Niger’s subtropical - tropical climate is mainly hot and dry, with a large deserted area. Its economy is based on farming, livestock and some of the world’s largest uranium deposits. But drought cycles, desertification, grasshopper invasion, 3.3% population growth rate and the drop in world demand for uranium have undercut an already marginal economy.

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**General Country Information:**

The Republic of Niger is a landlocked sub-Saharan country in Western Africa, named after the Niger River. It borders Nigeria and Benin to the south, Burkina Faso and Mali to the west, Algeria and Libya to the north and Chad to the east. Its capital and largest city is Niamey.

In 1922, Niger was colonized by France and French became the official language. The 1946 French constitution provided for decentralization of power. Since 1960, Niger is fully independent. In February 2010, a coup d’état occurred in Niamey and soldiers captured President Mamadou Tandja. The country is currently headed by a ruling junta. (CSRD)

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**Cholera Background History:**

Niger had several severe outbreaks from 1970 to 2006 but without periodical pattern. The largest occurred in 1971 with 9265 cases and 2344 deaths with a very high case fatality rate (CFR) of 25.3%. It affected particularly the towns situated along the river and fishing villages. Most cholera affected areas were in the South of Niger: Diffa, Dosso, Maradi, Tahoua, Tillaberi and Zinder.

In 1984, 19 countries were reporting cases, Niger notified 3788 cases and 308 deaths. The CFR (8.1%) was particularly high because of difficult access to proper health care, nomadic life-style, drought and malnutrition.

The period from 1991 to 2004 was characterized by high levels of transmission and many deaths, cholera also appeared in periurban areas that were previously spared. In 2004, the last important outbreak appeared with 2178 cases and 57 deaths (CFR 2.6%) associated with severe drought cycles and a grasshopper invasion. Improved preparedness for control has been observed.

From 1 January until 12 November 2006, Niger reported 1212 cases and 79 deaths with a CFR of 6.52%. Between January and July, the most affected areas were in the south-west of Niger: Tillaberi, Niamey, Dosso and Maradi. According to reports the first cases appeared in the region of Maradi at the end of March and spread to Dosso and Niamey in May. Most cases occurred in the region of Tillaberi in the district of Kollo and Say. *Vibrio cholerae* biotype ElTor serotype Ogawa was identified. In May 2006 the CFR reached 25% in the region of Dosso (20 c incl. 5 d).

Due to increased intensive contact to health professionals and adequate treatment the situation was rapidly brought under control. In August 2006, excessive rains were reported in the regions of Agadez, Zinder, Tahoua, Dosso and Tillaberi and from August 21, there has been a resurgence of cholera cases in the regions with poor water and sanitations facilities: Diffa, Dosso, Maradi, Niamey, Maradi, Tahoua and Zinder.

In 2007, between 25 June and 29 July, Niger reported 24 cases and 2 deaths with a CFR of 8.3%. All cases were located in Aguié district (Maradi region). For all other weeks of 2007, Niger reported zero case and acknowledged intensified efforts on environmental management including improved access to safe water and proper sanitation as being an important factor in the absence of case.

In 2008, Niger reported 948 cases and 70 deaths (CFR 7.4%) between 1 January and 7 December 2008. The first cases were reported in Zinder region (district of Tanout) on March 3. Then Maradi region (districts of Guidan-Roundji, Maradi, Mayahi, Tessaoua) reported 176 cases starting on 26 May. Tahoua region (Birni N’Konni, Keita) reported 279 cases starting 8 September and Dosso region (Boboye) only reported 10 cases after 22 September. The highest CFR, 11% was registered in Zinder.
Demographic and Socio-Economic Data:

Geography
- Total surface: 1 267 000 km² (water surface: 0.0002%)
- Capital: Niamey (population in Niamey: 674 950 in 2002)
- Departments: Agadez, Diffa, Dorso, Maradi, Niamey, Tahoua, Tillaberi, Zinder
- Official language: French

Environment
- Climate: tropical - subtropical
- Rainy season: March - April (about 2 weeks) and July - August
- Floods and droughts: desertification, droughts, grasshopper invasion (no floods)

Demographics
- Population: 13,737,000. Annual population growth rate: 3%
- Religions: Muslim 80%, remainder indigenous religions and Christian
- Ethnic Groups: Hausa, Djerma, Fulani, Songhai, Tuareg, Kanuri, Toubou, Arabs
- Migrants: Nomadic people

Economy
- Industry: 14% (uranium, gold, phosphates, coal, iron, limestone, gum Arabic)
- Farming: 40% (livestock, tobacco, beans, onions, millet, sorghum, garlic, peppers, sesame seeds)

Health Indicators
- Per capital total expenditure on health: 27$
- Child mortality (per 1000): Males: 257 Females: 249

Communicable Diseases
- Meningitis, malaria, yellow fever, African sleeping sickness, tuberculosis, measles, acute respiratory infections, shigellosis, typhoid
- HIV prevalence: 0.9% (2005)

Risk Factors for Cholera
- Population with access to improved water source: 42% (2006)
- Population with access to proper sanitation facilities: 7% (2006)
- Population undernourished: 32% (last big food crisis in 2005)