

REPUBLIC OF NIGER



FRATERNITY - WORK - PROGRESS



INVEST IN NIGER
INVESTIR AU NIGER

ECONOMY
AGRICULTURE
ENERGY
INFRASTRUCTURE
RESOURCES
SKILLS
INDUSTRY

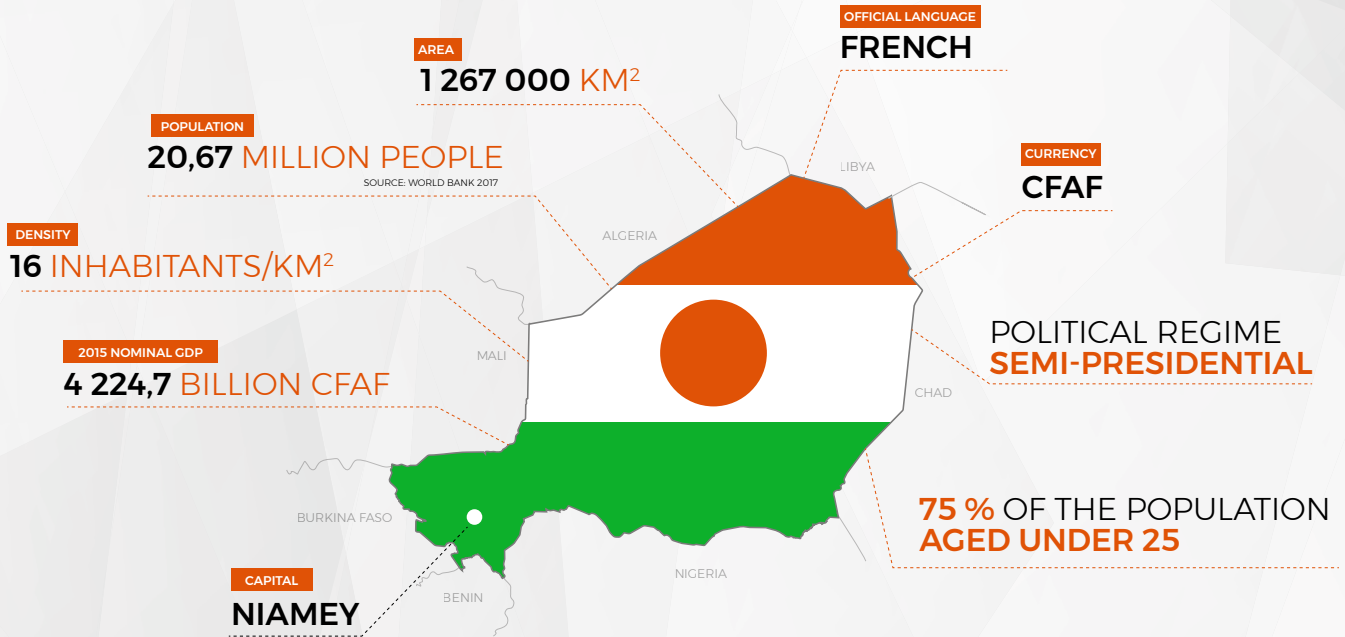


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WHY NIGER?

■ A STRATEGICAL GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION



Niger holds a pivotal position in-between Northern Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa. It also shares borders with eight countries of the ECOWAS (including 1500 km with Nigeria, Africa's leading economy), the CEMAC and the Arab Maghreb Union.

■ THE POLITICAL AND SECURITY SITUATION

All institutions provided for in the Constitution have been implemented and operate normally. Niger has a forum for political dialogue (CNDP) to prevent and defuse potential political crises, which guarantees a peaceful political environment.

Like other countries in the Sahel, Niger is located in a particular security context. As part of a security reinforcement program, the government has conducted several major operations. Globally, the deployed efforts have led to a peaceful setting and have improved the popular trust regarding security.

THE ECONOMIC SITUATION

KEY FIGURES



4TH PRODUCER OF URANIUM
IN THE WORLD



5% GROWTH IN
THE 2016 GDP



2016 INFLATION
RATE UNDER 2%



50,5% OF THE POPULATION
AGED UNDER 15
(WORLD BANK, 2015)



A PRIVILEGED ACCESS TO 350
MILLION CONSUMERS WITH
UEMOA

During the 2012-2015 period, Niger has experienced a vigorous economic growth, with a 6.7% growth rate and a stabilized inflation around 0.6%. The economic activity recovered in 2016, growing at a 5.2% rate compared to the previous 3.5%, mainly boosted by the agricultural production. For 2017, a consolidated growth is expected at 5.6%. Over the next five years, the growth rate is estimated at 7.2% on average.

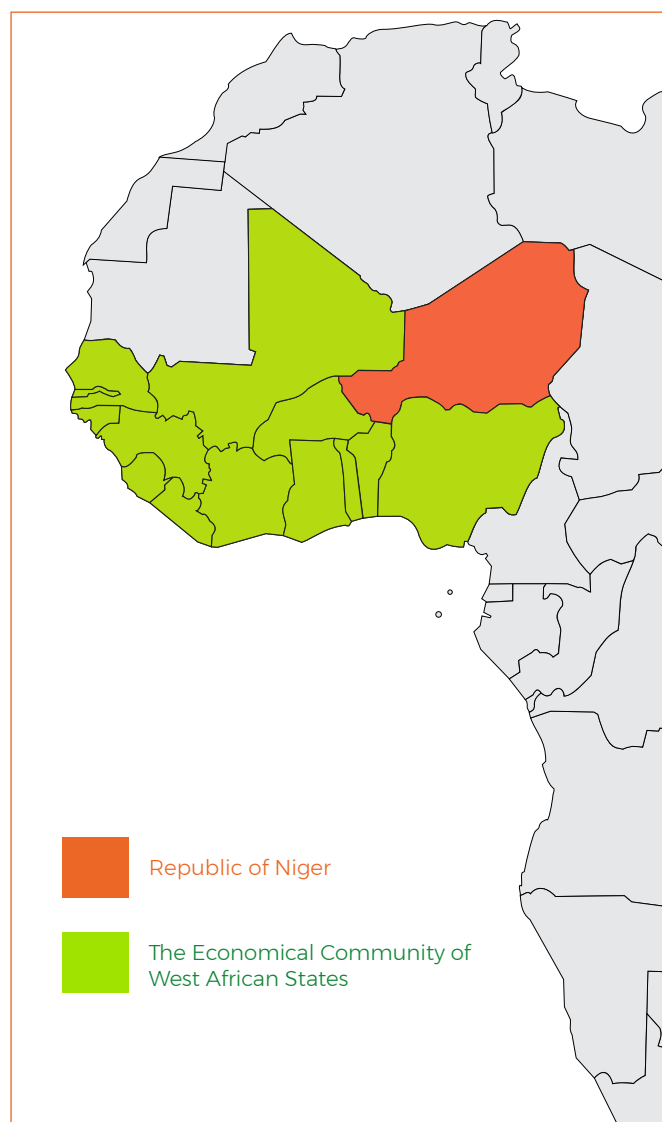
REGIONAL DEMAND

As a member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and part of the West African Monetary and Economic Union (UEMOA), Niger potentially benefits from the access to a market of 300 million consumers that are likely to grow to 600 million in 2050. In 2016, the economic activity of the Union witnessed an overall growth rate of 6.7%. It is, therefore, an economically healthy market, in which Niger holds a critical place.

NATIONAL DEMAND

Niger's domestic demand is significant. Final consumptions grew by 8.9% in 2015, compared to 7.8% in 2014. According to the BCEAO's estimations, they will even increase by 4.9% in 2017. As for private consumption, it accounted for 68.9% of the GDP in 2015 against 67.6% in 2014.

Regarding total investments, the gross fixed capital formation (GFCF) increased by 5.7% in 2015, compared to 12.8% in 2014. The end of activities of some mining and oil companies explains this downward trend. Regarding the public GFGF, it has been showing signs of progression: 6% in 2015 against 5.4% in 2014, mainly due to investments in transportation infrastructure, while private GFGF followed a decreasing trend of 5.5% in 2016 compared to 16.2% in 2014.



AN EXCITING BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT



In 3 years, Niger gained 26 points in the World Bank's Doing Business Group ranking, moving up from the 170th to the 144th position. This improvement is due to reforms conducted to improve the business environment.

The Niger State has implemented a series of reforms to make Niger the best investment destination in Africa and promote private-public partnerships. The focus is given to the promotion of environments in which the private sector can grow, create jobs and increase national incomes.

AN AMBITIOUS REFORM AGENDA

THE GENERAL FRAMEWORK OF THE AGENDA

■ Corruption control:

- Creation of the Bureau of Information, Claims, and Fight Against Corruption and Bribery (BIR/LCTI) and a free hotline (0800-1111), Ratification of the UN Convention Against Corruption, the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combatting Corruption, and the ECOWAS Protocol on the Fight Against Corruption
- Installation of anti-corruption agencies or anti-corruption institutions; including the High Authority for the Fight Against Corruption (HALCIA)

■ **Transparency and efficiency** in the management of public markets with the creation of the Public Market Regulation Agency and the compliance of the market codes to UEMOA's directives and international standards.

■ **Strengthening the human capital** by rehabilitating universities and public schools.

REFORMS ALREADY UNDERTAKEN

These reforms aim to simplify administrative procedures, reduce costs and deadlines for private investments, relaunch the country's economic activity and create jobs.

#1 • STARTING A BUSINESS

- Reduced starting time to create a business, from 15 to 3 days
- Reduced formalities costs to 17,500 CFAF
- Suppression of the 100,000 CFAF minimum capital to create an LLC
- Merging of the procedure for registration of statutes to all the other formalities at one-stop-shops in the Business Formalities Center
- Merging of the procedure for publication of incorporation notices to all the other formalities at one-stop-shops in the Business Formalities Center
- Free publication of incorporation notices on the website of the Maison de l'Entreprise

#2 • OBTAINING CONSTRUCTION PERMITS

- Reduced deadlines to issue ministerial construction permits, from 30 to 8 days
- Facilitated processing of applications with reduced delivery times to the hydraulic network, which results in a 10-day average delivery time instead of 30 days

#3 • ELECTRICITY CONNECTIONS

- Creation and operationalization of a one-stop-shop dedicated to connecting SMEs to electricity
- Creation of a Regulatory Authority of the Energy Sector to monitor the performance of the distribution company
- Upload of the connection costs and electricity fees on the NIGELEC website to ensure transparency and easy access to electricity rates
- Reduced costs of mortgage release to 1.5% of the amount agreed upon mortgage registration at a fixed fee of 50,000 CFAF

#4 • OWNERSHIP TRANSFERS

- Reduced notary fees for ownership transfers
- Reduced process time of land title transfers from 30 days to 7 days

#5 • SECURING LOANS

- Improvement of the information system associated with the credit by introducing regulations to govern the registration and operations of the credit institutions in the space of the UEMOA

#6 • PAYING TAXES

- The possibility of recourse and arbitration is given to companies in the event of a dispute regarding direct and indirect taxes, and VAT repayments
- Decreased number of Value Added Tax (VAT) payments

#7 • CROSS-BORDER TRADING

- The time and cost of exports have significantly dropped in the last two years. They are now at 99 hours and 594 USD for Niger, against the average 188 hours and 807 USD in Sub-Saharan Africa

#8 • ENFORCING CONTRACTS

- Reduced process time of commercial disputes and legal costs
- Creation and operationalization of a trade court and a Mediation and Arbitration center

#9 • LAND MANAGEMENT

- Adoption and operationalization of a strategic framework for a sustainable land management
- Simplified access to land and as well as ownership transfers thanks to the adoption of a town planning and land code
- Digitalization of the urban cadaster

AN ENTICING FRAMEWORK FOR INVESTORS

Numerous incentives are provided for investors. The institutional and regulatory frameworks experienced significant progress over the last five years. Niger now holds rigorous and efficient institutions.

DEDICATED INSTITUTIONS

The Maison de l'Entreprise of Niger was created to serve as a one-stop-shop for the creation of businesses, as well as providing non-financial/financial services to the development of SMEs and the promotion of investments. A cost-sharing subvention fund was thus created in the Maison de l'Entreprise with the following objectives:

- Support companies in improving their procedures, their productivity, and competitiveness
- Support SMEs/SMLs in improving their capacity to become service providers to big businesses, particularly in extractive industries (local content) and the agribusiness
- Make use of the partnership and business association opportunities (joint ventures, subcontracting) with big businesses, particularly in the sector of extractive industries.

The Office of High Commissioner for Investment in Niger (HCIN) is a forum for dialogue between the State and domestic and foreign investors. It comprises members of the public and private sectors, including international businesspeople, and serves a public-private consultation body chaired by the Head of State. The objective of the institution is to create the conditions for continuous improvements in the business environment and the promotion of investments.

The National Business Environment Committee (NBEC, being created) will be operational in the next few months to ensure a clear, transparent and investment-friendly framework to the benefit of national and international operators. His Excellency, the President of the Republic, will chair this high-level body. Representatives from the public and private sectors will compose this forum whose mission is to identify and implement measures to enhance Niger's attractiveness.

The NBEC strives to be the sole platform for Public-Private dialogue regarding Business Environment improvement and monitoring Niger's international image. It is a proactive pilot of the implementation and evaluation of reforms.

The Investment and Large-Scale Construction Promotion Agency (being created) facilitates the reception, orientation, and counseling, as well as assisting entrepreneurs and investors. Investors will, therefore, know how to learn about the regulatory framework and investment opportunities of the country. The Center also supports investors in their investment initiatives, contributes to the improvement of the business environment, the modernization and the competitiveness of the private sector companies. It also eases the access to funding for entrepreneurs and project leaders.

■ A REFORMED REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

From a regulatory perspective, four codes govern the business environment framework and help stimulate investments and job creation.

1 - THE INVESTMENT CODE

A highly attractive document that offers tax and non-tax benefits that cover key sectors such as agro-pastoral activities, production and transformation manufacturing industries, new and renewable energy production, extraction and processing, craft production, construction and healthcare equipment and laboratories for medical diagnosis and control, acquisition of new rolling stock for public transportation in addition to the chemical, para-chemical and pharmaceutical industries.

The maximum period for obtaining approval under the Code is regulated within 30 days given the existence of a one-stop-shop application for the investment code. The Article 16 of law N° 2014-09 of April 16, 2014, regarding the investment code, establishes three distinct preferential regimes: a promotional regime, a conventional regime, and a Free Zone regime. Each arrangement provides financial incentives. However, the approval of the code is granted to investors for a five-year period.

Regarding taxes and customs, investors benefit from several first-hand advantages, even during operation and implementation phases.

2 - THE MINING AND OIL CODE

With simplified procedures for granting prospecting, research and exploitation permits as well as specific tax provisions, it gives particular benefits to research investors to the exploitation of investments.

3 - THE CUSTOMS CODE

Includes different optional regimes (economic, suspensive and private) that offer benefits to all investments.

4 - THE LABOR CODE

Ensures freedom of hiring and easiness to grant work visas for foreigners.

5 - THE INSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Niger has adopted a law that governs public-private partnerships (PPP), which enables the country to benefit from an attractive framework for the funding of large-scale projects in the infrastructure, agricultural and social housing sectors. Niger has recently revised its electricity code to make the sector become more attractive and competitive.



A COMPREHENSIVE INVESTMENT PROTECTION SYSTEM

The International Conventions regarding the Guarantee and Protection of Investment.

As part of the promotion of foreign investment, Niger has ratified international conventions regarding the guarantee and protection of investment. These include conventions:

- From the International Center for Settlement of Investment Disputes, "ICSID"
- From the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency, "MIGA"

CONVENTIONS AND BILATERAL AGREEMENTS REGARDING THE GUARANTEE AND PROTECTION OF INVESTMENT

The promotion of foreign investment in Niger is not limited to the compliance of the multilateral international conventions but also includes bilateral agreements to strengthen the relationship with its main partners.

Therefore, many treaties, agreements, and conventions regarding the promotion and protection of investments and non-double taxation were signed over the past years. The main provisions in these agreements and conventions concern the following aspects:

- The processing of accepted investments
- The freedom to transfer capital and income
- The non-expropriation of investment, except for reasons of public interest and following to a court decision (on a non-discriminatory basis and leading to the payment of prompt and adequate compensation)
- The settlement of disputes with recourse to internal courts or international arbitration according to the choice of the investor

■ CONVENTIONS OF NON-DOUBLE TAXATION

Niger has signed non-double taxation agreements with several countries regarding income taxes. These conventions establish the list of taxes and income concerned, the rules of reciprocal administrative assistance and the principle of non-discrimination.

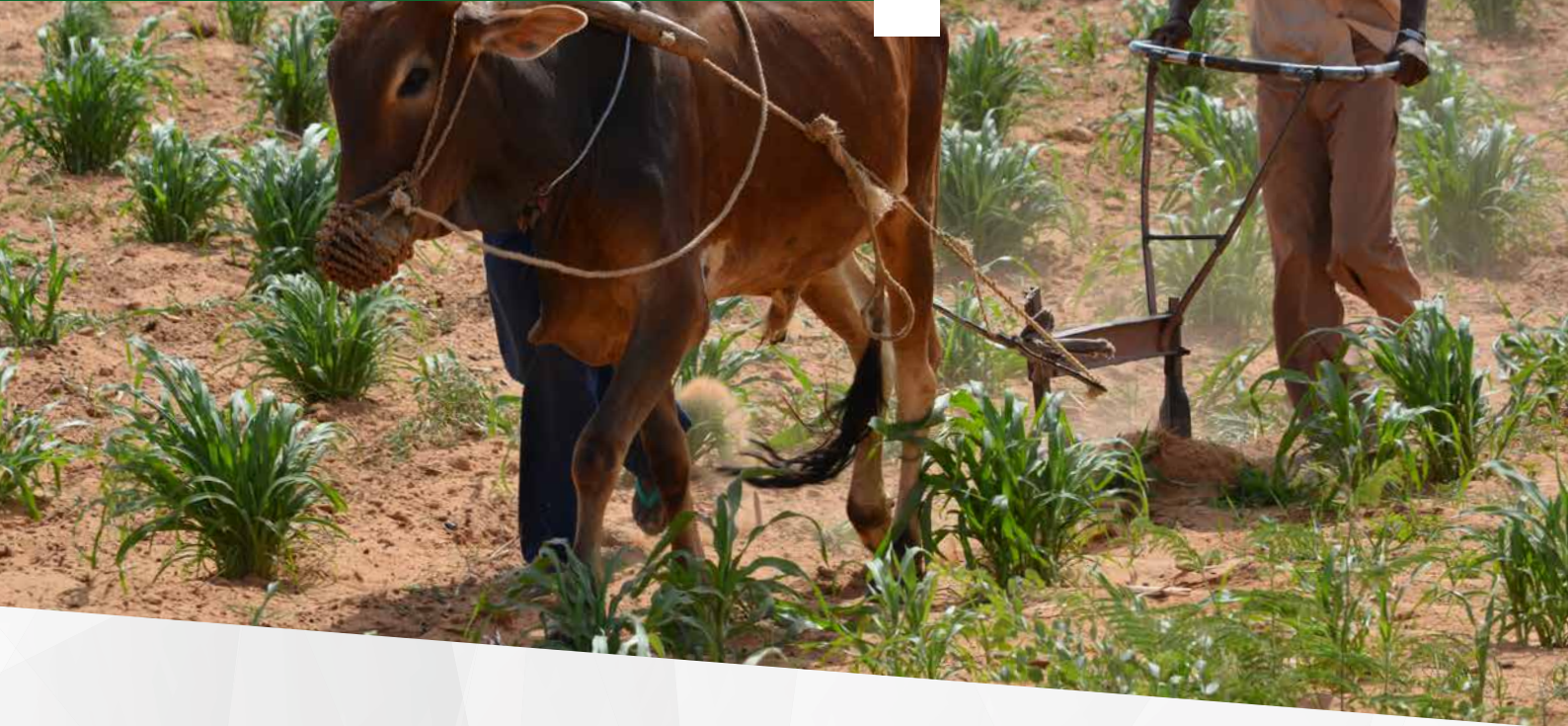
■ A SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR THE INVESTOR IN HIS FINANCIAL AND GUARANTEES RESEARCH

Niger has a strong network of more than nine commercial banks. Several banks and financial and development institutions are willing to support the private sector in Niger. Among them, we can mention SFI, ABD, BOAD, ICD BID, AFD, AFC, Afriexim Ban, and Propaco.

Multilateral Investment Institutions of Guarantee (FSA, FAGACE, AGF, Guarantco, AFC, BOAD, BID, Agency for Credit Insurance in Africa, ICIE CIDB, IDA, MIGA) are also available to investors.



INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES



■ PRIORITARY ACTIVITY SECTORS



1 - AGRICULTURE

Niger has 15 million hectares of cultivable land and offers a significant productive potential for its main crops. The country has a young, fast-growing agricultural labor force.

KEY FIGURES:

- 1st exporter of " violet de Galmi " onions
- 4,000 tons of gum arabic produced in Niger (strong global demand)
- 200,000 tons of exported sesame (strong Asian demand)





2 - LIVESTOCK FARMING

Livestock farming is one of the drive forces of Niger's economy, with 14% of the GDP generated by the production of cattle: camels, goats, sheep, and bovine. Niger has vast pastoral areas, and the potential for valorizing and exporting meat and leather is significant.

KEY FIGURES:

- Livestock generates 13% of the GDP
- Total revenue - CFAC 100 billion
- 21% of export earnings

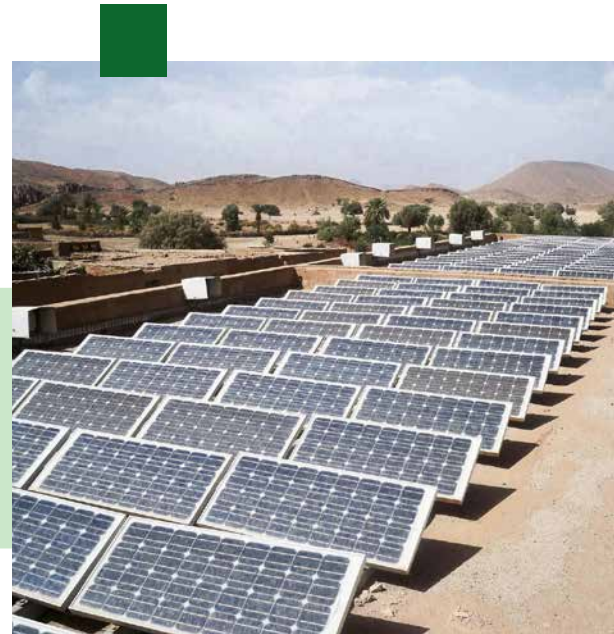


3 - ENERGY/OILS

Niger is the 5th sunniest country in the world and offers invaluable potential in the renewable energy sector (solar, wind and hydraulic). Due to a particularly fertile underground, Niger has all types of energy sources: fossils, oil, gas, coal, and uranium).

KEY FIGURES:

- A potential of over 1.200 million barrels of oil
- A potential of more than 17 billion m3 of gas production
- Highest sunshine rate on the planet: more than 6 kWh/m2/day



4 - INDUSTRY

The industrial sector is one of the major assets of the country's economic development. A particular emphasis is given to transformation and the industrial development of high-potential agro-pastoral products. Numerous actions have been carried out at an institutional level to promote industrial development, like the creation of the AN2PI (National Agency for the Promotion of Innovation and Industrial Property).

KEY FIGURES:

- 5% of the GDP
- 10 billion worth of investments to upgrade the sector
- More than 900 industrial units in activities





5 - MINING

Niger has considerable mineral potential. The country is the world's fourth-largest producer of uranium. Its subsurface is rich in supplies of uranium, coal, iron, gold, phosphate, salt, limestone, and gypsum. The government's policy favors the diversification of the production, the intensification of research and the improvement of the institutional environment. The total effective liberalization of the sector is also a key factor in fostering domestic and international private investments.

KEY FIGURES:

- 4th producer of uranium in the world
- 9 billion tons of iron
- More than 500 free licenses available to all substances



6 - TRANSPORTATION, ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE AND RAILWAYS

In this vast landlocked country (2,500 km distance from East to West and 1,500 km from north to south) the land and rail transport sector hold a key role in the economic and social development of the country. Niger, therefore, grants a special place to investments in the development of road infrastructure, with ambitious rail and land projects.

KEY FIGURES:

- 7 airports and 3.915 km of paved roads
- 272.034 passengers per year to Niamey airport
- 7% of the GDP



7 - URBAN PLANNING AND HOUSING

With a low human density rate, the urban planning and real estates offer many opportunities for investors. Several initiatives have already been undertaken to reduce the deficit in decent housing and many renovation programs are underway in urban centers (Niala Niamey, Zinder Saboua, Diffa Shawa and Taoua Sokola). Planning and sanitation of several urban areas and the construction of social housing are also taking place.

KEY FIGURES:

- Authorization and construction of more than 100 offices
- 25,000 homes to build over five years
- Total revenue of more than 40 billion CFAF per year





8 - COMMUNICATION

The country's authorities have resolutely committed Niger to the digital revolution, but the ICT demand remains far from satisfying, thus creating many investment opportunities.

KEY FIGURES:

- Overall penetration rate of ICT services was 38.63% in 2016



9 - TOURISM, HOTELS AND CRAFTS

Niger aims to enhance its attractiveness to boost its tourism industry. An increase of the awareness regarding the role of culture and tourism in sustainable development and the fight against poverty is taking place, particularly through the conservation, the valorization of the heritage, the art, and craftsmanship.

KEY FIGURES:

- 70,000 tourists visited Niger in 2005-2006
- Tourism activities generated 32 billion CFAC, equivalent to 1.7% of the GDP, and permanent jobs estimated at more than 8700 (2013)



10 - FINANCES

A major driver of the economic growth, the financial sector in Niger benefits from the country's macroeconomic stability and the numerous reforms that were undertaken. This industry offers many investment opportunities to the strengthening of the private banking sector. The regulatory frameworks of the BCEAO and the UEMOA Banking Commission contribute to the attractiveness of the sector for investors.

KEY FIGURES:

- 14 commercial banks and 158 bank branches
- More than 700 billion domestic credits
- Money supply: 1,152,210 billion CFAF





11 - HEALTH

Niger is among the worst performing countries in West Africa according to the indicator of the number of beds per 1000 inhabitants and the number of doctors per 1000 inhabitants. The technical insufficiency of the country's hospitals often cause sanitary evacuations of patients with an annual cost of evacuations:

KEY FIGURES

- More than 10 billion CFAF of evacuation expenses
- 5.8% of the GDP in Health spending

In this context, investing in health in Niger correspond to more than 200 billion FCFA of investment opportunities, whether it is in the infrastructure and provision of care, the manufacturing and distribution drugs, insurances or training.



12 - EDUCATION

Although in a constant improving trend, the part of the education and training in Niger is still fragile. The growth rate of professional and technical education has increased from 13.6% in 2011 to 25.6% in 2015. It is expected at almost 40% in 2021, thus demonstrating the real needs and opportunities for investments:

- In technical and professional skills to cover the needs of promising growth sectors and infrastructure to meet the strong staff growth;
- Capability enhancement;
- Research institutions

KEY FIGURES

- 75% of the population is under 15 years old (important potential market)
- Meager schooling rate



SOME EXAMPLES OF PROJECTS AMID THE PRIORITY AREAS

■ AGRICULTURE / LIVESTOCK FARMING

- **Niger is the primary producer of cowpea (beans) in the subregion** and the leading exporter of "Violet of Galmi", a variety of onion with a unique taste that can undoubtedly generate new external demand
- **Local production of gum arabic exceeds 4000 tons**, and it is likely to progress to meet the growth of the global demand rapidly
- **Niger produces nutsedge for which a potential market exists in Europe**, particularly in Spain where it is used as a substitute for malt in breweries, confectionery-making, and pastry
- **Niger also produces sesame with an estimated export potential of 200,000 tons** due to a high demand in Asia, which requires additional investments
- **Construction of a modern refrigerated slaughterhouse** according to international standards
- **Construction of a chain of slaughterhouses on the border of Nigeria**

■ ENERGY / OIL / MINING

- **Construction of gas-fired power plant** (Zinder and Diffa)
- **Improving access to energy services** in the rural environment
- **Project to build a 600 MW thermal power plant** in Salkadama

- **Project to build the 230 MW Kandadji dam**
- **Gas and oil potential are estimated at more than 1200 million barrels** and more than 17 billion m³. Several blocks of free research are still available
- **Crude oil pipeline construction project;**
- **Project to build a pipeline for the refined**
- **Refined oil pipeline construction project**
- **More than 500 free licenses are available** for all substances.

■ INFRASTRUCTURE / TRANSPORTATION

- **Construction of the Cotonou-Niamey-Abidjan-Ouagadougou railway loop**
- **Renovation of the Niamey airport** and restoration of the three others inside the country
- **Improvement and asphaltting of roads** to enhance the transportation and infrastructure network
- **Renewal of the public transportation fleet**
- **Construction of the dry port of Dosso** to transport the goods to Niamey

6 REASONS TO INVEST IN NIGER

1 STRONG AND STABLE ECONOMIC FUNDAMENTALS

Niger displays a stable growth rate of 5% and controlled inflation at 2%, below the 3% recommended by UEMOA. The average GDP growth is expected at 7.3% over the next five years.

2 A FAVORABLE AND ENTICING BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Several reforms were already undertaken to improve the business environment. Cited in the World Bank's Doing Business 2016 report as one of the countries of the Sub-Saharan Africa with the most progress on regulatory reforms, Niger went up six positions in the 2017 ranking.

3 A STRATEGIC GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

The country benefits from access to a market of over 350 millions of consumers and a pivotal position in-between Northern Africa and the Sub-Saharan Africa. The country also shares 1500 km of borders with Nigeria, Africa's leading economy and one of ECOWAS' main actors.

4 A VARIETY OF OPPORTUNITIES IN MULTIPLE SECTORS

A country with considerable potential in the mining, oil, agriculture, energy, and infrastructure sectors, as well as some critical structural projects already identified in various areas.

5 A REFORMED LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Niger has committed itself to a broad reform agenda and the modernization of its legal framework.

6 A SAFE COUNTRY

The country is safe due to a high government involvement and good governance.

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