# Conflict Factsheet

**Tuareg Rebellion in Niger 1991-1997**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of conflict</th>
<th>Intensity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conflict Locality</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western Africa</td>
<td>1991–1997</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>Agricultural / Pastoral Land, Water</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Conflict Summary

From 1991 to 1997 different Tuareg groups were active in an armed struggle against the Government of Niger, demanding greater political autonomy and development funds for Niger’s north western regions, inhabited by Tuaregs. Important droughts in the Sahel in the 1970s and 1980s and subsequent migration of disaffected Tuaregs to Algeria and Libya arguably have played an important part in facilitating this conflict.
Conceptual Model

Climate Change
- More Frequent / Intense Extreme Weather Events

Environmental Change
- Extreme Weather Event
- Land Use Change
- Increased Land Scarcity

Intermediary Mechanisms
- Change in Access / Availability of Natural Resources
- Anti-State Grievances

Fragility and Conflict Risks
- Displacements / Migration

Social and Economic Drivers
- Economic Development

Context Factors
- Agricultural / Pastoral Land, Water
- Water-stressed Area
- Eroded Social Contract
- High Unemployment
- History of Conflict
- Low Level of Economic Development
- Political Marginalization
Conflict History

Between 1991 and 1997, different Tuareg groups engaged the Government of Niger, demanding greater political autonomy and development funds for Niger’s north-western regions. Combats between the warring parties and violence against the civilian population resulted in more than 180 deaths (UCDP, 2014).

From drought to conflict
Severe droughts in the Sahel in the 1970s and 1980s exacerbated the precarious situation of many Tuareg pastoralists in Niger’s north-western Aïr and Azawad regions. Having only little political influence and suffering from the structural neglect of Niger’s northern regions, many Tuaregs were forced to flee to Algeria and Libya. However, deteriorating economic conditions in these countries during the 1980s prompted their return to Niger, where the situation of their communities had still not improved. Some Tuareg returnees had served in the Libyan army and acquired considerable military experience. In addition, Tuareg groups in Mali had started a successful insurgency against their government a year earlier, setting the example for their kinsmen in Niger to start a rebellion (Hershkowitz, 2005; see also Tuareg rebellion in Mali).

Economic and political marginalisation
The Tuareg insurgency of the early 1990s has to be understood against the background of political marginalisation and increased vulnerability of Tuareg populations in northern Niger. Despite its rich uranium and oil reserves, northern Niger is still one of the poorest regions in one of the poorest countries in the world. Extractive industries have only provided few jobs to locals and have contaminated scarce water and grazing resources, on which Tuareg pastoralists rely, while their revenues have not contributed to the development of the region. Moreover, Niger’s Tuaregs have held little political influence since the country’s independence in 1960, resulting in only a limited amount of government funds dedicated to the development of the northern regions. This situation is further compounded by the progressive encroachment of irrigated cultures onto traditional pastoral land, all of which deprive Tuareg pastoralists of essential resources (Benjaminsen & Ba, 2009; Fleury, 2010).

After three peace accords in 1993, 1994 and 1997, in which the government had promised political decentralisation and development funds for the northern regions, the last rebel group finally took down its arms in 1997. However, as in Mali, sluggish implementation of these accords led to renewed violence in 2007 (Hershkowitz, 2005; MAR, 2004).

Resolution Efforts

In June 1993, a truce was agreed between the warring parties, which lasted only one month due to internal divisions among the rebels. The Government of Niger resumed negotiations with the rebels in June 1994 in Paris. France, Algeria and Burkina Faso served as mediators. The talks led to the signing of the Ouagadougou agreement in October 1994. The government agreed in principle to decentralize political power, improve security in war-affected areas and facilitate the resettlement of refugees.
Following further negotiations a comprehensive peace agreement was signed in April 1995 in Niamey, with the creation of a special committee charged with implementing the accord. Negotiations over the implementation of the Niamey accord started in October 1995 and continued amidst continued fighting, until a definitive ceasefire accord was signed in November 1997. However, delays in the implementation of the accord and slow progress in the improvement of Tuareg pastoralist’s living conditions eventually led to renewed violence in 2007 (UCDP, 2014).
Entry Points for Resilience and Peace Building

Treaty/agreement
The government of Niger promised political decentralisation and development funds for the neglected northern regions after a lengthy negotiation process that encompassed three peace accords in 1993, 1994, and 1997, finally resulting in a ceasefire. However, in 2007 violence renewed due to the slow implementation of the accord.

Resources and Materials

Conflict References
Tuareg Rebellion in Mali 1990-1995

References with URL
Benjaminsen, T.A., Ba, B. (2009). Farmer–herder conflicts, pastoral marginalisation and corruption: a case study from the inland Niger delta of Mali
Fleury, K. (2010). Tuaregs and climate change

Further information