

**PROJECT INFORMATION DOCUMENT (PID)
IDENTIFICATION/CONCEPT STAGE**

Report No.: PIDC95618

Project Name	
Region	AFRICA
Country	Niger
Lending Instrument	IPF
Project ID	P162169
Borrower Name	Oxfam Novib
Implementing Agency	Oxfam Novib
Environment Category	C - Not Required
Date PID Prepared	17-Nov-2016
Estimated Date of Approval	15-Dec-2016
Initiation Note Review Decision	The review did authorize the preparation to continue

I. Introduction and Context

Country Context

Niger is a large landlocked country of 1.27 million square kilometers and a population estimated at 19.8 million in 2016 with a growth rate of 3.9%, one of the fastest rates in the world. Niger is prone to political instability, chronic food security, and natural crises, notably droughts, floods and locust infestations.

The 2016 presidential and legislative elections took place on February 21, 2016. The incumbent candidate President Mahamadou Issoufou gained 48% of the votes and Hama Amadou, who campaigned from behind bars via proxies, was second with 17%. As neither candidate took 50% of the vote, a run-off election took place on March 20, 2016 with incumbent President Issoufou winning 92% of the votes. The run-off elections were boycotted by supporters of Hama Amadou, resulting in low voter turnout, and continue to be contested by the opposition. As a result of Niger's participation in the operation against Boko Haram, the country was repeatedly attacked by this terrorist organization resulting in hundreds of casualties and wounded, as well as thousands of refugees fleeing the conflict in search of safer havens in Niger. The government has declared a state of emergency in its southeastern region.

Economic growth is still highly dependent on climatic conditions, large-scale investment projects in extractive industries, and security conditions. From a macroeconomic perspective, risks of disruption through growing external or fiscal imbalances continue to be moderate, given the protection and related fiscal policy obligations provided by the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU). Given the exposure to debt sustainability risks, resulting from a significant increase of external public debt to finance projects in extractive industries, in a context of declining uranium and oil prices, the quality of debt and public investment management will continue to have an important bearing on debt and fiscal sustainability. The recent violent clashes

between Boko Haram and the Nigerian army have displaced over 115,000 people from Nigeria into Niger. Refugees are concentrated in Diffa, a region suffering from food insecurity and which is currently experiencing an unprecedented humanitarian crisis. In response, the government of Niger has put forward a contingency plan of \$40 million and requested the assistance of development partners including the World Bank.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

In spite of an increased national budget of USD 450 billion in 2005 to 1,732 billion in 2015, the government of Niger has not been able to translate a bigger budget into increased human development levels. As a result of inefficiencies in the budget allocation and expenditure, citizens have not seen an increase in greater access to basic social services (e.g. access to healthcare, education, food, water and sanitation).

In Niger, the fiscal system is characterized by: a) heavily centralized decision-making on expenditure, with priorities set by the executive branch with little citizen or sub-national government input; b) low levels of social spending that fall below internationally agreed levels; c) weak spending of budgeted allocations and; d) limited institutional capacity to transform resources into essential basic services for the population.

Other challenges include:

1) Problems of access to information and limited participation of civil society organizations (CSO) and citizens in the national and local budget process. This means that budget processes do not adequately respond to the needs of society. The low level of information about -- and participation in -- the national budgetary process mean that regional and locally elected officials are unable to fulfil their representative duty toward their electorate. As a result, these elected officials have limited capacity to contribute constructively to the national budget processes.

(2) Weak capacity of other governmental officials and institutions that should act as a check on and approve the budget, such as Municipal Councils and the National parliament. These institutions are also unable to turn the allocated resources into provision of essential services for the most vulnerable in society. As a result, public finances are poorly managed which in many cases has led to increased corruption.

(3) Currently, the Audit Office (Court des Comptes) exercises administrative control over the budget and government accounts, however, it does not connect volumes of invested resources with the results achieved in terms of human development. Lack of disaggregated data means institutions lack adequate detailed sector by sector information on how money is allocated and spent in practice. These institutions also lack experience in doing result based expenditure analysis.

Relationship to CAS/CPS/CPF

The proposed project is aligned with the World Bank's Country Partnership Strategy (FY13-FY 16) by directly contributing to CPSs outcomes "Improved Budget Executions and Efficiency" and "Improved Transparency of Sector Budget Allocations". More specifically, the project will contribute to both outcomes by enhancing the monitoring capacity of civil society and public sector and by creating a mechanism that facilitates state-society engagement to support more evidence-based, responsive, participatory, and accountable public decision-making. In addition, the grant will

contribute to achieving the overarching development objectives of the Niger Reform Management and TA (P108253).

II. Project Development Objective(s)

Proposed Development Objective(s)

Contribute to increasing public budget and basic public services' responsiveness and accountability in Niger.

Key Results

The key results of this project are:

- Increased number of regional and locally elected officials that use information produced through social accountability tools to improve their engagement with national level authorities.
- Increased number of regional and locally elected officials are able to improve budgetary allocations using social accountability tools.

III. Preliminary Description

Concept Description

IV. Safeguard Policies that Might Apply

Safeguard Policies Triggered by the Project	Yes	No	TBD
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01		x	
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04		x	
Forests OP/BP 4.36		x	
Pest Management OP 4.09		x	
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11		x	
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10		x	
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12		x	
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37		x	
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50		x	
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60		x	

V. Financing (in USD Million)

Total Project Cost:	0.8	Total Bank Financing:	0
Financing Gap:	0		
Financing Source			Amount
Global Partnership for Social Accountability			0.8

VI. Contact point

World Bank

Contact: Josef S. Trommer
 Title: Senior Operations Officer
 Tel: 473-6242

Email: jtrommer@worldbank.org

Contact: Ragnvald Michel Maellberg
Title: Senior Public Sector Specialis
Tel: 458-1511
Email: mmallberg@worldbank.org

Borrower/Client/Recipient

Name: Oxfam Novib
Contact: Darius Monsia
Title: Project Coordinator
Tel: 22720350500
Email: Darius.Monsia@oxfamnovib.net

Implementing Agencies

Name: Oxfam Novib
Contact: Darius Monsia
Title: Project Coordinator
Tel: 22720350500
Email: Darius.Monsia@oxfamnovib.net

VII. For more information contact:

The World Bank
1818 H Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20433
Telephone: (202) 473-1000
Web: <http://www.worldbank.org/projects>