



IEDA RELIEF NIGER REPORT

IEDA Relief Launches *Livelihoods for Autonomy* in Diffa, Niger

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Abstract

Armed conflict between insurgents and the Nigerian army has caused massive population displacement, especially in Diffa, Niger. IEDA Relief ceremoniously launched the *Livelihoods for Autonomy* project, supported by the UNHCR, to enable refugees and returnees to rebuild their livelihoods and provide support to host families who have shared their meager resources with incoming refugees and returnees. Attended by local government officials, the ceremony marked the advent of *Livelihoods for Autonomy*, which will benefit 700 households through income generating activities.

Background: IEDA Relief in Diffa, Niger

Recurrent armed conflict between insurgents and the Nigerian army in north-eastern Nigeria has caused massive population displacement to Niger, already one of the poorest countries in the world, as people abandon their belongings to flee abuses of all kinds. Most of these refugees and returnees have settled in the region of Diffa, in the southeastern corner of Niger. In the face of this humanitarian catastrophe, IEDA Relief has implemented multiple projects, including *Livelihoods for Autonomy*, in the region with financial support from the UNHCR and in partnership with the Nigerien government.



Figure 1 The speech of the head of sub-office from IEDA Relief in Diffa

The aim of these projects is to enable refugees and returnees to rebuild their livelihoods and also provide support to the host families and communities who have shared their meager resources with incoming refugees and returnees. Given the social and economic imbalance that the influx of people has created in the region, the newly launched *Livelihoods for Autonomy* project is part of IEDA Relief's aim to contribute to an increase in self-sufficiency among returnees, refugees and the host community by providing support for various means of subsistence.

Official Project Launch: Diffa, Niger

Thursday, September 11th, 2014 marked a major milestone for refugees, returnees and host families in Diffa. It was the date chosen for the start of IEDA Relief's new *Livelihoods for Autonomy* project supporting Nigerian refugees and Nigerien returnees in the region. The project, which was made possible with financial support from the UNHCR, officially began with the distribution of grants to beneficiary households. The ceremony took place in the presence of regional and municipal authorities, including the Secretary General of the Prefecture of Diffa, the 2nd Vice President of the Regional Council, the Mayor of the city of Diffa, the Head of Canton and the UNHCR representative at Diffa, and several other dignitaries and humanitarians.



Figure 2 The Mayor of the city of Diffa officially submitting a grant to a beneficiary

Livelihoods for Autonomy

The new project consists of two tangible components that will contribute towards a path of self-sufficiency. Using a participatory approach, the beneficiaries will apply their existing expertise and newly acquired skills sets in various sectors such as agriculture, handicrafts, fisheries, transport, and animal husbandry in order to generate additional income that can help support themselves and their families. Secondly, by allocating beneficiaries into groups comprised of refugees, returnees and host community members, IEDA Relief intends to promote peaceful coexistence within the Diffa region.



Figure 3 The UNHCR and an IEDA Relief agent explaining the MoU to a beneficiary



Figure 4 IEDA Relief monitors assigned to accompany recipients

Livelihoods for Autonomy will benefit a total of 700 vulnerable households identified across 12 villages in the five communities of Diffa, Toumour, Bosso, Maine-Soroa and Kablewa. Each beneficiary household will receive a 60,000 CFA (approximately \$115 U.S. dollars) subsidy as a means to start and maintain their income generating activities (IGAs) over the coming months. The subsidy will be paid in two installments: the first 30,000 CFA is granted immediately after beneficiaries receive project training, and the second installment will be allocated after an evaluation of the activity halfway through the project. To increase the chance of success for each type of IGA, beneficiaries are organized into groups according to location and area of interest and IEDA Relief's monitors will provide them with additional support and advice along the way.