



Niger Youth Needs Assessment

How is COVID-19 Affecting Youth in Niger?

At the end of May, 2020, Youth TEA and CARE Niger asked 175 young entrepreneurs in Niger what they are experiencing in COVID-19. Here's what they told us. **Youth are worried—closing social spaces and income are their two biggest concerns.**

Youth TEA is a youth innovation lab that CARE Niger incubates and supports. Seeing youth¹ issues and leadership excluded from the national conversation, the members of Youth TEA decided to conduct an analysis of youth's COVID-19 experiences.

The psychological implications of COVID-19 have created worries for youth. The biggest percentage of youth (47%) say that they are afraid they or a member of their family will get the virus. 36% of young people who did not go to school say that their biggest worry is falling income.

Key Findings

- **Incomes are falling:** 89% of young people say that their incomes are falling.
- **Youth are getting pushed back into poverty.** The percent of youth who are in the lowest income bracket (between zero and \$12 per day) has gone from 21% to 88%. Now, only 1% of young entrepreneurs in the sample earn more than \$430 a week, down from 28% pre-COVID-19.
- **Stress is increasing:** 87% of young people say conflicts in their lives have gone up—either with their families or with their friends. 33% of young people are afraid of losing more income, and 46% are afraid of themselves or their families getting sick.

¹ In Niger, youth is defined as anyone from age 15-35.

- **Economic impacts are starting.** According to the National Public Administration for Food Crisis, food prices are likely to rise by 30%. The cost of water and electricity in urban areas will go up 10-30%. People will spend up to 50% on hygiene products like soap, masks, and water.
- **Information is a problem—especially for girls:** While most youth had heard of COVID-19, one in 3 young women does not understand how it is transmitted.

What are Youth Asking For?

Based on these findings, Youth TEA is asking for governments to:

- **Connect with youth when making decisions.** The group is calling for involving youth associations in COVID-19 related decision making.
- **Support youth organizations.** Because youth associations are already working with young entrepreneurs, Youth TEA calls on governments to finance those organizations to do outreach with youth and support young entrepreneurs who are “economic victims” of COVID-19.
- **Provide financial support to youth.** Set aside finances from economic recovery plans to specifically support young entrepreneurs and youth-led businesses.
- **Get youth involved in data collection.** Many young people have been to school and have familiarity with technology. With these skills, they can support data collection efforts to better understand what is happening during COVID-19, for youth and for everyone.
- **Set up an apolitical national youth council.**
- **Coordinate with others.** INGOs, UN bodies, and others should work with the government to co-finance and coordinate COVID-19 recovery plans.
- **Hold local governments accountable.** Decision-making is happening at all levels, and local governments should feel accountable to working with and supporting youth in decision-making.



Youth TEA is asking for young people to:

- **Respect all government-issued COVID-19 safety measures,** including mobility restrictions.
- **Be patient, innovative, and adaptable:** Young people are not the only ones affected by COVID-19, and their innovation and entrepreneurial spirit can contribute to solutions for everyone.
- **Be inclusive:** Youth organizations should have theories of change that include all categories of young people to act for the good of all.