

## Stable livelihoods for farming and pastoralist families

### Context

By land area, Niger is roughly 30 times the size of Switzerland and has a rapidly growing population of 20 million. This landlocked Sahel country in West Africa is about 60-per cent desert, with the remainder falling within the semi-arid Sahel zone. Only a small part in the south of the country is suitable to agriculture. Niger suffers from recurring droughts caused by lacking or irregular rainfall, and the situation is being further compounded by the impacts of climate change. Over 80 per cent of Niger's citizens have less than US\$1.90 per day at their disposal. It is often children under the age of five who suffer from acute malnutrition. HEKS/EPER has been active in Niger since the major drought of the 1970s and supports nomadic cattle rearing and peasant families in improving their living conditions over the long term and in arming themselves against future droughts.

### Objectives, priorities, activities

The HEKS/EPER Country Programme for Niger is aimed at ensuring access to land as well as mobility for cattle farmers and their herds, developing and sustainably exploiting natural resources, enhancing food security, boosting incomes and buttressing the resilience of village communities in preparation for possible droughts or other natural disasters. The HEKS/EPER Country Programme makes a key contribution to shortening the annual hunger periods - when supplies from the previous year's harvest have been used up and the new harvest is yet to come in. Another crucial aim of the country programme is securing access to pastureland for pastoralist families while protecting farmlands. The programme thus facilitates peaceful coexistence between pastoralists and sedentary farming families.





## Target groups

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Families and rural communities in the Maradi and Zinder regions who live from agriculture and/or cattle farming.

## Partnerships, networks, alliances, memberships

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HEKS implements projects both with its own team and in cooperation with local partner organizations. Importantly, there is cooperation with agricultural research institutes like the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) and the Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique du Niger (INRAN). HEKS/EPER also maintains regular contact with the SDC office in Niamey.

## HEKS/EPER on the ground

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The HEKS/EPER team in the capital Niamey totals eight persons.

## Topics and working approach

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HEKS/EPER draws on the experience and know-how of the local people and of its partner organizations. One cornerstone of project work is the inclusion and strengthening of local groups. Autonomy, accountability, transparency and efficiency are also key values in the cooperation between HEKS/EPER and its local partner organizations. Wherever possible, HEKS/EPER creates synergies with other players in the project region.

### Country:

Niger

**HEKS/EPER No.:** 375.600

### Responsibility:

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