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Niger

Media and Telecoms Landscape Guide

February 2012

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1. Introduction

Niger lies on the southern edge of the Sahara desert and is classified by the United Nations as one of the poorest countries in the world.

Most of its 15 million people are subsistence farmers and nomadic pastoralists.

They suffer from recurrent drought, crop failure and lack of pasture for their cows, sheep and goats.

They are never far from hunger.

According to the UN World Food Programme (WFP), the failure of seasonal rains in 2009 and 2010 forced nearly eight million people – half the population – to rely on food aid.

Following another poor harvest in 2011, WFP was planning to provide food aid to 3.3 million people – nearly a quarter of the population - in 2012.

Niger's growing population and increasingly erratic climate have increased pressure on the environment.

Much of the country's agricultural and grazing land has become degraded.

There is very little irrigation away from the River Niger, which sweeps through the southwest corner of the country, and almost no mechanised farming.

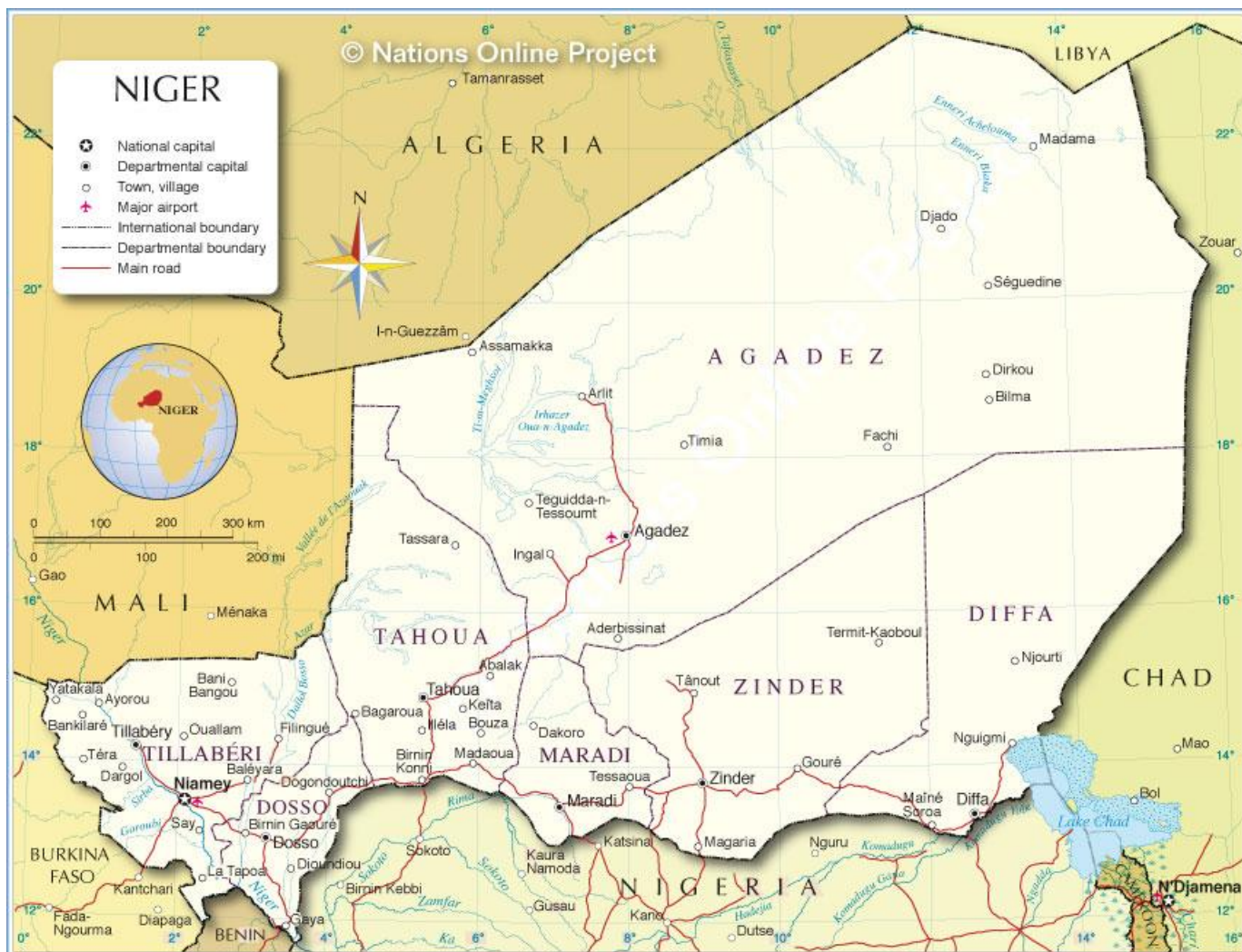
This landlocked former French colony relies almost entirely on rain-fed agriculture and labour-intensive farming techniques.

For several decades, impoverished farmers have been leaving the countryside to seek work abroad.

Many work as seasonal labourers in other West African countries, returning home to plant their fields in the rainy season.

Others migrate clandestinely across the Sahara to North Africa and onwards to Europe.

The money they send home to their families is a mainstay of Niger's economy.



Administrative map of Niger

Source: United Nations

According to the World Bank, 61% of all Nigeriens live in extreme poverty on less than one US dollar per day.

Niger was classified 186th out of the 187 countries listed in the UN Human Development Index for 2011 – just ahead of the bottom placed Democratic Republic of Congo.

The government depends on foreign aid to meet nearly half its spending.

It has been difficult for democracy to take root in such a poor and fragile society, but since April 2011, Niger has enjoyed a return to elected civilian government.

The country has experienced four military coups since independence in 1960 and has endured long years of military rule.

However, the latest military takeover in February 2010 ended 11 years of authoritarian rule by President Mamadou Tandja and paved the way for fresh elections and a more liberal democratic regime.

Tandja, a former military officer, was elected head of state in 1999. He was re-elected for a second term in 2004.

But Tandja provoked a political crisis in 2009 when he attempted to change the constitution to allow him to serve a third successive term in power.

He ignored a key ruling against his plans by the constitutional court, dissolved parliament and attempted to rule by decree.

The military junta which assumed power following Tandja's overthrow held presidential and parliamentary elections in January and March 2011 and returned Niger to civilian government.

Veteran opposition leader Mahamadou Issoufou was elected head of state in a two-stage presidential poll which was widely praised as free and fair.

He assumed power in April 2011.

Corruption flourished under Tandja and remains a serious problem.

Niger was rated 134 out of 183 countries listed by Transparency International in its 2011 Corruption Perception Index.

President Issoufou attempted to punish several high-ranking individuals accused of corruption during the Tandja regime shortly after he came to office.

This move may have been a factor behind a failed coup attempt against him in July 2011.

Niger is the world's fifth largest producer of uranium. This highly radioactive metal is the country's main export.

The uranium mines are situated near Arlit in the desert north. All the mines in production in early 2012 were controlled by French and Chinese interests.

The uranium mines are situated close to the main trade route across the Sahara. This runs north from Agadez through Arlit to Tamenrasset in southern Algeria.

A long-running rebellion by the nomadic Tuareg people has caused insecurity in northern Niger for decades.

Despite a series of peace deals over the years, the Tuareg rebellion has continued to simmer away with occasional flare-ups. There have been frequent attacks on road

traffic and military units in northern Niger and occasional raids on the Arlit uranium mines.

Banditry and smuggling, especially the transport of clandestine African migrants heading for the Maghreb and Europe, are rife.

Since 2001 an Islamic fundamentalist guerrilla movement that operates in several countries in the Sahara desert has emerged as a new threat to security in Niger.

This group is known as Al Qaeda in the Maghreb (AQIM). It grew out of an Islamist rebel movement in southern Algeria. In recent years AQIM has extended its attacks to targets in Niger, Mali and Mauritania.

In September 2010 seven expatriates working for the French uranium mining firm Areva were kidnapped near Arlit by AQIM. More than a year later, four Frenchmen among those taken hostage were still being held prisoner.

In January 2011 two French men were kidnapped by AQIM at gunpoint in a restaurant popular with foreigners in the capital Niamey. They were subsequently killed during a botched rescue attempt by French and Nigerien forces.

The desert-dwelling Tuareg people have been demanding autonomy ever since Niger's independence from France.

In the 1970s and 80s many Tuaregs received military training from the government of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi in Libya. They subsequently took up arms against the government of Niger.

The most recent Tuareg rebellion took place from 2007 to 2009. That uprising saw the Tuareg rebels in Niger join forces with their counterparts in neighbouring Mali.

In 2011, the overthrow and killing of Gaddafi in Libya triggered an exodus of refugees and returning migrant workers to Niger. The returnees included thousands of Tuaregs who had served in Gaddafi's security forces.

The victorious insurgent forces in Libya labelled most Tuaregs and black immigrants from Sub-Saharan Africa as mercenaries fighting to defend Gaddafi's regime.

As the rebels gained the upper hand in the civil war, many of these African migrants fled for their lives – mostly across the southern border into Niger.

About 100,000 Nigeriens who had been living and working in Libya returned home, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

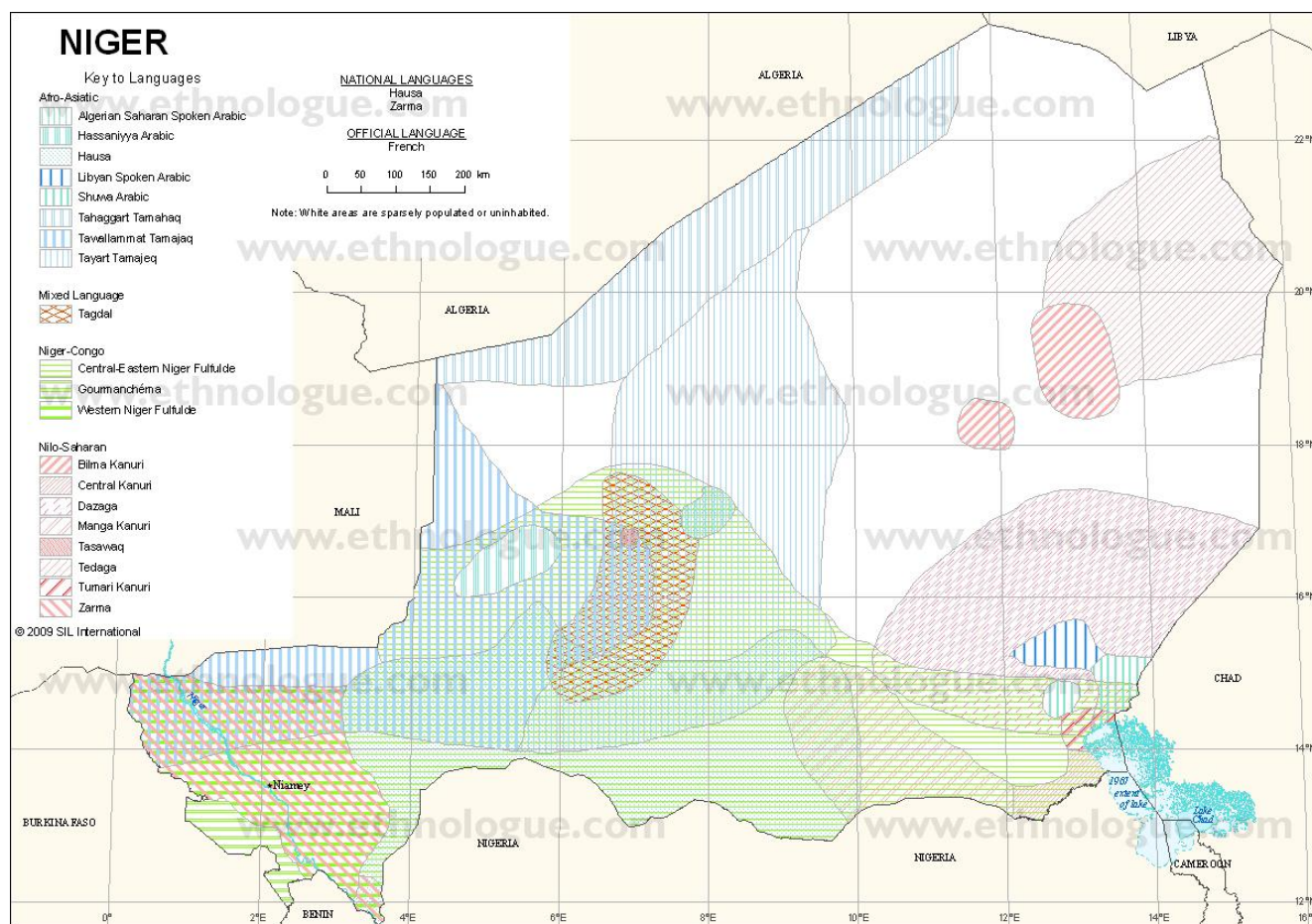
They were joined by tens of thousands of other West Africans heading home across the Sahara desert.

Most of these people made an overland dash to Agadez, the main town in northern Niger. Many of them turned up there destitute, but heavily armed.

In September 2011 several high profile members of the Gaddafi regime also began to arrive in heavily armed convoys accompanied by Tuareg fighters.

The mass return of armed Tuaregs who had formerly fought for Gaddafi presents a new security risk for Niger.

How the government deals with these people will be critical for security in the north.



Language map of Niger

Source: *Ethnologue.com*

The most common language spoken in Niger is **Hausa**.

This is the first language of most of the farming communities in southern Niger and is the main lingua franca of the country.

About 60% of Nigeriens speak Hausa as their first language.

Djerma (also spelled **Zarma**) is widely spoken in southwestern Niger in the area around the capital Niamey. It is the first language of about 23% of the population

Further north, the nomadic Peul people speak **Peul** (also known as **Fulfulde** or **Fulani**) and the Tuareg speak **Tamasheq**. Each of these languages is spoken by about 10% of the population.

French is the official language of government, but it is spoken only by a small educated elite.

According to a study carried out by the global French language cultural organisation *La Francophonie* “*La langue française dans le monde 2010*,” www.francophonie.org/IMG/pdf/Synthese-Langue-Francaise-2010.pdf less than 15% of people in Niger speak French.

Nearly all Nigeriens are Muslims.

People who have received a religious education have some knowledge of **Arabic**.

The language is also widely understood in northern Niger, where there is much social inter-action with neighbouring Algeria and Libya.

By and large Niger does not suffer from violent ethnic divisions.

However the desert north, where many people have close links with the Arabic culture of North Africa, feels culturally very different to the savannah scrubland of the south, where more than 80% of the population lives.

The southerners are mostly settled in villages and plant crops during the annual rainy season. They look south to the black states of West Africa for inspiration.

The northerners are mainly nomadic pastoralists.

Niger is divided into eight administrative regions – Niamey, Tillaberi, Dosso, Tahoua, Agadez, Maradi, Zinder and Diffa.

Each one is named after the city which serves as its capital.

Most of Niger’s government, business and media activities are concentrated in these eight urban centres

Niamey, situated on the banks of the river Niger, is the seat of government and the main centre of media production.

But Maradi, Niger’s second city, 650 km to the east is the country’s main commercial hub. It has strong links with nearby Nigeria.

Niger’s imports of food, fuel and manufactured goods mostly come by road from Nigeria.

Some imports also come via Benin from the Atlantic ports of Cotonou and Lome.

Most Nigeriens practise a mix of livestock rearing and agriculture.

In the south, drought-resistant cereals such as millet and sorghum are planted during the rainy season, which usually lasts from June to October.

But many men migrate to other West African countries in search of work during the long dry season when there is little for them to do at home.

Traditionally most have headed for Nigeria and Cote d'Ivoire.

Although uranium remains Niger's main export, other minerals are also being developed.

Gold mining began in 2007 at Mont Samira near the south-western border with Burkina Faso.

Oil production was due to start on a modest scale at Diffa near Lake Chad in the far south-east of Niger in 2012. The Chinese National Petroleum Company was working to develop oil production near Lake Chad in both Niger and Chad.

Four mobile phone companies provide good network coverage in the more densely populated south and west of Niger.

However, there is almost no mobile phone coverage in the desert north and east away from the towns strung out along the main road to Algeria.

One in four Nigeriens own a mobile phone.

NIGER AT A GLANCE

Population (World Bank 2011)	15.2 million
Main languages (Rough guide to Niger)	French (official), Hausa (60%), Djerma (23%), Tamasheq (10%), Peul (10%), Arabic
Per Capita GDP (World Bank 2011)	\$1,118
Adult literacy rate (UNESCO 2005)	28.7%
Radio sets in country (CIA World Factbook 2003)	680,000
TV sets in country (CIA World Factbook 2003)	125,000
Mobile phone subscribers (ITU 2010)	3.8 million
Mobile phone penetration rate (ITU 2010)	24.5 %
Mobile network coverage – population (Sahelcom 2012)	65%
Mobile network coverage - land area (Sahelcom 2012)	45%
Internet usage rate (ITU 2010)	0.8%
UN Human Development Index 2011	186 out of 187
Ranking on Reporters Sans Frontieres Index 2010	104 out of 178

2. Media Overview

Radio is the main source of news and information in Niger.

The country has more than 20 private FM stations and over 100 community radio stations operating alongside the extensive state radio network.

Television is also popular, especially in urban areas. The country has seven different TV channels.

A BBC World Service media audience survey in 2008 showed that 67% of adults listened to the radio at least once a week.

However, only 17% watched TV on a weekly basis.

Radios are cheaper and more portable than TV sets. They are also less dependent on a mains electricity supply to work.

Newspapers and magazines are only read by the educated urban elite – mainly in the capital Niamey.

All of Niger's newspapers are written in **French**. Only the educated elite can read them or afford to buy them.

The everyday language used by most people is **Hausa**.

According to UNESCO, only 28% of Niger's adult population could read and write in 2005, the latest date for which published statistics are available.

43% of men could read and write, whereas the adult literacy rate for women was only 15%.

Despite its poverty, Niger has a well-developed and relatively free media.

It ranked 104 out of 178 countries listed in the Reporters Sans Frontieres 2010 Press Freedom Index.

Operating alongside the state radio network, **La Voix du Sahel**, there are about 20 private commercial radio stations.

Some of the larger ones based in Niamey, also have local studios and FM relay stations in other large cities.

In addition, there are more than 100 community radio stations. Most of these serve isolated towns and villages using low-powered FM transmitters.

Together these different types of radio station cover the vast majority of the population and offer most Nigeriens a choice of listening.

The Hausa language radio services of several foreign broadcasters, notably **BBC World Service**, **Voice of America (VOA)** and **Radio Deutsche Welle** also command a large audience.

They broadcast to Niger on Short Wave, but can also be heard on FM in several cities through relay partnerships with local radio stations.

Radio France Internationale (RFI) is also influential. It broadcasts in **French** and **Hausa** on FM from its own transmitters mounted on the masts of state-run Voix du Sahel in several large towns.

Most town dwellers have access to a mobile phone. Mobile usage is also widespread in the countryside.

The BBC World Service audience survey in 2008 found that 9% of adults listened to the radio on their mobile phones.

Internet usage is confined to an affluent minority within the educated urban elite.

The International Telecommunications Union (ITU) estimated that less than 1% of the population had access to the internet in 2010.

This is partly a result of Niger's low literacy rate, but it is also a consequence of extreme poverty.

Very few people can afford to buy a computer, surf the web on their mobile phone or buy computer time at an internet cafe.

The most popular types of radio programme in Niger are news and current affairs updates.

Four out of ten adults listen to 30 minutes of news per day, according to the 2008 BBC World Service audience survey.

The survey indicated that Nigeriens are primarily interested in local rather than African or global news.

Dramas and programmes that focus on local and family issues are also popular.

There are no reliable media audience figures.

Radio and TV stations tend to estimate – and very often exaggerate - the number of listeners and viewers that they attract.

Research by the US embassy in 2011 suggested that the state-run radio network **La Voix du Sahel** had a regular audience of around seven million people.

It also estimated that **TeleSahel**, the flagship state TV channel had up to four million viewers.

The embassy research showed that **Tal TV**, ORTN's second television channel, attracted up to one million viewers.

No recent figures are available for the ownership of TV sets and radio sets.

The state broadcasting corporation, **Office de Radiodifusion et Television du Niger (ORTN)**, controls **Voix du Sahel**, **Telesahel** and **Tal TV**.

Voix du Sahel operates local radio stations in **Niamey** and the seven regional capitals; **Maradi**, **Zinder**, **Tillaberi**, **Tahoua**, **Agadez**, **Diffa** and **Dosso**.

These regional stations link up with network headquarters in Niamey for national programming.

Telesahel and its more commercial sister station **Tal TV** broadcast from masts in the eight regional capitals. They can also be received nationwide by satellite.

Two of Niger's privately owned TV stations - **Tenere TV** and **Canal 3** – are also available on satellite.

The other three private TV stations only provide coverage of Niamey and the surrounding area from free-to-air terrestrial transmitters.

The five largest private FM radio stations: **Anfani**, **Sarraounia**, **Tenere**, **Alternative** and **Tambara**, have studios and transmitters in Niamey and other provincial cities.

Their regional studios are often used to provide a limited amount of local news and programming as well as contributions to the national network.

Niger's main spoken language is **Hausa**. This is the language that is most widely used on radio and television.

Most people speak Hausa with a reasonable level of fluency.

Radio and TV stations also broadcast a lot of programming in **French**, the official language of government.

The other main languages used in broadcasting are **Djerma** (also spelt **Zarma**), **Peul** (also known as **Fulfulde** and **Fulani**), **Tamasheq**, **Toubou** and **Arabic**.

Djerma is the main language spoken in southwestern Niger around Niamey.

Peul, **Tamasheq** and **Toubou** are spoken in the north.

Arabic is also widely understood in northern Niger, where people have close cultural, social and trade links to the Arabic speaking countries of North Africa.

The state broadcaster ORTN broadcasts daily news bulletins in eight local languages.

The programme-making capacity of Nigerien radio and TV stations is limited, but is developing fast.

Almost all broadcasters are short of equipment, but many have plenty of staff.

Even small radio stations may employ eight to 10 journalists.

The quality of broadcast output is quite variable.

Some radio stations have up-to-date digital recorders and digital editing software and their broadcast output sounds very professional.

Others still rely on cassette recorders without proper microphones to undertake news reporting.

Some TV programmes look as good as their counterparts in Cote d'Ivoire.

Others are technically so bad that they are difficult to watch.

Foreign radio stations have traditionally beamed programmes into West Africa on Short Wave, but increasingly they reach Nigerien audiences on FM through relay partnerships with local radio stations.

The **BBC Hausa Service** claims an audience of 3.6 million people in Niger. It can be widely heard on FM through relay partnerships with three local commercial stations: **Anfani**, **Sarraounia** and **R & M**.

Voice of America (VOA) and Germany's **Radio Deutsche Welle** also have popular **Hausa** language programmes. These are relayed on FM by **Tenere** and **Anfani** among others.

Radio France International (RFI) is available nationally in **French** on FM. It also has a **Hausa** service, but this appears to be less popular than the Hausa-language broadcasts of the BBC, VOA and Deutsche Welle.

The French satellite television channels **TV5** and **France 24** are popular amongst the educated elite.

Most local TV stations run a high proportion of foreign programmes.

Ivorian TV dramas are particularly popular.

Canal France International, a consortium of French international broadcasters, supplies French-language radio and TV programmes designed for African audiences to many Nigerien radio and TV stations.

Niger's media scene has opened up quite dramatically since political liberalisation began in the early 1990s.

Until then, the state-run ORTN had a complete monopoly of radio and television.

Niger's first independent weekly newspaper, **Le Republicain**, was launched in 1991.

R & M was the first private FM station to go on air. It began broadcasting from Niamey in 1994.

Niger's first private TV channel, **Tenere**, was launched in 2000.

The first community radio station began broadcasting in 1999.

A further 100 community radio stations sprang up over the following decade, encouraged by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and a variety of other international donors.

Many community radios in remote locations consist of a ready-to-use radio station-in-a-box located in a mud hut. Most are powered by solar panels.

The community stations typically have a 50 to 100 watt transmitter mounted on a 20 to 30 metre high mast. Most have a broadcast range of 10 to 50 km.

By August 2011, 129 community radio stations had been established.

However, media sources said about 30 of them were off air as a result of technical and financial problems.

Press freedom suffered during the authoritarian rule of President Mamadou Tandja from 1999 to 2010.

But relations between the state and the media have thawed considerably since Tandja's overthrow and the introduction of a new more liberal media law in 2010.

The new media law was drafted jointly by the military junta which deposed Tandja and local journalists at a conference in March 2010. It was promulgated three months later.

The new law decriminalised abuses of journalism. It scrapped prison sentences for defamation and the publishing of erroneous information. Instead, these became civil offences punishable by fines.

The new law also introduced a degree of self-regulation on the media for the first time through the creation of an autonomous body called the **L'Observatoire Nigérien Indépendant des Médias pour l'Éthique et la Déontologie** (Independent Nigerien Observatory for Media and Ethics) (**ONIMED**).

However, ONIMED has very limited powers to support journalists and uphold their rights.

The government retained overall powers of supervision of the media through a regulatory body called the **Office National de Communications (ONC)**.

The new media law enshrined the principle of freedom of information and committed the government to allow widespread public access to official information.

Journalists have now begun to demand information from government bodies which in the past were reluctant to divulge anything.

Separate laws outlaw religious intolerance and hate speech. However, both these phenomena are rare in the Nigerien media.

In the past, journalists frequently practiced self-censorship on political issues and on stories affecting prominent figures in big business. The 2010 media law could help to make them less reticent.

Low salaries mean that journalists are susceptible to bribery and the colouring of their reports by financial inducements.

The government and aid agencies frequently pay journalists to attend their press conferences.

The average wage of a Nigerien journalist is less than US\$100 per month so most reporters are grateful for this supplement to their meagre basic income.

However, critics of the system argue that such payments are simply bribes that encourage journalists to give prominent and favourable coverage to the story that they have been invited to cover.

The institutionalisation of such payments has led to an environment in which journalists are often disinclined to cover stories where there is no financial inducement from them to do so.

Nevertheless a mission to Niger by the media rights organisation Reporters Sans Frontieres (RSF) in July 2011 gave a very positive assessment of developments in the media following the country's return to democracy.

It concluded that: *“Niger could become a regional model of good governance and respect for media freedom, but must first consolidate what has been achieved”*.

Social taboos inhibit the public discussion of several sensitive issues, such as violence against women, abortion, rape and prostitution.

In the past, the government has also objected to media references to famine and the continued existence of domestic slavery in Niger.

Sensitive social issues are often tackled effectively through dramatic sketches written and performed by local theatre companies.

These mini-dramas are performed in public and many of them are recorded and broadcast by community radio stations.

Whenever radio stations organise discussion programmes on controversial issues, they often invite Muslim clerics or scholars to offer a Koranic interpretation of the matter at hand.

Such discussion programmes often include questions and comments from listeners who call in by phone or send a text message.

Several international media development organisations have worked in Niger in recent years, mostly to support the development of community radio stations.

Community radios offer one of the best ways for aid agencies to communicate with the rural population.

They broadcast in local languages and carry local news and information of direct relevance to the everyday life of their target audience.

In 2011, the US-based media development organisation **Equal Access** was training journalists from 52 radio stations to become 'community reporters,' able to report more effectively on local issues.

Equal Access was producing three programmes per week which were circulated to these partner stations for broadcasting;

- a rural soap opera containing social messages
- a youth programme
- a religious affairs programme that emphasises tolerance

The US NGO was also helping its partner stations to form listening groups where people listen to these programmes together and discuss them afterwards.

The broadcasts of each community radio station only cover a small geographical area. Potential sponsors of programming must deal with each station individually. There is no national coordination body that can sell air time on several community stations at once.

Neither has any telephone contact list been compiled and published to make communication with individual community radio stations easier.

Many humanitarian organisations find it easier to sponsor programmes on commercial radio stations with a wider geographic reach, such as **Anfani, Saraounia, Tenere, Alternative** and **Tambara**.

UNICEF is a major purchaser of radio airtime for public service announcements and programmes with a social message on issues such as health and education.

It commissions the production and recording of radio programmes and spots and then pays for them to be aired on a large number of commercial and community radio stations.

The revenue raised from broadcasting sponsored programming for aid agencies is an important source of revenue for most Nigerien radio stations, especially the smaller ones, which find it difficult to attract advertising.

Niger's media is still learning how to engage with disaster-affected communities, but several aid agencies have begun to encourage this process.

The World Food Programme (WFP) and UNICEF have worked directly with journalists from radio stations and newspapers, taking them to the field to meet communities affected by drought and severe food shortages.

The civic action NGO **Alternative Espaces Citoyens**, which runs its own **Radio Alternative** FM radio stations in Niamey and Zinder, has also organised a number of reporting missions to outlying communities to gather voices and opinions from forgotten places, and to hold educational debates there on issues of importance.

The US Peace Corps office in Niger has produced a useful guide on how to work with radio stations in Niger "*Working with Radio, a guide for PCVs.*" This is available online. It does not have a URL, but can be found through a Google search for the title.

Niger is 99% Muslim and socially conservative.

Prayer forms an important part of everyday life and most men attend the mosque on a weekly basis.

Traditional channels of communication such as imams and village elders are still important for reaching the illiterate sections of rural society.

3. Media Groups

The state radio and television corporation, the **Office de Radiodiffusion et Television du Niger (ORTN)** is the largest and most influential media organisation in the country.

The government also owns a newspaper publishing company, the **Office National d'Editions de Presse (ONEP)**, which produces Niger's only daily newspaper, **Le Sahel**, but this is managed separately.

There are five private media groups which own a combination of radio and TV stations:

- **Radio Television Tenere (RTT)**
- **Radio Television Bonferey (RTB)**
- **Radio Television Dounia**
- **Radio Television Sarraounia**
- **Canal 3**

The Tenere group operates an FM radio station with several relay transmitters in the interior and a satellite TV station. Both have broad national coverage. It also owns a weekly magazine.

The radio and TV broadcasts of Bonferey and Dounia are restricted to Niamey and its immediate surroundings.

Office de Radiodiffusion et Television du Niger (ORTN) www.ortn.ne

ORTN is the state broadcasting corporation.

It runs the government radio network **Voix du Sahel** and two TV channels, **Telesahel** and **Tal TV**.

All three broadcast nationwide.

Voix du Sahel is ONRT's flagship radio station. It broadcasts on FM and Short Wave for 19 hours a day and claims a national audience of up to seven million.

ORTN's main TV channel **TeleSahel** is on air for 15 hours per day and is estimated by the US embassy to reach up four million viewers.

Tal TV, its second channel, was set up as a more commercial venture to compete head-on with Niger's private television stations. However in practice it shares a lot of common programming with Telesahel.

ORTN operates local radio stations linked to the Voix du Sahel national network in the following cities:

Agadez
Diffa
Dosso
Maradi
Niamey
Tahoua
Tillabery
Zinder

In early 2012 Voix du Sahel was broadcast from 36 FM relay stations around the country and the installation of more local transmitters was planned.

Voix du Sahel's eight regional stations produce and broadcast their own programming for several hours each day. They link up with Niamey for national programmes and the main news bulletins.

ORTN employs around 750 people nationwide. It is by far the largest news gathering organisation in Niger.

ORTN has an estimated annual budget of more than one billion CFA francs (US\$2 million), of which about 700 million (US\$1.4 million) comes from the government.

The remainder comes from advertising, programme sponsorship and other sources of revenue.

TeleSahel and TAL TV have some regional programme making capacity.

Both TV channels are broadcast by terrestrial transmitters and by the Globecast Africa Atlantic Bird 3 satellite.

ORTN staff say they feel much freer to report following Niger's return to democracy in April 2011.

Loic Crespin, a veteran journalist at ORTN, was appointed Director General of the organisation in July 2011. Shortly afterwards he extended the hours of daily TV broadcasting.

Teleshahel and Tal TV now broadcast from 10.00 in the morning until after midnight. Until 2011, they were only on air in the evening.

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Radio Television Tenere (RTT)

The Tenere media group operates one of Niger's largest private radio stations and a TV station which broadcasts nationwide by satellite. It also owns a weekly magazine.

The group, named after the Tenere desert in northeastern Niger, opened **Radio Tenere FM** in Niamey in 1998.

It went on to launch Niger's first private TV station, **Tenere Television** in 2000.

According to US embassy media audience research, RTT's radio and TV broadcasts both reach a nationwide audience of about one million people.

RTT also owns a weekly magazine, **Tenere Express**

The media group was set up by businessman Amadou "Hama" Hima Souley. It is still run by members of his family.

Radio Tenere broadcasts nationwide on FM from **Niamey** and relay stations in **Agadez, Diffa, Dosso, Maradi, Tahoua, Tillabery** and **Zinder**.

RTT employs a network of journalists in all eight regions of Niger. Most are bi-media trained and work simultaneously for Tenere's radio and TV stations.

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4. Radio

Radio overview

Radio is the most popular and influential channel of communication in Niger.

A BBC World Service media audience survey in 2008 showed that 67% of adults listened to the radio at least once a week.

However, only 17% watched TV on a weekly basis.

Most people listen to radio at home, sometimes in a group.

The BBC World Service audience survey found that 9% of adults listened to the radio on their mobile phones.

The peak listening periods are in the early morning and evening.

Four out of ten adults listen to 30 minutes of news per day, according to the BBC survey.

It indicated that Nigeriens are primarily interested in local rather than African or global news.

Dramas and programmes that focus on local and family issues are also popular.

Voix du Sahel, the state radio network, has the widest reach and commands the biggest audience. It has 36 FM relay stations across the country.

There are also about 20 private commercial radio stations and up to 129 community radio stations scattered across the country.

Not all of the community stations are operating. In August 2011 media sources said about 30 were off air as a result of technical problems and financial difficulties

Research by the US embassy in Niamey in 2011 indicated that the state radio network **Voix du Sahel** reaches seven million people across Niger.

It also showed that 52% of adults tune in regularly to its programmes.

Voix du Sahel produces national network programming in **Niamey**.

Its eight regional FM radio stations in Niamey and seven other cities around the country broadcast four or five hours per day of regional programming, most of it in local languages.

They relay national network programming during the rest of the day.

La Voix du Sahel operates regional FM radio stations in:

Agadez
Diffa
Dosso
Maradi
Niamey
Tillaberi
Tahoua
Zinder

The **BBC Hausa service** is the second most popular radio station at a national level.

It attracts 3.6 million listeners daily, according to BBC World Service research.

The BBC Hausa service can be received nationwide on Short Wave.

However, most Nigeriens listen to its programmes on privately owned FM stations such as **Anfani, Sarraounia, R&M** and **Radio Sahara**, which relay its broadcasts.

A BBC World Service audience survey found that most listeners to its Hausa service in Niger were young employed rural males.

In urban areas, private FM stations which play African and Nigerien music are very popular.

Five private commercial FM radio stations based in **Niamey** have studios and FM relay stations in one or more other cities. These are **Anfani, Sarraounia, Alternative, Tenere** and **Tambara**.

Although most private commercial radio stations are based in the capital, there are also private radio stations based in **Agadez, Diffa, Gaya, Dosso, Maradi, Tahoua, Tillaberi** and **Zinder**.

Anfani is the largest private radio station in Niger. It claims a nationwide audience of up to one million.

However, the only Niamey-based radio stations able to reach the remote north of Niger are La Voix du Sahel, Tenere and Alternative

Community radio stations have mushroomed since the first one was set up at Bankilare in Tillabery region near the border with Burkina Faso, in 1999.

The community radios often serve outlying towns and villages which struggle to pick up other stations.

Many of them simply consist of a radio-in-a- box kit set up in a one or two roomed mud house.

Most have a low-powered 50 to 100-watt FM transmitter mounted on a 20 to 30 metre high mast.

Their signal can usually be heard within a radius of 10 to 50 km.

The community radio stations are only on air at set times for a few hours per day.

Some only broadcast on selected days each week.

In many outlying districts, where there is no mains electricity, the radio stations are powered by solar panels.

A large number of community radio stations were set up with financial support from international aid agencies such as United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Dutch development organisation SNV, UNICEF, USAID and Africare.

Dozens of community radio stations were launched between 2000 and 2005 with the support of a donor-financed project called the **Rural Radio Network (RURANET)**.

This provided funding and technical assistance for the setting up of solar-powered community radio stations with low powered transmitters.

RURANET also supplied these stations with World Space receivers that enabled them to capture and relay the programmes of La Voix du Sahel and international radio stations that broadcast by satellite.

In addition, RURANET helped community radio stations to exchange among themselves the programmes that they produced.

RURANET has been inactive since 2005.

The supervision and development of community radio stations is now undertaken by a less dynamic body called the **Coordination Nationale des Radios Communautaires** (National Coordinating Committee for Community Radio Stations).

Many community radio stations struggled to survive financially after their initial start-up funding ran out. Typically, they were only supported by a sponsoring donor for their first two years of operation.

After that, many suffered from an exodus of trained staff. The presenters and technicians often left in search of paid work elsewhere.

Today, most of these small radio stations have become dependent on strong figures in the local community who continue to make and present programmes out of goodwill and social commitment, even though they are no longer paid.

None of the community radio stations receive any funding from central government.

However, many of them earn revenue from broadcasting sponsored programmes on behalf of international aid agencies such as UNICEF.

These sponsored programmes often deal with health care, education and women's issues. Some are ready-made recordings. Others are locally produced programmes on a particular topic.

The latter often incorporate drama sketches performed by local theatre groups and discussions with local people.

The popularity of community radio stations depends partly on where they are located and what other radio listening alternatives are available.

In large towns many people prefer to listen to La Voix du Sahel and private commercial stations because they give international news and have a wider selection of music.

But in remote rural areas, the local community radio station is often seen as a lifeline and its broadcasts are closely followed by everyone.

Community radio stations are distributed fairly evenly across southern Niger, but there are only a handful of them in the sparsely populated north.

In August 2011, officials of the National Coordinating Committee for Community Radio Stations said that up to 30 community radio stations in Niger might not be functioning.

Nonetheless, community radio stations are still one of the most fundamental and popular communications tools in Niger.

They are staffed by familiar and trusted figures in the community, most of whom are volunteers.

In 2011, the US media development NGO **Equal Access** was working to help improve the output of 23 community radio stations

Half of these were located in the **Tahoua** administrative region. The others were in the **Maradi**, **Zinder**, **Agadez** and **Niamey** administrative regions.

Equal Access produces a special series of weekly programmes with a social message, carries out training and provides a support network for journalists working on community radio stations.

It singled out the radio stations in **Abalak** and **Illela** in Tahoua region as being particularly successful.

The National Coordinating Committee for Community Radio Stations lacks direct engagement with most of its affiliated stations.

This is partly due to a chronic lack of funding. Instead, it uses a network of eight regional coordinators to liaise directly with individual radio stations.

Many community radios are based in remote locations without a phone. Regional coordinators have to drive through the desert on a motorbike to reach them.

There is some confusion about the exact number of community radio stations.

The National Coordinating Committee for Community Radio stations said in August 2011 that there were 129 stations, but only 102 names appear on its published list.

The **Office National de Communication (ONC)**, the government body which is responsible for allocating radio frequencies, listed 120 community stations in June 2011. However, it said that not all of them had been authorised to broadcast.

The number actually on air in August 2011 appeared to about 100.

Individual community radios can be contacted directly or through the regional coordinators of the **National Coordinating Committee for Community Radio Stations**. These are:

Niamey

Coordinator - M. Halirou

Mob: +227 90 50 07 11

Address: Rue de le 2eme Pharmacie, Niamey

Agadez

Coordinator - Hamid Al-Haq

Mob: +227 96 20 04 20

Diffa

Coordinator - Fadayi Mohammedu

Mob: +227 96 50 6967

Dosso

Coordinator - Barham Abubakar

Mob: +227 96 59 00 62

Maradi

Coordinator - Issif Chaibou

Mob: +227 96 46 04 09

Tahoua

Coordinator - Abdulatif Mohammed

Mob: +227 96 02 20 08

Tillaberi

Coordinator - Moussa Hassan

Mob: +227 96 08 35 42

Zinder

Coordinator Abas Ba Tcheri

Mob: +227 96 53 48 62

Locations with functioning community radio stations (June 2011)

Sources: Office National de Communications (ONC), Community Radio Station Steering Committee, Equal Access.

NB: The spelling of place names may vary from those shown here.

Agadez Region

- 1- Agadez – Alternative 99.4 FM
- 2- Akokan
- 3- Aghor
- 4- Arlit
- 5- Boudari
- 6- RTA (Route Tahoua-Arlit?)
- 7- Tabelote
- 8- Tiguidan Taguette
- 9- Tiguidan Tassoum
- 10-Tchirozerine**

Diffa Region

- 1- Bosso
- 2- Cheri
- 3- Chetimari
- 4- Goudoumaria
- 5- Issari
- 6- Maine Soroua
- 7- N'Gourti
- 8- N'Guima

Dosso Region

- 1- Bengou
- 2- Bingou
- 3- Birni-N'Gaoure
- 4- Bumba
- 5- Dan Kassari
- 6- Dogon Kirya
- 7- Doumega
- 8- Falwal
- 9- Garanke Dey
- 10-Gobery
- 11-Kara Kara
- 12-Kargui Bongou
- 13-Kiota
- 14-Loga
- 15-Sakadamna
- 16-Tanda
- 17-Tchibiri

Maradi Region

- 1- Aguié
- 2- Annuri
- 3- Dakoro
- 4- Gabi
- 5- Gadabedji
- 6- Gagama
- 7- Gazawa
- 8- Guiden Roudji
- 9- Mahay
- 10- Maradi
- 11-Nfouta
- 12-Sarkin Haoussa
- 13-Souloulou
- 14-Tessaoua

Niamey Region

1. Niamey - Radio Alternative 99.4 FM
2. Niamey - Boukoki 99.0 FM (Boukoki suburb of Niamey)
3. Niamey - Radio Jeunesse 98.6 FM (Goudel suburb of Niamey)

Tahoua Region

- 1- Abalak
- 2- Abalak Mairoua
- 3- Assala
- 4- Azeye
- 5- Bagaroua
- 6- Bermo
- 7- Bouza
- 8- Dogorawa
- 9- Dole
- 10-Garahanga
- 11-Ibohamame
- 12-Illela
- 13-Kaou
- 14-Keita
- 15-Tabalak
- 16-Takanamet
- 17-Tamaske
- 18-Tamaya
- 19-Tassara
- 20-Teberam
- 21-Tillia
- 22-Tintabaraden

Tillaberi Region

- 1- Agoudou Fouga
- 2- Ayrou
- 3- Bankilare
- 4- Damana
- 5- Dantiandou
- 6- Dolbel
- 7- Filingue
- 8- Garbey Krou
- 9- Goudel
- 10-Kahe
- 11-Karbeji
- 12-Kokorou
- 13-Kona Bangou
- 14-Mehana
- 15-Ouallam
- 16-Say
- 17-Sawani
- 18-Simiri
- 19-Tarbiyat
- 20-Tera

Zinder Region

- 1- Belbedji
- 2- Birni-Kazoe
- 3- Damagram Takaya
- 4- Dan Barto
- 5- Dogo Dogo
- 6- Gangara
- 7- Goure
- 8- Guidguir
- 9- Guidmouni
- 10-Kantche
- 11-Malawa
- 12-Magaria
- 13-Mirya
- 14-Sassoumbroum
- 15-Tesker
- 16-Wacha
- 17-Yachin-Kafa
- 18- Zinder – Alternative 99.4 FM

Radio stations

Voix du Sahel www.ortn.ne

Voix du Sahel (Voice of the Sahel) is the national radio network of the state broadcasting corporation **Office de Radiodiffusion et Television du Niger (ORTN)**.

It broadcasts for 19 hours per day between 06.00 in the morning and 01.00 at night.

Voix du Sahel broadcasts nationwide on a variety of FM frequencies from 36 transmitters across Niger.

Many of these FM transmitters cover an area of 60 to 80 km radius.

La Voix du Sahel also broadcasts on 9705 Khz on Short Wave and by satellite via the Globecast Atlantic Bird 3 satellite.

According to research by the US embassy in Niamey, the state radio station has a nationwide audience of seven million and 52% of adults listen to it at least once a day.

La Voix du Sahel has a reputation for being reliable, but it is widely regarded as a bit old-fashioned.

Some of its technical quality is variable.

National network programming is produced at the headquarters in **Niamey**.

La Voix du Sahel also operates eight local FM stations in the following cities:

Niamey

Agadez

Diffa

Dosso

Maradi

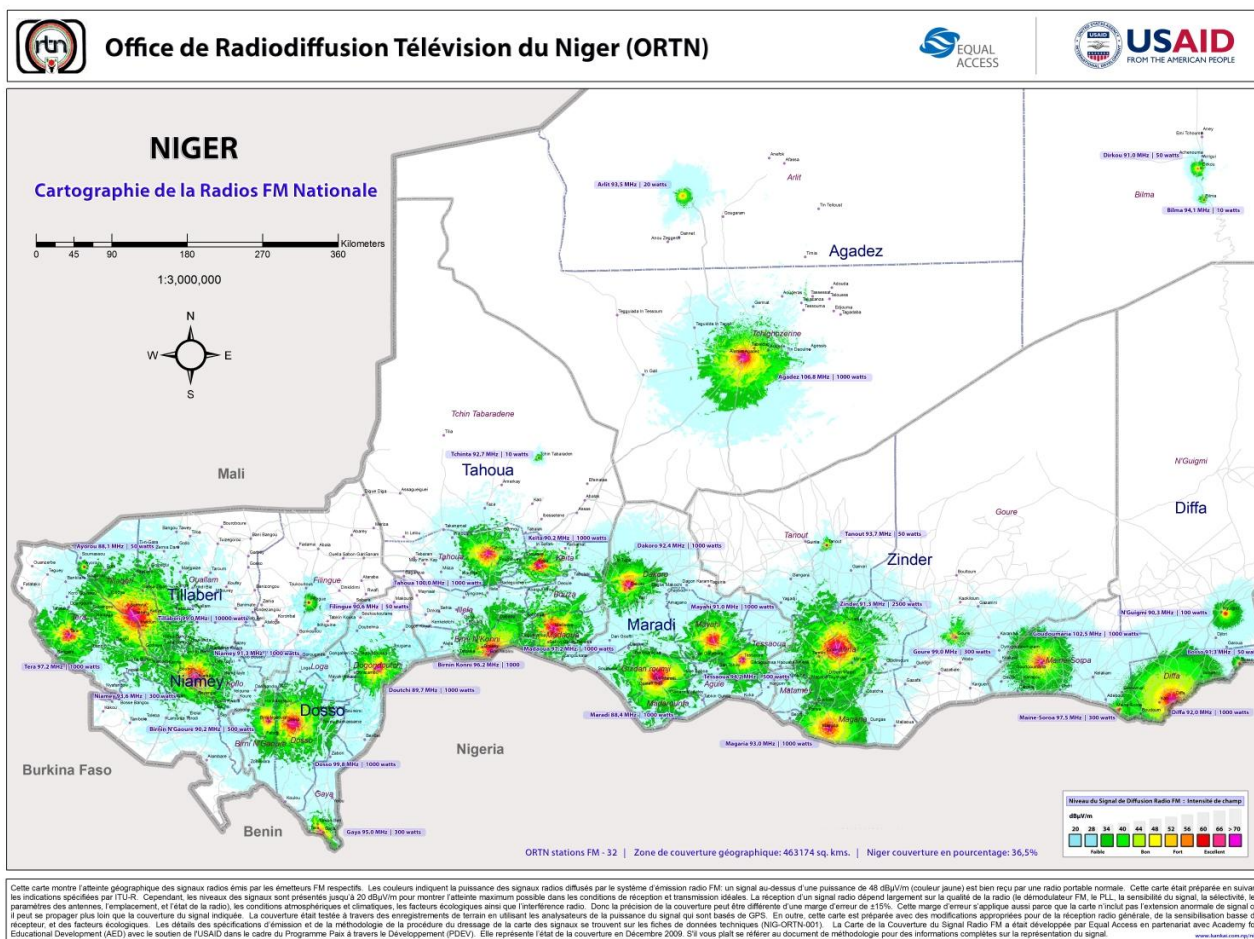
Tillaberi

Tahoua

Zinder

These broadcast local programming between 08.00 and 12.00 in the morning and again for several hours in the evening. During the rest of the day, they relay national network output from Niamey

La Voix du Sahel has about 25 journalists based in the seven regions of Niger outside of Niamey.



Voix du Sahel FM radio coverage in December 2009

Source: Equal Access radio coverage survey

The network broadcasts mainly in **French** and **Hausa**. About one third of its programme output is in French.

Voix du Sahel also carries programmes and news bulletins in **Djerma** (also called **Zarma**), **Peul** (also called **Fulfulde** or **Fulani**), **Tamasheq**, **Toubou**, **Arabic**, **Kankuri**, **Gourmance** and **Buduma**.

About 65 % of the output of Voix du Sahel's regional stations is in local languages.

Each regional station carries its own news bulletins, current affairs and audience participation programmes, and programmes on health, agriculture and social issues.

These are broadcast for two hours in mid-morning and a further two or three hours in the afternoon.

During the rest of the day the regional stations relay national network programming.

ORTN has a cooperation agreement with **Canal France International**. This gives Voix du Sahel access to a wide range of French language programmes produced by French international broadcasters.

There are national news bulletins in **French** at 06.45, 13.00 and 20.00.

The annual budget of ORTN is estimated at over 1 billion CFA francs (US\$2 million), of which about 700m CFA (US\$1.4 million) comes from the government.

The rest comes from advertising, programme sponsorship and other sources.

Voix du Sahel has a tradition of co-operating with international aid agencies which want to transmit humanitarian messages to the population through the media. In particular, it works closely with UNICEF.

Director of ORTN -Loic Crespin
Mob: +227 9971 88

Director of Programmes ORTN - Moumouni Idrissa:
Mob: +227 96 88 6181

News editor Voix du Sahel - Aboudoulaye Tiémogo
Mob: +227 96 36 48 66

Tel: (switchboard) +227 72 31 63

Address: La Voix du Sahel, ORTN, BP 309, Plateau, Niamey

Regional offices of La Voix du Sahel:

Agadez

Journalist - Mohamed Madou
Mob: +227 96 98 27 10

Maradi

Station Director - Abba Attoumane
Mob: +227 96 28 89 15

Tillaberi

Journalist - Kimba Seydou
Mob: +227 96 29 65 01

Zinder

Journalist - Ibrahim Mamane
Mob: +227 96 12 53 19

RADIO ANFANI 100.0 FM

Radio Anfani is one of Niger's largest and most respected private radio stations.

It is based in **Niamey** and has regional studios in **Birnin Konni, Diffa, Maradi** and **Zinder**

Anfani has a 1,000 watt transmitter mounted on a 35 metre-high mast in Niamey with a range of about 70 km.

It also has FM relay stations in the four other towns where its regional studios are located

Radio Anfani claims to have a regular audience of 500,000 in Niamey and over one million nationwide.

The station is owned by Gremah Boucar, who is one of Niger's best-known and most charismatic journalists.

After a stint as a politician, he returned to journalism saying: "it's the better job of the two".

Anfani is on air for 18 hours a day from 06.00 to midnight.

It mainly broadcasts in **French** and **Hausa**, but also carries news bulletins in other local languages.

The station carries news, sports, music, live phone-in programmes, features and documentaries.

Some of its programmes are taken from **Canal France International**, which distributes French language radio and TV programmes for re-broadcast in Africa.

Anfani produces local news bulletins at its regional studios in Birnin Konni, Maradi, Zinder and Diffa, some of them in local languages.

These local stations are well-staffed, but they lack equipment and technical support. If something breaks they have to wait for a visit from Niamey.

In 2011 Anfani's Niamey news room only had one working computer equipped with digital editing software. This made it difficult to produce high quality news packages.

Radio Anfani relays programmes of the **BBC Hausa Service** and the **Voice of America (VOA) Hausa Service**.

Owner and director - Gremah Boucar
Mobile: +227 96 96 59 59

Head of programmes - Amadou Kodjo Akouete (Dr Style)
Mobile: +227 96 56 53 68
drstyle@gmail.com

Technical director: Zannou L'avenir
Zasela25@gmail.com

Address: Radio Anfani, Quartier du Grande Mosquee, Niamey.

Regional offices:

Diffa

Journalist - Adam Ba Boukarna
Mob: +227 96 26 85 88

Maradi

Director - Kanta Djaji:
Mob: +227 96 49 94 56

Zinder

Director - Lawan Boucar
Mob: +227 96 56 47 15

Radio Tenere 98.0 FM (No website)

Radio Tenere is one of Niger's largest privately owned radio stations.

It forms part of the Radio Television Tenere (RTT) private media group, which also owns **Tenere Television**.

Radio Tenere broadcasts on 98.0 FM from transmitters in **Niamey, Agadez, Diffa, Dosso, Maradi, Tahoua, Tillaberi** and **Zinder**.

However, the government media regulator, the Office National de Communications (ONC) says RTT does not have full authorisation for all these relays.

RTT estimates Radio Tenere's total audience at about 500,000.

The station has a good reputation for impartiality and neutrality in its news and current affairs coverage.

The RTT media group is owned by businessman Amadou "Hama" Hima Saley. According to the management, he largely stays out of editorial issues.

The station broadcasts for 18 hours a day from 06.00 in the morning to midnight, mostly in **Hausa** and **French**.

It also carries some programmes in **Djerma** (also called **Zarma**), which is widely spoken in and around Niamey.

Tenere carries a mixture of music and current affairs/news programmes.

There are two main news programmes daily, one in Hausa and one in French. Each of these is followed by an interactive discussion programme.

Management says the most popular themes are health, environment, politics and the high cost of living.

Radio Tenere also relays programmes of the **Voice of America (VOA) Hausa Service**.

The station was launched in Niamey in 1998 and has progressively expanded its national coverage since then.

RTT says that selling advertising space on the radio station is very difficult.

Radio Tenere supplements its income from advertising by making privately commissioned documentary programmes for companies and international organisations.

RTT employs about twenty journalists in Niamey, all of whom are multi-media trained. They all work simultaneously for radio and TV.

The media group has limited news gathering capacity outside Niamey.

It employs just one journalist and one manager in each of its six regional offices in Agadez, Diffa, Dosso, Maradi, Tahoua and Zinder.

Radio Tenere broadcasts from Niamey on a 1,000 Watt FM transmitter that provides broadcast coverage within a 60 km radius.

The signal is transmitted by satellite to FM relay stations in the interior.

News editor - Moustapha Maman Sani
Mob: +227 96 89 50 52
Tel (switchboard) +227 73 65 74
Email: mmamanesani@yahoo.fr

Headquarters address: RTT Tenere, Avenue Maoneye, Quartier Maouneye, BP 13600. Niamey

Regional offices:

Dosso:

Journalist - Assoumane Amadou
Mob: +227 9627 3516

Maradi

Journalist - Koundo Zintori
Mob: +227 96 46 56 59

RADIO SARRAOUNIA 102.1 FM (no website)

Radio Sarraounia is one of the most popular independent radio stations in western and south-central Niger.

It broadcasts on 102.1FM from two 500 watt transmitters mounted on a 35-metre-high mast in **Niamey** and can be heard clearly within 80 km radius of the capital.

Radio Sarraounia also has FM relay stations and regional studios in **Birnin Konni, Madaoua, Tahoua and Maradi.**

The station broadcasts a small amount of local programming from each of these four regional centres.

Radio Sarraounia is owned and run by Moussa Kaka, a former correspondent of **Radio France Internationale (RFI)** in Niger.

The station has a good reputation for balanced and unbiased reporting.

Radio Sarraounia broadcasts mainly in **Hausa and French.**

It is on air for 18 hours per day.

The station carries news, phone-ins, discussion programmes, features, documentaries, music and sport.

The main **French** language news programmes are at 12.15 and 18.15.

Radio Sarraounia also relays programmes from the **BBC Hausa, English, Arabic and French Services.**

It claims to have the third largest radio audience in Niger, with 300,000 to 500,000 regular listeners in Niamey and up to one million nationwide.

Sarraounia has a good track record of collaboration with aid agencies.

It has broadcast sponsored programmes covering issues such as HIV awareness, health and women's education for UNICEF and other international organisations.

The station is named after Sarraounia, a famous African queen who resisted the imposition of French colonial rule in Niger in the 19th century.

In late 2011, Radio Sarraounia was in the process of setting up a sister television station in Niamey.

Owner and Director - Moussa Kaka (for business and management issues)
Mob: +227 96 39 69 05

News and current affairs editor - Jamila Souley (wife of Moussa Kaka).

Mob: +227 96 96 33 71

+227 9090 3371

Email: Jamilah_souley@yahoo.com

Address: Radio Sarraounia, KL 50, Kailey Est, Niamey.

Regional offices:

Maradi

Station manager - Salissou Kaka

Mob: +227 96 97 10 96

R&M (no website)

R & M (Radio and Music) is a **Niamey**-based radio station that broadcasts news and music on 104.5 FM in **Hausa** and **French**.

Launched in 1994, it was the first private radio station to start broadcasting in Niger.

R & M started off as a music station, but it has diversified in recent years to develop more news coverage. It claims an audience of several hundred thousand in the Niamey area.

The station is owned by Abdul Razak Jeannot, the son of its late founder, Mamane Abdou, who died in 2010.

The main **French** language news programmes are broadcast at 12.00 and 18.00.

R &M broadcasts from a 500 watt transmitter via roof-top mast with a total elevation of 70 metres.

Its mast also hosts the Niamey FM transmitters of **BBC World Service** and **Radio China International**.

Owner and Director - Abdul Razak Jeannot

Mobile: +227 96 40 36 32

Email: Razjeannot2002@yahoo.fr

Radio Alternative 99.4 FM www.alternativeniger.org

Radio Alternative broadcasts on FM from **Niamey** and relay stations in **Agadez** and **Zinder** on 99.4 FM.

The station was set up in 2003 by an association of former student leaders to provide an alternative voice to the state radio station Voix du Sahel.

Radio Alternative has a reputation for independent, balanced and original reporting.

It broadcasts news and a wide variety of current affairs and audience participation programmes.

Radio Alternative is run by **Alternative Espaces Citoyens**, (Association for Alternative Citizens' Spaces), a not-for-profit organisation created in 1994. It is dedicated to civic education and the promotion of democratic and inclusive alternatives to what it calls neo-liberal capitalism.

It forms part of Alternatives International, a global network of similar organisations, based in Canada.

The head of Radio Alternative in Niger is Moussa Tchaiga, a respected and experienced journalist, who has written a number of reports on the local media for international organisations.

Radio Alternative claims to be one of the most widely listened to FM stations in Niamey. Its broadcasts can be heard within 90 km radius of the capital.

Uniquely in Niger, Radio Alternative's 600 watt transmitter in Niamey is mounted on a mobile base station tower adjacent to the studio at an elevation of 27 metres, rather than on an independent mast

The station does not carry advertising.

Radio Alternative broadcasts mostly in **French** and **Hausa**, but has special news programmes in **Djerma** (also known as **Zarma**), **Tamasheq and Peul** (also known as **Fulfulde** and **Fulani**).

Radio Alternative employs about 25 journalists in Niamey and a further 12 at its regional offices in Agadez and Zinder.

These regional offices cannot broadcast directly. They have to send their reports and recorded programmes back to Niamey for transmission from the station's headquarters

Radio Alternative is technically classified as a community radio station, but it is far larger and more sophisticated than any of its peers.

Nevertheless, the station has a strong community ethos. It often tries to present major stories from the point of view of the ordinary people affected by the events.

During 2011, the radio sent reporters to northern Niger to report on the impact of tens of thousands of people fleeing from the civil war in Libya arriving in the region.

Radio Alternative has made and broadcast special programmes for a number of international organisations, including UNICEF. It has also worked closely with the media development organization **Internews** and the press freedom organization **Reporters Sans Frontieres**.

In 2011, the station sent journalists to South Africa for training in how to make radio programmes on HIV/AIDS awareness.

Director of Alternative Espaces Citoyens - Moussa Tchangari

Mobile: +227 9697 8490

Email: tchangari@yahoo.fr

Director of Radio - Hassan Boucar

Mob: +227 96 99 00 98

News Editor - Albert Tchaibo

Mob: +227 9697 2941

Email: Albchaib13@yahoo.fr

Director of Programmes - Chatou Mahamadou:

Mob: +227 9063 3945

Email: machatou@yahoo.fr

Address: Radio Alternative, 72 Rue de C147, Poudriere, Niamey

Radio Dounia 99.0 FM (no website)

Radio Dounia and its sister TV station broadcast to **Niamey** and the surrounding area.

The radio and TV stations were both launched in 2007 by businessman Habibou Garba Fonder.

However, they were forced to suspend broadcasting on several occasions by the government of former president Mamadou Tandja.

According to the management, Fonder is keen to give everyone an opportunity to join in national debate and does not run the station for his own benefit.

Radio Dounia broadcasts 24 hours per day in **French** and **Hausa** on 99.0 FM.

It has a 1000 watt transmitter mounted on a roof-top mast at an elevation of 47 metres.

The station can be heard within 80 km radius of Niamey, depending on the weather. Its signal does not always reach that far.

Radio Dounia has news broadcasts in both French and Hausa at 07.00, 12.00, 18.00 and 22.00.

The station carries a wide variety of current affairs programming, covering issues such as sports, economics and politics.

The management says advertising revenue is difficult to come by so it has to accept money from organisations to make announcements and attend press conferences.

The Dounia media group has about 30 journalists based in Niamey. All of them are bi-media trained and work for both its TV and radio stations.

Radio Dounia aims to expand into the regions, but in late 2011, its transmissions were still restricted to Niamey.

The station does send journalists into the field to carry out reporting, but they can only file their reports by telephone.

Managing director - Mahirou Amadou
 Mob: +227 9404 4872
 Email: nodiabaoba@yahoo.fr

Director of Programmes - Seyni Amadou
 Mob: +227 9697 8391

Radio Tambara 107.0 FM

Radio Tambara is a specialist radio station for women, which is trying to broaden its appeal to attract a wider audience.

It broadcasts from **Niamey** on 107.0 FM and has a relay station and a small office in **Tahoua**.

Radio Tambara broadcasts for 17 hours per day from 07.00 in the morning until midnight.

Most of its output is in **Hausa** and **French**. It also broadcasts programmes and news bulletins in **Djerma** (also known as **Zarma**), **Tamasheq** and **Peul** (also called **Fulfulde** and **Fulani**).

News bulletins in French are at 12.45 and 19.45.

Radio Tambara was originally set up in 2000 as a specialised women's station called **Voix de la Femme**.

It was founded by women's rights activist Hawa Ambali and several associates. Ambali is still a director of the radio station, but the control of day-to-day operations has passed to her son.

Radio Tambara now broadcasts more general programmes with a wider appeal, alongside its specialised output for women on topics such as food and health.

However, it is keen to retain its specialist focus on women's programmes.

Six of the seven presenters are women. The station employs about 25 journalists, including reporters in Tahoua, Agadez and Arlit.

Radio Tambara's equipment is old and very basic. It has no digital recording or editing facilities, so its journalists work with old cassette machines.

The station has a good tradition of co-operating with international humanitarian organisations, particularly UNICEF and USAID.

It has often produced and broadcast 'social message' programmes that use theatre to highlight women's issues.

Radio Tambara estimates that it attracts an audience of about 100,000 in Niamey. Like most other radio stations in Niger, it struggles to attract advertising.

The station rebroadcasts Hausa language programmes of **IRIB World Service**, the external broadcasting arm of Iranian state radio.

Radio Tambara's 500 Watt FM transmitter in Niamey is mounted on a roof-top mast at an elevation of 32 metres. It has a range of about 30kms.

Tambara plans to eventually open a companion TV station.

Managing Director - Hamid Hambali Yacouba

Mob: +227 90 28 28 28

Tel: +227 20 30 03 07

Email: tambarfm@yahoo.fr

Hamidhambaly@gmail.com

Address: Radio Tambara, Rue de Grande Marche, BP 2164, Niamey

Tahoua sub-office

:

Director - Abdoulaye Sani

Mobile: +227 94 62 42 16

Radio Bonferey <https://sites.google.com/a/bonferey.com/www/>

Radio Bonferey is an Islamic radio station which broadcasts a mixture of news, current affairs, religious programmes and music from **Niamey** on 105.0 FM

It is part of the Niamey-based **Radio-Télévision Bonferey** media group, which also runs a TV station in the capital.

Radio Bonferey has worked very closely with the US-based media development organisation **Equal Access** in the last few years to develop social programming on religious tolerance.

It carries a lot of interviews and discussion programmes on religious issues, including occasional discussions with Christians

Radio Bonferry has a 1000 watt transmitter in Niamey, mounted on a roof-top mast at a total elevation of 40 metres.

The Bonferey media group's website was still 'under construction' in early 2012. It is eventually due to contain audio and video content.

News Editor - Chaibou Mamane

Tel: +227 20 74 17 17

+227 20 74 39 39

Email: dg@bonferey.com

Secretary - Hadiza

Mob: +227 96 98 99 59

Radio Shukura 105.5 FM (no website)

Radio Shukura is a small private radio station owned by businessman Suleiman Keita in the south-central city of **Zinder**.

It broadcasts **Hausa** and **French** from 06.45 to midnight for six days of the week.

On Friday's it only broadcasts for half the day.

The station employs 10 people, of whom four are journalists.

Radio Shukura carries a variety of current affairs, culture and music programmes.

Its 250 watt transmitter is mounted on a 35 metre-high mast.

Keita said in 2011 that he planned to open more radio stations in other towns near Zinder.

Director -Suleiman Keita

Mob: +227 96 98 96 16

Radio Sahara 97.0 FM www.radiosahara.blog.fr

Radio Sahara is the main private radio station in the northern town of **Agadez**.

It has about 15 staff, four of whom are journalists.

They are regularly sent out of town on local reporting missions, but have to bring their reports back to base for editing and broadcast.

Radio Sahara broadcasts from 06.00 to midnight daily on 97.0 FM in **Hausa**, **French** and **Tamasheq**, the language of the Tuareg people of northern Niger.

Its signal can be heard within 80 km radius of Agadez town.

It carries a mix of news, current affairs and music programmes.

Radio Sahara also re-broadcasts programmes of the **BBC Hausa Service** and **Voice of America Hausa Service**. These are played out in the morning to provide daily, national and international news.

In 2011, Radio Sahara reported extensively on the deterioration of security in the far north of Niger following the exodus of tens of thousands of people from Libya during the civil war which led to the overthrow and killing of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi..

Radio Sahara plays a lot of Tuareg and Nigerien music, along with old hits from the 1960s.

It also has social affairs programmes, including a youth programme, a women's programme, and a religious programme with local Islamic religious leaders.

The Agadez administrative region has a scattered population of about 300,000, many of whom are nomads.

Radio Sahara estimates its regular audience at about 30,000.

Its website carries podcasts of the daily news bulletin in Hausa and is popular with the Nigerien Diaspora.

Radio Director - Raliou Assalit

Mobile: +227 96 96 33 65

Email: saharafm2003@yahoo.fr

Address: Radio Sahara, Avenue de Bilma, (near airport), Agadez

List of authorised private radio stations and their transmitter sites

Source: Office National de la Communication (ONC) August 2011

NB Some stations may also transmit from other locations which have not been authorised by the government. The list does not include community radio stations.

1. Radio Dounia - Niamey, Agadez, Diffa, Dosso, Maradi, Tahoua, Tillaberi, Zinder #
2. Canal 3 FM - Agadez, Niamey, Diffa, Dosso, Konni, Maradi, Tahoua, Tillaberi, Zinder
3. Tenere FM - Niamey, Agadez, Diffa, Dosso, Maradi, Tahoua, Tillaberi, Zinder,
4. Touraki 94.5 FM – Niamey
5. Kakaki 96.6 FM - Niamey
6. Sud 98.5 FM – Niamey
7. Anfani FM 100.0 FM - Niamey, Zinder, Maradi
8. Sarraounia 102.1 FM - Niamey, Maradi
9. R+M 104.5 FM – Niamey
10. Bonferrey Radio – 105 FM – Niamey
11. Tambara 107.0 FM - Niamey, Tahoua
12. Horizon 94.0 FM - Niamey
13. Radio Ecole 97.0 FM – Niamey
14. Voix du Hemicycle 95.1 FM – Niamey
15. Fahamey 103.4 FM - Niamey
16. Te Bonse 97.5 FM - Tillaberi
17. Gakouwa 107.0 FM - Maradi
18. Shukura 105.5 FM – Zinder
19. Nomade 101.9 FM - Agadez, Arlit
20. Sahara 97.0 FM - Agadez

Although Radio Dounia was authorised to transmit from multiple sites, its only active transmitter in late 2011 was Niamey.

Foreign radio stations

BBC Hausa Service www.bbc.co.uk/hausa

The BBC Hausa Service is the most popular overseas broadcaster in Niger.

It claims a regular audience of 3.6 million people in the country.

A 2008 BBC audience survey showed that in Niger the main listeners to the Hausa Service were young employed males living in rural areas.

An audience survey conducted for the BBC in late 2009 http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/review_report_research/ara2009_10/bc_hausa.pdf, said the Hausa Service had an overall audience of 23.5 million in West Africa, mostly in Nigeria.

The Hausa service broadcasts for a total of 90 minutes per day in three separate 30-minute segments of programming at the following local times:

06.30 - 07.00

14.45 - 15.45

20.30 - 21.00

The BBC Hausa Service is produced at studios in **London** and **Abuja**. It mainly broadcasts news and current affairs programming.

The Hausa Service broadcasts on Short Wave on 6355 and 7305 Khz in the morning, 9440 and 11800 in the afternoon and 15105, 17780 and 21630 Khz at night.

Its programmes are also relayed on FM in Niger by **Anfani, Sarraounia, R&M** and **Radio Sahara**.

These four stations allow the BBC Hausa Service to be heard on FM in **Niamey, Agadez, Birnin Konni, Diffa, Madaoua, Maradi** and **Zinder**.

The BBC World Service also operates its own FM relay station in Niamey that carries programmes in **English** and **French** round the clock on 100.4 FM.

The 2009 audience survey found that just over half of BBC Hausa Service listeners in Niger tuned into the service on FM.

But in rural areas, with no FM coverage, 80% still listened to the service on Short Wave.

Some of the BBC World Service's FM relay partners in Niger also broadcast BBC news programmes in **French** as well as Hausa.

Tel: + 44 (0) 20 7557 2516

Email: hausa@bbc.co.uk

Address: BBC Hausa Service, Bush House, Room 122CB, Strand, London WC2B 4PH, UK

VOA Hausa Service www.voanews.com/hausa/news/

The Voice of America (VOA) Hausa Service broadcasts for two hours per day on Short Wave at the following local times:

06.00 – 06.30

08.00 - 08.30

16.00 – 16.30

21.30 – 22.00

VOA programmes are also relayed on FM in **Niamey, Maradi** and **Zinder** through partnerships with **Radio Tenere, Radio Anfani** and **Radio Sarraounia**.

Much of the Hausa service programme content is produced at studios at Abuja and Kano in Nigeria.

The VOA Hausa Service has been broadcasting continuously since 1979.

Its Facebook page is www.facebook.com/voahausa

Tel: +1 202 203 4077

Email: sashen-hausa@voanews.com

VOA Hausa, African Division, 330, Independence Avenue SW, Washington DC 20237 USA.

Radio Deutsche Welle Hausa Service www.dw-world.de/dw/0,,627,00.html

Radio Deutsche Welle, Germany's international radio station, broadcasts to West Africa in Hausa on Short Wave for two and a half hours per day

It is on air at the following local times:

07.30 – 08.00

14.00 – 15.00

19.00 – 20.00

The Hausa Service is produced at studios in **Bonn** in Germany by a team of about 12 West African journalists.

It broadcasts news, current affairs and feature programmes, and a radio soap opera.

The Hausa Service broadcasts on Short Wave on 12045, 15440 and 17800 Khz.

The Deutsche Welle Hausa Service makes programmes available to its FM relay partners as podcasts which they can access online and play at any time they wish.

The partner stations mainly rebroadcast the Deutsche Welle soap opera and its 10-minute daily feature programmes. These deal with topics such as democracy, human rights, women's issues, youth, agriculture and environment.

In January 2012, the following partner stations in Niger carried Deutsche Welle Hausa Service programmes:

Anfani FM	Diffa, Maradi, Niamey, Zinder
Sarounia FM	Birnin Konni, Madaoua, Maradi, Niamey
Garkuwa FM	Maradi
Tenere FM	Niamey, Zinder
Faraa FM	Dosso, Gaya
Nomade FM	Agadez
Dallol FM	Doutchi, Matankari
Niyya FM	Birnin Konni

E-mail: hausa@dw-world.de

Address: Deutsche Welle Hausa Redaktion, 53110 Bonn, Germany

Radio France Internationale www.rfi.fr www.hausa.rfi.fr

Radio France Internationale (RFI) broadcasts in several cities in Niger in **French** and **Hausa** on 96.2 FM and to the entire country on Short Wave.

Its Hausa service was launched in 2007 in collaboration with **Voice of Nigeria**, the external broadcasting service of the Nigeria Federal Government.

The RFI Hausa Service broadcasts for two hours per day at the following local times:

07.00-07.30

08.00-08.30

17.00-18.00

RFI broadcasts in Hausa on Short Wave on 6170, 9805, 11830, 11995 and 15315 Khz in the morning and 11700 and 15315 in the evening.

It also broadcasts on 96.2 FM from transmitters mounted on ORTN masts in the following cities:

Agadez

Diffa

Maradi

Niamey

Tahoua

Zinder

The Facebook page of the RFI Hausa Service is:

www.facebook.com/Rfisashenhausu

Contact number

Mob (Nigeria): +234 703 017 7358.

5. Television

Overview

Television is becoming more and more popular in Niger, especially in urban areas, but it does not rival radio as the most important source of news and information for the population as a whole.

A BBC World Service media audience survey in 2008 showed that 67% of adults listened to the radio at least once a week.

However, only 17% watched TV on a weekly basis.

Radios are cheaper and more portable than TV sets. They are also less dependent on a mains electricity supply to work.

Niger had seven functioning TV channels in early 2012. They broadcast mostly in **French** and **Hausa**.

The only organisation with genuinely national reach is the state broadcaster **Office de Radiodiffusion et Television du Niger (ORTN)**.

Its two channels, **TeleSahel** and **Tal TV** are broadcast from terrestrial transmitters in Niger's eight regional capitals and can be received nationwide by satellite.

Telesahel is ORTN's flagship TV channel.

Tal TV was set up as a more commercial channel designed to compete with private TV stations. However, in practice it shares a lot of common content with Telesahel

The private TV station with the widest national coverage is **Tenere Television**. This also broadcasts nationwide by satellite.

Canal 3, a relatively new channel, also broadcasts by satellite.

A survey of media consumption by the American embassy suggested that TeleSahel attracts an audience of about 4 million nationally and TAL TV about one million.

The US embassy survey suggested that Tenere was watched by around one million people.

There are three other private TV channels which only broadcast to **Niamey** and the surrounding area; **Sarraounia**, **Dounia** and **Bonferey**

Tenere, Dounia, Sarraounia and Bonferey all have sister radio stations. The journalists of these small media groups are bi-media trained and work for both radio and television.

Most television viewing takes place in the evenings. The ORTN channels and Tenere are on air until 01.00.

News programmes are widely watched. So too are foreign films soap-operas and religious programmes.

TV soap operas from Cote d'Ivoire are particularly popular.

Nigerien TV stations broadcast a high proportion of foreign programmes.

They depend heavily on French-language programmes distributed by **Canal France International**. This consortium of French international broadcasters distributes French-language radio and TV programmes designed for African audiences to many broadcasters across the continent.

The French satellite television channels **TV5** and **France 24** are widely watched by the educated elite.

However, according to the BBC World Service audience survey, less than one percent of adults have access to international TV news channels via cable or satellite links to their homes.

TV stations

Telesahel www.ortn.ne

State-run Telesahel is by far the biggest and most developed TV network in Niger.

It forms part of the government broadcasting corporation **Office de Radiodiffusion et Television du Niger (ORTN)**.

It broadcasts on channel two from terrestrial transmitters located in the eight regional capitals of Niger:

Agadez
Diffa
Dosso
Maradi
Niamey
Tahoua
Tillabery
Zinder

Telesahel is also broadcast nationwide by satellite on Globecast Atlantic Bird 3.

Most of Telesahel's output is in **Hausa** and **French**.

It also broadcasts weekly programmes in **Djerma** (also spelt **Zarma**), **Tubu**, **Peul** (also called **Fulfulde** and **Fulani**), **Arabic**, **Kankuri**, **Gourmance** and **Buduma**.

The main TV news bulletins are at 12.30, 20.30 and 23.00.

Much of Telesahel's output consists of pre-recorded features and documentaries. Some are locally produced. Others come from abroad.

The channel also broadcasts religious programmes and special programmes for women and youth.

Many of Telesahel's imported programmes are provided by **Canal France International**, a consortium of French broadcasters which supplies French language radio and TV programmes to several countries in Francophone Africa.

The channel also carries Ivorian soap operas, which are very popular, and some Malian programmes.

Telesahel takes advantage of ORTN's large news gathering capacity. The state broadcaster has about 25 journalists deployed in the regions outside Niamey.

Small studios in the seven regional capitals outside Niamey provide programming for some local opt-outs from the national network.

This mainly consists of news bulletins in local languages.

According to a media audience study by the US embassy, up to four million people watch Telesahel – nearly a quarter of Niger’s population.

Insiders say that ORTN has changed a lot since the advent of democracy in Niger, especially since Loic Crespin, a veteran journalist with the organisation, took over as Director General in July 2011

TV broadcasts, which previously only took place in the evening, now begin at 10.00 in the morning and journalists say they feel much freer to report.

Director of ORTN -Loic Crespin
Mob: +227 9971 88

Director of Programmes ORTN - Moumouni Idrissa:
Mob: +227 96 88 6181

Tel: (switchboard) +227 72 31 63

Address: La Voix du Sahel, ORTN, BP 309, Plateau, Niamey

Regional offices of ORTN:

Agadez

Journalist Mohamed Madou
Mob: +227 96 98 27 10

Maradi

Station Director - Abba Attoumane
Mob: +227 96 28 89 15

Tillaberi

Journalist Kimba Seydou
Mob: +227 96 29 65 01

Zinder

Journalist - Ibrahim Mamane
Mob: +227 96 12 53 19

Tal TV www.ortn.ne

Tal TV is the second channel of the state broadcasting corporation **Office National de Radiodiffusion et Television du Niger (ORTN)**.

It was set up in 2004 to provide news and entertainment programming that would compete directly with that of the country's private television stations.

Tal TV broadcasts different news bulletins from ORTN's flagship TV channel **TeleSahel** at 19.30 and 23.00, but in practice the two channels share a lot of the same programming.

The station broadcasts mainly in **French and Hausa**.

It is on air daily from 10.00 in the morning until after midnight.

A media audience survey by the US embassy in Niamey suggested that Tal TV attracts about one million viewers nationwide.

Tal TV broadcasts on channel three from terrestrial transmitters in:

Agadez
Diffa
Dosso
Maradi
Niamey
Tahoua
Tillabery
Zinder

It also broadcasts nationwide by satellite from the Globecast Atlantic Bird 3 satellite.

Director of ORTN -Loic Crespin
Mob: +227 9971 88

Director of Programmes ORTN - Moumouni Idrissa:
Mob: +227 96 88 6181

Tel: (switchboard) +227 72 31 63

Address: La Voix du Sahel, ORTN, BP 309, Plateau, Niamey

Tenere TV

Tenere TV is Niger's most popular private TV station.

It claims one million viewers nationwide and is well respected for the quality and independence of its news reporting.

Tenere TV forms part of the **Niamey**-based media group **Radio Television Tenere (RTT)**.

This also includes **Radio Tenere** and the weekly magazine **Tenere Express**.

TV Tenere broadcasts in **French** and **Hausa** from terrestrial transmitters on channel one in **Niamey, Dosso, Maradi, Zinder, Tahoua, Diffa** and **Agadez**.

It also broadcasts nationwide on satellite.

The station is on air from 06.00 in the morning until midnight.

Tenere TV became Niger's first private TV station when it was launched in Niamey in 2000.

Since 2003, Tenere TV has steadily extended its reach from the capital to other parts of the country.

RTT has some newsgathering potential in the regions. The group employs one bi-media journalist and one manager in each of the six provincial capitals where it has transmitters.

However, the technical quality of the TV footage that its regional correspondents send back to Niamey is often poor.

Most Tenere TV journalists use DV CAM and digital editing software and can edit their own footage.

Managers say this has made a huge difference to the amount of programming that the station can produce with limited staff and equipment.

RTT TV produces news and current affairs programmes and programmes on sport, music, the environment and social affairs.

The main news bulletins are in **French** at 19.30 and 23.00,

There are also some news bulletins in **Hausa**.

Tenere TV has a partnership with **Canal France International** which provides it with some generic French programming for Francophone Africa.

It also carries some programmes from the French international TV channel **TV5**.

News editor - Moustapha Maman Sani
Mob: +227 9689 5052
Email: mmamanesani@yahoo.fr

TV DOUNIA (no website)

Dounia TV is a private TV station that broadcasts to **Niamey** and the surrounding area.

It was launched in 2007.

The station belongs to the **Radio TV Dounia (RTB)** media group, owned by businessman Habibou Garba Fonder.

He also owns the Niamey-based FM station **Radio Dounia**.

The Dounia media group fell foul of the government of former president Mamadou Tandja, which temporarily shut down its radio and TV broadcasts on several occasions.

TV Dounia broadcasts in **French** and **Hausa** for 24 hours per day on channel four.

It broadcasts news bulletins in **French** at 07.00, 13.00, 20.00 and 01.00.

Many of its imported programmes are provided through partnerships with the French television channels **France 24** and **TV5**.

Managing director - Mahirou Amadou
Mob: +227 94 04 48 72
Email: nodiabaoba@yahoo.fr

Director of Programmes - Seyni Amadou
Mob: +227 96 97 83 91

SARRAOUANIA TV (no website)

Sarraouania TV, owned by the respected Nigerien journalist Moussa Kaka, began pilot broadcasts in **Niamey** in 2011.

Kaka, a former correspondent of **Radio France Internationale (RFI)** in Niger, also owns Radio Sarraouania.

He eventually hopes to turn Sarraouania TV into a 24-hour news channel covering the whole of Niger by satellite.

In 2011 TV Sarraouania was still only broadcasting from a terrestrial transmitter to the capital. Its news bulletins looked very professional.

The Sarraouania media group has radio reporters based at its offices in Birnin Konni, Madaoua, Tahoua and Maradi, but in late 2011 they had not yet been trained in TV news gathering techniques.

Director - Moussa Kaka (for business and management issues)

Mobile: +227 96 39 69 05

News editor: Jamilah Suleyman

Mobile: +227 96 96 33 71

+227 90 90 33 71

Email: Jamilah_souley@yahoo.com

Address: TV Sarraouania, KL 50, Kailey Est, Niamey.

Bonferey TV www.bonferey.net

Bonferey TV is an Islamic TV station that broadcasts to Niamey and the surrounding area.

It forms part of the Bonferey media group, which also owns a radio station in the capital.

Bonferey TV broadcasts mostly Islamic programmes. These include Koranic readings in **Arabic** with direct live translation into **French** and **Hausa** and religious programmes made in other Islamic countries.

This station is very popular during religious holidays.

Secretary -Hadiza

Mobile: +227 96 98 99 59

Tel: +227 20 74 1717

+227 20 74 38 38

+227 20 74 39 39

Email: dq@bonferey.com
bonferey@yahoo.fr

Address: Radio TV Bonferey, Rue du College Mariama, BP 2260, Niamey

Canal 3 Niger

Canal 3 is based in Niamey and broadcasts nationwide by satellite via Intelsat 901.

Tel: +227 20 74 01 80
+227 20 74 01 66

6.Print

Print overview

Newspapers play a relatively minor role in transmitting news and information to the general public.

However, they are important forums where the educated elite debate national issues and form opinions that influence government policy.

Newspapers are only read by relatively affluent members of the urban intelligentsia, particularly civil servants, business people and other educated Nigeriens who follow politics closely.

The rest of the population relies on radio, TV and word of mouth.

Most Nigeriens could not read a newspaper, even if they could afford to buy one.

Only 28% of the adult population can read and write and only some of this minority can read **French**, the language in which all Nigerien newspapers are written.

Most newspapers are written in ponderous and stylised old-fashioned French. This is another factor which limits their appeal to ordinary people.

Niger's sole daily newspaper is **Le Sahel**, a government-owned publication which sells 3,000 copies per day. It is delivered daily to most government offices.

Its Sunday companion, **Le Sahel Dimanche**, sells up to 5,000 copies.

All of Niger's private newspapers are weekly, fortnightly or monthly publications with a much smaller circulation.

The most influential of these are **Le Republicain**, **Alternative**, **La Roue de L'Histoire** (The Wheel of History) and **Le Canard Dechaine** (The Unchained Duck).

According to the local media development association **Maison de la Presse**, La Roue de l'Histoire is the most widely circulated newspaper. It sells about 2,000 copies per week.

Most other private newspapers claim sales of 1,000-1,500 copies per edition, but this is hard to verify.

Le Republicain is Niger's oldest private newspaper. This influential weekly began publishing in 1991.

Newspapers are generally sold by vendors on the street. They often approach drivers waiting at traffic lights.

There are 84 officially registered newspapers and magazines in Niger, but most vendors only have four or five different papers on offer.

The private broadcasters **Radio Television Tenere (RTT)**, **Radio Anfani** and **Radio Alternative** also publish newspapers and magazines.

Some newspapers have a reputation for failing to check facts before publication and getting things wrong. Newspapers are generally regarded as less reliable than radio and television in this regard.

Le Sahel has a significant price advantage over its private competitors.

The government newspaper sells for 150 CFA francs (30 US cents), whereas most private newspapers cost 300 CFA (60 US cents).

Newspapers

Le Sahel www.lesahel.org

Le Sahel is Niger's only daily newspaper.

It is owned by the government and sells about 3,000 copies per day. The eight-page newspaper is distributed to all the regional capitals and is also available online.

The newspaper's magazine-style Sunday edition, **Le Sahel Dimanche**, sells 3,500 to 5,000 copies

For many years Le Sahel was the only newspaper printed in Niger. However, since 1991 it has had to face competition from a growing number of small private newspapers.

Le Sahel still commands some respect among the older generation as an authoritative source of news and information.

However, it has often been used as a propaganda tool for the government of the day and it cannot be regarded as independent or impartial.

The newspaper is largely aimed at the country's educated and political elite. Its main readers are civil servants. Le Sahel is distributed free in most government offices.

Le Sahel is also widely read by business people since it announces tenders by the government and international aid agencies.

Le Sahel's reputation has improved since the restoration of democracy in 2011. Since then it has been able to provide some genuinely interesting, insightful and balanced reporting.

Journalists at the paper say the liberal media law, promulgated by the transitional military junta in 2010, and the restoration of elected civilian government in April 2011 have enabled them to pursue subjects that they felt unable to report on previously. These include corruption and mismanagement within the ruling elite.

A sign of this new spirit was the launch of a new series of weekly political interviews in 2011. These grill individual politicians on difficult subjects in an open and sometimes light-hearted manner.

However Le Sahel's writing style is very ponderous and formal. The newspaper sometimes gives the impression of not having enough news to fill the space available.

Most stories are about political and economic issues. There is only a small section on social affairs.

Nevertheless, Le Sahel does have the strongest newsgathering capacity of any newspaper in Niger.

It has a network of fifteen reporters in Niamey and regional reporting bureaux in **Maradi, Zinder** and **Tahoua**. There is also a full-time journalist based in **Dosso**.

Le Sahel is also able to assign journalists to work on special reports for longer periods.

The newspaper was launched in 1974. It replaced the previous government daily 'Le Temps du Niger'.

Le Sahel is owned and run by the state publishing house **L'Office National d'Editions et de Presse (ONEP)**.

Its sale price of 150 CFA francs (30 US cents) is half that of most private newspapers, which have a cover price of 300 CFA (60 U cents).

Director - Saïdou Daoura

Mob: +227 96 96 99 04

Tel: +227 20 73 22 29

saidou_daoura@yahoo.fr.

La Roue de l'Histoire

Roue De l'Histoire (The Wheel of History) is a privately-owned weekly newspaper, which is published on Thursdays.

It was founded by Sanoussi Tambari Jackou, a politician, historian and economist. He is a lecturer at Niamey University.

Tambari Jackou has a reputation for being outspoken and even-handed in his criticism and his newspaper commands widespread respect.

La Roue de l'Histoire sells about 2,000 copies per week. It has no website, but can be viewed online at www.nigerdiaspora.info and other Nigerien news aggregator websites.

Like most other newspapers in Niger, La Roue de l'Histoire mainly targets the educated and relatively affluent middle class elite in the capital **Niamey**.

It is not distributed for sale in the interior.

The newspaper is well-written, but its style is rather ponderous and its stories are often very long. It covers politics, economics and social issues such as education and health.

La Roue de l'Histoire has a special section called 'Nation' which carries in depth reporting on a different theme every week.

Some reports are written in collaboration with local and international NGOs.

The newspaper covers a lot of press conferences on social issues.

La Roue de l'Histoire announces a rather dramatic mission statement on its masthead : "The Wheel of History turns inexorably and no-one can stop it".

The newspaper employs a Director, a News Editor and eight journalists in Niamey.

It is printed at the NIN printing press, owned by the publisher of rival weekly newspaper **Le Republicain**.

Director - Laoual Sallaou Ismael

Mob: +227 96 96 45 85

Email: Ismaellaoual@yahoo.fr

News Editor - Yahaya Garba

Email: Yahaya_garba@yahoo.fr

Tel: +227 20 74 05 69

Address: CCOG, Sur la route de SONATRAV, Niamey

Le Republicain www.republicain-niger.com

Le Republicain is one of the best-known and most respected private newspapers in Niger. It has a reputation for balance and fairness.

The weekly was launched in 1991 as Niger's first private newspaper.

It is published every Thursday in **French**.

Le Republicain is distributed in **Niamey, Tahoua** and **Zinder** and has weekly sales of 1000-1500. It also has a good and informative website.

The newspaper was set up by politician and businessman Maman Abou, who remains in overall charge of its editorial output.

Abou owns one of the main printing businesses in Niamey, Nouvelle Imprimerie de Niger (NIN). This prints Le Republicain and several other private newspapers.

Abou is close to President Mahamadou Issoufou, who was elected in 2011. He has been tipped as a future prime minister.

Le Republicain made its name through its vocal criticism of former president, Mamadou Tandja.

Abou was a prominent opposition figure during Tandja's 11-year rule from 1999 to 2010 and his newspaper suffered for its criticism of Tandja's government.

Le Republicain was frequently closed for short periods and its journalists were harassed during Tandja's time in power.

The newspaper's stories are often very long, and are written in rather stylised and inaccessible, old-fashioned French.

But the newspaper carries good political and economic reporting .

It also has two to three pages dedicated to social issues such as health, education and agriculture, and a decent sports section.

Le Republicain has a good record of recent collaboration with humanitarian organisations, including the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNDP and UNICEF.

There are about seven journalists in Niamey, and a small number of journalists reporting from other regions – notably **Zinder** and **Agadez**.

Director - Maman Abou

Tel: +227 2033 0303

Email: sales@lerepublicain-niger.com

webmasters@lerepublicain-niger.com

News Editor - Issa Hussein

Mob: +227 9463 7122

Tel: +227 73 47 98

Address: NIN, Place du Petit Marche, face Pharmacie de L'Espoir, Quartier Terminus, BP 12015, Niamey

Le Canard Dechaine (no website)

Le Canard Dechaine (The Unchained Duck) is a satirical weekly published in **Niamey** on Thursdays.

It styles itself on the French satirical newspaper Le Canard Enchaine (The Chained Duck).

The Nigerien newspaper runs similar opinion pieces, challenging authority.

Le Canard Dechaine was set up by Abdoulaye Tiemogo, a veteran journalist who also works for state television.

It has a reputation for being one of the more daring newspapers in Niger, although some commentators think Le Canard Dechaine sometimes sacrifices balance and fairness for a good story.

The paper attracted a lot of publicity in July 2011, when its Editor Aliou Oumarou Modibo was briefly arrested and jailed after being accused of defaming an official at the Ministry of Communications.

This made him the first journalist to be arrested and jailed since the widely-praised introduction of a new press law in March 2010 which theoretically removed prison sentences for defamation and replaced them with fines.

The case upset many Nigerien journalists, causing them to question President Mahamadou Issoufou's much-vaunted commitment to free speech.

The media watchdog ONIMED put out a statement in support of the jailed editor.

Le Canard Dechaine has about seven journalists working in its Niamey newsroom, and not much newsgathering potential beyond that in the regions.

It sells approximately 2,000 copies a week and is printed at the NIF printing press.

There is a completely different satirical weekly in Niamey with a similar name: **Le Canard Libere** (The Liberated Duck).

News Editor - Abdoulaye Tiemogo

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Mob: +227 90 00 99 83

Tel: + 227 73 53 98

+227 90 09 32

Le Democrate

This weekly newspaper has a reputation for tackling difficult social issues.

It was set up in Niamey by journalist Bory Seyni in 1992.

In line with most of the private press in Niger, Le Democrate carries a mixture of political, economic and social reporting.

The stories are often long and written in very formal, old-fashioned French. Many are just verbatim write-ups of press conferences by aid agencies or the government.

However, Le Democrate has a strong 'society' section where it has famously tackled difficult social issues such as drugs trafficking and prostitution.

The Niamey newsroom employs about five full-time journalists. Le Democrate also publishes contributions from correspondents in the interior

The newspaper publishes on Mondays and sells about 1,500 copies per week in **Niamey**. It is not distributed outside the capital.

The newspaper does not have its own website, but it can be viewed online at the news aggregator site www.nigerdiaspora.info and other news aggregator websites

Address: Place du Petit Marche, Immeuble ex-Radio Tambara, Niamey

Director - Bory Seyni

Mob: +227 98 53 4254

Email: boryseyni@hotmail.com

Alternative (no website)

Alternative is an independent and outspoken fortnightly newspaper which is owned by **Alternative Espaces Citoyens**, the same civic action group that runs **Radio Alternative**.

The newspaper was launched in 1994 by a group of former student leaders at Niamey University to provide an alternative source of news and opinion to the state media.

Radio Alternative followed in 2003 and is now the organisation's principal media outlet.

The early days of the Alternative newspaper were difficult. It was often closed down by the authorities

It focuses on covering political issues in-depth.

The newspaper shares Radio Alternative's large nationwide team of reporters and often publishes stories on issues that are also covered by the radio station.

In 2011, both ran a series of in-depth reports about the security situation in the north after a team of reporters went up to Agadez. They carried out extensive interviews with people from remote communities whose voices are rarely heard.

Alternative seems braver than other newspapers at running opinion pieces.

It also runs direct appeals from civil society organisations to the government.

The newspaper sells about 1,500 copies per issue.

News editor - Albert Tchaibo

Mob: +227 9697 2941

Email: Albchaib13@yahoo.fr

La Griffe www.lagriffe-niger.com

La Griffe (The Claw) is a lively weekly newspaper that is owned and run by Kane Illa, a journalist who also is chairman of the media self-regulation body ONIMED.

La Griffe took a strong opposition stance during the 1999-2010 rule of former president Mamadou Tandja.

The satirical newspaper has a lively mix of politics and social stories, and a laid-back style.

The newspaper's attitude to government has mellowed since the election of current president Mahamadou Issoufou in 2011, but its editorials are still occasionally critical of government activities.

La Griffe is published on Mondays and sells around 1,000 copies.

It carries a lot of tenders and other announcements from aid agencies.

Address: La Griffe, Quartier Nouveau Marche, 195 Niamey

Owner/Director - Kane Illa

Mob: +227 96 13 95 28

Mob: +227 9087 14 05

Email: kane.illa@yahoo.fr

lagriffeniger@yahoo.fr

Commercial director - Moussa Douka

Mob: +227 96 98 08 40

Email: moussa.douka@yahoo.fr

L'Enqueteur www.enqueteur.info

This weekly newspaper is published in Niamey on Wednesdays.

L'Enqueteur (The Enquirer) mainly covers politics and economics, but also runs stories on social issues.

Its stories are informative and balanced, but often incredibly long and dense.

L'Enqueteur prints and sells around 1000 copies a week.

Director - Ibrahim Souley

Mob: +227 96 96 20 84

Tel: +227 20 34 48 91

Email: Lenqueteur@yahoo.fr

Address: Quartiere Poudriere, villa 67, BP 12395 Niamey

Le Courier

Le Courier is a broadly independent weekly newspaper based in Niamey. It sells about 1,000 copies per edition.

The newspaper has a small team of Niamey-based journalists who write mostly about political and social affairs.

It covers a lot of press conferences and carries largely unedited interviews.

Le Courier is printed at NIN, the printing press of **Le Republican**.

The newspaper does not have a website of its own, but it can be viewed online at the Nigerien news aggregator website www.nigerdiaspora.info

Director - Ali Soumena

Mob: +227 96 97 87 57

Tel: +227 21 66 21 43

Email: lecourier_niger@yahoo.fr

Address: RDFN Fonction Publique, Niamey

7. Online media

Very few people use the internet in Niger. Access is restricted to the urban educated elite.

According to the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) only 120,000 people in Niger used the internet to some extent in 2010. Many of these would have been foreign residents.

Illiteracy puts the internet beyond reach for nearly three quarters of the population.

Most of the 28% who can read and write are also barred from the internet because extreme poverty makes computers and internet cafes unaffordable.

A home internet connection costs upwards of 25,000 CFA francs (US\$50) per month.

Frequent power cuts and poor internet connectivity in many parts of Niger don't help either.

Outside Niamey, internet speeds are usually too slow to watch video or listen to audio.

Internet use is the exclusive preserve of Niger's educated urban elite and the diaspora who use it to keep in touch with family, friends and news back home.

Only 0.83 per 100 people in Niger used the internet in 2010, according to the ITU.

This figure was lower than the same benchmark for neighbouring West African states such as Chad (1.7), Mali (2.7) and Burkina Faso (1.4).

Modern internet services, including mobile internet access, 3G and wireless are available, in the capital Niamey, but the take-up is low.

Most people access the internet through small internet cafes.

Some who work for the government, large businesses or international humanitarian organisations, have access to the internet at work.

Connection speeds via the state telecoms operator **Sahelcom** are generally good since it is directly linked to the fibre optic undersea cable off the coast of West Africa.

Sahelcom distributes the signal to Niger's three private telecoms providers by V-Sat, but this connection is generally not as fast or reliable.

Many of those who do go online use the internet primarily to send emails or to chat with friends through social networking sites.

Global news sites are popular, including those of **Radio France International (RFI)**, **Voice of America (VOA)**, **BBC**, **Yahoo** and **Google**.

There are a number of popular Nigerien news aggregator sites in **French**. These are mostly managed by Nigeriens in the diaspora.

These carry links to other Niger news websites, selected articles from the local media and facsimile copies of local newspapers which do not have their own website

Such aggregator sites include www.nigerdiaspora.info which is managed from Brussels in Belgium, and www.tamtaminfo.com, which is managed from Peachtree City, Georgia, USA.

Also popular is www.fofomag.com, a music, culture and entertainment site specialising in interviews and video clips of popular Nigerien musicians. It is colourful, well produced and has regular updates.

Fofomag is the website of Fofa, a local NGO that promotes Nigerien culture. It receives some support from French cultural organisations.

www.baobabniger.net is a news and current affairs site set up by **Radio Anfani**. It also receives contributions and funding from other media partners such as **Sarraounia FM**. It covers all aspects of Niger news, politics and culture.

www.nigerexpress.info is another news aggregator site, specialising in stories about Niger and other Francophone countries in West Africa.

The use of social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter is quite low.

According to the internet traffic measurement site www.socialbakers.com there were only 41,300 Facebook users in Niger in January 2012.

About 35% of the country's estimated 120,000 internet users used Facebook, it calculated.

A few media organisations are starting to use Facebook to promote themselves, but there is no evidence of it being used for social mobilisation.

Blogging has not taken off yet in Niger. Most of the existing blogs on Niger-related issues are written by foreign residents and Sahel experts living outside the country.

8. TRADITIONAL CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

Traditional channels of face-to-face communication through village elders and chiefs and Islamic religious leaders remain important in Niger.

Doctors and teachers are also seen as important community leaders.

Communication through community leaders is particularly important for people living in rural areas, with poor access to radio and television.

UNICEF has worked successfully with imams to publicise child vaccination programmes and encourage parents to have their children immunised.

The US-based media development organisation Equal Access also has a programme of engagement with religious leaders to support its radio development work.

Equal Access produced 40 episodes of a religious discussion programme in conjunction with the Islamic radio station Radio Bonferey.

It also held a series of workshops for religious leaders in Maradi and Niamey to help them improve their communication skills.

This included training in how to structure sermons and deliver messages. The workshops also encouraged religious tolerance by discussing the impact of spreading negative messages about other faiths.

Equal Access found that in some imams were unable to read and had not previously met representatives from other religious faiths.

Equal Access also works with civil society community associations in villages to form 'listening clubs' for specific radio programmes which carry important social messages.

These groups listen to the programmes together and discuss them afterwards.

The government-backed **Association Islamique du Niger (AIN)** is a useful starting point for establishing contact with local religious leaders.

Ustaz Mouha Khalil Dan Yaro, a senior representative of AIN, can be contacted on mobile telephone number: +227 9696 9509.

He is also a member of the **Haut Conseil Islamique du Niger** (High Islamic Council of Niger).

9. Media resources

Media regulators

Ministry of Communications www.mcintic.ne

The Ministry of Communications has overall responsibility for the media and telecommunications.

The Ministry exercises its supervision of the media through two independent bodies which fall under its general responsibility:

- **L'Office National de la Communication (ONC)**– a statutory organisation which licences radio and TV stations and has the power to fine media outlets which commit breaches of the 2010 Media Law.
- **L'Observatoire Nigérien Indépendant des Médias pour l'Ethique et la Déontologie (ONIMED)** – a self-regulation body of the local media controlled by journalists. It acts as a watchdog on press freedom, investigates allegations of improper behaviour by the media and drafts codes of practice for journalists

The Ministry of Communication makes announcements on behalf of the government.

It also issues accreditation to journalists.

In addition to the media, the Ministry of Communications is responsible for the Post Office and the telecommunications sector.

Director of Communications – Saidou Ousmane

Mob: +227 91 19 77 47

Email: ???

Office National de la Communication (ONC)

The ONC – the National Office of Communications - is the government media regulator in Niger

It is responsible for licencing radio and TV stations and ensuring that all journalists and media organisations observe the code of behaviour set out in the 2010 Media Law.

The ONC's forerunner, the **Conseil Supérieur de Communication (CSC)** was frequently used to punish media outlets that criticised or embarrassed the government, often by suspending their licence to broadcast or publish.

In 2011, the ONC was drafting guidelines to regulate advertising and consumer rights in Niger. Such regulations did not previously exist.

It was also working out how to make the government's promise to implement freedom of information effective in practice.

In addition, it was reviewing the journalism ethics code.

The ONC has the power to fine offending media organisations and refer serious cases of media abuse to the public prosecutor.

Its governing council has 13 members and includes some media industry representatives.

The ONC is supposed to work closely with the media self-regulation body ONIMED.

However, in the event of a disagreement between the two, the ONC's authority prevails.

Chairman (President) - Abdourahmane Ousmane

Mob: +227 9697 7292

Tel: +227 2072 2356

Email: abdousmane@gmail.com

L'Observatoire Nigérien Indépendant des Médias pour l'Ethique et la Déontologie (ONIMED)

ONIMED – the Nigerien Observatory for Media Ethics and Good Practice - is a statutory self-regulation body set up under the terms of Niger's 2010 Media Law.

This committee of 15 journalists and one non-journalist is designed to be a watchdog for press freedom.

It is also charged with curbing abuse by the media.

However, ONIMED has limited powers.

It can investigate complaints against journalists who break the media code set out in the 2010 Media Law and publicise its conclusions in a public statement.

However, it can do little more than pass moral judgement on whether or not an infraction of the media code has been committed by upholding or dismissing a complaint.

ONIMED's first major test case came in July 2011. Aliou Oumarou Modibo, the editor of the satirical weekly **Le Canard Dechaine**, was arrested on charges of defamation.

The incident brought into question the government's stated commitment to decriminalise defamation, making it a civil offence, punishable by fines rather than imprisonment.

ONIMED issued a public statement in support of Modibo, who was released after 24 hours in custody.

ONIMED is drafting a number of codes of practice for journalists, including an already published 'Guide for Media in Conflict Situations'.

The regulatory body is run by Kane Illa, the owner and editor of the weekly satirical newspaper **La Griffé**.

Director - Kane Illa

Mob: +227 9613 9528

+227 9087 1405

Email: Kane.illa@yahoo.fr
onimedniger@gmail.com

Media associations

Coordination Nationale de Radios Communautaires

The National Coordinating Committee for Community Radio is responsible for promoting the development of community radio in Niger and supervising the way it operates.

However, it has no resources available to fund the operation of individual stations.

In practice, the headquarters of the organisation in Niamey has very little direct contact with community radio stations in remote areas.

It mostly communicates with individual stations through a network of eight regional representatives.

The National Coordinating Committee had a list of 129 known community radio stations in August 2011, but thought that about 30 were no longer functioning.

It was unable to say which stations were off air.

Director - Amadou Boukari
Mobile: +227 9698 0972

L'Association Nigérienne des Editeurs de la Presse Indépendante (ANEPI)

ANEPI - the Association of Nigerien Editors of the Independent Press - is the main association for newspaper journalists in Niger.

It is based at the **Maison de la Presse**, a journalism resource in Niamey, which is owned collectively by several local media associations

In late 2011, there were 84 registered newspapers in Niger, although only a fraction of these were actually publishing on a regular basis.

All of these newspapers are nominally members of ANEPI although there is some dispute about leadership and some journalists prefer not to be involved. It's hard to gauge how much power ANEPI actually has.

ANEPI's Director, Boubacar Diallo, believes that in general newspaper journalists are not as well-behaved as radio journalists.

He believes that newspaper journalists get away with writing unverified reports and expressing inappropriate opinions more easily because so few people actually read what they write.

Diallo also believes that many journalists are heavily influenced in what they write by payments they receive for attending press conferences.

ANEPI is trying to stop this practice.

Director - Boubacar Diallo
Mob: +227 96 97 96 22
Tel: +227 21 76 38 86

Maison de la Presse www.medianiger.info

Maison de la Presse is a well-equipped meeting place and resource centre for journalists.

It offers free internet access to local journalists.

A German development agency which now forms part of GIZ had a media development officer based at ANEPI for one year in 2009. She helped Nigerien journalists to develop internet skills and social networking sites.

She also helped to create the Maison de la Presse website www.nigermedia.info. This is designed to bring together all information relevant to the Nigerien media.

Maison de la Presse has also received support from several other international organisations, including UNESCO, Oxfam and Reporters Sans Frontieres.

Many of the centre's computers, faxes and printers there appear to have been donated by various media development organisations.

However, very few journalists appear to use the centre's facilities on a regular basis.

Maison de la Presse was created in 2005 by 12 organisations representing journalists and the media in Niger.

By early 2011, it had 17 members.

Maison de la Presse is run by Boubacar Diallo, who is also Director of the journalists' association ANEPI.

President - Boubacar Diallo

Tel: +227 20 72 69 17

Email : maison.presse@yahoo.fr

L'Association des Promoteurs des Radios Privées du Niger (APRPN)

APRN is an association that represents the owners of the main private radio and TV stations in Niger.

It is headed by the owners of **Radio Sarraounia**, Moussa Kaka and his wife Jamila Souley.

Other important members include **Radio Anfani, Tambara FM, Shukura FM** and **Sahara FM**.

APRPN sometimes runs workshops and training courses for journalists.

It is based at Sarraounia's offices in Niamey.

Director: - Jamila Souley

Mobile: +227 96 96 33 71

Email: Jamila_souley@yahoo.com

Association des Promoteurs des Radios et Télévisions Privées du Niger (APRTPN)

This is another organisation representing private TV and radio stations in Niger.

Its main members are **Radio Television Tenere (RTT)**, **Canal 3** and **Radio Television Bonferey**.

Director - Mme. Zainabou

Mobile: +227 9393 0446

Media development organisations

L'Institut de Formation aux Techniques de l'Information et de la Communication (IFTIC) www.iftic.net

IFTIC – the Institute for Training in Techniques of Information and Communication – in Niamey is the main journalism training institution in Niger.

Many of the journalists working in Niger today were trained there.

IFTIC runs a variety of courses lasting up to 12 months on print, radio and television journalism.

It has its own studios and runs a campus radio station which broadcasts irregularly.

Courses cover topics such as film-making, radio package making, radio output and production techniques, writing skills and journalism ethics.

IFTIC also runs shorter courses on digital editing, archiving, photography, sound recording, and creating and managing an audio library.

The Institute is relatively well equipped. It has been well supported by foreign donors, including the United States.

Created in 1977, IFTIC trains journalists from Niger and several other Francophone African countries.

Marketing – Ibrahim

Mob: +227 9002 0986

Tel: +227 2073 3706

Address: IFTIC, Rue de Corniche Yantala, BP: 10701 Niamey

Equal Access www.equalaccess.org

Equal Access is the most active international media development organisation working in Niger.

It works with 52 radio stations across the country – including many community radio stations, to produce and broadcast a series of weekly programmes.

Equal Access claims that these reach a regular audience of 2.5 million people.

The organisation also undertakes training and provides Nigerien radio stations with technical support.

Its media development programme is funded by USAID as part of its Peace through Development Project (PDEV).

PDEV falls under the US-sponsored Trans-Sahara Counter Terrorism Initiative. This is aimed at combating the activities of armed Islamist groups operating in Algeria and several West African countries, including Niger.

Equal Access has its own radio production studios in Niamey.

It produces and distributes three weekly radio programmes:

- *Hantsi Leka Gidan Kowa* is a soap opera in Hausa about life in a Nigerien village that focuses on issues of good governance
- *Gwadaben Matasa* (Youth Boulevard) is a magazine programme for youth
- *Sada Zumunci* (Solidarity and Fraternity) is a religious affairs programme that promotes religious tolerance and inter-faith dialogue. Equal Access has organised a series of inter-faith dialogue training sessions, where Christian and Muslim leaders meet and discuss the writing and delivery of sermons.

All the Equal Access radio programmes are recorded in **Hausa**. However, some are reversioned in **French**, **Djerma** (also known as **Zarma**) and **Tamasheq** for specific regional audiences.

Equal Access supports its partner stations through training – particularly in the production of audience participation programmes - and the supply of equipment.

It also helps them to form listening clubs in villages. These listen to specific radio programmes as a group and discuss them afterwards.

Many of the Equal Access-sponsored radio programmes are made by a network of 'community reporters' who have been trained up and equipped by the media development organisation.

Equal Access has also embarked on a project to map the location of individual radio stations in Niger and the range of their transmitters.

The activities of its radio development programme are focussed on the provinces of Maradi, Zinder, Agadez, Tahoua and Niamey.

Country Director - Idi Kader – Niamey coordinator:

Mob: +227 96 97 10 01

+ 227 90 27 60 68

Idi.kader@yahoo.fr

UK contact for Niger project - Lucy Lyons

Email: lucyllyon@gmail.com

GIZ www.gtz.de/en/weltweit/afrika/593.htm

GIZ, the German development agency, known locally as Co-operation Allemande, has funded various media development programmes in Niger.

The most recent was the placing of a German consultant at the **Maison de la Presse** in Niamey for a year in 2009.

She ran training courses in internet skills and provided support for online media development.

This included setting up the Maison de la Presse website www.medianiger.info which is designed as a gateway to all the media activities in Niger.

GIZ was formed in January 2011 by the merger of three German aid agencies: GTZ, DED and Inwent.

Tel: +227 20 722551

Email: giz-niger@giz.de

Address: GIZ, Avenue de l'Afrique Porte N° 36, BP 10814, Niamey

Co-opération Allemande

Office landline:

+227 20 75 31 36

Fajimata – project co-ordinator

Landline office: +227 20 35 01 16

American Cultural Centre

The American Cultural Centre in Niamey runs a series of short-term media development programmes.

In 2011 it provided support for the **Maison de la Presse**. It also organised a forum between journalists and representatives of the Ministry of Communications following Niger's return to elected civilian government.

Cultural Affairs Officer - Josh Wagener

Tel: +227 20 73 41 07

Email: Waggenerjd@state.gov

Media Research - Idy Baraou (former BBC correspondent in Niger)

Mobile: +227 96 87 67 25

American cultural centre, Rue de Tahoua, BP 11201, Niamey

Kokoyo

The Kokoyo theatre company writes and performs dramatic sketches with a social message.

It has created short plays on designated themes for UNICEF and other aid agencies.

Drama is a very popular channel for tackling thorny social issues in Niger without appearing to be preaching or imposing outside values.

Subjects tackled by Kokoyo include forced marriage, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), clandestine migration and environmental problems.

Director - Cheick Kotondi

Mob: +227 96 98 37 53

Email : kotondi2@yahoo.fr

Mwangaza Action www.mwangaza-action.org

Mwangaza Action is a Burkinabe NGO which promotes social action through community participation.

It specialises in writing and producing radio programmes with a social action message on issues such as human rights, good governance, sexual and reproductive health and informal education.

These programmes often include drama sketches.

Mwangaza Action works closely with UNICEF and local drama groups and has done a lot of work in Niger.

Contacts - Roger Tciombiano
Badjima Bakouan

Tél. (Burkina Faso) +226 50 50 90 49
+226 50 37 89 86

Email: mwangaz@fasonet.bf

Address: Mwangaza Action, 06 B.P. 9277 Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

Audio and video services

Cinema Numerique Ambulant (CNA)

Maiga Aissata runs the **Association Nigérienne Cinéma Numérique Ambulant**, which arranges the projection of films in remote rural areas. She works closely with UNICEF.

Contact - Maiga Aissata

Tel: +227 21 76 99 65

Email: aissa_maiga67@yahoo.fr

MSA

This Niamey-based video filming and production company is run by media professional Harouna Kaine.

Contact -Harouna Kaine

Mob: +227 9698 6941

Media Marketing

Jamilah Suley, the wife of Radio Sarraounia director Moussa Kaka, runs a private media marketing company that specialises in getting messages out across all Niger's media outlets

Mobile: +227 9696 3371
Mobile +227 9090 3371
Email: Jamila_souley@yahoo.com

Printers

Nouvelle Imprimerie du Niger (NIN)

NIN is the largest and most modern printing works in Niger.

It prints the weekly newspaper **Le Republicain**, which is owned NIN's proprietor Mamam Abou, and several other private newspapers.

NIN also prints leaflets and magazines.

Director - Maman Abou

Tel: +227 20 73 47 98
+227 20 73 52 78
+227 20 73 46 36

Email: nin@intnet.ne

Address: NIN, Place du Petit Marche, face Pharmacie de L'Espoir, Quartier Terminus, BP 12015, Niamey

10. Telecommunications

Telecommunications overview

Mobile telephone use is widespread and increasing rapidly.

Roughly one in four people in Niger own a mobile handset.

According to the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), there were 3.8 million mobile subscribers in Niger in 2010.

That gave the country a mobile penetration rate of 24.5%.

The country has four mobile phone companies – **Airtel, Sahelcom, Orange and Moov.**

They provide good network coverage in the more densely populated south and west of Niger.

But in the sparsely populated desert north there is scarcely any mobile network coverage east of the main road from Zinder to Agadez, Arlit and the Algerian frontier.

Sahelcom, which boasts the largest mobile network, claimed on its website in 2012 that it covered 65% of the population of Niger and 45% of the country's land area.

Mobile phone usage has exploded over the past decade, although it still lags behind neighbouring Nigeria, where the mobile penetration rate reached 55% in 2010.

Most people either own a phone or have access to one through a friend or family member.

Niger is one of the world's poorest countries, so voice calls are kept short to minimise the cost.

Those who can read and write use text messages to cut the cost of communication still further.

Mobiles are widely used by families to stay in touch with relatives who have left home to find work in other countries.

Many of those who have left to seek better opportunities elsewhere send home remittances.

Airtel and **Orange** both offer mobile money transfer services. These allow credit to be sent instantly to a recipient's phone. It can then be redeemed for cash at a local paying agent.

In 2010, the Irish aid agency Concern launched a pilot project to distribute cash to beneficiaries in Niger by mobile money transfer.

State-owned **Sahelcom** has the most extensive mobile network coverage, but its three private sector rivals are not far behind.

Airtel is the most popular network, with an estimated 800,000 to a million SIM cards sold by late 2011.

The landline network in Niger is very patchy and mainly restricted to the big cities. It is operated by the formerly state owned telephone company **Sonitel**.

It was privatised in 2001 and is now majority owned by Chinese and Libyan investors.

Government offices, large businesses and humanitarian agencies usually have landline phones, but most ordinary people do not.

According to the ITU there were only 83,592 fixed line telephone subscribers in Niger in 2010 – one for every 200 people.

The internet network in Niger is improving, but from a very low base.

According to the ITU only 0.83 per 100 inhabitants used the internet in 2010 – roughly 120,000 people.

Niger has one of the lowest internet usage rates in the world.

In neighbouring Nigeria, by way of contrast, 28.5% of the population used the internet in 2010, according to the ITU.

In Niger, internet usage is restricted to educated and relatively affluent people in the main cities.

It is virtually unheard of in rural communities.

Most people access the internet at work or from internet cafes.

The number of home subscriptions is very low. A home internet link costs upwards of \$25,000 CFA francs (US\$50) per month.

Sahelcom provides the fastest and most reliable internet connections, particularly in Niamey.

The state-owned company has a fibre optic cable to Benin which is linked to a submarine fibre optic cable that runs along the coast of West Africa.

It redistributes the internet to other service providers in Niger, including the other three mobile phone companies, by V-Sat.

Internet access is slower and less reliable outside the capital.

Mobile connections to the internet are available, but few people can afford them.

The mobile network appears quite robust. Most mobile towers have their own generator.

Sahelcom has, on occasion, broadcast SMS messages to its subscribers on behalf of aid agencies.

However, only 28% of the population can read and write. Illiteracy is much higher in the countryside than in the main towns, so the impact of such messages on the wider population may be limited.

A BBC World Service audience survey in 2008 found that 9% of adults listened to the radio on their mobile phones.

Equal Access has worked with **Orange** and **Airtel** to develop systems that allow radio listeners to send text messages and recorded voice messages to radio stations, so that their voices and concerns can be heard on interactive radio phone-in shows.

Mobile call charges are relatively expensive by African standards.

A pre-paid voice call to a subscriber on the same network typically costs 75 to 100 CFA francs (15 to 20 US cents) per minute.

Calls to subscribers on other networks cost 150 francs (30 US cents) per minute.

However, a variety of discount deals are available.

Moov, for example, offers calls to five favourite numbers at the reduced rate of 50 CFA francs (10 US cents) per minute.

SMS messages cost between 10 and 25 CFA francs (2 to 5 US cents) each.

Telecoms companies

Sahelcom www.sahelcom.ne

Sahelcom is the state mobile phone company.

It boasts the most extensive mobile network coverage in the country, but it lags in subscriber numbers behind the market leader **Airtel**.

Sahelcom claimed on its website in early 2012 that its network covered 65% of the population and 45% of Niger's land area.

Sahelcom said it had sold more than 500,000 SIM cards by mid-2011.

Airtel claimed up to one million subscribers at that point.

On several occasions, Sahelcom has broadcast key humanitarian messages to all its subscribers by SMS on behalf of aid agencies.

Sahelcom is also the primary provider of internet connections in Niger.

It owns a fibre optic cable to Benin which hooks up to an undersea cable that runs along the coast of West Africa.

Sahelcom offers the fastest and most reliable internet service in Niger.

Sahelcom itself offers a home internet service through a radio wireless connection, usually through an aerial on the roof.

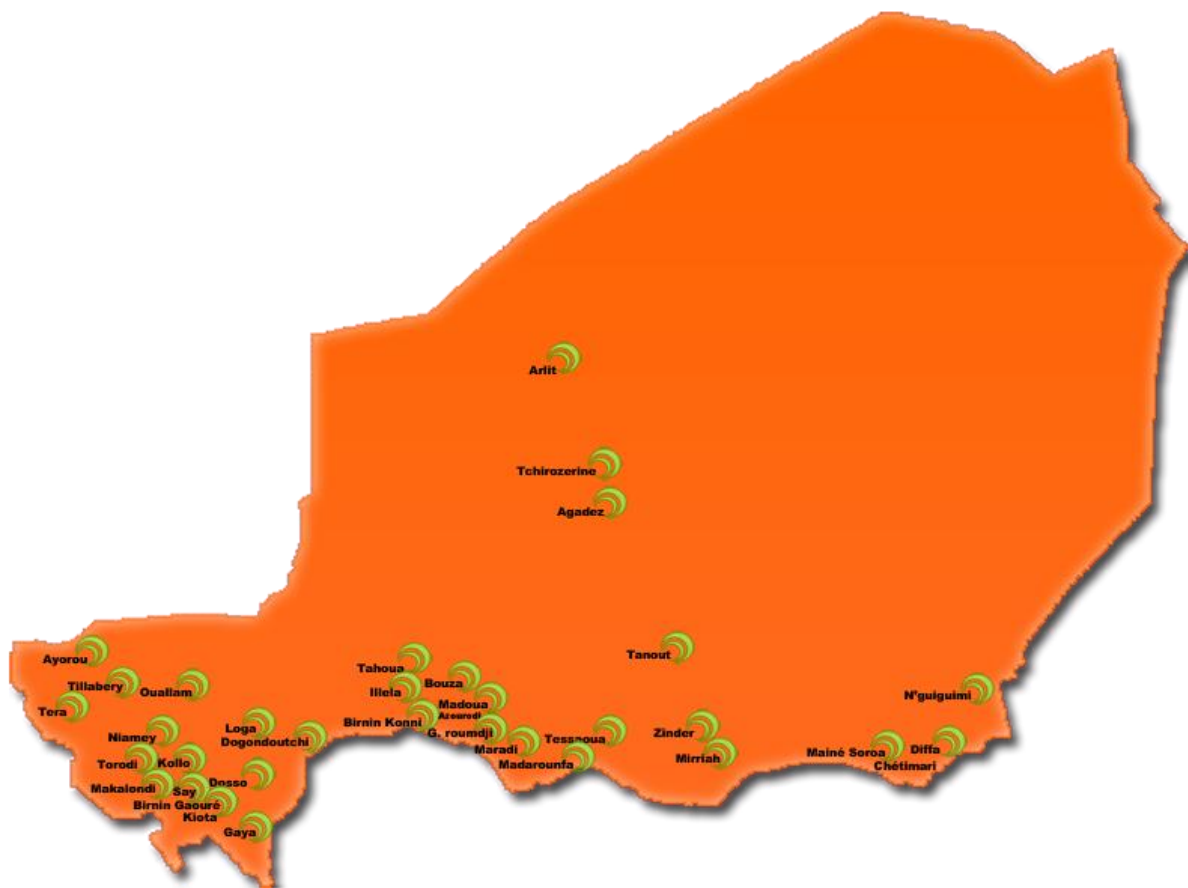
It also provides internet access via its mobile phone network but the number of mobile internet subscribers is very low.

Sahelcom also redistributes the internet by V-Sat to other local internet service providers, including the three private mobile phone networks..

Commercial Manager -Tahirou Tinni

Tel: +227 2072 4775

Email: ttahirou@intnet.ne



Sahelcom mobile network

Source: Sahelcom 2012

Airtel <http://africa.airtel.com/niger/>

Indian-owned Airtel is the most popular private mobile phone operator in Niger.

In 2011 it was reputed to have between 800,000 and one million subscribers

Airtel claims to cover every major town and village in Niger, except in the sparsely populated desert of the northeast.

The company lists more than 80 towns and villages with network coverage on its website at

[http://www.africa.airtel.com/wps/wcm/connect/africaairtel/Niger/Home/Se_connecter/Zone de couverture/](http://www.africa.airtel.com/wps/wcm/connect/africaairtel/Niger/Home/Se_connecter/Zone_de_couverture/)

Airtel offers a variety of different tariffs and reduced call charges to the subscriber's three favourite numbers. But on average a voice call costs about 100 CFA francs (20 US cents) per minute.

The company operates a mobile money transfer service called Airtel Money in association with Ecobank.

Airtel provides mobile internet access and wireless internet access to fixed locations.

However, anecdotal evidence suggests that data transfer speeds are slow and the service is not always reliable.

Airtel supports Blackberry in Niger, but the take-up of these combined mobile phone and internet devices is very low because they are expensive.

The company has a Web2SMS service which allows internet users to directly message their telephone contacts by SMS.

Airtel can also broadcast mass SMS messages to its entire subscriber base.

It can also arrange an SMS chat facility and conference calls

The company has also worked with the media development NGO Equal Access to develop a service that allows radio listeners to send SMS messages in to the station with their questions and comments on topics being discussed on live programmes.

Their views can then be immediately broadcast on air.

Airtel Niger was owned by the Kuwait-based telecoms group Zain until 2010.

Customer service - +227 96 99 81 11

Email: info.ne@zain.com

ORANGE www.orange.ne

Orange Niger is part of France Telecom.

Its parent company operates mobile networks in most Francophone African countries.

In Niger, Orange provides coverage of all the main towns and along the country's principal main roads.

The company had 650,000 subscribers in mid-2010.

Orange offers mobile internet access and wireless internet access to fixed locations. However, its signal is often unreliable and has provoked many complaints.

The company offers a mobile money transfer service called Orange Money. This also allows bill payment. Orange Money was launched in 2010 in conjunction with Bank of Africa.

The company has the capacity to broadcast mass SMS messages to all its subscribers.

Orange provides 3G coverage in Niamey and offers mobile internet services to subscribers in the capital.

Orange has worked with the media development organisation Equal Access to develop a 'voice-bank' system, which allows listeners to live phone-in programmes to call a toll-free number and record a message about the issues being discussed. A detailed interactive mobile network coverage map is available at <http://www.orange.ne/reseau.html>

Client service manager - TA Hubert Korango

Mob: +227 9022 2222

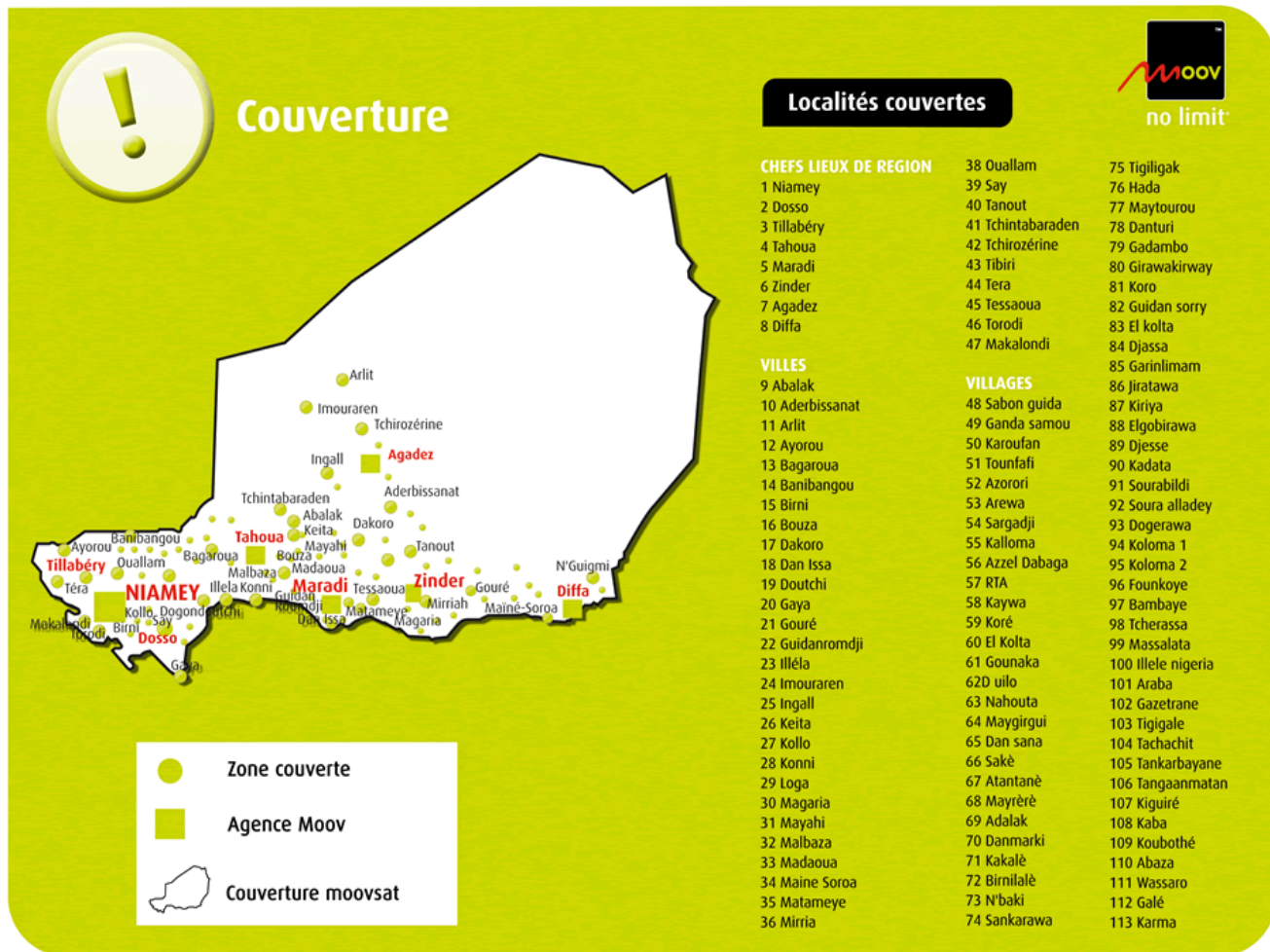
Email: Service.client@orange-niger.net

Moov www.moov.ne

MOOV is the smallest mobile telecommunications company in Niger. In 2011 it claimed to have mobile phone masts in about 40 towns and 60 large villages in Niger.

The company offers internet access using up-to-date GPRS and EDGE technology and photo messaging as well as SMS.

Moov operates in several West African countries, including Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Togo, Gabon and the Central African Republic.



Localités couvertes

CHEFS LIEUX DE REGION	38 Ouallam	75 Tigiligak
1 Niamey	39 Say	76 Hada
2 Dosso	40 Tanout	77 Maytourou
3 Tillabéry	41 Tchintabaraden	78 Danturi
4 Tahoua	42 Tchirozérine	79 Gadambo
5 Maradi	43 Tibiri	80 Girawakirway
6 Zinder	44 Tera	81 Koro
7 Agadez	45 Tessaoua	82 Guidan sorry
8 Diffa	46 Torodi	83 El kolta
	47 Makalondi	84 Djassa
VILLES		85 Garinlimam
9 Abalak	VILLAGES	86 Jiratawa
10 Aderbissanat	48 Sabon guida	87 Kiriya
11 Arlit	49 Ganda samou	88 Elgobirawa
12 Ayorou	50 Karoufan	89 Djesse
13 Bagaroua	51 Tounfafi	90 Kadata
14 Banibangou	52 Azorori	91 Sourabildi
15 Birni	53 Arewa	92 Soura alladey
16 Bouza	54 Sargadji	93 Dogerawa
17 Dakoro	55 Kalloma	94 Koloma 1
18 Dan Issa	56 Azzel Dabaga	95 Koloma 2
19 Doutchi	57 RTA	96 Founkoye
20 Gaya	58 Kaywa	97 Barnbaye
21 Gouré	59 Koré	98 Tcherassa
22 Guidanromdji	60 El Kolta	99 Massalata
23 Illéla	61 Gounaka	100 Illele nigeria
24 Imouraren	62D uilo	101 Araba
25 Ingall	63 Nahouta	102 Gazetrane
26 Keita	64 Maygirgui	103 Tigigale
27 Kollo	65 Dan sana	104 Tachachit
28 Konni	66 Sakè	105 Tankarbayane
29 Loga	67 Atantanè	106 Tangaanmatan
30 Magaria	68 Mayrèrè	107 Kiguiré
31 Mayahi	69 Adalak	108 Kaba
32 Malbaza	70 Danmarki	109 Koubothé
33 Madaoua	71 Kakalè	110 Abaza
34 Maine Soroa	72 Birnilalè	111 Wassaro
35 Matameye	73 N'baki	112 Galé
36 Mirria	74 Sankarawa	113 Karma

Moov mobile network coverage

Source: Moov

Director of Marketing and Communication - Francois Kouassi

Address, Moov, Route de l'aéroport, 720 Boulevard du 15 Avril, BP 13 379, Niamey

Tel: + 227 20 74 44 44

+227 20 74 19 54

Sonitel www.sonitel.ne

Sonitel runs Niger's landline telephone network.

It also offers internet access.

According to the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), Niger had 83,592 landline subscribers in 2010.

The Chinese-Libyan consortium Dataport acquired a 51% controlling stake in the formerly state-owned company when it was privatised in 2001.

Local calls to other Sonitel numbers are relatively cheap at 25 CFA francs (10 US cents) per minute.

However, long distance calls within Niger and calls to mobile numbers cost 150 CFA francs (30 US cents per minute).

Long distance calls made from a mobile phone generally cost much less.

Business accounts department

Tel: +227 20 73 90 00

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Email: info@sonitel.ne

Address: SONITEL - Société Nigérienne des Télécommunications - Avenue du Général de Gaulle - B.P. 208 Niamey

LIST OF PRINCIPAL SOURCES

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- Reporters Sans Frontieres report on Guinea and Niger (July 2011) www.rsf.org
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<http://www.sahelcom.ne/>; <http://www.orange.ne/>
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