

28 May 2021

## KERRY GROUP

# Kerry and Concern Worldwide partnership delivering improved nutrition, health access and farm productivity for Niger communities

Kerry, the world's leading taste and nutrition company, and Concern Worldwide, the Irish humanitarian organisation, have revealed that through their partnership in Niger nearly 500 farmers have been trained over the last year and this has resulted in significant improvements to the region including clean water access, increased food production and improved health and nutrition practices. The Realigning Agriculture to Nutrition (RAIN) programme focuses on improving food and nutrition security while enhancing the livelihoods of the most vulnerable households in Tahoua, a region in the south of Niger. Today's announcement is to mark World Hunger Day (Friday 28 May), and reflects the significant success that the partnership has delivered over the last three years.

Niger is one of the poorest countries in the world with over 9.5 million people affected by extreme poverty. As the country is highly dependent on agriculture, even minor climate shocks directly affect the livelihood of thousands of households. RAIN helps build sustainable futures for farmers by equipping them with the tools and knowledge to enable them to build livelihoods for themselves, while also working to promote key health practices for improved maternal and child nutrition.

As part of the programme farmers are trained in climate smart agriculture techniques, which includes promoting water conservation and improving soil protection and as a result 98.6% of RAIN households have now adopted at least one new conservation agriculture technique. There has also been a marked improvement in crop yields, with the average yield of millet in 2020 reaching 796kg per hectare compared to 568kg in 2019. For the first time, farmers were in a position to sell some of their millet harvest to a local flour mill, generating a source of revenue and creating sustainable livelihoods.

Meanwhile, two community tree nurseries supported the cultivation of fruit and forest trees, with over 15,000 local trees preserved and nurtured and a further 2,600 planted in 2020. The programme has also delivered improved access to clean and portable water, which is now up to 39% of households in the villages RAIN is operating in, compared to 9% before the project started.

Commenting on the success of the programme, Jean Patrick Masquelier, Concern Worldwide's Programme Director in Niger, said: "Three years into our four-year programme we're seeing the incredibly positive impact of RAIN. Some 20,000 kilogrammes of vegetables were produced by 7,000 people in 2020 through our market garden activities, with the average number of different crops per household increasing from 1.5 in 2018 to 4.9 in 2020, greatly improving people's diets and nutritional diversity. Solar powered irrigation systems have been installed in these sites, providing a reliable source of water for vegetable production. The legacy of RAIN is to leave communities with the ability to sustain the achievements made, well after the project ends," he said.

Catherine Keogh, Chief Corporate Affairs and Brand Officer of Kerry Group, added: "Access to healthy food and good nutrition remains difficult for too many people, with the pandemic and climate change making it even more challenging. We are proud to see the positive impact of this programme, enabling farmers and communities to grow more nutritionally diverse food and build more sustainable livelihoods."

Kerry Group's partnership with Concern Worldwide in Niger builds on the success of the previously funded RAIN project in Zambia which concluded in 2015. Concern Worldwide has been working in Niger for the last 18 years, implementing both humanitarian and development programmes in order to provide basic needs and at the same time, improve the resilience of local communities.

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## About Kerry

Kerry, the world's leading taste and nutrition company, provides sustainable nutrition solutions for the food, beverage and pharmaceutical industries. Every day over one billion people around the world enjoy food and beverages containing Kerry's taste and nutrition solutions. The company has offices in 31 countries, 149 manufacturing facilities and employs 26,000 people globally, including over 1,000 food scientists. We aim to be our customers' most valued partner by delivering food and beverage products that meet their consumers' individual taste, nutrition and wellness preferences, while enhancing their lives and contributing to a more sustainable world. For more information, visit [kerrygroup.com](https://www.kerrygroup.com).

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