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## SUCCESS STORY

# Nigerian Association Helps Ease Food Crisis in Niger

**Dawanau Market Development Association's (DMDA) assistance to Niger during the food crisis is little-known throughout the world.**



Photo: MISTOWA

*DMDA members load truck with food staples in Kano market for dispatch to Niger during the food crisis.*

***DMDA provided Niger with weekly truckloads of food and opened their warehouses for relief aid.***

Niger experienced a severe food crisis in the summer of 2005 when prices for staples such as millet and sorghum rose by an astronomical 75-80% above normal.

During the crisis, the international community got most of the credit for relief efforts. However, help also came from regional neighbor, Nigeria. The Dawanau Market Development Association (DMDA) of Nigeria played a little-recognized role by supplying food staples such as garri, millet and maize at discounted prices. Traders opened their market warehouses for the Government of Nigeria to purchase grain and other food items to be dispatched to Niger.

Before the food crisis reached its peak, MISTOWA brought together traders from Niger and Nigeria for a variety of events, including a 25th anniversary celebration of DMDA, an 'Onion Forum' and other capacity-building activities. Traders from neighboring countries often mistrust each other due to language and information barriers. MISTOWA's efforts paved the way for a more congenial and cooperative relationship between each country's traders.

Between June 1 and August 22, 2005, DMDA donated a total of 2,250 tons of foodstuffs valued at close to \$2 million. Government purchases from the market are estimated at about ten times the contribution of the trader associations. At a time when many other traders were taking advantage of higher prices, the DMDA's discounted prices resulted in a savings of more than \$100,000 to the traders in Niger.

The food crisis in Niger demonstrates that MISTOWA's work with traders enhances regional food security. Providing accurate and timely market price information is a critical tool that enables associations to avert future food crises in the region.