

3. Methodology

The consultants undertook Document Review, made Field Visits and made Observations as a result of carrying out participatory Semi-structured Interviews with Key Informants, Focus Groups, Families, Woman-headed households and widows. Discussions were held with Government of Niger agencies (including CCA and SAP), WFP, USAID, FEWS Net, EC, International agencies, NGOs and CBOs.

Information was triangulated with the different respondents and a very short³³ ZOPP participatory problem/solution analysis workshop was held with a representative cross-section of participating Partner staff in Niamey. In the same session, a short SWOT analysis was undertaken and the staff asked to add more indicators and sources of information to those already suggested in the given (by Partners) and ex-post Logical Frameworks (produced by the Team).

A chronology³⁴ was recorded by the Team with the assistance of participating Partner staff and Logical Frameworks³⁵ established for each Partner from available documents. Planned/Achieved matrices³⁶ were drawn from the LogFrames and performance assessed according to the classical DAC evaluation criteria using those indicators and sources³⁷ indicated in the LogFrames³⁸.

Findings were presented to the Steering Committee of the participating Partners in Niamey and feed-back gathered. A draft report was then prepared for review by the Partners and their comments integrated into the Final Report.

4. Background

4.1 Background to the country

Niger is a sahelo-saharan totally land-locked country and one of the largest in West Africa. It covers an area of 1 267 000 sq. km of which three quarters are desert or semi-desert and cropping is limited by rainfall of 350 mm/annum in the south to 100 mm in pastoral zone and denied in the desertified areas of the north. The nearest sea-port is Cotonou (Benin) 1 000 km to the south.

As in the whole of the Sahel, Niger's is characterised by steppe which ranges from stunted growths and bush in the north to more diverse vegetation with trees in the south. Variations of vegetation density and height are accentuated by substrate and local micro-climates.

³³ There was only time for a four-hour session.

³⁴ See **Annexe B** below.

³⁵ See **Annexe C**.

³⁶ See **Annexe D**.

³⁷ These were not exhaustive.

³⁸ See **Annexe L**. (Planning and Evaluation methodology).