

we all need water



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Niger Washing for Prayer

Ablutions are performed before the *salah* or prayer, preparing the body, mind, and soul to commune with God. In the village of Sabon Gida, the Imam calls the *Asr* prayer from the mosque and men send young boys to fill plastic tea kettles with water to wash for the prayer. Likewise, my friend, Maman, fills a small kettle with water from a clay pot, sits under a neem tree and tips water into his hand. He whispers the name of God and performs his ablutions, his motions effortless and efficient. When he finishes, he picks up a string of prayer beads, puts them in his pocket and joins the other men at the mosque.

--Dan Patterson, *Peace Corps/Niger, 1997-99*

Niger (Republic of Niger)

Capital Niamey

Population 15,306,252 (2009 est.)

Life Expectancy 52.6 years

Literacy 28.7% (age 15 and over can read and write)

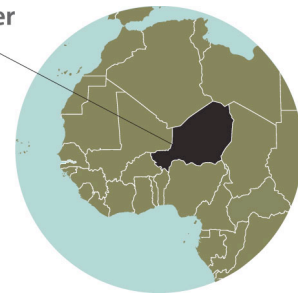
Languages French (official), Hausa, Djerma

Religions Muslim 80%, other (includes indigenous beliefs and Christian) 20%

Government republic

Source: *The World Factbook, 2009*

Niger



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