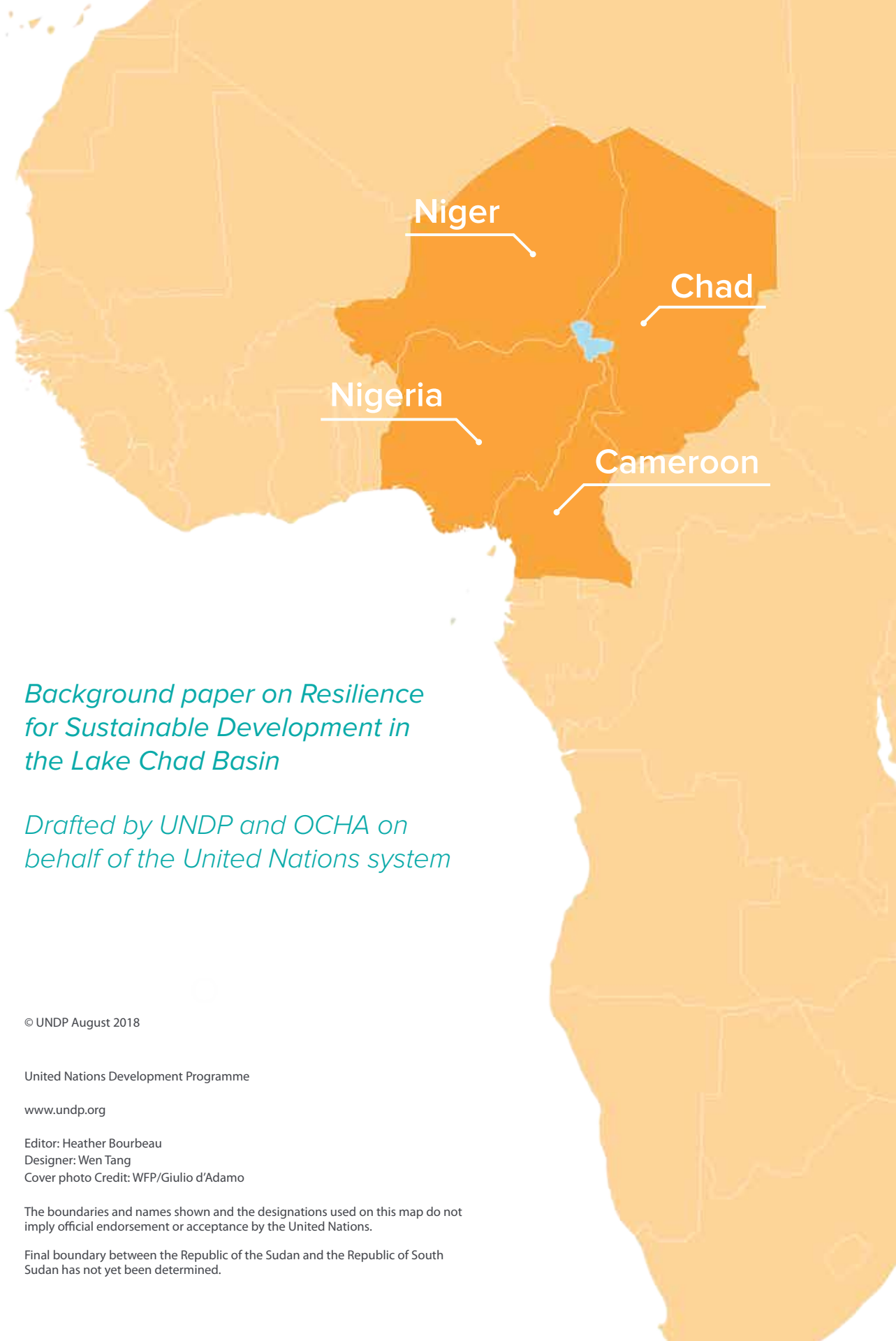


RESILIENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE LAKE CHAD BASIN



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*





Background paper on Resilience for Sustainable Development in the Lake Chad Basin

Drafted by UNDP and OCHA on behalf of the United Nations system

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Final boundary between the Republic of the Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined.

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This paper is the product of a joint mission conducted by OCHA and UNDP in the Lake Chad Basin region from 2 to 13 July 2018. Led by Aliou Dia, with the participation of Stephanie Julmy, Salvator Nkurunziza, Antoine Haarman, Phil Vernon, Pia Hussein and Rodolpho Valente the joint mission traveled to Chad, Cameroon, Niger, and Nigeria to identify sustainable development solutions and areas of opportunity to increase the region's resilience. Its findings and recommendations were submitted in preparation for the follow-up High-Level Conference on Lake Chad Basin on 3- 4 September 2018, in Berlin, Germany.



(Photo credit: UNDP Chad/Jean Damascene Hakuzimana)

.....The urgent need for a resilience-based approach



(Photo credit: UNDP Nigeria/Bridget Jangfa)

The humanitarian crisis in the Lake Chad Basin (LCB) is among the most severe in the world, with more than 10 million people in urgent need of life-saving assistance and protection. As the crisis enters its ninth year, attacks by non-state armed groups remain frequent, and the violent conflict continues to fuel large-scale human suffering, including massive violations of human rights, especially for women and girls, who are often victims of abuse and sexual violence. Communities and individuals in the LCB, especially women, are accustomed to shocks and have withstood numerous crises in the past decades. Life-saving humanitarian assistance has been critical in helping them absorb the impact of these shocks and continues to be needed considering the severity of the situation.

Yet, it is critical that we urgently scale up development interventions to strengthen resilience in the region, help people and communities recover as quickly as possible and prevent a

further deterioration of the crisis. While acute emergency needs continue to be dire, delivering only humanitarian assistance year after year will not be enough to prevent the further erosion of local capacities nor to bring communities back to a path of sustainable development. Development programmes for strengthening resilience need to be scaled up now, even while humanitarian programmes continue. This means enhancing local governance, providing basic services, improving economic opportunity and strengthening social cohesion, while also restoring people's and institutions' sense of agency and dignity, as well as their ability to adapt to changing circumstances—all with a focus on women and young people. A more coordinated approach to humanitarian and development programming that upholds and safeguards human rights is needed to “move from delivering aid, to ending need”, as expressed in the Secretary-General's Agenda for Humanity, which called for a New Way of Working. This requires a boost in development action that focuses on “those furthest



behind first” and addresses the structural deficits and root causes underlying the crisis in the LCB.

The underlying causes of the LCB crisis include high inequality, perceived social injustice, a lack of social service provision, historic marginalization, inadequate economic opportunities, high levels of poverty, rapid demographic growth and the impacts of climate change and land degradation. These

pre-existing structural constraints and deficiencies have disproportionately affected women and girls, and reduced the ability of the population and political, social and economic systems to cope with conflict-induced disruptions. The violence has further increased people’s vulnerability, disrupting farming, fisheries and pastoralist livelihoods, freedom of movement, commerce, local governance and the provision of basic services. It has affected the ability of communities to effectively and peacefully manage these conflicts. Competition over diminishing natural resources due to the impacts of rapid population growth, climate variability and climate change have further exacerbated tensions in the region.

As a result, a military victory alone would not be enough to create positive peace and stability and protect human rights. A focus on restoring and enhancing resilience is needed, even as humanitarian activities and security operations continue. The recently released UN-World Bank report “A Pathway for Peace” shows that conflict stems from the mobilization of people’s perception of exclusion

and injustice, which are rooted in inequalities, and tackling these issues should be a priority to prevent further escalation of conflict. While military and security agencies have made some progress in limiting the activities of extremist groups, their own practices have, at times, been heavy-handed and have included violations of human rights, adding to the sense of insecurity and alienation which increase divisions among displaced persons and communities.

Resilience in the affected zone means going beyond simply restoring the status quo ante, which had contributed to the escalation of the crisis. Resilience means building a better standard of living than before. This will lessen the risk of and vulnerability to future crises, and thus reduce the costs of responding to humanitarian needs. Moreover, equipping stakeholders with peacebuilding tools to strengthen social cohesion between divided and/or adversarial groups will enable communities to foster peaceful and cohesive initiatives to improve socio-economic development.

However, there is a shortage of effective and coordinated development interventions in the LCB that address the root causes of the crisis and focus on strengthening resilience of people and communities. Some development programmes were halted when the crisis began, mainly due to insecurity, the prioritization of security-related interventions and the shortage of government actors to work in these areas. Even in areas not in active conflict, a lack of political will and prioritization from governments, a



high level of corruption and high operational costs have made LCB areas less attractive to receive development funding.

Finding ways to scale up development interventions and improve their efficiency in the LCB in order to address these structural deficits is therefore critical. Central and local government authorities have the primary responsibility to address the underlying structural constraints and weaknesses that contribute to the conflict and create high levels of vulnerability. Development partners should find ways to support national institutions and build their capacity to address underlying development deficits in the LCB and the root causes of grievances and religious extremism. Also, development partners must adopt conflict-sensitive approaches to avoid exacerbating existing conflicts or creating the conditions for new conflicts to arise. Bringing in development assistance ‘earlier’ in a crisis (when possible) has been shown to result in clear economic benefits, including offsetting medium- to long-term losses, mitigating risks, catalyzing economic growth and decreasing reliance on humanitarian funding.

There is considerable scope to scale-up development investments in the LCB. Several donors are already allocating development funds for the LCB starting in 2017 and have adapted their operational modalities in order to do so. For those projects that have already begun implementation, the feedback has been that the activities remain effective, despite difficult

operating circumstances. They are demonstrating that scaling up development-oriented action in the LCB is possible, in spite of the continued conflict and rapidly evolving situation, by involving communities and integrating more risk-tolerance, flexibility and creativity in programme design, as well as investing in building the capacity of women and youth.

This paper highlights the type of medium/longer-term efforts that need to be supported and scaled up, in parallel with humanitarian and peacebuilding efforts, in order to strengthen resilience. These need to be initiated now and make the 2030 Agenda a reality for the more than 10 million people affected by crises year after year in the Lake Chad Basin. This approach is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, Agenda 2063 of the African Union, National Recovery and Development Plans (such as the Buhari Plan for North East Nigeria, and the Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessments, or RPBA, in Nigeria and Cameroon), and UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF). It is also in line with the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit’s Agenda for Humanity and subsequent efforts to strengthen the humanitarian-development collaboration and roll out the New Way of Working. The paper is also well aligned with several regional and sub-regional strategic frameworks, including the UN Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS) and its new Support Plan, and the African Union and Lake Chad Basin Commission joint Lake Chad Basin Stabilization, Resilience and Development Strategy.

.....Understanding the social, economic, governance and environmental causes and impacts of the LCB crisis

PRE-EXISTING STRUCTURAL CONSTRAINTS AND DEFICIENCIES...

The severity and scale of the impacts of the LCB crisis are exacerbated by pre-existing economic and sociocultural practices that promote social, environmental, climatic and governance constraints, which over the past several decades have progressively weakened individual, household and systemic resilience and disrupted regional economic productive systems, institutions and social cohesion.

The LCB regions of Nigeria and Cameroon have traditionally not benefited from the same level of development and investment as other parts of the country. This disparity can be explained by the geographical positioning and demographics of these regions, political dynamics, sociocultural factors and the structure of the regional economies, characterized by sub-optimal productivity and endemic poverty. In Nigeria, 50 percent of the population lives below the poverty line in the North-East Region, while the national average is 33 percent. For Cameroon, the gap is even greater, with 74.3 percent of the population living below the poverty line in the Far North Region compared to 37.5 percent nationally. The regions have also witnessed low human capital development with significant gender gaps in school attendance (all below the national averages), due to limited provision of basic social services. In the Far North Region of Cameroon, the net academic enrolment rate is 23.5 percent while national average is 44.5 percent. These social and economic disparities within the population have deepened the perceptions of marginalization and exclusion. While the regions bordering Lake Chad in Chad and Niger have been less marginalized and less excluded from development planning compared to equivalent regions in Cameroon and Nigeria, development indicators remain worse than the national averages and access to basic services there is limited or inexistent.

Historically, limited state presence and government capacities have contributed to low rates of development, popular discontent and a loss of legitimacy, as well as the inability to manage tensions and conflicts. Weak governance in the LCB region has been a driver of conflict, and financial mismanagement

has undermined the effectiveness of development programme implementation. Traditional governance mechanisms have often proved to be more effective in promoting local conflict resolution than the formal justice system has.

Women are historically disadvantaged compared to men in all social development indicators in all four countries of the LCB. Within each country, conditions for women are usually worse in the LCB region than in other areas of the country. In Nigeria for instance, 70 percent of women over thirty are illiterate in the North-East compared to 34 percent in the South. Women and girls also have significantly less decision-making power than men and boys, and violence compounds and reinforces this disadvantage. Young people feel they have limited economic, social and political prospects across the LCB crisis zone. This is one of the factors that has enabled the rise of Boko Haram and will destabilize the region again if it is not resolved through an approach that combines human capital and economic transformation, providing decent work and incomes.

The combined impacts of accelerating global climate change, local extreme hydro-meteorological weather events and climate variability, and unsustainable resource-use practices by a growing population have added an additional environmental stress to the existing structural constraints. Climate and weather variability play a part in this environmental degradation, exacerbated by man-made stresses. In turn, these have exacerbated gender inequalities. For instance, access to resources often defines power relationships between men and women, and when resources are stretched, women lose out even more. There is a debate about the role of climate change and hydrology in the ongoing conflict around the Lake Chad Basin. According to some stakeholders, the priority should be the replenishment of the lake, which has shrunk in size since 1963. However, according to a study commissioned by the French Development Agency (AFD), the Lake Chad Basin wetlands, which are favorable for farming and fishing, have expanded and are now at more or less optimal levels for many livelihoods.

... MADE WORSE BY CONFLICT DYNAMICS

The armed conflict, combined with structural constraints described above, has caused widespread displacement, market and social service disruption, and regional economic deterioration.

Conflict-related displacement: In all four countries, most internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees (mainly women and children), live in host communities. They are often in areas that do not have adequate absorptive capacity in terms of livelihoods and social services, which, in turn, has environmental and economic impacts. In many cases, IDPs and refugees are compelled to remain for years. Some will even reestablish permanently in their area of displacement. Administrative maps and corresponding national budget allocations have not been reviewed to reflect the demographic changes caused by displacement. At the same time, an estimated 1.5 million people have attempted to return to their areas of origin in Nigeria, but many remain in displacement in makeshift settlements due to inaccessibility and/or inexistence of livelihood options and services back home. Once returnees have settled back in their villages of origin, the lack of livelihood opportunities and employment has been cited by many IDPs as an immediate threat to social cohesion, especially with regards to youth. In Niger's Diffa Region, for instance, the security situation has worsened since the first Boko Haram attack in February 2015, which has caused the displacement of more than 300,000 internally displaced persons and refugees (coming mainly from Nigeria). About 70 percent of these displaced persons are women and children.

Production/productivity and market disruptions:

The conflict has significantly impacted economic productivity in the LCB, which is largely based on farming, pastoralism and fishing. The main impacts of the conflict include inaccessibility and a loss of productive assets and inputs due to human displacement and the disruption of markets due to physical destruction of facilities, and the enforcement of security-related measures such as restrictions of movement and the prohibition to farm or trade in certain areas. As a result, agricultural production and access to land have declined sharply, resulting in a widespread loss of livelihoods and employment. Undoubtedly, women are the backbone of the agricultural sector and represent up to 70 percent of the agricultural workforce and food trade in the

region. Thus, a disruption of women's activities has a knock-on effect on productivity. In addition to direct losses in productive assets, agricultural trade has also been significantly impaired by damages to the road network and the closure of borders. Commerce has been severely curtailed. People are not receiving appropriately tailored weather and climate preparedness services to cope with different constraints. As a result, it is reported that 62 percent of the Chadian population in the LCB will face food insecurity during 2018.

Disruptions of essential social services and governance systems:

Proximate leadership and governance are essential for resilience. Many local and traditional governance structures have been challenged by the crisis and the deployment of military personnel. The conflict has also significantly impacted the already limited provision of essential social services through the deliberate targeting and destruction of infrastructure, facilities and equipment in Nigeria and the departure of civil servants in the face of the deteriorating security situation in all four countries. Boko Haram has targeted schools in northern Cameroon, leaving an estimated 35,000 children without access to education since 2014, which will hinder their ability to find alternative employment. The weak capacity of social service providers at the regional and local levels does not allow them to cope with the growing number of separated and unaccompanied children. Humanitarian Needs Overviews (HNO) in the four countries show that millions around the Lake Chad Basin do not have access to basic social services, such as education, health, nutrition, protection and water/sanitation.

Economic deterioration: Due to the conflict, macroeconomic conditions, which were already in decline prior to 2009, have significantly deteriorated in the LCB region. According to the RPBA estimates, the estimated economic losses due to the conflict in North-East Nigeria amount to approximately US\$8.3 billion between 2011-2015, and in Cameroon, the Recovery and Peace Consolidation Strategy for Northern and East Cameroon was costed at US\$4.6 billion. The fiscal impact of the conflict has also been severe due to an increased share of public expenditures related to security and defense. The lack of economic opportunities in the LCB region make youth easy prey for Boko Haram recruiters, prolonging the conflict.

.....How to strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability and risks in the LCB

The complex and multi-faceted nature of the crisis in the LCB underscores the need for a comprehensive approach that complements life-saving assistance with efforts to strengthen specific individual and systemic resilience, within an overall long-term framework that is focused on achieving collective outcomes in order to respond to humanitarian needs while simultaneously reducing need, risk and vulnerability. Such approaches should also aim at building local capacities for future risk management and prevention and be complemented by efforts to address core structural issues, including unequal opportunities for men, women, boys and girls. Governments, in partnership with the development and humanitarian communities in these countries, have started to articulate concrete, measurable collective outcomes around which humanitarian and development programming will be coordinated over the next three to five years, thus advancing the 2030 Agenda in the region.

This comprehensive people-centered approach must include strengthening resilience that improves coping capacity and reduces vulnerabilities. Strengthening resilience in the LCB will require improving four types of capacities to endure shocks and stresses:

- Absorptive capacity, which is the capacity to take intentional protective/preventive action and to cope with shocks and stresses (e.g., harvesting early);
- Adaptive capacity, which is the capacity to make intentional incremental adjustments in livelihood strategies in anticipation of or in response to a changing environment (e.g., diversifying livelihoods or introducing drought resistant seeds, mapping agro-ecological regions, provision of weather, agrometeorological and climate tailored services);
- Transformative capacity, which is the capacity to make intentional change to stop or reduce the causes of risk, vulnerability, poverty and inequality (e.g., reduce political marginalization);
- Leadership capacity for women and youth groups that combines both professional and life skills to reinforce their decision-making powers.

Medium- and longer-term support focused on resilience, recovery and development are required to capitalize on these absorptive capacities, while also improving adaptive and transformative capacities.



(Photo credit: UNDP Cameroon)

MEDIUM-TERM RESPONSE: RESILIENCE AND RECOVERY

In areas where security and economic conditions are sufficient, the focus of efforts should be on strengthening the resilience of individuals and households, and on community-level economic empowerment through increased productivity and trade and the provision of social services. The prioritization of the most vulnerable groups, particularly women and children, will be crucial. The objectives of such support should be to enhance capacities in order to prevent further deterioration of vulnerability, to facilitate the return and sustainable and peaceful reintegration of displaced people, and to enable improvement of socio-economic conditions. The following enabling factors should be considered: sufficient security, freedom of movement, the degree of access to the target population, and the presence and capacity of local administration, technical services and service provision in target areas. Depending on the presence and sustainability of enabling conditions, two sets of interventions can be considered targeting host communities, internal displaced persons and refugees:



STRENGTHENING INDIVIDUAL AND HOUSEHOLD COPING CAPACITIES

In areas where enabling factors such as security and local authority presence are still volatile, the focus should be on support for restoring livelihoods and access to social services, especially education, health, water, sanitation, energy and agro-meteorological information (on both supply and demand). The aims of this assistance are to enhance resilience to shocks and promote recovery through restoring social cohesion and local governance for the sustainable management and use of productive resources (land, pasture, water, etc.) at the community level, restoring access to productive assets, increase economic production and increase income and employment opportunities. Specific measures could include facilitating access to productive assets, especially for women who face difficulties in accessing and owning land (e.g., identify solutions with local and traditional authorities to facilitate access to land and livestock replenishment, particularly targeting IDPs and returnees); provision of agricultural inputs (e.g., seeds and livestock); short-term employment creation through cash for work; provision of social safety nets (e.g., cash transfers); provision of weather and climate services (forecasting of extreme hydro-meteorological events, tailored weather/climate information for agriculture, livestock, fisheries, etc.); restoration of access to essential

services, including the provision of delivery systems and rehabilitation of small community infrastructure; and addressing women's specific needs as expressed by the women themselves. Where possible, programmes should go further than agricultural opportunities and promote new economic opportunities (including for women and youth groups), such as, supporting agro-processing of and added-value in agricultural, livestock and fisheries products, introducing bio-enterprises in urban areas, connecting stakeholders through technologies to enhance marketing opportunities. An over-reliance on unproductive pastoralism and agriculture, degraded soils, weak value chains, inadequate physical and financial infrastructure and poor entrepreneurial capacity have all contributed to low income and asset levels, which undermine resilience.



ENABLING MEDIUM-TERM RECOVERY AND SYSTEMIC RESILIENCE

In areas not directly impacted by the conflict and in addition to some of the activities above that are also relevant, a focus on strengthening systemic resilience and social cohesion at the local and community levels can help both prevent future destabilization and promote growth, despite a constrained regional economic environment. Objectives of this assistance could include economic empowerment by increasing and improving economic production, ensuring full access to high quality services on a sustainable basis, increasing capacities to safeguard and sustainably manage the hydrological, biological and cultural resources, and addressing the root causes of gender inequality and human rights violations. With respect to economic empowerment, measures could include access to financing for business recovery and development (credits and grants); diversification and development of agricultural, livestock and fisheries value chains; food conservation, transformation and commercialization, including across borders; strengthening of agricultural extension services and skills training programmes; and rehabilitation of priority economic infrastructure to facilitate economic recovery (notably roads, markets and water/irrigation systems, as well as electricity, renewable energy, automatic weather stations networks, and land and productive assets for women and youth groups). Regarding service provision, priority should be accorded to strengthening and expanding institutional service delivery systems, including through the rehabilitation of infrastructure, review of the administrative mapping and re-staffing and allocation of financing for adequate and high-quality service delivery. Strengthening locally accessible and affordable health, water, sanitation, education and weather/climate infrastructure and services



(Photo credit: UNDP Chad)

will help people recover from the crisis and strengthen their ability to withstand future shocks and take advantage of opportunities for transformation, particularly through the provision of education through teaching and training in host communities and camps for IDPs. Reversing the breakdown caused by the long-term crises that have affected the management of land, lake resources and climate change impacts would help the recovery of the lake ecosystem for both human and biodiversity resilience.

Additional investments will likely be required in areas of protracted displacement, both to provide additional absorptive capacities to host communities and to enable IDPs to generate income, pending their return. The processes described above should streamline opportunities to strengthen peaceful coexistences and social cohesion between groups and stakeholders (e.g., jointly-led, mutually beneficial economic initiatives between divided communities).

LONGER-TERM RESPONSE: LONG-TERM TRANSFORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT

While medium-term interventions can help strengthen the resilience of local economies and institutional capacities, these will not be sustainable over the long term without a focus on core underlying structural constraints and deficiencies, the root conflict drivers and system building. Four priorities in particular will be essential to enabling sustainable long-term recovery and mitigating structural issues that directly impact the resilience of livelihoods and local economic and social systems.



TRANSFORMATIONAL ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

The priority is to promote transformational economic development in the LCB, in line with the region's potential, with a focus on expansion, modernization and growth of the agricultural and livestock sectors with consideration of smallholder farmers. This will enable the region's populations to move beyond subsistence-level production. Such development will necessitate significant investments in economic infrastructure, the development of agribusiness value chains with a focus on achieving larger scale production, the promotion of regional and cross-border trade and private sector development. It must leverage conflict-sensitive, holistic, multi-stakeholder approaches that promote inclusivity and collaboration and are responsive to contextual considerations. There are positive examples from the LCB (in Niger and Chad) and in

the greater Sahel area (Niger, Burkina Faso and Mali) that can be expanded or replicated. There is also inadequate economic vision to absorb the large number of youth in the LCB region who do not want to return to farming. With almost two-thirds of the rapidly growing population under 25 years old, solid economic diversification and innovative cash transfer schemes would be essential to drive economic development in the region. These will require different trainings and education in diverse fields for women and youth to acquire the skill sets to participate in nonagricultural employment. In addition, support for stopping the degradation of Lake Chad must be considered. For instance, young people should be trained in green economy activities that have strong connections to regional and international trade.



GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Addressing historical governance weaknesses will require a substantial investment in local institutions with a focus on strengthening policy, regulatory and oversight capacities; quality social service delivery planning and management; and investments in expanding and strengthening institutional capacities and governance at local levels. Such capacity building should focus on development planning, budget/resource management, service delivery and accountability mechanisms for the duty bearers to respect and implement basic human rights. All four countries have different governance systems and specificities of each need to be considered in the implementation of decentralization/local development programmes. In Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger and Chad, local development plans have been or are being developed in/updated in the LCB regions and should be used to increase the volume of public and private investments and to coordinate development at the local level. Enhanced social protection schemes with elements of crisis transformation could also be developed to **reinforce** the social contract between the state and citizens. Reinforcing and encouraging youth and women's participation in decision making, both at community and regional levels, will prevent the sense of exclusion and marginalization that has been exploited by Boko Haram for recruitment. Land management and planning, combined with inclusive governance over the use of shared natural resources in transboundary areas, have helped regional integration. It is also critical to facilitate local planning processes in order to resolve questions about land allocation for housing (urbanization) and agricultural/livestock production and to reflect the changes in demographics. This strategy can be used to encourage the four countries to develop common

governance systems. In recognition that there is “no wealth without health”, young people will also benefit from comprehensive sexual and other health education both in and out of school to promote positive health-seeking behaviors at young ages and reduce unwanted teenage pregnancies.



SOCIAL COHESION AND RECONCILIATION

The crisis has damaged social cohesion mainly through human rights violations, including sexual and gender-based violence, from all sides. Careful reconciliation programmes, along with justice mechanisms for those seeking justice, will be needed to promote the peaceful reintegration of these individuals into society, even if some cannot return to their communities of origin. Some women, girls and boys are stigmatized by the society due to the perceived roles they could have played with parties of the conflict. Moreover, conflict erupts when land and other resources on which people depend come under threat—whether that threat is real or perceived. Securing people’s rights to land can directly contribute to peacebuilding. Durable, strategic and holistic solutions that take into consideration the sociocultural differences must be identified in consultation with affected populations, including IDPs, refugees and host communities. Providing an equal level of services to non-displaced populations also reduces the risk of conflict and alienation. Inclusive, multi-stakeholder dialogue processes to build trust and bridge divides between communities and stakeholder groups, particularly between local authorities/governments and communities, remain critical. Local authorities and governments must lead by initiating such dialogues in order to reconcile with communities that feel abandoned and have experienced repressive security practices. Communities should be consulted to identify an acceptable reintegration process. Victims of gender-based violence should also be consulted and provided support services to ease their reintegration into their societies. Ideally, social cohesion and reconciliation programmes should be designed and implemented at the regional level or at least involve a dimension of regional consultations, as well as include key interventions at the community level. The Governors’ Forum organized in Maiduguri in 2018 allowed participants to share lessons learned and current practices related to reintegration, reconciliation processes and social cohesion. Social cohesion and reconciliation should include not only IDPs, refugees and host communities, but also returnees from armed groups and non-state armed actors. Considering the high incidence of traumatized populations, social cohesion and reconciliation should include also psychosocial counselling services.



CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The Security Council recognizes the adverse effects of climate change and ecological changes, including water scarcity, drought, desertification, land degradation and food insecurity, among other factors, on the stability of the region. In this context, an integrated transboundary approach to the conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of water and natural resources, and the development of local communities is critical. Conflict in the Lake Chad Basin has contributed significantly to the degradation of natural resources already weakened by climate change. The settlement of refugees and IDPs in a locality increases pressure on livelihoods. Environmental protection and livelihoods need to be considered in emergency interventions to ensure recovery and resilience after the crisis. According to a Lake Chad Basin Commission study, the degradation of the LCB land and water ecosystem is mainly due to minimal investment in biological resource management, a low level of environmental awareness and unstable economic and political settings. Member states of the Lake Chad Basin Commission and partners will also need to prioritize improving natural resource management and investments to rehabilitate the degraded land, for example by reopening water channels, planting trees, and improving agronomic practices. They will also need to introduce ‘climate smart’ agriculture and pastoralism with new varieties and methods and strengthen weather/ climate services in the region to be able to provide tailored comprehensible information and services to end-users that can help mitigate hydrometeorological risks, as well as cope with the negative impacts of climate variability and change. Promoting ecological agricultural transitions will help benefit the most vulnerable and will provide numerous solutions to the structural fragilities and to challenges of the LCB. Those solutions are social (conflict resolution at community level), economic (financial and employment viability), environmental (natural resources rehabilitation and resilience against climate change) and nutritive (increased food and nutritional diversification).



(Photo credit: UNDP Cameroon)

Cross-cutting themes that effectively build resilience in the LCB require targeting people who are most vulnerable, including IDPs and refugees, together with host communities. There should be a particular focus on adolescent girls and youth, who are the most vulnerable in each community.

It is important that efforts be done in a way that does not harm the population or make them even more vulnerable. In the Lake Chad Basin, programmes must address when and how displaced people should return home, the risk of humanitarian dependency, and questions related to land allocation. Regarding IDPs and refugees, for example, while durable solutions are important, returns must be voluntary and based

on credible and reliable information to ensure displaced populations make informed decisions to return. In addition, the area of return must be ready to receive the returnees in terms of security, restoration of services, return of civil administration and opportunity for livelihoods. Anything short of these basic minimum conditions is only a recipe for secondary and/or tertiary displacement. Until then, and as mentioned above, there are numerous opportunities to support medium-term strategies to reduce displaced populations vulnerability and strengthen their resilience, including with regards to livelihoods.

Finally, development programming should aim at restoring people’s and institutions’ sense of agency and dignity, and their ability to adapt to changing circumstances.

.....Towards a new operational paradigm

There is a clear, ongoing paradigm shift to increase development efforts in the LCB, in parallel with humanitarian support, in order to tackle the underlying causes of the crisis. This includes implementation of the New Way of Working and other efforts to strengthen the humanitarian-development nexus. Many existing strategies and frameworks focus on recovery and resilience, including UNDAFs and RPBAs, government plans, the forthcoming AU Stabilization, Resilience and Development Strategy for the sub-region, and the UN Integrated Strategy for the Sahel Action Plan. Development partners are setting up new mechanisms to increase delivery and improve development results in fragile and conflict-affected contexts through better coordination, mutual accountability and innovative programmatic approaches (e.g., the Sahel Alliance). Existing national development programmes (for example in education, health, economy, infrastructure and good governance) are being expanded to include parts of the conflict-affected zone, sometimes with suitable adaptations to take into account security and other factors. There is a genuine spirit of inquiry among agencies looking for and developing creative ideas, often jointly between traditionally humanitarian and development agencies. UN agencies are collaborating on combined programmes, including a joint resilience initiative in Northern Cameroon. That said, these efforts need to be scaled up, in parallel with humanitarian funding, and accompanied by a systematic effort to reduce people's needs and vulnerabilities until they no longer need life-saving assistance.

Key changes to operating modalities in development programming and financing that are helping bring results to the region are:

Making development funding available 'earlier' and processing it more quickly. The World Bank, AFD, EU/DEVCO, AfDB, Germany, the UK and USAID are some of the donors that have made allocations for stabilization and development activities (in parallel with humanitarian funding) in the LCB starting in 2017. The volume of these allocations (in billions of dollars) represents a shift in approach with the investment of substantial amounts of development funding in areas traditionally left to humanitarian assistance. More needs to be done to identify the appropriate capacity in country to implement this funding in a timely manner and remove operational bottlenecks that limit actual delivery on the ground.

Shifting the focus away from risk avoidance to risk prevention and management. Development partners and governments are starting to make greater use of risk analysis and monitoring mechanisms, as well as innovative strategies for mitigating risk factors and creating enabling conditions for both humanitarian and development programming. AFD, for example, has contracted Groupe URD to do the monitoring of its programme focused on economic and social recovery in the LCB (RESILAC) and has supported the elaboration of a comprehensive study on Boko Haram and the Lake Chad Basin.

Targeting. In line with the SDGs, medium- and longer-term support needs to target the most vulnerable people, including people affected by conflict. Different approaches are needed based on varying circumstances. Agencies are identifying communities at different stages of readiness for programming approaches. For example, by mapping and monitoring communities' levels of vulnerability, their security status and operational access, agencies are matching their programming approaches to communities' changing absorptive capacity.

More flexible development funding that allows for adaptive programming. More flexible and adaptable financing from a wider range of financing streams is needed for longer-term programmes to be more agile and adaptive to changing circumstances on the ground, as well as to learn what has worked or has not. The Government of Nigeria has been negotiating loans with the World Bank, the African Development Bank and the Islamic Development Bank in order to allocate grants at the state level and contribute to development activities for strengthening resilience in the North-East. The RESILAC programme, for example, includes one pillar focused on monitoring the implementation of the programme, including actions in the field and strategic orientations. Another example would be the EU-sponsored Borno Package, which relies on development funds to complement humanitarian life-saving activities with resilience activities.

Working through a broader range of partners at the local/community level with different instruments. To ensure that medium- and longer-term efforts could start despite the lack of local authority presence in some regions, donors such as the World Bank, AFD and EU/DEVCO have been providing funding through

NGOs, UN agencies or CSOs (with a component of programmes focused on building local capacities and transitioning to local authorities as soon as possible). It is important to explore the use of non-traditional peace brokers by promoting the participation of women in peace negotiations and rebuilding processes that capitalize on their nonalignment in conflict situations. Various funding instruments are being used in addition to traditional donor grants, for example World Bank and AfDB grants and loans, and creative approaches to combining humanitarian and development funding within single programmes and projects. There is also the possibility to work more with the private sector, not only from the perspective of livelihoods and jobs, but also in efforts to scale up access to basic social services in some areas.

Adopting regional and cross border approaches. Local authorities from the four countries are receiving assistance to collaborate on issues such as prioritization and the harmonization of programming approaches. For instance, the World Bank, AfDB, AFD and Germany have encouraged the formulation of regional frameworks to tackle common issues of governance, livelihoods, inequalities, trade, return and reintegration, and climatic, environmental and economic transformation. It is important to keep in mind the differences that exist within the regions, communities and groups. The Lake Chad Basin Commission has been reinforced, and considerable work has been done to improve local coordination among the different regions through a Governors' Forum. A new approach to integrated border and cross-border community management are also needed to transform cross-border zones into hubs of economic development through, for example, the creation of free trade zones. In parallel with building the capacities of border agencies and increasing the physical presence of the state in border areas, improved interaction with local populations is required to better articulate legitimate law and order efforts, as well as to protect and promote the informal cross-border trade that is often critical to livelihoods and food security.

Collective outcomes. Governments, in partnership with the development and humanitarian communities, have started to articulate concrete, measurable collective outcomes, as three to five-year instalments towards advancing the 2030 Agenda in the region in line with the New Way of Working. The UN and its partners have already rolled out the New Way of



(Photo credit: UNDP Niger)

Working in Chad, where they agreed on collective outcomes with the Government in 2017. In Nigeria, the Buhari Plan combines humanitarian action with recovery and economic development, and the UNCT is working on a strategy to operationalize the New Way of Working in the North-East. In Niger, the government has set-up a humanitarian-development committee and is resolved to transcend the humanitarian-development institutional divide. In Cameroon, the Recovery and Peace Building Strategy adopted by the Government considers short-, medium- and long-term humanitarian interventions, as well as resilience and development actions.

WHAT ELSE IS NEEDED

Building and attracting human capacity. A lack of human capacity to engage in complex resilience building and development programming is one of the major impediments for the development agenda in the LCB. Development funding does not necessarily translate into a significant increase in development-related interventions in the Lake Chad Basin due to the difficulty of identifying implementing partners (government or non-governmental) that meet the criteria of development instruments. Major NGOs involved in strengthening resilience/development are absent in some of the regions surrounding Lake Chad, and international organizations have difficulties attracting talent to work in Cameroon, Chad and Niger. Targeted programmes for building capacity in consultative planning and service delivery, particularly at the local government level, will be essential to accelerate the delivery of development funding.

Government and local authorities' leadership and engagement. Governments need to provide increased leadership, ownership and engagement in defining and

implementing programmes for strengthening resilience and policies. These need to be part of a clear national narrative of transformation and local government plans, and with the participation of all relevant stakeholders. Governments need to be supported to increase human resources capacity at the decentralized level in the LCB region to adequately deliver essential services. It is important that communities are involved in decision making to avoid perceptions of exclusion. Humanitarian and development partners should ensure that their interventions are coordinated at the local level under the leadership of local authorities, follow local legislation and support and strengthen national and local capacity rather than replace them.

More flexible and adaptive financing. More flexible and adaptable financing from a wide range of financing streams is needed for longer-term initiatives that contribute to jointly-agreed, collective outcomes. Interventions in the LCB could combine a component on direct humanitarian assistance and development programming with concurrent implementation of both. These projects could be funded creatively by a combination of humanitarian and development funding. They should aim to strengthen resilience to levels above what existed prior to the current crisis in order to reduce the risk of future shocks occurring and to reduce people's vulnerability to them. The best initiatives will be adaptive by design, funded on a multi-year basis and will include specific indicators of increased resilience in their monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

Improved coherence and coordination. Although effective mechanisms exist in all four countries to coordinate humanitarian response efforts, this is not the case for longer-term resilience/development programming. Improved coordination is essential for effective, efficient and targeted resilience programming, and to ensure that lessons are learned and shared across the entire region. This requires the governments of the LCB to set up and/or strengthen development coordination mechanisms, and it requires the international community to allocate more resources to supporting the governments in this area. In addition, an effort must be made to strengthen the linkages between humanitarian peacebuilding and development programmes. The high-level humanitarian-development steering committees recently established in Chad and Niger are examples of how to strengthen

strategic linkages, while joint, area-based coordination meetings in Chad represent an effort to strengthen operational linkages. These efforts need to be based on a substantive partnership between international agencies and the governments, while upholding humanitarian principles.

Integrated spatial and participatory budget planning. Bringing stakeholders together to strengthen resilience for sustainable development requires municipalities and villages to understand their potentialities and map their assets to better engage in medium- and long-term development planning. Scarcity of water and conflicts over land use require actors to adopt integrated land development plans derived from community consultations and dialogue between institutions that deal with different sector issues. The use of geo-referenced data and the inclusion of the climate-friendly buildings concept are two critical dimensions to consider for the economic sustainability in the LCB. They require new skills and more labor to produce the materials needed for more eco-friendly hospitals, marketplaces, schools, public places, and houses. By promoting integrated spatial planning and coherence in the production of human settlements for IDPs, refugees and host communities, these processes will include action-oriented training of participatory budgeting.

New practical ideas for economic transformation. Despite universal recognition that economic opportunity is essential to recovery and resilience, and essential to avoid further political instability, there is a deficit of ideas about how to achieve this within the urgent timeframe and at the scale that analysts say is required. It is especially critical to absorb the large numbers of young people in the zone, where almost two-thirds of the rapidly growing population is under 25 years old. To address this problem adequately requires urgent, local, national and sub-regional research to develop a vision of how this can be done in very practical terms and involving the private sector as a central actor alongside government, communities, international agencies and NGOs.



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