

May 21, 2012

Comments from United Kingdom on Approval by Mail: Niger: Climate Information Development and Forecasting Project (PDIPC) - Project ID XPCRNE030A

- The project will work through Niger's 235 councils. Many of these will have very little capacity and it's important that the project recognises this and the need to ensure that capacity building of local government is a core activity.
- Project monitoring will be challenging. Niger is vast and travel is difficult. Furthermore there are high security threats in much of the country which make it off-limits to international staff which may limit the involvement of both AfDB and the World Bank
- The project should improve information for Early Warning Systems in Niger. However, it's important to recognise that improving EWSs is not just about technical data but also how this is used institutionally and politically. Improving the governance side of EWS also needs to be addressed. The 'lack of producer receptiveness' risk should include this issue and have more explicit mitigation actions identified.
- The risk management section should be strengthened to address the three areas highlighted above: i) local government capacity ii) project monitoring in remote and insecure areas and iii) the political and governance challenges associated with the uptake of early warning systems.
- Clarity is requested on the issue of weak public financial management identified under the Governance section. The potential impact of this issue on project success should be appraised and its management added to the risk section.
- The project has a clear gender disaggregated results framework which is welcomed. However some of the baseline information is missing which should be readily available.
- Two additional related projects to be added to Appendix III that the UK supports: i) the Africa Risk Capacity project (AU and WFP) which is in pilot phase and a feasibility study completed in Niger, this will set up a risk pooling mechanism for African governments in which payments are made based on rainfall levels, so that a drought would trigger payments to affected governments. It will depend on accurate climatic data and the PPCR project could help provide this and ii) the Adaptation Learning Programme (run by CARE) - a community based adaptation project working in four Africa countries including Niger. We welcome the references made to links with the ClimDev programme which the UK supports and encourage continued coordination with this programme.

- It will be important for this national programme to link up with regional forecasting initiatives (such as ClimDev but also others), to maximise the benefits to Niger and other countries in the region. We would welcome further details on how this can be achieved in implementation.