national administrative system.

• **Subcomponent 1.2: Climate-resilient rehabilitation/construction and upgrading of selected feeder and rural roads and construction of drainage systems within the RN1 basin** (*US\$33.0 million; US\$5.0 million PBA IDA credit, US\$8.0 WHR IDA credit, US\$20.0 WHR IDA grant*). This subcomponent will strengthen the resilience of the Niger’s road network and of communities served through financing the rehabilitation and upgrading to climate-resilient standards of approximately: (i) 25 km of feeder roads connecting to the RN1 Maradi–Zinder section; and (ii) 165 km of rural roads connecting to the rural hinterland of the RN1 basin in the Maradi–Zinder regions. These roads will be selected following a climate risk-informed prioritization methodology that considers their contribution to the resilience of the road network, complemented by GIS analyses and consultations with community groups, particularly women and RHC, taking into account their specific mobility needs (better lighting, pedestrian pathways, and roads that better connect villages and existing health facilities and markets); and (iii) construction of 50 km of concrete block gutters in areas with high flood exposure, deploying the high labor intensity (HIMO) method.⁶⁰ About 85 percent of the feeder and rural roads to be financed by this project will be rehabilitated/constructed to connect areas populated exclusively by RHC with agricultural production sites, health facilities, schools and markets, including connecting better Niger’s only three villages of opportunity Chadakori, Dan Daji and Garin Kaka, as well as other RHC within the Maradi region. It is estimated that 80,080 refugees, 18,697 IDPs and 2,561,000 hosts excluding IDPs will directly benefit from enhanced access and all-weather connectivity, and this will lead to increased trade and economic potential of the region. This is particularly important for refugees who may rely on small-scale businesses or agriculture for their livelihoods. This subcomponent will support local communities utilizing the HIMO approach to create jobs directly benefiting RHC. The project will finance a professional certification training program in construction and drainage maintenance, enhancing job prospects beyond this project for at least 2,500 refugees and 500 host community members, focusing on women and youth. Additionally, it will provide

⁵⁸ The proposed project was further informed by the Climate Risks and Resilience and Adaptation Options Appraisal Report funded by the Global Center on Adaptation to improve the climate resilience of road infrastructure and one of the Global Facility for Decarbonization of Transport (GFDT) studies under TF0C0046 entitled *Southern Niger Deep Dive*, which included Maradi and Zinder Regions.

⁵⁹ See more details in Annex 2.

⁶⁰ This will further reduce climate change vulnerability on rural roads connecting areas with high agropastoral potential by following the recommendations of the GCA and GFDT climate vulnerability analysis and design considerations to ultimately improve climate-adaptive rural accessibility in areas with a high concentration of RHC, which tend to be among the poorest and the most vulnerable to the pervasive effects of climate change.



direct employment within the project for approximately 400 refugees and 100 host community members, targeted among the most vulnerable RHC. The HIMO approach will be applied during construction and for long-term community maintenance. While job opportunities for this activity are limited, it will contribute to reducing flood risks in RHC areas. The climate vulnerability–informed prioritization, as well as NMT, road safety, and climate-resilience design considerations under subcomponent 1.1, will also apply under this subcomponent.

- **Subcomponent 1.3: Climate-resilient road asset management strengthening and reform operationalization** (*US\$17 million; US\$10 million PBA IDA credit and US\$7 million counterpart funding*). This subcomponent will primarily support improving governance and institutional mandates for climate-resilient road asset management. The component takes a two-pronged approach by financing the following: (a) a technical assistance (TA) to maximize the effectiveness of the 2019 road sector reforms and institutional strengthening for road maintenance through activities to be identified during project implementation;⁶¹ and (b) designing and implementing a multi-year contract for periodic and routine road maintenance for a road section to be determined during implementation that meets certain eligibility criteria. The TA aims to facilitate the transition to medium-term planning and multi-year contracting for routine and periodic road maintenance in Niger, in alignment with the government priorities identified through the 2025 Niger InfraSAP. Key activities to be carried out include enabling DGSR with adequate resources or delegating ARMP programming to AMODER, promoting institutional collaboration for efficient planning, and revising the institutional architecture to support decentralization. Capacity building will be achieved through training programs, strengthening financial and technical capacities, and improving GIS skills. Financial and technical integration involves providing technical guidance for the modernization of the Road Database, incorporating climate risks in maintenance programming, and diversifying maintenance financing sources. Private sector participation will be promoted, and stakeholder engagement will align priorities for road infrastructure development. Contracting and governance improvements include developing multi-year maintenance contract models, and refining the M&E mechanism based on performance measures. This comprehensive approach aims to develop a sustainable and efficient road maintenance system in Niger. Regarding the multi-year contract for periodic and routine road maintenance program, FER will fully finance the routine maintenance and provide complementary funds for the periodic maintenance under this contract. All support under component 1.3 will be provided with a focus on ensuring long-term institutional sustainability. This includes the possibility of establishing the necessary capacity and framework for future climate-resilient road asset management efficiency and programming.

- **Subcomponent 1.4: Preparation of technical studies and environmental and social (E&S) instruments for priority paved roads in southern Niger** (*US\$1.5 million PBA IDA credit*). This subcomponent will finance consultant services to prepare technical studies and E&S instruments for the rehabilitation and upgrading of paved road sections to climate-resilient standards, to be selected during implementation. The roads selection will prioritize RN1 basin climate-resilient connectivity. Examples of these roads include the Zinder bypass road and the Maradi junction.

25. Component 2: Enabling environment for southern Niger basin logistics (*US\$4.1 million PBA IDA credit*)

- **Subcomponent 2.1: Design of value chains support program through rural logistics** (*US\$2.1 million PBA IDA credit*). This subcomponent will finance consultant services to prepare studies and design a support program for agropastoral value chains through logistics. This study will assess the feasibility of a broad range of financial instruments (e.g., blended finance models, concessional credit lines, trade finance solutions) and may feature the use of financing mechanisms such as credit enhancement grants that improve the credit for MSMEs, including women-led MSMEs, informal women's groups/associations/cooperatives (including RHC informal women's groups), and agropastoral associations; and partial portfolio credit guarantee (PPCG). It will also cover necessary institutional arrangements and provide technical assistance to participating financial institutions and logistics actors in southern Niger, tailored to their needs (e.g., preparing financial documents and enhancing their capacity to manage businesses and improve returns on proposed investments).

Develop a predefined criteria in contracts of RAM; (xviii) identification of pilot projects for multi-year contracts; and (xx) refine the M&E mechanism based on performance measures and targets. .



- **Subcomponent 2.2: Support to multimodality and regional trade facilitation** (*US\$2 million PBA IDA credit*). The subcomponent will finance consultant services to prepare technical studies and E&S instruments for: (i) a border post in Magaria to facilitate exports; (ii) the establishment of small onion export counters in Maradi; and (iii) a dry port in Maradi. The studies for the dry port of Maradi are expected to include a commercial feasibility assessment and a management/operations modality.

26. Component 3: Institutional strengthening and project management (*US\$11 million; US\$10.5 million PBA IDA credit, US\$0.5 WHR IDA credit*)

- **Subcomponent 3.1: Institutional strengthening** (*US\$4 million; US\$3.5 million PBA IDA credit, US\$0.5 WHR IDA credit*). This subcomponent finances road safety motorization management through: (i) consultant services to conduct a vehicle inspection system audit and to prepare the technical and E&S instrument for two modern vehicle inspection centers in Maradi and Zinder; and (ii) the construction of such facilities. It will also support the MTE, the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF), the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAE), the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MCI), the Ministry of Water, Sanitation, and Environment, and the Road Safety Agency of Niger (ANISER) to finance equipment, software, consumables, and staff capacity building related to the integration of climate change considerations into the planning, design and implementation of project activities. Lastly, the WHR credit will finance activities to strengthen the institutional capacity of the ministries involved in the implementation of the project, including direct support to the MIPSTA's DGECMR, including: (i) strengthening the capacity of central and decentralized administration officials in the field of refugee management and support to host populations; and (ii) specific long-term trainings in refugee management. The support to MIPSTA's DGECMR will result in better security measures and legal frameworks for refugees, which are essential for their protection and integration. The Government of Niger, with support from the UNHCR, has implemented measures to protect refugees and ease their integration, such as improving registration and revising national procedures for determining refugee status, and this activity will further support these efforts.

- **Subcomponent 3.2: Project management** (*US\$7 million PBA IDA credit*). This will finance costs associated with the following: (i) provision of relevant technical assistance,⁶² training and equipment (including software), and financing of Operating Costs; (ii) implementation of safeguard measures, including financing of resettlement compensation for the rehabilitation of the Maradi–Zinder road section of the RN1; (iii) future Resettlement Action Plans (RAPs) for the feeder and rural roads and drainage; and (iv) the provision of technical assistance and training for the implementation and close monitoring of the environmental and social instruments and mitigation measures included in the ESCP, including the preparation and implementation of the SEA/SH action plan(s); (v) the establishment and implementation of a grievance redress mechanism for channeling and managing Project-related complaints, and the carrying out of communication activities regarding the Project activities.

27. Component 4: Contingent emergency response component (CERC) (*US\$0.0 million*). A Contingent Emergency Response Component is included in the project in accordance with Investment Project Financing (IPF) Policy, paragraphs 12 and 13, for Situations of Urgent Need of Assistance and Capacity Constraints. This will allow for rapid reallocation of IDA uncommitted funds in the event of an eligible emergency as defined in OP 8.00. A CERC Manual will guide the activation and implementation of the CERC, and an Emergency Action Plan will be prepared to confirm activities and financing for a specific event.

⁶² This includes consulting services for: (i) project fiduciary support, environmental and social monitoring, and project management assistance; and (ii) monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities for data collection, monitoring, and reporting related to the project indicators.



Legal Operational Policies	Triggered?
Projects on International Waterways OP 7.50	No
Projects in Disputed Area OP 7.60	No

Summary of Screening of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

The environmental and social risks and impacts of project activities are related to the rehabilitation of the road sections and the proposed economic activities. The full extent of these risks and impacts are not known at this stage but a comprehensive ESIA to assess the potential risks and impacts and identify mitigation measures and assess the acceptability of any potential residual impacts will be carried out. On the environmental side, the potential risks and negative impacts are related to: (i) Resource efficiency and pollution prevention and management (sourcing of raw materials for civil works, water and energy use, GHG emissions, dust, noise, potential contamination of water sources due to spills and run-off of petroleum products, infiltration into storage areas and improper disposal of fuels, (ii) Occupational and Community health and safety (potential injuries to workers, spread of diseases from labor camps, GBV); (iii) potential loss of vegetation and biodiversity during civil works and preparation of sites, quarries areas for materials, and higher demand of fuelwood by workers; and (iv) potential impact of civil works and excavations on cultural heritage. The full extent of the social risks is not yet known. An ESIA will be undertaken during preparation to gather important information regarding demographics, economic activities, GBV/SEA risks and security concerns. The results will be used to inform project design and the preparation of safeguard instruments. However, it should be noted that the contextual risks in certain of the project area are quite high. This will impact both the ability of the Bank to visit the project area and our capacity to provide implementation support and safeguard compliance verification. Alternative ways to ensure that these risks are adequately mitigated and can be monitored are being explored. For example, the feasibility of a TPM or hiring a local NGO to assist with community engagement are under consideration.

E. Implementation

Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

28. The project's institutional structure includes a Steering Committee, a Technical Committee, and a Project Coordination Unit (UCP) under the MTE. The day-to-day implementation of activities is undertaken by participating agencies. The MEF represents the government on financing issues and will guide the use of counterpart funds, particularly to ease the mobilization and allocation of counterpart funds for sustainable road maintenance. Additional key ministries include the MIPSTA, the MAE, the MCI, the Ministry of Public Health, Population, and Social Affairs (MSPPAS), and the Ministry of Hydraulics, Sanitation, and the Environment (MHAE).

29. At the national level, the MTE oversees the project, with a Steering Committee that is chaired by the Minister. It will provide general strategic direction and oversee project execution. It also approves the project’s annual work programs and budgets. This committee will be established through a government act issued by the Prime Minister and will constitute an effectiveness condition.

30. A Technical Committee, led by the Secretary General of the MTE, will monitor technical implementation, along with technical experts from the MTE and other supervising ministries. It will be responsible for daily technical supervision, annual work plan supervision, and the implementation of all project components and activities to ensure the



project achieves its objectives, outputs, and outcomes. This committee will be established through a government act issued by the MTE within three months after effectiveness.

31. The project will be supported by sectoral ministries to ensure ownership, high quality engagements and build long-term capacity. At the sectoral level, management committees will be established to coordinate activities through Project Teams represented in the Technical Committee. **The Project Teams will be formally constituted and operationalized before project effectiveness and will be responsible for implementing the project activities according to Table 1.**

Table 1 – Scope of the Project Teams

Sector Activities	Responsible Entities
National and secondary road improvement and drainage works	General Directorate of Public Works and Infrastructure (DGPI) , in coordination with the MIPSTA’s DGECMR, the National Environmental Assessment Office (BNEE), and other stakeholders
Rural road rehabilitation	General Directorate of Rural Roads , in coordination with the MIPSTA’s DGECMR, the BNEE, and other stakeholders
Institutional support and pilot of road maintenance program ⁶³	DGPI/DGSR , in coordination with collaboration with the AMODER, the FER, and the CACER
Value chain development (logistics, multimodality, and trade facilitation)	UCP , in coordination with the Directorate of Agriculture, the Directorate of Animal Industry, DGECMR, the Directorate of Railway, Maritime, and River Transport, customs authorities, the DTR, and other stakeholders

32. The Project Coordination Unit attached to the Secretary General of the MTE through the Road Transport Directorate (DTR) will oversee fiduciary aspects (procurement and financial management), environmental and social risk management, security risk considerations, M&E, and coordination among stakeholders. It is already operational and ensures project implementation coordination with the ongoing WB Lomé–Ouagadougou–Niamey Economic Corridor Project (PCE-LON, P168386). The UCP will also supervise the technical aspects of the project for all components and ensure the implementation of project activities within their respective institutional mandates, along with sectoral and regional management committees to coordinate activities.

33. The existing Project Implementation Manual (PIM), M&E Manual, and Project Procedures Manual (setting out guidelines and procedures for administrative tasks, financial management, grant disbursement, and other fiduciary arrangements), currently used for the PCE-LON, have been satisfactorily updated. The implementation capacity of the UCP is deemed as adequate to implement the PCE-LON and this Project; however, the UCP would benefit from the recruitment a SEA/SH specialist proposed as an effectiveness condition, and of an additional accountant proposed as a dated covenant (to be completed three months after effectiveness). The PIM directly designates this UCP for this operation.

CONTACT POINT

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⁶³ Considering the legal status of AMODER, FER and CACER and their critical role in the implementation of the pilot road maintenance program (including FER’s obligation to provide counterpart funding for the periodic and routine maintenance activities), the government of Niger has agreed to adopt a quadripartite implementation/collaboration agreement between the MTE and these three agencies. This agreement needs to be adopted no later than six months after the effective date. This agreement needs to capture their roles and responsibilities in the implementation of the Project activities, including compliance with relevant environmental and social requirements under the ESCP.



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