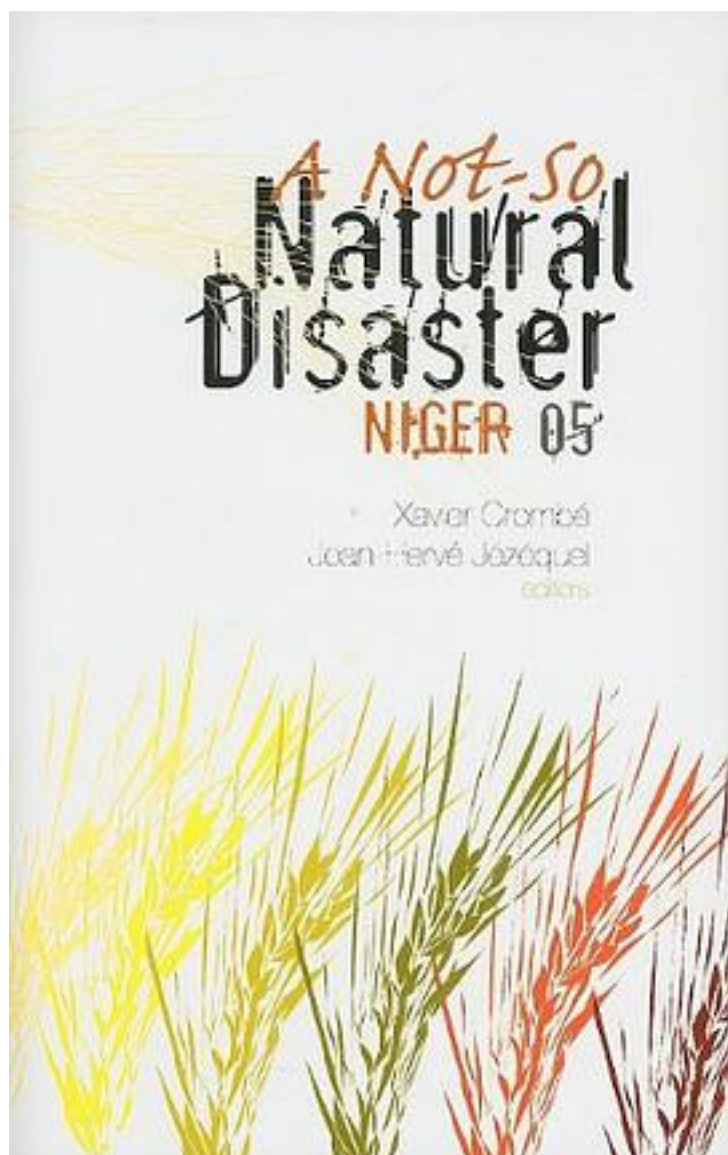


# A Not-So Natural Disaster



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In 2005, a famine ravaged the country of Niger. From the outset, the media focused more on the supposed natural causes of the food shortage—the droughts and locust infestations that have always plagued the region—rather than the political issues that kept NGOs and the government from adequately addressing the crisis. In fact, a more comprehensive study would have revealed that drought and locusts overtook the Sahel region a year before the famine began and that the death of tens of thousands from malnutrition was not a "natural" phenomenon. Through the diligent work of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), the humanitarian organization also known as Doctors Without Borders, a more accurate picture of the 2005 Niger crisis can now take shape. MSF treated more than 60,000 children for severe malnutrition during the famine—one of the most ambitious operations in the organization's history. Struggling to mobilize others to intervene in this emergency situation, the MSF sparked controversy among a variety of actors trying to manage the crisis, which led to an intense argument over the exact nature of the situation they confronted. The public nature of the MSF's involvement, outside of the zones in which it traditionally operates, led to new routes of reflection and insight. The wisdom and knowledge the organization gained informs the essays contained in this book, a balanced, multifaceted account of the factors that allowed a preventable disaster to occur. This unique volume also details the necessary steps Niger should take to prevent this tragedy from happening again.

作者介绍:

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