

Niger

Estimated population 12.2 million

The former French colony of Niger has the unfortunate distinction of being ranked 177th, the worst country on Earth by the UN in terms of Human Development. Males and Females can expect to live only to 43 years and GDP per capita was a little over \$270 in 2005. In the same year the member countries of the IMF and the World Bank cancelled the country's external debt. Successive military dictatorships have hampered development. Tuareg rebels are active in the north. There are significant uranium resources and promising indications of petroleum deposits.

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