



Project Information Document (PID)

Concept Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 01-Mar-2022 | Report No: PIDC33474

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

Country Niger	Project ID P177043	Parent Project ID (if any)	Project Name Niger Integrated Landscape Management Project (P177043)
Region AFRICA WEST	Estimated Appraisal Date May 04, 2022	Estimated Board Date Jan 19, 2023	Practice Area (Lead) Environment, Natural Resources & the Blue Economy
Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing	Borrower(s) Republic of Niger	Implementing Agency Ministry of Environment	

Proposed Development Objective(s)

The Project development objective is to increase the adoption of integrated landscape management practices and enhance people's livelihoods in selected communes in Niger.

PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US\$, Millions)**SUMMARY**

Total Project Cost	150.00
Total Financing	150.00
of which IBRD/IDA	150.00
Financing Gap	0.00

DETAILS**World Bank Group Financing**

International Development Association (IDA)	150.00
IDA Credit	75.00
IDA Grant	75.00



Environmental and Social Risk Classification

Moderate

Concept Review Decision

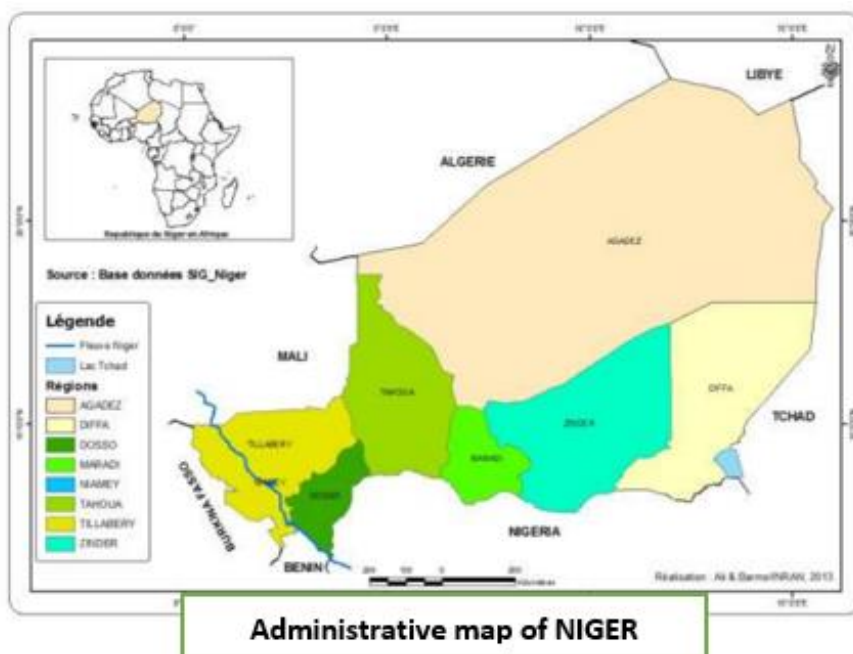
Track I-The review did authorize the preparation to continue

Other Decision (as needed)

B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

1. **Geography and climate.** Niger, a land-locked country with an area of 1,267,000 km², is the sixth largest country in Africa and the largest in West Africa (see Map 1). Two-thirds of the country is located in arid and semi-arid zones (see Annex 1, Map 2). The climate is mostly arid (in 85% of total area, annual rainfall is less than 350 mm). Niger faces ever-increasing aridity, marked by very low rainfall in general and varying along a negative gradient from the south (800 mm maximum in the Sahel) to the north, where it is often exceptional. (between 10 and 90 days depending on the region). The country is characterized by rising temperatures, erratic rainfall, and the occurrence of other extreme weather events such as floods and droughts, which expose the populations to climatic



hazards with the risk of loss of crops, animals and other resources. Compared to pre-industrial levels, the median temperature is expected to increase by 2.1 °C in 2030, while the annual number of very hot days¹ is projected to rise substantially. In some parts, especially in south-western Niger, this would amount to about 300 days per year by 2080.² Future projections of precipitation are less certain due to the high seasonal and annual variability which characterizes the Sahel region³. Some models project almost no change in the mean annual precipitation over Niger, while other models project a decline and others an increase. The projections also show high variations within the country. What is certain, however, is that extreme weather events (floods and droughts) will become more common, and that farmers and

¹ Days with daily maximum temperature above 35 °C.

² Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (2020). *Climate Risk Profile: Niger*.

³ <https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/niger/vulnerability>



pastoralists should adapt to erratic rainfall. The 2020 floods affected 350,000 people⁴ and the monetary damages and losses are currently being estimated.

2. **Demography.** Niger has a population of about 23.3 million people. About three-quarters of the population is concentrated along the Niger River (in the West) and the long (1,500 km) southern border with Nigeria. Some parts of the north are almost uninhabited except for a few smaller cities along the northern route to Algeria. Niger is marked by one of the world's highest population growth rate. Indeed, over the last two decades, the average annual intercensal growth rate of the population of Niger has gone from 3.1% during the period 1988-2001 to 3.8% (with a fertility rate of 6.9 children per woman): at this rate, the population of Niger will double every 18 years. Thus, in 2030, the population of Niger would be more than 34 million inhabitant and population density would increase from 8.5 inhabitants per km² in 2001 and 13.5 inhabitants per km² in 2012, to 26.9 inhabitants per km² in 2030. This development poses the challenge of meeting the growing needs in education, health, employment, social and security protection, infrastructure, food security, and improvement of the environment.

3. **Economy.** Niger's economy is dominated by the agropastoral sector, which contributes 38 percent to the country's GDP and on which more than 80 percent of the population depend for food security and livelihoods. About 84 percent of the population depends on natural resources which are very vulnerable to climatic factors. Niger's economy has been affected by high variability in rainfall, fluctuating terms of trade and volatility in aid flows. These shocks seriously affect human development and cause chronic food insecurity in Niger. Poor households, especially female-headed households, are more exposed to these shocks and often resort to negative coping mechanisms such as selling or consuming seed socks and selling productive livestock. Food insecurity is aggravated by the high incidence of rural poverty, which translates at the household level into low purchasing power, difficult access to food for vulnerable groups, endemic malnutrition and poor access to structures. Due to the health, climate and security crises, the growth rate fell from 5.9% in 2019 to 3.6% in 2020. However, the favorable economic outlook in 2021 could allow a rebound in growth to 5.1%.

4. **Poverty.** Niger has an undiversified economy, dependent on agriculture for 40% of its GDP. An estimated 2 million people are chronically food insecure, while 4.5 million people are at risk of food insecurity.⁵ In the *2020 Human Development Report*, Niger is ranked last (189th). The level of extreme poverty in 2020 at 42.9% concerns more than 10 million people (out of 23 million). There are striking disparities in poverty at the subnational level. and the poverty incidence in rural areas is 46.8 percent, compared to only 11.8 percent in urban areas: a Nigerien inhabitant in Niamey has the lowest probability (7 percent) of being poor, while those living in the regions of Dosso, Zinder, Maradi, and Tillaberi have the highest probability, estimated at 48.4 percent, 47.8 percent, 46.1 percent, and 42.3 percent, respectively. Two regions, Zinder and Maradi (where nearly half of Nigeriens lives in poverty) have the largest number of poor people. Such wealth disparities between regions can be a source of social tensions and can potentially affect the country's future growth and security situation. In the absence of adequate coping mechanisms or programs that help the poor build resilience, shocks can contribute to food insecurity, with long-term impacts on poverty reduction and human capital. Rural households commonly cope with shocks through negative coping strategies, such as the depletion of productive assets (sales of productive livestock or consumption of seeds needed for planting), with long-term consequences.

5. **COVID-19 and food insecurity.** The pandemic and its related economic downturn had an adverse effect on household welfare and on poverty reduction. In 2020, income losses due to job layoffs and lower remittances has caused poverty to increase, drawing an additional 400,000 people into extreme poverty. Growth was dampened by COVID-related

⁴ Government of Niger (2020). *Integrated flood response plan for 2020*.

⁵ Government of Niger (2017). *Economic and Social Development Strategy (ESDS) for 2017-2021*.



restrictions on the movement of people and on business activities, implemented from March to May 2020, together with a halt in large infrastructure projects and lower global demand for commodities. In addition, Nigerian authorities closed borders for trade with Niger from August to December 2020. The health crisis was followed by an acute food crisis linked to the deficit of the 2019/2020 agricultural campaign, the difficulties and/or restrictions on the export of food products (particularly from Algeria), and the closure of the border with Nigeria. The results of the national food crisis prevention and management system indicated that 4.2 million people were estimated to be in acute food insecurity during the April-May 2020 period and 5.6 million during the June-August 2020 period.

6. **Insecurity.** Niger meets the definition of a country at risk of fragility, conflict, and violence. The spillover of the crisis in Mali and the Boko Haram regional crisis is causing a significant displacement of people toward and within Niger. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Niger is home to more than 568,410 displaced people (August 2021). These include 249,850 refugees and 283,120 internally displaced persons (IDPs) mainly in Diffa, Tahoua, Maradi, Tillabéry, and Niamey, and 35,440 Nigerien nationals who returned from Nigeria. More than half of the refugees are women and almost two-thirds are under 18 years old. The World Bank's *Risk and Resilience Assessment (RRA)* in the Sahel Region further highlights the security and economic impacts of regional conflicts and forced displacement on Niger. Niger has also faced endogenous crises and conflicts, including military coups, rebellions and intra- and inter-community clashes.

7. **Gender.** Gender inequality is pronounced in Niger across a range of socioeconomic, health, and education outcomes. Niger has the highest level of gender inequality among the 189 countries rated by the gender inequality index and other gender indicators are equality poor, with a tendency to further worsen in times of crisis and shocks. Gender-based violence (GBV) is relatively prevalent, and economic opportunities and access to education are very limited for women and girls. Conflict, militarization, and insecurity in some areas of the country (notably the Diffa, Tahoua, and Tillabéry Regions) have exacerbated pre-existing risks of GBV in multiple ways: the collapse of social safety nets and protective relationships, the growing challenges associated with accessing life-saving services leaving survivors isolated and unable to seek care, the weakened rule of law and state presence failing to provide protection, the widening of levels and severity of gender inequality, and different manifestations of GBV, from intimate partner violence to sexual exploitation of women and girls.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

8. **Natural resources.** In Niger, as already mentioned, more than 84 percent of populations depends heavily on the exploitation of renewable natural resources, mainly extensive through pastoralism, rain-fed food crops, collection of Non-timber forest products (NTFPs) for food / pharmacopoeia, and firewood for cooking. These natural resources are subject to strong biophysical pressures: low and erratic rains, high temperatures, high aridity, often poor and easily degradable soils, etc. These pressures are exacerbated by anthropogenic pressures: demographic growth, climate change, insecurity, poor environmental governance. Natural resource management (NRM) issues are deeply interconnected with general environmental constraints: for example, water is a growingly rare resource, not only because of weak rainfall, but also because of unsustainable natural resource use and population pressures, which in turn propel the degradation of agricultural and pastureland. **This creates a vicious circle.** By adopting it as a main survival strategy, producers are increasing cultivated areas at the expense of soil fertility management practices, such as fallowing. In addition, overgrazing, uncontrolled exploitation of forests to meet wood energy and service needs, poor harvesting practices for forest products used in traditional medicine and bush fires are all human activities that contribute to the regression of the vegetation cover thus promoting land degradation.



9. **Agriculture.** The performance of the sector is highly variable from one year to another because of its high exposure to agronomic, climatic, and security risks. The exposure to these risks is accentuated by the very low level of capital investment in the sector and the lack of resources to apply technology to help improve productivity and resilience in the face of disruption in production cycles. The shocks that follow agricultural and livestock crises have a strong impact on household income, on national budget, and on the overall Nigerien economy's growth rate. Most crops are produced under rainfed conditions with low yields, including millet, sorghum, and other cereals (including coarse/feed grains), as well as legumes (cowpeas, groundnuts) in more modest amounts. Crop productivity is low compared to neighboring countries, largely because of the low input/low output agriculture practiced by the vast majority of farmers, an underdeveloped inputs market, and also very little investment in productivity-enhancing agricultural practices and technology. The bulk of crop production is consumed locally with little marketable surplus. Crop production is most favorable in the relatively humid areas in the southern part of the country, i.e., the Niger valley as well as some other areas such as Zinder, Maradi, Tahoua, and Diffa. These small areas produce over half of the country's food (production is mainly composed of rice and horticultural products under irrigated, fairly intensive, year-round production conditions). In the North East, there are some 19 million hectares composed mainly of pasture lands, where land is shared between crop and livestock production. Overall average yields of major crops have not seen a significant increase and since the 1980s per capita food production has remained stagnant.¹

10. **Land degradation.** Land degradation is an important factor contributing to low agricultural productivity, poverty and other environmental problems. It is estimated that Niger loses 100,000 ha of agricultural land per year, while the current levels of restoration are below 50,000 hectares a year. Land degradation due to agricultural overexploitation, fuelwood needs, desertification and drought, very low yields, due to land degradation, drought, lack of agricultural inputs and inefficient techniques, and shrinking plots mainly due to demographic growth have combined to create persistent economic and food insecurity. Furthermore, land degradation is exacerbated by other underlying drivers such as weak land governance and conflict resolution mechanisms. Poorly regulated competition and tensions between different local communities over natural resources are an increasing cause of violence. Rural communities witness a pattern where high demographic growth, migration and unprecedented climatic variability put pressure on loosely regulated and limited natural resources. This in turn leads to over-use and degradation of the assets, which in a context of scarce economic opportunities and high poverty, causes greater and unsustainable exploitation and thus more frequent and intense conflicts.

11. **Agricultural expansion.** Agricultural expansion is the most dramatic change in Niger's landscapes. **According to** AGRYMET, over the period 1975-2013, cultivated areas have increased from 12.6 percent in 1975 to 24.5 percent in 2013, representing a total increase of 94.2 percent.⁶ Over this period, natural vegetation suffered a sharp decline, reducing natural biodiversity and exposing the soil to wind and water erosion. In turn, sandy areas have increased by 24.8 percent since 1975. This trend, which appears to have become more acute since 2000, is a concern because it indicates a decrease in soil stability and a loss of vegetation cover.⁷ Niger's vast south-central agricultural zone, already heavily cultivated in 1975, is now saturated with cropland and expanded eastward into the pastoral zone. The expansion of agriculture into areas previously devoted to pastoralism, and the changes in pastoralists' migration patterns in response to climate change

⁶ Agricultural expansion has mainly concerned the productive sandy soils of the valleys of the Tillabéry region where crops are now encroaching on traditional pastoral lands. On the plateaus and terraces of western Niger, the vegetation is dominated by a mosaic of steppes and herbaceous Sahelian savannahs. To the east, the region of Maradi and Zinder, already intensely cultivated in 1975, has become a homogeneous, totally agricultural landscape. In addition, there is a 50% increase in irrigated areas, mainly along the Niger River. Steppes remain the dominant land use and their surface has remained more or less stable in recent years.

⁷ CILSS (2016). *Landscapes of West Africa – A Window on a Changing World*.



have intensified this competition, creating new tensions. With a rapidly growing population and need for farmland, there are increasing tensions between sedentary farmers and livestock producers on the one hand and the traditional pastoralists on the other hand, competing for scarce grass/fodder resources. In an environment where people struggle to meet basic food needs, the production of fodder to increase animal productivity is in competition with staple food production. Land conflicts between farmers, between farmers and pastoralists and among pastoralists themselves are likely to generate even more violence.

12. **Land tenure.** The great majority of rural communities' grapple with a land tenure system with often unclear and overlapping rights, a lack of land use classification and registry, and lack of monitoring and enforcing by local institutions. Typically, traditional or customary mechanisms have been used to resolve conflicts through dialogue and consensus, but they have recently become less effective due to disruptive social changes, increased pressure on land, and a reduced asset base. Land tenure in rural areas is based on a 1993 law (**Rural Code**) that recognizes traditional land ownership and common natural resources management, including for irrigated land and pastoralism. This legislation established an affordable and expedited process to secure tenure rights through local land commissions (see Inset 1) which are however still not set up or understaffed. The 2020 rural land policy further accounted for local realities and diversity, including requiring that a minimum of 30 percent of plots developed by the Government and local authorities are granted to women, youth, and vulnerable persons.

Inset 1: Rural Code and Land Commissions in Niger

In Niger, the *Rural Code* (established by the Ordonnance n° 93-015 of March 2nd, 1993, is an original and innovative tool to respond to the challenges of land management in a context of limited natural resources, and with the objective of combating food insecurity, environmental degradation and conflicts in rural areas. The Rural Code sets the legal framework for agricultural, forestry and pastoral activities from the perspective of land use planning, environmental protection and human development. It ensures the security of rural operators through the recognition of their rights and promotes development through rational organization of the rural world. The Rural Code has established the Land commissions, which are the institutions that implement the Rural Code and ensure compliance with the standards established in its texts. They are established at all levels, from the village to the national. At each level, the land commissions have well-defined powers and prerogatives. They are an opportunity to establish a dynamic of local governance of spaces and natural resources within the framework of decentralization. This local governance should enable better security for rural operators and the prevention of conflicts

- The COFOB (basic land commissions) essentially make a local work: control of corridors, control of access to water points and the issuance of land certificates, in particular donations, sales, inheritances, rentals or customary pledges of land. This is a job that can only be done by grassroots land commissions.
- The COFOCOMS (municipal land commissions) intervene in the identification of passage corridors, the identification of water points, the identification of forests, the materialization system and the registration of these resources there in the rural file. So, all missions that could not be carried out by COFOB.
- The COFODEP (departmental land commissions) supervise the work of the COFOCOMs, and also ensure the training of the members of the COFOBs and the members of the COFOCOMs. It is also the COFODEPs that issue land titles. At the regional level, it is another type of work. The region oversees the entire building at the regional level. The region is also involved in the process of developing the land development plan. At each level, there are therefore different missions, and it is the sum of all these missions that determines the Rural Code.



13. **Public services.** Limited capacity, resources and governance hamper the delivery of basic public services, including justice services, notably outside the capital city of Niamey. The low capacity of the administration, including limited human and financial resources to deliver adequate basic services, and structural issues in public financial management and investment planning and execution, as well as weak revenue mobilization, result in a highly centralized administration and low levels of basic public services.

14. **National Policies and Strategies.** Despite the challenges ahead, Niger has developed several development plans and strategies related to sustainable development, economic growth, land management and climate change resilience there have been various policies and strategies promoting sustainable land management in Niger and other success stories to potentially build on. The following are particularly relevant for the proposed Project:

- **Decentralization and deconcentration.** The Government of Niger supports a bottom-up socio-economic development, including management of natural resources, and is committed to promoting a more holistic approach, particularly in rural communities. Through the decentralization policy, the objective is to "make local authorities strong democratic institutions, capable of contributing to the consolidation of national unity and the promotion of sustainable local development centered on reduction of poverty, delivery of basic social services while respecting the principles of good governance and local diversity". Local authorities (mainly at Commune level, see Inset 2 have public service missions by designing, programming and implementing economic, educational, social and cultural development actions of municipal and regional interest as well as by supporting activities for the protection of the environment, the development of natural resources and the improvement of the living environment.⁸ Local authorities exercise their powers under the control of the State, in compliance with laws and regulations as well as regularly ratified international conventions and agreements. However, in spite of initial promising results, deconcentration and decentralization have lagged, with 90 percent of the budget spent at the central level (nearly all in Niamey, where 50 to 90 percent of civil servants are based), accentuating the disparity with all other regions. Insufficient progress to decentralize power and financial resources to the local level contribute to lack of state presence and essential services. While elected local officials have been in place for the past decade to administer local governance, financial transfers to support them have been extremely limited (estimated at 0.5-2 percent of the budget) and local government revenues are relatively unreliable, modest, and based on out-of-date collection methods that are heavily dependent on central government management and control. The decentralization of responsibilities to local government initiated in 2018 for the education, health, hydraulics and environment sectors has made limited progress as institutional and fiscal systems are still not fully effective. While most local governments have participatory approaches to planning, capacity to mobilize and manage resources is very limited.⁹

Inset 2: Communes and Regions in Niger

Niger has 255 Communes, four of which have special status or "cities" organized into 15 municipal districts. Added to this are seven Regions which have just appeared in the institutional landscape as local authorities with their own legal status. This process provided local institutions with democratically elected deliberative and executive bodies. Moreover, through the decentralization policy, the objective sought by the State is to "make local authorities strong democratic institutions, capable of contributing to the consolidation of national unity and the promotion of sustainable local development. focused on poverty reduction, the delivery of basic social services while respecting the principles of good governance and local diversity".

⁸ Art.5 of General Code of local authorities.

⁹ Direction générale de la Décentralisation et de la Déconcentration (2012) *Document-Cadre de Politique nationale de Décentralisation*.



In Niger, *law 2008-42 of July 31, 2008* relating to the organization and administration of the territory of the Republic of Niger defines the municipality as “the basic territorial community. It is responsible for municipal interests and provides local public services that meet the needs of the population and which, by their nature and importance, do not come under the jurisdiction of the State or the region. For the exercise of its missions and powers, it has its own budget, personnel and assets. To finance the investments and the operation of the Communes, the State has created the *National Agency for the Financing of Territorial Communities (ANFICT)* which is a tool for financing and supporting the mobilization of resources by the Territorial Communities.

In general, the Commune is at the same time a geographical, economic, social and cultural space that a population shares in common. It is finally and above all an administrative entity.

- The *Rural Commune (CR)* is a grouping of villages, tribes or administrative districts around a central locality of at least two thousand (2000) inhabitants and coinciding with all or part of the territorial space of a canton or a group according to the socio-ecological zone considered. There are currently two hundred and fourteen (214) rural communes in Niger.
- The *Urban Commune (CU)* is the grouping of districts and administrative villages and/or tribes around an agglomeration of at least five thousand (5000) inhabitants. In Niger, there are currently thirty-seven (37) urban communes.
- An Urban Commune can be set up as a Commune with special status (CSP) or city when the main agglomeration has a population figure of at least one hundred thousand (100,000) inhabitants. The four Communes with special status that currently exist in Niger are: Maradi, Niamey, Tahoua and Zinder.

(Source: Ministry of Interior, Public Security, Decentralization and Customary and Religious Affairs (2015): *Brochure d'Information sur la Décentralisation au Niger, 2015*)

- **Sustainable Development.** Niger adopted its 2035 Development Vision in its ***Strategy for Sustainable Development and Inclusive Growth (SDDCI)***¹⁰ in May 2017. The overall strategy seeks to address main constraints to development, including national security, public administration, human capital (education and health), population growth as well as economic growth, rural development, and private sector development.
- **Economic and Social Development.** The government of Niger stresses the importance of maintaining a balance of its fragile ecosystems and their services for the socio-economic development of the country, as enshrined in one of the five key pillars of its main national policy, the *Economic and Social Development Strategy (ESDS) for 2017-2021*. The strategy recognizes that Niger is facing a precarious environmental situation due to the severity of soil degradation, low preservation of biodiversity, obstacles to the sustainable development of land and water resources, and limited ability to deal with the climate crisis. In addition, the *Renaissance Program 2 (2016-2021)* identifies the restoration and sustainable management of land as one of the main priorities to ensure food and nutrition security through the *Nigeriens Nourish Nigeriens Initiative (3NI)*. These policy documents include ambitious targets in two major areas: (i) the sustainable management of lands and ecosystems, which includes objectives to restore 1.065 million hectares by 2021 (on average 213,000 hectares per year) and to extend protected areas from four to 40, for all ecosystems combined¹¹; and (ii) the valorization of timber and non-timber forest products, including the objective to increase the production of Arabic gum and of moringa to 200,000 tons and 15,000 tons by 2021, respectively.¹² Through its *Strategic Framework for Sustainable Land Management for 2015-2029*, the government of Niger has set itself the objective to restore 3.2 million hectares of land by 2029. Niger has expressed these commitments internationally, including through its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the UN Paris Agreement on Climate Change and through the Bonn Challenge.¹³

¹⁰ Stratégie de Développement Durable et de Croissance Inclusive. For more details, please see: <http://www.plan.gouv.ne/sddci2035.php#:~:text=Le%20Tome%201%20de%20la,de%20ses%20objectifs%20en%202035>.

¹¹ During the period 2011-2015, Niger reported to have restored 218,000 hectares of land against a target of 150,000 hectares and doubled the area of protected areas.

¹² Government of Niger (2016). *Renaissance Program 2*.

¹³ A global Climate Resilience. platform launched by the Government of Germany, involving 61 countries to date.



- **Maisons du Paysan (MP).** The concept at the commune level was first introduced by the national food security initiative, “Nigériens Nourish Nigériens” Initiative (3NI, 2012). The purpose was to bring national services closer to local needs and provide a feed-back mechanism between national and local policies and practices. The MP is conceived to be a multi-service platform with 10 components either all located in one place or scattered in the commune. Farmers and rural producers can obtain advisory services, training, and equipment to improve sustainable and climate resilient land management practices. With the objective to establish one MP in every commune, only 32 were constructed by 2019. Among these, only a number were fully operational. Under the CAPRC project, eight additional MP were built and equipped. Each participating commune developed a roadmap for operationalizing its MP specific to their needs and with strong participation from its mayor, mobilizing all the responsible actors (commune, regional and central level) around clearly defined objectives, responsibilities, and deadlines. These roadmaps covered all aspects related to setting up governance and management arrangements, consultations, purchase of products, installation of equipment, and training of technical and support personnel, among other needs. These roadmaps can be useful to operationalize more MPs but the sustainability of the mechanism is subject to the legal status of the MPs which has yet to be decided¹⁴.
- **Climate Resilience.** In 2010, the Government of Niger developed its *Strategic Program for Climate Resilience (SPCR)* with the general objective to increase food security in Niger by improving resilience of production systems to climate change. The SPCR, rested on four complementary investment projects, including the *Community Action Project for Climate Resilience (CAPCR)*,¹⁵ promoted an innovative approach by addressing climate resilient *sustainable land management (SLM)* hand-in-hand with social protection for the most vulnerable populations. It sought to support climate resilience of populations and their production systems in targeted communes by enhancing the absorptive capacity and preparedness of populations and their productions systems against the adverse impact of climate change primarily focusing on the occurrence of more frequent and severe droughts but also on recurrent flooding, locust infestations, etc.
- **Biodiversity.** To face the many challenges and give new impetus to the management of biological diversity in Niger, a forward-looking vision for improving it has been defined. The objective of the 2014 *National Strategy and Action Plan on Biodiversity (SNPA/DB)* is “to undertake concrete and effective actions with a view to increasing the resilience of ecosystems in the face of the adverse effects of climate change and improving the management of biological diversity in order to ensure that by 2020, its loss is reduced”. By 2035, Nigerien citizens, aware of the roles and challenges of biological diversity, value it, conserve it, restore it and use it “in a sustainable way in order to contribute to guaranteeing to all a better life with equity”.
- **Natural resources.** By 2030, Niger commits to achieving Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) (no net loss), reducing degraded areas from 9% to 5% and increasing vegetative cover from 17% to 19% (net gain) with a view to sustainably improve the living conditions of populations. Specific targets are the following: restoration of degraded land; reduction of cultivated land with a negative net primary productivity trend; reduction to 0% the annual rate of conversion of forests/savannahs/wetlands into other types of occupation; putting an end to silting and water erosion (gullying) along of the Niger River); sequestration of carbon in the soil and/or biomass through good agroforestry practices (wind breaks, hedgerows, assisted natural regeneration, fodder bank, food bank, etc.).¹⁶ Large areas of degraded lands are currently bare and must be recovered for the needs of agricultural and pastoral operations for the benefit of rural producers. The preservation and sustainable management of natural resources will go through the restoration and

¹⁴ The World Bank has recommended the MP to be a public service offered by the commune rather than it be a state-owned enterprise, a solution favored by I3N.

¹⁵ The SPCR consisted of (i) the *Community Action Project for Climate Resilience* (\$US63 million implemented by the World Bank); (ii) the *Climate Information Development and Forecasting Project*, (\$US13 million implemented by the African Development Bank); (iii) the *Project for the Mobilization and Development of Water Resources* (\$US22 million implemented by AfDB; and (iv) a *project to improve private sector resilience to climate change* (\$US 12 million implemented by the International Finance Corporation).

¹⁶ République du Niger (2018) *Processus de Définition Des Cibles de Neutralité en Matière de Dégradation des Terres Rapport Final du Programme de Définition des Cibles de NDT*.



protection of productive bases; conservation of biodiversity and enhancement of wildlife; enhancement of fish and beekeeping forest products; securing and sustainable management of agro-sylvo-pastoral resources, water bodies and developed areas; as well as improving environmental governance.

- **National Determined Contribution (NDC)**¹⁷. Niger revised its *Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)* in October 2021 as part of the Paris Agreement on climate change, with WBG support to develop an Investment Plan to meet its NDC commitments and a *Partnership AxcoPlan* to coordinate support provided by technical and financial partners and help match available resources with needs. According Niger's priority is therefore: to focus first on strategies for adaptation and resilience to climate change: the scaling up of sustainable land management practices across all agro-ecological zones to increase the resilience of households and ecosystems, and sequester significant amounts of carbon; the development and sustainable management of forest formations to avoid the loss of 100,000 ha of shrub steppes per year and considerably reduce GHG emissions due to deforestation; improving access to modern cooking fuels, by reducing the demand for wood per inhabitant (massive distribution of improved stoves with a penetration rate in urban areas of 100% by 2030 and 30% in rural areas; use of domestic gas; production and use of biogas and biofuels on an industrial and family scale).¹⁸
- **Social Protection**. In 2011, and within the context of the SDRP, the Government approved the *National Policy on Social Protection* to promote innovative forms of governance that provide more social protection coverage to the population. The political commitment is to mainstream national targets into main national strategies and policies. In Niger, social protection is part of the strategic priorities to reduce poverty and food insecurity, as highlighted in the *3N Initiative*. In addition, the country's resilience strategy for the next 20 years is aimed at protecting Niger's people from hunger, promoting national production, and improving incomes. The first axis of the Social Protection Policy outlines a strategic vision to move from one-off emergency aid to the establishment of a permanent system of social safety nets that contribute to building resilience and that can be scaled up in case of crises. The policy outlines how to link the prevention and protection aspects of social safety nets, with promotion measures that contribute to poverty reduction over the medium to long term.
- **Gender**. In 2007, the Government adopted a comprehensive *National Policy on Gender* aimed at activating the national and international government commitments for the promotion of equity and gender. The strategy revolves around the following four strategic axes: (i) improvement of the socio-cultural environment in connection with demography, peace and security for greater equity between men and the women ; (ii) strengthening of the institutional and legal framework conducive to the application of the rights of women and girls, to the fight against gender-based violence and the equitable participation of men and women in the management of power; (ii) economic empowerment and inclusive growth linked to management environmental sustainability, disaster risk management, migration and humanitarian emergencies; and (iv) strengthening of institutional mechanisms and organizational frameworks coordination, monitoring-evaluation and partnership.

15. **The implementation of all these strategies/action plans has not been mixed, characterized by a lack of synchronized objectives and a plethora of competing frameworks.** The problem is the lack of institutional coordination, overlapping mandates, conflicting objectives, and contradictory agendas and priorities vying for prominence. Sectoral ministries tend to operate in isolation and address issues such as climate change, climate-biodiversity interaction, and land management in a piecemeal fashion. Institutional, policy and governance responses to address these issues are often reactive through a fragmented and ad hoc approach, while failing to address the root cause. Within the frameworks of

¹⁷ https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/ndcstaging/PublishedDocuments/Niger%20First/CDN_Niger_R%C3%A9vis%C3%A9_2021.pdf

¹⁸ Source: République du Niger – Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme – The Global Mechanisms (n.d.) *Processus de définition des cibles de neutralité en matière de dégradation des terres cibles et mesures en vue d'atteindre la NDT*. The Niger NDC has a number of specific objectives over the 2015-2030 period: (1). Restoration of agricultural land: 1,030,000 ha.; (2). Assisted natural regeneration: 1,100,000 ha.; (3). Dune fixation: 550,000 ha ; (4). Development of natural forests: 2,220,000 ha; (5). Hedges: 145,000 km; (6). Gum/Doumlier plantations: 750,000 ha; (7). Moringa oleifera plantations: 125,000 ha; (8). Herbaceous seeding: 304,500 ha; (9). Private forestry: 75,000 ha



these policies and strategies supporting by inclusive and participatory local development, the approach adopted by the proposed landscape restoration and resilience project will constitute a promising, comprehensive, and multi-functional way to tackle issues presented above by optimizing synergies and reducing negative trade-offs. The approach includes different horizontal and vertical entry points emphasizing the importance of interrelated strategies and agreements on a set of concrete objectives. Common denominators of these entry points include (i) a shared vision among stakeholders about multiple landscape benefits; (ii) a package of practices that achieve multiple objectives; and (iii) key strategies to manage spatial and seasonal interactions across different land uses and users. A spatial approach based on priority landscapes is well aligned with poverty targeting as well as with greater integration of World Bank interventions (e.g., captured through *Geo-Enabling Initiative for Monitoring and Supervision* (GEMS) data).

Relationship to CPF

16. **The proposed Project is well aligned with the World Bank Group’s twin goals of ending extreme poverty and boosting shared prosperity in a sustainable manner.** Project activities will promote poverty reduction, invest in diversifying local livelihoods and improve climate resilience. The Project will provide special support to the poorest and vulnerable social categories, especially those who have been severely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

17. **The proposed project’s objectives are fully aligned with the Niger Country Partnership Framework (CPF) and the Niger Economic and Social Development Plan (PDES).** The proposed project is fully aligned with the focus areas 1 and 3 of the CPF by: (1) increasing rural productivity and incomes to improve the productive capacity and Market integration of farmers and pastoralists and to support agriculture diversification; and (3) strengthening governance to foster citizen’s engagement and promote important sectoral reforms that improve service delivery, expand economic opportunity, bolster economic growth, augment the resilience of the population to fragility and climate change, and mitigate climate change through reduced energy use. The project is also aligned with Niger’s vision for 2035, as expressed through the Sustainable Development and Inclusive Growth Strategy (SCDDI),¹⁹ as well as with Niger’s Economic and Social Development Plan 2017 - 2021 (PDES 2017-2021), which intends to “*strengthen the resilience of the economic and social development system.*” More specifically, the project supports pillar 2 (Social Development and Demographic Transition), pillar 3 (Accelerating Economic Growth) and pillar 5 (Sustainable Management of the Environment) by increasing sustainable landscape management and food security through coordinated and sustainable multi-sectoral investments.

18. **The project directly contributes to the World Bank’s corporate goals of ending extreme poverty and promoting shared prosperity, the World Bank’s Africa Climate Business Plan, and the World Bank’s COVID-19 response as articulated in the Bank’s promotion of Green, Resilient and Inclusive Development (GRID).** In accordance with the *Niger Systematic Country Diagnostic* (SCD-2017), the project targets rural areas with some of the highest poverty rates in the country. Furthermore, these areas are especially vulnerable to climate change, therefore contributing to the action areas “creating climate-resilient landscapes” and “promoting climate smart agriculture” set out in the World Bank’s Africa Climate Business Plan. The project similarly aligns with the World Bank Group’s Climate Change Action Plan (2016 and upcoming update 2021). Finally, the project reinforces the World Bank’s COVID-19 response, which recognizes that the crisis can be leveraged by countries to “Rebuild Better” in a greener, more sustainable and resilient way in accordance with the WB’ Green Resilient and Inclusive (GRID) Development approach.²⁰ The position paper recognizes that landscape and watershed management, ecosystem restoration, sustainable management of forests, regenerative agriculture and

¹⁹ SDDCI: *Stratégie de Développement Durable et Croissance Inclusive*

²⁰ The World Bank Group COVID-19 Crisis Response Approach Paper Crisis Response Approach Paper Saving Lives, Scaling-up Impact and Getting Back on Track (June 2020)



food systems can create jobs quickly and generate long-term benefits such as reduced water scarcity, flood and drought mitigation, lower carbon emissions, and higher agricultural productivity and food security.

19. **The project is in line with the Government’s *Prevention and Resilience Action Plan (PRA)* which was prepared by the Inter-ministerial and Multi-agency Working Group in 2020** and will directly contribute to the priority measures to mitigate the factors of fragility, conflict and violence through three out of its four strategic objectives: (i) Improve the integration of youth and women into the country’s economic and social dynamics; (ii) Prevent and manage conflict and tension related to natural resource access and population growth; and -iii) Improve governance, with a focus on access to justice services and management of extractive resources.

20. **The Project will use the WBG *Maximizing Finance for Development (MFD)* approach, by systematically leveraging all sources of finance, expertise, and solutions (including the private sector) to support sustainable growth.** This means a much more coordinated approach to the public and private sides of development, within a large a spectrum of solutions, private as well as public. The Project will operate within the partnership of the *WB’ Wealth Accounting and Valuation of Ecosystem Services (WAVES) Program*,²¹ which aims to promote sustainable development by ensuring that natural resources are mainstreamed into development planning and national economic accounts.

21. **On a global scale, the Project will also:**

- Contribute to the overall *Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)* and support Niger towards its implementation. It will notably contribute to SDG 12 “*Responsible production and consumption* to restore forest and land through improved soil and nutrient management practices, and promote efficient and sustainable land use practices and avoid land degradation; SDG 13 “*Climate Action*” to take urgent action to combat climate change, SDG target 15 “*Life on Land*” to combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world”. Through the *Natural Capital Accounting (NCA)* system, natural resources will be included in planning and implementation at the national and sectoral levels from the policy dialog that precedes the decision to undertake a project, to project design, through implementation, and even long after the project has ended.
- Share the post-2020 *Global Biodiversity Framework*, whose vision is “by 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and *wisely* used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people”; and which contributes to achieving the five *Aichi Biodiversity Targets*.

22. **The conception of the proposed project will capitalize lessons learned and best practices from several ongoing and past projects supported by the Bank.** It will particularly strengthen and scale-up the activities of the *Community Action Project for Climate Resilience (CAPRC) (P125669)*. It will also seek synergies with current World-Bank financed operations such as the *Niger Integrated Water Security Platform Project (Niger-IWSP Project) (P174414)* and the *Climate-smart agriculture support project (P153420)*. Synergies and complementarity will also be established with forthcoming WB operations (see the list of WB projects currently implemented in Niger in Annex 3). Particularly close partnership will be established with the *Mali Landscape Restoration and Resilience Project (P177041)* – still under preparation - with which it shares the same conceptual approach and methodology.

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

²¹ <https://www.wavespartnership.org/>



The Project development objective is to strengthen integrated landscape management and improve resilience of both climate impacts and of communities' livelihood in targeted communes in Niger.

Key Results (From PCN)

23. **The PDO-Level Results Indicators are the following:**

- Land area under sustainable landscape restoration practices (CRI, Hectare (Ha));
- People with increased benefits from natural resources, disaggregated by sex (Male/female)
- Net greenhouse gas emissions sequestered (CRI, Metric tons of CO2 equivalent/year);
- Target beneficiaries with rating 'Satisfied' or above on project interventions (Percentage, disaggregated by sex and age).
- Communes using integrated landscape management to improve natural resources management and climate resilience as well as using conflict resolution mechanisms related to natural resources management (Number);

D. Concept Description

24. **The underlying assumption of the proposed Project is that traditional sectoral approaches to land management, natural resource management, rural development and food security are no longer sufficient to meet multi-faceted environmental, economic, social and climate change-related challenges.** In order to break current deadlocks and respond to local needs, an innovative, inclusive and integrated approach is needed to face these. The integration of landscape elements is recognized as an effective mitigation strategy by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and several experts due to its multiple adaptation and mitigation effects. The landscape restoration activities are useful to reduce land degradation and biodiversity erosion, which is expected to be aggravated by climate change. Reduced erosion goes along with reduced losses of soil organic matter and, hence, increased soil fertility. Through the same activities, the goal is also to contribute to achieving Niger commitments related to Land Degradation Neutrality by protecting the rights of land users; integrating planning and implementation into existing land use planning processes; and balancing economic, social, and environmental sustainability.

25. **Within a well-defined territory (considered as a large tract of land, such as an administrative unit or living area), a landscape is a geographical unit, comprising a mosaic of natural and human-modified ecosystems.** A landscape—the result of ecological, historical, economic, and cultural processes and activities—is normally defined by its stakeholders at a scale that is small enough to maintain a degree of manageability but large enough to deliver multiple functions to stakeholders with different interests. In Niger, Communes' territories are linked to specific socio-cultural-linguistic groups and ecosystems and, therefore, to avoid the creation of a parallel process, it is legitimate to consider the Commune territory landscape as equivalent to a landscape unit. The Commune will provide the platform for inclusive, participatory, and adaptive spatial planning that integrates multiple objectives and favors the engagement of all stakeholders on shared objectives—including sedentary agriculturalists, semi-sedentary agro-pastoralists and fishermen, nomadic pastoralists, as well as smallholder producers, different categories of peoples (marginalized and vulnerable people), and women and youth groups. Table 1 presents how the Landscape restoration approach will be embedded in the preparation and the implementation of the *Communal Development Plan* (PDC) that by law each Nigerien Commune has to formulate and execute.

Table 1. Imbedding landscape restoration approach in the Nigerien Communal Development Process



Key Steps of the landscape restoration approach	Incremental Steps of the proposed Project
Identification and characterization of landscape units based on relative homogeneous characteristics (environmental, socioeconomic, and demographic parameters)	Selecting communes (on the basis of specific criteria) in the area covered by the project
Establishment of a multi-sectoral partner group at the level of each landscape unit, made up of local stakeholders, agricultural development groups, private sector (for example, agribusiness, banks), nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and so on	Enhancing the planning and managerial capacities of deconcentrated line departments (at district and Commune levels) and reinforcing partnerships between the public, private, and civil stakeholders
Participatory preparation at the level of each landscape unit of Integrated Landscape Development Plans (ILDPs) by the multi-sectoral partner group under the leadership of local governments	Supporting participatory and inclusive elaboration/updating of Commune Development Plans (PDC) and related Investment Plans (IPs) to comprehensively address related to natural capital and livelihoods
Joint implementation by public and private actors of the ILDPs agreed activities	Assisting local stakeholders to design eligible investments (subprojects) aimed to restore landscapes, rehabilitate ecosystem services, and enhance livelihoods and supporting the implementation by local stakeholders (state and non-state actors) of eligible investment subprojects
M&E of the implementation of the ILDPs	Support a bottom-up and inclusive Monitoring & Evaluation system for PDCs and related investment subprojects

26. **The project is structured around three interdependent components that help achieve its development objective.** A fourth *Contingency Emergence Response Component* (CERC) is added to immediately respond to a potential crisis (whether it is natural disaster or anthropogenic related). *Component 1* focuses on promoting an enabling environment for integrated landscape restoration and livelihood resilience, through capacity building, planning and conflict prevention initiatives. *Component 2* focuses on promoting sustainable investments aimed at (i) restoring physical and social functions of degraded landscapes and resilience capacity and increasing their productivity; and (ii) enhancing local livelihood’s resilience by creating jobs, improving services, supporting entrepreneurship and sustainable development of value chains. *Component 3* will support coordination, communication and monitoring - evaluation of the project. Furthermore, the project will harness the potential of disruptive digital technologies to take advantage of the opportunities they offer. Stakeholders will be supported to fully understand the potential of advanced technologies and apply them consistently.

27. **Within the context of Nigerien decentralization and deconcentration policy, the Project will facilitate collaboration and synergies** between, on one hand, Communes and sectoral line ministerial departments and, on the other hand, between Communal institutions and local producers and users’ groups and civil society organizations (CSOs). In terms of governance, the importance of the *subsidiarity principle* will be stressed, to ensure that decisions are taken as closely as possible to the citizen and that higher authorities do not take action (except in the areas that fall within their exclusive competence).

28. **The design of the project is based on the nexus between natural resources degradation, climate change impacts, and social conflicts.** While on the one hand, climatic and anthropogenic factors lead to land degradation and the gradual decline in yields and create a spiral of unsustainable development, the structural vulnerability of Nigerien ecosystems combined with the lack of alternative sources of income explain the uncontrolled expansion of agricultural activities and their encroachment on grazing and forest areas, exacerbating conflicts between communities in a socio-political context already marked by the breakdown of the social contract, the lack of state legitimacy and the proliferation of armed groups.



The conceptual framework of the project is based on this reality and proposes a holistic approach and implementation modalities combining land restoration, citizen engagement, conflict prevention and management, strengthening of local solidarity networks, and improvement of the resilience of populations.

29. **The project concept is also developed based on lessons learned from other projects and by seeking thematic and geographic complementarities with ongoing and upcoming projects.** In this regard, the project aims to consolidate and scale up the successful approaches to co-management of natural resources developed under the *Community Action Project for Climate Resilience (CAPRC) (P125669)*. It will also seek synergies with current World-Bank financed operations such as the *Niger Integrated Water Security Platform Project (Niger-IWSP Project) (P174414)* and the *Climate-smart agriculture support project (P153420)*, as well as the restoration of pastoral lands in complementary areas to those of the Regional Sahel pastoralism support project (PRAPS - P147674). This approach will allow the project to create a multiplier effect to slow down and help reverse the observed trends in deforestation, land degradation and depletion of natural capital in Niger.

30. A series of preparatory studies are also planned to be conducted to feed project design as described in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Activities to be jointly conducted during the preparatory phase by the Technical Unit (TU) and World Bank (WB)

Category	Activities to be conducted during project preparation (March 2022 – July 2022)	Responsibility
Carrying out preparatory studies	Identification of the project area: Mapping exercise to cross all the available data to identify between 50 and 80 targeted Communes meeting the agreed selection criteria	TU WB
	Socio-economic assessments of social capital in the targeted Communes, with a view to strengthening social cohesion and solidarity networks	
	Studies on Value chains (VC) to identify the value chain potential of the targeted areas.	
Planning	Identification of number of PDC to be prepared and/or updated in targeted Communes. Identification of priority investments from valid PDCs	
Analyses	Diagnostic of Maisons du Paysan and how to build on up on its success	TU WB
	Implementation of NDC and Land Neutrality commitments	TU
	Economic and financial analysis of the project	WB
	Security risks of the project covered by the project	TU
	Identification of partner institutions Preparatory analyses related to Social Conflict Management approaches	WB
Environmental and social instruments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF)</i> • <i>Resettlement Framework (RF)</i> • <i>Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)</i> • <i>Labor Management Procedures (LMP)</i> • <i>Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP)</i> 	Ministry of Environment and the Fight Against Desertification (with WB)



COMPONENT 1: Creating enabling conditions for integrated landscape management and climate resilience

31. **This component will support a range of interdependent initiatives aimed at creating and improving the capacities of all stakeholders.** Information, awareness raising, and communication initiatives will address the challenges of integrated landscape management including landscape restoration and livelihood resilience in Niger, by improving the knowledge base about landscapes through specific studies and assessments, strengthening or updating local planning instruments for landscape restoration and livelihood enhancement and setting up the conditions aimed at preventing and managing social conflicts. Activities will primarily benefit Communes and related stakeholders of targeted areas but are likely to include additional neighboring Communes and beneficiaries actually working or committed to address similar issues.

Sub-component 1.1: Strengthening Human and Institutional Capacities

32. **1.1.1 Support capacity building initiatives** of all stakeholders involved at national, regional and municipal levels, including members of the *Project Management Unit* (PMU). These capacity building initiatives will focus on: (i) the socio-economic and environmental issues of Nigerian landscapes and their integrated management; (ii) the economic and commercial challenges of landscape labeling; (iii) the use of renewable energies in landscapes; (iv) certification schemes; (v) the development of certification codes for landscape products to respond to climate risks; (vi) approaches to developing productive alliances and sectors; and (vii) fair trade. Coordinated capacity building initiatives (including study tours) will also be organized. Best practices of the CAPRC (P125669) and *Maisons du Paysan* (MP) (see below) will be used to establish and strengthen professional users' organizations. A collaborative process will be rolled out to engage stakeholders to develop jointly activities, implement and monitor these.

33. **1.1.2 Support studies and assessments to improve the legal, regulatory and budgetary frameworks** and to facilitate integrated landscape management including landscape restoration and livelihood enhancement in Niger. Potential activities to be further clarified during preparation include: (a) conduct of institutional diagnostic for a proper baseline scenario; (b) support to the deployment and enforcement of the Rural Code; and (iii) conduct evaluations aimed at developing relevant options to strengthen the *Maisons du Paysan* scheme and its efficiency. Activities will be undertaken in close collaboration with the *Niger Integrated Water Security Platform Project* (IWSP) (P174414), which already supports the land tenure issues through the COFOCOM and COFODEP, the establishment of land information systems, and the adoption of SLM. In addition, specific activities will advocate the integration of climate change into sectoral policies by supporting initiatives already undertaken under the CAPRC (P125669).²²

34. **1.1.3: Supporting an enabling environment for mobilizing climate finance.** A range of interrelated activities will support the *Natural Capital Accounting* (NCA) in Niger, mainly in the forest and land use sector (climate mitigative and adaptive measures). They will include: (a) strengthening governance of the implementation of the NDC, communication and the capacity of actors, the establishment of vulnerability indexes/reference threshold of Greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) reduction levels in the 4 sectors of the NDC and the development of the long-term low-carbon strategy; (b) assessing and strengthening existing environmental Information and Management Information system; (c) supporting the elaboration of *REDD+ Readiness Preparation Proposals* (R-PP); (d) operationalizing national information and management system to ensure the monitoring of the Niger NDC as part of the implementation of the *Paris Agreement*; (e) and strengthening the links between existing information systems and their evolution toward a monitoring, reporting, and verification (MRV) system. In this regard, the PMU will establish an agreement with the *National Direction of Environment*,

²² At the national level, climate resilience indicators are now integrated into the public investment system and the Strategic Coordination Unit within MPTACD is actively participating in national strategic planning activities.



Urban Sanitation and Sustainable Development / MELCD and the *General Direction of Environment, Water and Forests* to lead the implementation of MRV-related activities. In addition, this subcomponent will support studies to strengthen the legislative and regulatory framework relating to the management, exploitation, and marketing of non-timber forest products (NTFPs) and assessments aimed at establishing an NTFP labeling system (standards, eco-certification and traceability, packaging, fair trade, and so on.). Activities of this subcomponent will be implemented under the responsibility of the PMU, which will call for tenders to recruit a specialized *Consulting Firm*, which, in collaboration with selected Nigerien institutions, such as the Kolo-based *Practical Institute for Rural Development* (PDR) and the *National Institute of Agricultural Research of Niger* (INRAN), will (i) assess the capacities of existing vocational training and research institutions and propose a mechanism to enable them to integrate and deliver proposed programs; (ii) evaluate stakeholders' needs and requirements; (iii) establish training programs' objectives, related content, and evaluation process; (iv) identify participants for each proposed educational program; (v) set a schedule and action plan to strengthen selected Nigerien vocational training and research institutions' capacities for implementing proposed programs; and (vi) deliver the proposed educational programs,. To perform these activities, the PMU will launch a call for tenders to hire a specialized firm that will support the conception, establishment, and operationalization of the above proposed systems. Additional call for tenders will be also launched by the PMU to perform proposed studies.

Sub-component 1.2: Territorial planning and Development in selected Communes

35. **Developing / updating PDC in targeted Communes.** Through this subcomponent, the project will help develop / update PDCs by incorporating landscape restoration and livelihood enhancement. Pro-poor participatory methodology will be enhanced to increase the access and consultation of all stakeholders including the poor and other vulnerable and marginalized groups (such as transhumant pastoralists) and their involvement in the decision-making process. The implementation of this activity will be done with the support of *Partner Institutions* (PIs) selected by the PMU on a competitive basis, that have strong local representation and will work in close collaboration with local actors to develop / update their PDCs. Conflicts, climate change, security, and gender-sensitive principles will be embedded in this process to consider vulnerable population groups, women, and youth specificities and help build trust and collaboration between communities to rebuild and restore peace. The PDC's enhancement process will also include the identification of local social and cultural capital, including solidarity networks and self-help mechanisms, and potential value chains. Participatory and inclusive planning procedures set up and implemented within the context of the *CAPRC (P125669)*.²³

Subcomponent 1.3: Conflict management strategy

36. **The project will support the implementation of a social conflict risk management strategy.** It is imperative that the activities financed by the Project not only avoid directly or indirectly causing conflicts and negative human impacts, but also contribute to creating the conditions for greater peace, security, and resilience. To this end, the project will develop a social conflict risk management strategy which main aim to create the right conditions to encourage project beneficiaries to avoid the use of violence and weapons (in accordance with the principle of "**Do no harm**") and to find other means to solve the problems at the root of the conflicts instead of fueling and aggravating them. Specific activities will also support citizen engagement activities with the two main objectives to (i) strengthen trust and dialogue between the state and citizens and among and between communities, and (ii) to promote socially inclusive and sustainable participatory ILM practices. A particular focus will be given to communities which are marked by a chronic lack of basic social services, insufficient economic opportunities and high poverty rates. The strategy will be built around a set of guiding principles that provide specific guidance on how to plan and implement all project activities by taking risks into account

²³ Actions to strengthen climate resilience are now locally anchored in the Communal Development Plans at the level of each of the CAPRC 38 Project communes, supported through allocation of funds in the associated Annual Investment Plans.



(including in relation to conflict prevention, investments in human capital and support for consultation and cooperation platforms). It involves specific operational measures, such as: conducting integrated, holistic and iterative diagnoses of situations of fragility; supporting a flexible planning system for all activities taking into account current and potential situations of fragility; the establishment of a grid of indicators to assess conflict dynamics in real time through the participation of all stakeholders; expanding partnerships with state and non-state actors operating in humanitarian, development and research/peacekeeping; and communication initiatives, through the implementation of sensitization, information and training initiatives for all stakeholders (including members of the Project Management Unit) about fragilities and conflicts, in emphasizing local social capital, i.e. forms of solidarity, mutual aid and intra- and inter-community collaboration. To ensure the implementation of this strategy at both central and local level, throughout the duration of the project, the PMU will be able to rely on the recommendations and support of a Security and Peace Working Group (GTSP) made up of representatives of the *Ministry of Interior and Decentralization*, the *High Authority for the Consolidation of Peace (HACP)*, and the *Permanent Secretariat of the Rural Code (SPRC)*, and will benefit from the technical assistance services of a specialized partner institution (such as a consulting firm, an NGO or an association), recruited on a competitive basis.

COMPONENT 2: Investments in Landscapes Restoration and Livelihood Resilience

37. This component will finance investments (subprojects) aimed at restoring land and ecosystem services and enhancing livelihood resilience. The rationale is that conservation and restoration of land and the pursuant efforts to manage that land sustainably can increase soil fertility, fodder, water, and ecosystem services and contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation through carbon sequestration in vegetation and soil, which in turn can increase land, resource, and livestock productivity and protect biodiversity. Landscape restoration will aim to reconcile economic, social, and environmental concerns within a holistic framework, enhance and diversify local livelihoods, improve food security, create climate-smart jobs, and increase resilience to the impact of climate change. Lessons learned from the *Climate Smart Agriculture support* (P153420) will be capitalized and especially on assisted natural regeneration techniques. Activities will also closely be coordinated with those under the *Lake Chad Region Recovery and Development Project* (PROLAC; P161706), *FSRP* (P172769) and *Niger-ISWP* (P174414) in the regions of Diffa, Tillabéry and Zinder. It will also leverage the rural service network previously established through the CAPRC project (P125669) in selected communes (Annex 4 presents the list of WB project currently under implementation and identifies potential synergies).

Sub-component 2.1: Restoring landscapes

38. **The restoration of landscapes in targeted Communes will have sustainable impact on soil, water and the goods and ecosystem services.** Priority investments to restore degraded landscapes, which will be part of the PDCs of the targeted Communes, are, among others, the following: (i) physical soil amendment works that support a large range of techniques to improve soil fertility and microbiology; (ii) agro-sylvo-pastoral techniques including permaculture and deferred grazing/protection of plant cover that restore soil fertility, control soil erosion and desertification, improve microclimate; provide fruits, fodder, wood, and other useful products; and preserve both agricultural diversity and biodiversity while improving the food security, resilience, and livelihoods; (iii) climate-smart forestry techniques to manage forest areas and woodlands such as natural regeneration, tree planting, harvesting of NTFPs; afforestation and reforestation; soil protection through reforestation techniques to protect soils; and (iv) support for intensive community-based reforestation initiatives and plantations through (support for the production of forest seeds; support to nurseries; creation and management of community forests; promotion of sustainable forest management techniques; promotion of fruit tree cultivation; etc.). Execution of this subcomponent activities will be contracted by the PMU to service providers (including local civil works contractors and experienced NGOs, according to the nature of the activities), who will be selected using a transparent and inclusive process taking into due account demonstrable experience and institutional capacity in the targeted area of concern. Labor will be supplied by the local workforce to be hired from the



project area with focus on vulnerable groups, women, and youth (optimal use of labor-intensive works programs).²⁴ The outcome is expected to strengthen resilience to climate change risks, reduce river sedimentation and flood risks, and enable recovery of agricultural lands.

Sub-component 2.2: Enhancing local livelihoods and improve the access of producers and / or producer organizations (POs) to strategic markets

39. **This subcomponent aims to enable rural dwellers active in the agriculture, livestock and fisheries sectors to improve their livelihoods, by becoming more competitive producers, capable of meeting market demands, establishing sustainable linkages with buyers, while adapting to climate change and reducing GHG emissions.** The design of the sub-component is informed by the *Matching Grants* (MG) and *Productive Alliance* (PA) models which have been implemented in numerous World Bank financed projects. Considering the capacity constraints of Nigerien financial institutions in rural areas, matching grants will be used as the main financing instrument for productive investments sub-projects. Special focus will be paid to promoting access to matching grants for women and youth, adaptation to climate change and reduction of GHG emissions.

40. **2.2.1: Strengthening local social and non-tangible capital of targeted communes.** Local know-how and intellectual capital are a major determinant of innovation, growth, employment, reconciliation, and mitigation of conflicts between communities. The project will strengthen the body of knowledge, handicraft skills, practices, and representations that communities have accumulated, the result of a long history of interaction between their cultural and natural environments. Indeed, if these customs disappear or undergo significant changes, it is the cultural identity and heritage of local communities that will be in great danger. Execution of this activities will be contracted by the PMU to service providers (NGOs, CSOs, etc.).

41. **2.2.2: Support provision of socio-economic services and access to strategic markets through the *Maison du Paysan* (MP) model.** The MP is a multifunctional integrated set of infrastructures and services established at the Commune level to improve the supply of support services to producers and agricultural businesses in order to support their efforts to increase production and productivity. Its aim is to contribute to improving the availability of and access to factors of production as well as to promote the use of innovative technologies that have been proven and adapted to the local context (see Annex 2, which includes a map of the geographical distribution of MPs).

42. Based on the results of diagnostic of MPs that will be conducted during project preparation, this sub-component will finance the replication/strengthening of the MPs with a clear focus on how they can also support (i) entrepreneurship and sustainable value chain development²⁵ and (ii) diversification and promotion of value-added activities as well as better connection of local products to promising markets. In some landscapes, this may also involve the development of promising niches (such as geothermal energy, aquaculture, greenhouses, etc.) and the promotion of alternative crops. Targeted value chains will be strengthened, and improved. Activities will help improve the access of producers and / or producer organizations (POs) to strategic markets through the co-financing of investments in *Productive Alliances* (PAs) and the development of *value chains* (VCs). In targeted landscapes, the aim is to help build the capacities of emerging

²⁴ In Niger, these programs, called HIMO (*haute-intensité de main d'oeuvre*) have excellent results and contribute to creating temporary salaried job opportunities and to fight against vulnerabilities ("social safety net" aspect) while improving infrastructure.

²⁵ MPs created under CAPRC project provide services through four sectoral elements (storage, agricultural inputs, fodder supplements, equipment rental and repair) and four transversal elements (training, communal radio, microfinance, administration) (see Inset 3). Each MP also has a multifunctional women's platform, and most will also have meteorological stations to assist with forecasting. The complementary services provided by the MPs help strengthen the livelihood of individual producers while increasing food security for the entire community and improving climate resiliency of the production system. At CAPRC Project closing, 8 MPs were fully operational, while another 7 MPs are developing financing plans for their completion.



producer organizations (POs), diversify their value-added activities, link them to national, sub-regional and international markets, and better promote local products²⁶ and handicrafts in the context of productive alliances and value chains. Eligible activities aimed to support PAs and VCs will include: (i) purchase of equipment (such as tools and machines needed for the collection or processing of agro-silvo-pastoral products; and construction packaging centers, classification centers, warehouses and cold chain facilities); (ii) advisory services regarding access to financial services, business management, market and marketing skills, quality and standard certification services, etc.; (iii) training in technical and / or managerial skills; as also (iv) working capital requirements for a period of one to two years, when it proves difficult to obtain them from commercial or public banks. Eligible entrepreneurs will contribute to the financing of their sub-projects, the amount of their co-financing will depend on the size of the company. Matching Grants (MG) will be allocated to cover up to 80 percent of the total subproject costs: they will be provided through a competitive allocation to the winning business plans coproduced by the POs, buyers (in the case of a PA), and the technical assistance services financed by the project.

43. Execution of this subcomponent activities will be contracted by the PMU to a Partner Institution, working in collaboration with NGOs and CSOs., and will capitalized the successful lesson learned from the CAPRC Project.

Inset 3: Key services provided by MPs

The concept of the *Maisons du Paysan (Peasant House)*, introduced by the 3N High Commission a few years ago, has resulted in the creation of several MPs in the country. The MP can be considered as the anchor point of the 3N Initiative at the Commune level. At the level of the communities (villages/camps), the relay of certain integrated services combined with good advisory support will make it possible to obtain measurable effects and impacts at the level of households.

Key services provided by Maisons du Paysan are the following:

- Communal storage of agricultural inputs and outputs increases food security.
- Seed and fodder banks prevent farmers from having to sell seeds and livestock early, replenished on local markets, they provide a source of income for producers.
- Agricultural equipment rental and repair services increases the productivity of farmers.
- Training centers equip farmers and youth with new knowledge and skills to improve resilience of production, and to make a living in rural areas.
- Community radios give farmers access to information about i.e., government initiatives, forecasts, and experiences shared by peers.
- Microfinancing enables rural producers and community members, including women, to realize potential investment opportunities or build alternative livelihoods.
- Administrative units provide operational support and guidance to local rural producers and cooperatives.

MPs also bring positive change at the national and local level by improving resilience planning and more broadly by ensuring sustainability of the impacts beyond the project lifetime. By bringing national services closer to local needs with a feed-back mechanism between national and local policies and practices, the MPs enable consolidation and replication of actions to build climate resilience. MPs enjoy strong ownership by mayors and the community, which has led to the mobilization of the communes' own funds or that from other partners to complement the work financed by the Project.

(Source: Haut Commissariat à l'Initiative 3N (2019) *Manuel -Type de gestion de la Maison du Paysan*)

²⁶ Such as wood and non-wood forest products (néré/*Parkia biglobosa*, shea/*Butyrospermum parkii*, baobab/*Adansonia*, goïne liana/*Saba senegalensis*), etc.), aromatic and medicinal plants, condiments, honey, oils, cereal, rice and fodder crops, and by-products (such as composting of vegetable waste).



COMPONENT 3: Project monitoring and coordination

44. This component will facilitate the implementation of the Project through efficient management and monitoring. The project will be implemented, supported and coordinated by a Project Implementation Unit (PIU) which will be hosted in the Ministry of Environment and Fight against Desertification (MELCD).

Subcomponent 3.1: Coordination, Project Management and Communication

45. This subcomponent includes project administrative activities such as budgeting and planning, procurement and financial management (FM), annual audits, and social and environmental risks management. It will finance (a) the purchase of vehicles, equipment, and office supplies; (b) the PMU office rental; (c) the PMU experts' salary; (d) the cost of technical assistance firm and the partner institutions; and (e) operating costs.

46. The sub-component includes also the development and implementation of a project communication strategy and action plan and facilitation support for a collaborative approach to meet the results of the project.

Subcomponent 3.2. Monitoring and Evaluation

47. This subcomponent will finance (a) meetings of the review/piloting committees; (b) implementation of the M&E framework, including preparation of a detailed M&E manual, which will be incorporated into the Project Implementation Manual, and development of indicator tracking sheets; (c) planning and dissemination workshops and M&E capacity-building workshops; and (d) impact/beneficiary assessment and midterm review (MTR), including undertaking an internal MTR assessment by the PMU and ensuring readiness for Implementation Completion and Results Report (ICR).

48. M&E processes will take place in a participatory manner with inputs from beneficiaries and stakeholders to enable adaptive and results-oriented project management from project design through implementation and closure. In this regard, a project M&E system will be established comprising an M&E manual and an M&E information system will be established and made operational to facilitate M&E of the implementation of project activities. The project M&E information system will consist of tracking and reporting templates, which will make it possible to meet the challenge of remote monitoring of project activities in crisis and conflict situations by leveraging the power of mobile data collection tools (such as *KoBo Collect Toolbox*) to create a portfolio of high-frequency surveys. Local M&E focal persons will be equipped with smartphones and trained to fill in pre-coded weekly questionnaires about the progress of the works, well-being of beneficiaries, and perceptions of communities. Data will then be uploaded to a secured server for remote access and analysis. The design and development of these tools will benefit from the piloted tools developed under existing WB-financed projects and will be supported by the GEMS initiative. Synergies with other ongoing project working on strengthening national data systems (such as the Niger-ISWP project) will be sought.

COMPONENT 4: Contingent Emergency Response

49. Following any untoward, adverse natural event that causes a major natural disaster, the Government may request to re-allocate project funds to this component to support response and reconstruction. This component would allow the government to request to re-categorize and reallocate financing from other project components to partially cover emergency response and recovery costs.



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

Summary of Screening of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

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APPROVAL

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