

New Report Reveals How Years of Conflict Has Undermined Food Security in Niger

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Between June and August 2023, at least 3.3 million people were **estimated** to be acutely food insecure in Niger. A new **report** by Insecurity Insight demonstrates how long-term violent conflict has played a key role in contributing to this. It shows that between 1 January 2015 and 28 September 2023, there were at least 697 conflict events directly affecting food insecurity in Niger.

Over half of these incidents involved the looting of livestock. For pastoralists dependent on these for their livelihoods, the looting of the animals is like stealing “everything they have in the bank”, commented one key informant who also highlighted the key nutritional value of milk from the livestock for children. There were also at least 15 incidents of granaries being deliberately burned in the Tillabéri region. In some cases, over 100 granaries were set ablaze in single incidents which occurred just after the harvest season when they were full of grain, thereby destroying civilians’ food reserves. Other commonly recorded incidents included violent clashes between farmers and pastoralists and the killings and abductions of farmers, pastoralists and fishers. Most of the incidents have occurred since the start of 2020 and were most frequent in the regions of Tillabéri, Diffa, Maradi and Tahoua.

In addition to the 697 conflict events directly affecting food security, the report shows how broader insecurity has created severe restrictions on farmers’ and pastoralists’ ability to access their farmlands. In turn, this has undermined food production by reducing their capacity to grow and harvest crops and graze livestock. It has also intensified tensions between farmers and pastoralists whilst increasing land degradation due to the smaller areas of land which they have been forced to work on. Concerningly, increased restrictions on the movement of goods, especially across the borders with Nigeria and Benin, since the July 2023 military coup have undermined access to food aid for civilians. NGOs have also been made to feel uncertain about their freedom to act following a **declaration** at the end of August 2023 that they were not permitted to operate in certain areas of the country.

“The recent exacerbation of food insecurity in Niger amidst the long-term contribution of violent conflict is especially worrying. Humanitarian actors must be allowed to provide food aid to those in need without impediment. This means ensuring the free transport of food across borders and that aid agencies are supported,” said Christina Wille, the Director of Insecurity Insight.

The findings are based on key informant interviews and a data based analysis of 697 reported conflict events clearly affecting food security in Niger between 1 January 2015 and 28 September 2023 identified from open sources. The full report can be viewed **here** and the data is available on the **HDX**.

Media contact

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As an H2H (humanitarian to humanitarian) association, **Insecurity Insight** supports the work of aid agencies, providers of healthcare, education, and protection services, and other civil society organisations by providing publicly available information for evidence-based policies. We collect and analyse data about violence against civilians and damage and destruction of vital civilian infrastructure in order to strengthen civilian protection and the delivery of aid in armed conflict.