Each year, Sida conducts a humanitarian allocation exercise in which a large part of its humanitarian budget is allocated to emergencies worldwide. The allocation and subsequent disbursement of funds takes place in the beginning of the year to ensure predictability for humanitarian organizations and to allow for best possible operational planning. In an effort to truly adhere to the humanitarian principles, Sida’s humanitarian assistance is grounded in the four humanitarian principles, and in particular impartiality, with its compelling urge to ensure that humanitarian action is carried out based on “needs alone”, giving priority to the “most urgent cases of distress”. Therefore, Sida’s allocation methodology is grounded in several objective indicators such as; the scale of humanitarian needs (number of people in need), the severity of humanitarian needs (including food insecurity/IPC levels), the number of people targeted for the humanitarian response, the financial coverage of the respective humanitarian appeal, national capacities to respond and underlying risks, as well as distinct indicators related to forgotten crises. Sida also strongly supports the humanitarian coordination structures. Besides this initial allocation, another part of the humanitarian budget is set aside as an emergency reserve for sudden onset emergencies and deteriorating humanitarian situations. This reserve allows Sida to quickly allocate funding to any humanitarian situation throughout the year, including additional funding to Niger.

For 2019, Niger is allocated an initial 34 MSEK. Close monitoring and analysis of the situation in Niger will continue throughout the year and will inform possible decisions on additional funding.

1. CRISIS OVERVIEW

1.1. Type of crisis

Conflict

- **Background/Underlying cause:** Niger is politically relatively stable, but the state is weak in capacity. After the 2010 coup d’état and the 2011 elections the situation in the country has remained relatively calm. In late 2018 the intra-community conflicts seem to be on the rise, and an increased spill-over form the Mali conflict is affecting the western parts of the country. International troops are also increasingly becoming a target for insurgent attacks. There are also reports of international humanitarian law (IHL) violations. The Diffa region is still volatile and attacks of Boko Haram armed groups are still common along the border. An increasing number of migrants are returned to Niger from Libya and Algeria.

- **Main stakeholders in the conflict:** Despite Niger not being a main stakeholder in the conflicts in Mali and Nigeria, attacks have been directed to refugees from Nigeria in camps in Niger and also directed towards Malians. As state capacity Niger is are weak, refugees from Nigeria are more likely to seek asylum and protection in Cameroon. Seeing the dynamics of the crisis in Mali and Nigeria they are likely to escalate and there is also a risk that similar separatist groups are going to become more active in Niger.

- **Cross border implications:** The recent armed attacks indicate that there are internal Nigerien groups with affiliations to Boko Haram that are being radicalised and that attacks are not only coming from the outside targeting Nigerians. The same dynamics is noted in the areas bordering to Mali and Burkina Faso.

- **Trends:** There is likely of probable deterioration of security and escalation of conflict in Niger. The participation in the Lake Chad Basin conflict joint forces and in the Mali conflicts with the Liptako Gourma G5 intervention also increase the attention to Niger as an active player in the security situation in the Sahel.
**Natural disaster**

- **Nature of disaster:** Niger is one of the most arid countries in the world with only a small percentage of the country's surface being suitable for agricultural production. The Sahel region, including Niger, has a climate and topography that is prone to seasonal drought. The natural variation from year to year is exacerbated by climate change and desertification. Moreover, the population growth rate of 3.9% puts pressure on natural resources and leads to significant land degradation. However, indications for 2018 are that it will be a normal year when it comes to agricultural production, despite general food production deficits.

- **Frequency:** This is a recurrent crisis that on a yearly basis leads to a situation where household reserves and resources are not sufficient to last until the next harvest. With population increase and degradation of the environment (desertification), and low usage of irrigation, the traditional coping mechanisms are not enough to secure the challenges due to the protracted crisis. Since the financial resources at household level is weak, there may be severely malnourished children and adults, despite that food is readily available on the market.

- **Resilience and coping mechanisms:** Traditionally there are resilience and risk management systems and coping mechanisms among the Sahel people. Seasonal and yearly variations have been dealt with through transhumance migrations and access to multiple sites for agricultural crops in different areas to alternate between. The role of the extended family and ethnic groups is also a way to cope, where resources are distributed amongst members of the extended family that live in another area of the country or abroad. Very few cases of Nigeriens on irregular migration routes towards Europe are registered, and during 2018 some Nigeriens have been evacuated from Libya.

1.2. **Geographical areas and affected population**

- The Diffa region in the east of Niger is the most affected by the Lake Chad Basin Crisis. Malian refugees are mostly found along the western border of Niger. The general food insecurity affects the whole country. Western parts of the country are increasingly being affected by conflict.

- The most vulnerable groups, including women and men, girls and boys who lack social safety nets such as assets, family/extended family and/or transferrable skills, are the neediest both regarding the refugee/IDP crisis and the food insecurity crisis. Among mobile populations the most vulnerable are IDPs who are the least catered to when it comes to both protection and basic humanitarian needs. Some host communities are also strained of resources as refugees sometimes settle in informal settlements close to existing communities.

- Chronic vulnerabilities related to food insecurity, malnutrition, epidemics and floods are being compounded by growing insecurity in the regions bordering Mali and in the Diffa region. Further, overcrowding in camps and displacement sites have worsened the living conditions of the displaced population and exacerbated the protection risks faced particularly by children and women.

- Niger is a country where the chronic crisis and the general level of underdevelopment leaves a significant part of the population in need of humanitarian assistance. For 2019 the number is estimated at 2.3 Million people and the target in the HRP is to reach 1.7 million people. The Nigerien government has launched a nexus approach that will be adhered by agencies and humanitarian organisations.

1.3. **Critical assumptions, risks and threats**

- Niger has risen one step on the HDI index and passed CAR in the place of being the least developed country in the world. Niger has weak state capacity and there is a constant risk of internal unrest and a risk of spill-over from conflicts in neighbouring countries. The food insecurity analysis is revised on a yearly basis, as each year's crop affects the next year's lean season. As most farmers are subsistence farmers, a drought for a year may lead to low or no crop at all for consumption the following year. Internal conflicts and banditry is common and the capacity of police monitoring, and the rule of law is low. As Niger is a fragile state, it also harbours members of armed groups from...
neighbouring countries’ crises. As for financial risks, Niger receives the score 33, on a scale where 100 equals freedom from corruption, from Transparency International’s report. Hence the public sector in Niger, compared to other countries, can be said to be characterised by a medium-high risk level of corruption.

1.4. **Strategic objectives and priorities of the Humanitarian Response Plan**

- The humanitarian response plan is targeting conflict affected populations, displaced persons and persons affected by natural disasters and epidemics. The humanitarian response is directed towards those areas with the highest needs, and to those with most needs. An integrated approach of meeting both food security, shelter and protection need is adopted. Niger has a HCT protection strategy. Access in both Diffa region and Tilaberri region makes humanitarian response difficult. Durable solutions are well integrated in the humanitarian response and UNHCR has shown excellent approaches on how to reduce humanitarian needs in refugee camps in Diffa. Sida partners are responding well in Diffa but lacking now in response in the Tilaberri region.

2. **IN COUNTRY HUMANITARIAN CAPACITIES**

2.1. **National and local capacities and constraints**

- **Government**: The Nigerien government is not adequately able to provide the necessary services and assistance to its population. The Government of Niger is involved mainly through the roadmap for all interventions in Niger, the so called ‘Plan de Soutien’, which includes all humanitarian activities. The initiative 3N (les Nigeriens Nourissent les Nigeriens) provides a framework to respond to emergency needs, food insecurity and recurrent nutritional crisis over the long-term and strengthen the resilience of households. The provinces are rather decentralised and play a certain role in coordination and local ownership.

- **Civil Society**: Local Nigerien NGOs are weak and need to develop capacity to be able to scale up support. There are only a few local organizations with national coverage. Some local organisations serve as implementing partners for INGOs in the Diffa-province.

- **Community and household level**: Household capacity to cope with development and crisis related needs are based on a community and extended family model and the state is of low significance to many people as basic social services are weak. Schools and health clinics exist, but are often not functional outside of urban centres if there is no international support linked to the service. International migration seems to be an uncommon coping mechanism for poorer households.

2.2. **International operational capacities and constraints**

- **Leadership and Coordination**: The humanitarian response mechanisms are coordinated through the humanitarian country team (HCT). OCHA is present both centrally and in the field, and clusters as well as sub clusters are active centrally and in field level. At field level, government structures are present and, in some cases, lead the sub-national clusters. Sweden doesn’t have an embassy or bilateral cooperation with Niger.

- **Humanitarian Agencies**: UN agencies supported by Sida have a well-functioning system of using and reporting on Sida contributions. Since there are no safe and reliable commercial domestic air carrier operating in Niger, United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) and its humanitarian flight services will continue to be an important function for the response. INGOs are relatively strong in Niger and have a presence in cluster coordination and Humanitarian Needs Overview HNO/HRP elaboration.

- **Implementing partners**: Nigerien civil society is present as implementing partners in the humanitarian response, but capacities need to be further developed to fully implement the GB (Grand Bargain) targets.
Development actors: Few development actors are present in Niger and not much international development cooperation funding reaches Niger. The attention the migration flows have caused seem to be directed to border control and return assistance, so that the people who were hosting or transporting migrants have lost their sources of income, and not been helped to find an alternative livelihood. Large development donors are USA, EU and the World Bank.

2.3. International and regional assistance

- Donors: In 2018, the largest humanitarian donors were the USA, DG-ECHO, Canada, Germany and CERF. The HRP was 47% funded as at end of November 2018.

2.4. Access situation

- The long distances between major cities in the country makes all logistics and access a challenge. Security has deteriorated, and many UN organisations are using armed escorts when travelling on major roads. In the Diffa region access is slightly improved, in the western part of the country the deteriorating security is affecting humanitarian organisations negatively.

3. SIDA’S HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE PLAN

3.1. The role of Sida

- Earlier assistance and results: Sida has supported humanitarian response in Niger for many years. The response has shifted according to changing needs due to climate variations and conflicts in neighbouring countries.

- Lessons learnt: Chronic crises are going to demand development programmes run by the government to reduce the underlying cause to vulnerability. Apart from the conflict related crisis in the east (Diffa) and refugees from Mali, the cause of the general crisis is underdevelopment. Humanitarian interventions have proved not efficient in assisting longer term challenges, for example around nutrition.

3.2. Response Priorities 2019

- The focus for 2019 will be a continuation of orientation resources to respond to the acute conflict crisis in the Lake Chad area around Diffa and Bosso and to conflict affected areas on the border to Mali and Burkina Faso. Where possible, durable solutions are being sought to be integrated in the programme setup. Coordination and access will continue to be a priority. All Sida funded interventions must include gender integration and environmental consequence descriptions leading towards conservation of nature and plans for effective use of resources need to be included in the proposals. Conflict analysis and a “do no harm” analysis is also required.

- Field follow-up: In 2019 the situation in the Liptako Gourma region will be monitored, and if possible, and in combination with another follow-up in the region a visit to Tilaberi will be organised. Key organisations to follow up are SMC, AAH and UNICEF.

3.3. Partners

AAH: In Niger, ACF is operating in the Lake Chad Basin region, more specifically in Diffa with a WASH project. AAH has long experience working with WASH in the region. AAH will support and strengthen the health system in the treatment and monitoring of acute malnutrition among children from 6 to 59 months. The project will also include activities that improve vulnerable households’ access to safe drinking water.

SMC: The Swedish Mission Council’s project in Niger is implemented by International Aid Services (IAS). IAS are operating in the Diffa Region, where they are implementing a WASH project, targeting people affected by the Lake Chad Basin Crisis, including refugees, IDPs and host communities. The projects have been visited on several occasions and shows a high degree of relevance and expertise within the WASH sector.
ICRC: Main priorities in 2019 include to increase the range of ICRC-supported health care, but reduce aid to some facilities that are long-time recipients of ICRC support, thus encouraging the authorities to take over. It will focus on helping to build resilience among agro-pastoralists and vulnerable households through livelihood support, and continue to deliver emergency relief to displaced people and members of host communities.

UNHAS: UNHAS is allocated Sida funding in Niger for 2018 due to their important role in the humanitarian logistics cluster.

OCHA: The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNOCHA, will be supported with unearmarked funding in 2018.

UNICEF: The needs are multi-sectoral and Sida assesses that UNICEF has the capacity to support several of the relevant sectors with humanitarian activities through the HAC 2019. UNICEF will respond to both chronic and acute crises in Niger.

### SIDA's HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO Niger in 2019

(Insert total sum allocated to country. If another sum is proposed, please indicate that sum with a second/separate table)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended partner for Sida support</th>
<th>Sector/focus of work (incl. cross sectoral/multipurpose programming) and response modalities (e.g. in-kind, services, CVP or a mix)</th>
<th>Proposed amount (SEK)</th>
<th>amount</th>
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<td>SMC</td>
<td>Project support to WASH in Diffa and Tillaberi</td>
<td>7 000 000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICRC</td>
<td>Budget support for IHL and protection</td>
<td>5 000 000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNHAS</td>
<td>Access/Logistics</td>
<td>4 000 000</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCHA</td>
<td>Coordination</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>Budget support to HAC</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAH</td>
<td>Project support for WASH in Diffa</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>34 000 000</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### 3.4. Strategic funding in protracted crises

- Currently Sida has an ongoing two-year programme with the Swedish Red Cross that will run through 2019. FAO is on the third year of funding on a tree year funding of 4 MSEK/Year.

#### 3.5. Synergies with long-term development assistance

- Connections to the Sahel regional initiative should be sought, as well as with other regional programming that may incorporate Sida funding opportunities.