



3rd Meeting  
of the  
**Lake Chad Basin  
Governors' Forum**  
of the  
**Lake Chad Basin  
Commission (LCBC)**

**OFFICIAL  
REPORT**



**4TH - 5TH  
OCT 2021**

Palais des Congrès  
Yaoundé - Cameroon





**Report of the Third Annual Governors' Forum of  
the Lake Chad Basin Commission**

# **OFFICIAL REPORT**



04 – 05 October 2021

# 3rd Meeting of the Lake Chad Basin Governors' Forum

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



The Lake Chad Basin Commission expresses its sincere thanks to the various institutions and actors who supported and assisted its organization of the third meeting of the Lake Chad Basin Governors' Forum. The Government of the Republic of Cameroon deserves special thanks for their hosting of, and participating in, the Forum.

The African Union Commission, the United Nations Development Programme, and Crisis Management Initiative (CMI) which have extended ongoing technical support to the LCB, including towards the organization of the Forum, also deserve our gratitude.

The financial support of Germany, Sweden, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, the European Union, and the African Development Bank was highly instrumental to the success of the Forum. We are therefore most grateful to these donors for

their support in this regard. The Lake Chad Basin Commission also wishes to extend special thanks to the Governors of the region for their participation and for making the Forum a successful one.

The active engagement of all meeting participants is as highly appreciated. The Commission warmly thanks the Secretariat for their exceptional hard work in organizing and making this third LCB Governors' Forum a resounding success.

Lastly, we would also like to extend our appreciation for the rapporteurs; Prof. Obiora Chinedu Okafor, Prof. W. R. Nadège Compaoré, Prof. Awalou Ouedraogo and Dr. Modesta Tochi Alozie. Their meticulous and detailed recording of the events played a key role in the success of the Forum, including the production of this report.







# FOREWORD BY THE LCBC EXECUTIVE SECRETARY



The past few years have been very important years for the Lake Chad Basin Commission. As the Lake Chad Basin region continues to face security and humanitarian crises, the Commission has expanded its efforts to address these challenges over the past few years.

Since its inception in 2018, the Governors Forum has satisfactorily provided the space for constructive engagement, dialogues, exchange of ideas and best practices, and identification of critical cross-border interventions that would help restore stability and development in the region. In 2018, the Governors Forum, which was held in Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria, provided us with the opportunity to advance discussions and conversation on the approach and content of the Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko Haram-affected Areas of the Lake Chad Basin (RSS). In 2019, the Governors Forum consolidated the steps made in 2018, and launched the Lake Chad Regional Stabilization Facility. At the 2019, Governors Forum, the governors domesticated the RSS through the Territorial Action Plan (TAP) and mandated to Secretariat to provided technical guidance for the development and elaboration of the TAPs across the eight territories.

The third Governors Forum demonstrated the progress that has been made across the eight territories by the Governors despite challenges of insecurity and COVID-19 pandemic. It reaffirmed the Forum as a viable platform for strategic political engagement for between territorial authorities in the region and humanitarian, development, and peace actors in the LCB region.

The meeting attracted over 500 participants from state/regional governments, the LCBC, the MNJTF, the AU, UN agencies, the Regional Economic Communities, multilateral and bilateral institutions, donor governments, the armed forces, the private sector, civil society organizations (CSOs), and the media physically and virtually. During the meeting, the governors' made a strong and clear commitment to implement the TAPs, and to cooperate with humanitarian, development, and peace actors. The Governors also highlighted the criticality of cross-border cooperation and the imperatives for collaboration with security forces and civil society to move the region to stability to long term recovery and development.

I am therefore delighted to present to you the outcome of the third Governors' Forum meeting. I am convinced the report will help in reminding us of the commitments and actions to be taken at different levels and institutions across the Lake Chad Basin region.

**H.E. Mamman Nuhu (Amb.)**  
Executive Secretary, Lake Chad Basin Commission  
Head of Mission, Multinational Joint Task Force



# STATEMENT OF SUPPORT

# UNDP AFRICA REGIONAL DIRECTOR

////////////////////////////////////

The Lake Chad Basin region is experiencing one of the largest security and humanitarian crises in the world. From Chad to Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria, people are being killed and injured, and several others are forced to flee their homes due to the violent insurgency of Boko Haram. More people are also going hungry as trade has stalled tremendously while flooding has increased in the region. The Lake Chad has also shrunk significantly due to climate shocks, with devastating consequences on food security and the livelihoods of the local people who depend on it for fishing and irrigation-based agriculture. The United Nations estimates that out of the 17 million people who live in the region, 10.7 million need urgent humanitarian assistance. Covid 19 pandemic also continues to compound the crisis by shrinking the resources available for aid and inhibiting access to populations in dire need of humanitarian assistance.

While many people attribute the region's instability to religious ideology, climate shocks, poverty, and maldevelopment are its main causes. These layering of causes has implications for the kind of interventions that will effectively restore peace and help bring development back to the region. The governors in the region have continued to engage in discussions to identify opportunities for addressing the multidimensional crisis in the region. UNDP has remained steadfast in supporting the governors' efforts. In 2018, UNDP and the African Union supported the Lake Chad Basin to develop the Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery & Resilience of the Boko Haram-affected Areas of the Lake Chad Basin (RSS). The development of the RSS builds on discussions from the first edition of the Governors' Forum, which UNDP jointly organised with other stakeholders.

The RSS is a five-year strategy comprising nine pillars of actions distilled into strategic objectives. It adopts a balanced approach to addressing the multidimensional crisis in the region. We believe strongly that in addition to aid and military actions, we must build the resilience of local communities. We must restore their hope and support national peacebuilding and development efforts to enable displaced populations to return home where they can regain control of their lives and live with dignity. To achieve these results, we will continue to support the efforts of national and regional governments to address the social, political, and economic causes of the conflict. The Lake Chad Basin Governors Forum is one of such efforts. It provides a platform for key stakeholders and interlocutors in the region to address humanitarian, development and peace challenges and advance strategic actions and priorities. The special attention on cross border interventions at the Forum makes the Forum a unique strategic and political platform.

Through the Regional Stabilization Facility, UNDP will continue to support the Lake Chad Basin Governors Forum as an important political platform for advancing sustainable and durable solutions to the people of the region.

**Ahunna Eziakonwa**  
UN Assistant Secretary-General  
UNDP Assistant Administrator and Regional Director for Africa





# STATEMENT OF SUPPORT

# PRIME MINISTER OF CAMEROON

////////////////////////////////////  
I am delighted to have welcomed you, on behalf of the President of the Republic, His Excellency Paul Biya to Cameroon at such a critical time in the history of our country and the Lake Chad Basin region. It has now been more than a decade since our region was immersed in Boko Haram insurgency which has affected millions of our population resulting in their displacement. Over 2.7 million people in the Lake Chad region have been forced to flee to new cities and new countries in search of safety, and as the region faces the additional stress of climate change, food insecurity has worsened, and the number of our displaced population continues to rise.

The violence also continues to be an obstacle to the development of our region as it exerts considerable economic, social, and political burden on our already fragile systems. The burden of the Boko Haram insurgency in all its forms continues to be a big challenge for our region. There is, therefore, an urgent need for all the affected countries to collaborate and develop coherent integrated solutions that will address the major drivers of this conflict in a sustainable manner.

In 2018, the governors from the Boko Haram affected areas in the region established the Governors Forum to serve as an annual interactive platform where the governors and other development actors, including policymakers, international organisations, civil society groups, academics and the public can have a dialogue on how to collectively transform the region into a peaceful and prosperous region for everyone. The deliberations that emerged from this forum was instrumental in developing the Regional Stabilization Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery & Resilience of the Boko Haram affected areas of the Lake Chad Basin Region (RSS). RSS sets out priority actions that will be taken by various actors to address the Lake Chad Basin Crisis. Since then, the governors with the support of development partners and funders have continued to organise and scale up efforts to address the crisis. In 2019, the second Governors' Forum was held in Niamey, Niger. After disruption by COVID-19, in 2020 I am delighted that we eventually convened the third Forum and that Yaoundé, Cameroon served as the venue for the third Governors Forum from 4-5 October 2021.

Cameroon under the Leadership of its illustrious Head of State, His Excellency Paul Biya is happy to have hosted, the Forum and to witness the level of discussion and engagement that cut across the humanitarian, development, and peace spectrum. It is my strong conviction that the quality of the discussion and deliberation will contribute to the quality of programme and policy that will emerge in the coming months to address the crisis in our region.

As a nation, we believe that the problem in Lake Chad Basin is regional, and we are committed to supporting a regional platform such as the Governors Forum as a credible space for advancing common solutions to common problems in the region.

**H.E Joseph DION NGUTE**  
**Prime Minister and Head of Government**  
**of Cameroon**

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The third meeting of the Governors’ Forum for Regional Cooperation on Stabilization, Peacebuilding and Sustainable Development was held from the 4-5 October 2021, in Yaoundé, the Republic of Cameroon. The meeting was convened by the Lake Chad Basin Commission with the technical support of the United Nations Development Programme and the African Union Commission. The meeting was attended by the governors of the Far North and North regions of Cameroon, Hadjer-Lamis and Lac provinces of Chad, Diffa Region of Chad, and Borno State of Nigeria. The governors of Adamawa and Yobe States were represented at the meeting. Also in attendance were representatives of the African Union, the United Nations (UN) System, multilateral and bilateral institutions, donor governments, civil society organizations (CSOs), and the media.

The meeting built upon the earlier Governors’ Forum meetings held in May 2018 in Maiduguri (Nigeria) and Niamey (Niger) in 2019, and the political endorsement of the Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko Haram-affected Areas of the Lake Chad Basin Region (the RSS). It advanced the deliberations and outcomes of the first two meetings and consolidated the position of the Governors’ Forum as a genuine regional platform for strategic policy and programme direction for humanitarian, development, and peace actors in the Lake Chad Basin (LCB) region.

**The two-day event provided the perfect political and strategic space for stakeholders and actors in the region to advance deliberations on several key issues across Humanitarian, Development and Peace (HDP) spectrum that are peculiar to the region viz:**

## THE SECURITY AND HUMANITARIAN CONTEXT OF THE REGION:

The Forum highlighted the persistent security challenges in the LCB region, but noted the significant improvements recorded due to the military offensive of the MNJTF across the region. While improvements have been recorded in the security environment, the region remains volatile and the security situation continues to evolve, especially in recent months, following the death of Boko Haram Leader Abubakar Shekau, the surrendering of large numbers of ex-fighters/associates and the seeming uncertainty that could result from the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISAWP) takeover of some areas from The Jamatu Ahli Al-Sunna lil Da’wa Wal Jihad (JAS), otherwise known as Boko Haram. The humanitarian situation in the area remains dire despite the progress made as a result of UNDP’s stabilisation initiatives across the region, which has led to restoration of a large measure of security, enhancement of basic infrastructure and provision of livelihood opportunities for affected members of the community. Overall, the Forum noted that the progress has also led to the re-establishment of the social contract between communities and government due to the return of authority to communities. However, the Forum acknowledged the seriousness of the humanitarian situation in the region, despite marked improvements, and agreed that all RSS partners should redouble their efforts to address this crisis, especially through better cooperation and increased resource investments. The Governors specifically called on all humanitarian actors working in the region to better align their activities with the priorities of the authorities in the states/territories in which they work, including through better sequencing, of interventions and to ensure that they always inform the authorities of those activities before commencing them.

## THE TERRITORIAL ACTION PLANS (TAPS):

The TAPs, which are the fundamental basis for the implementation of the RSS for each of the eight affected territory, were presented and launched at the Forum. The launching of the TAPs underlines the commitment of the Governors to ensuring that humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding interventions reflect the priorities of the Governors within a coordinated framework. The Forum agreed that stronger political cooperation and partnerships are needed to consolidate on the gains so far made and advance RSS-TAPs implementation, including greater attention to the imperative of ensuring local ownership of these programs and processes. The Forum called on donors and other RSS partners to swiftly ramp up their provision of resources for TAPs implementation, including to the MNJTF, since the success of RSS rests on the provision of adequate security in the region.



## THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY:

---

The crucial need to enhance the participation and inclusion of women and youth, and that of civil society across the full cycle of TAPs implementation was recognized, as this was essential to the optimal success of the programs and projects undertaken. A critical outcome of the Forum was the need for stakeholders to reflect on post stabilization strategy toward recovery and community resilience and the needs to ensure the involvement of local civil society groups in co-creating long term interventions to ensure sustainability and promote locally owned process by both government at the local level and civil society groups.

## CIVIL-MILITARY AND HUMANITARIAN ENGAGEMENT:

---

The Forum noted that robust civil-military and humanitarian cooperation is critical to stemming the tide of the crisis in the region and agreed that the LCBC-MNJTF 's Civil Military Cooperation Cell should be further strengthened to support tackling the root causes of distrust and building mutual trust and cooperation among military and civilian actors on the one hand, and military and humanitarian actors in the affected areas on the other hand.

## CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION AND OPPORTUNITIES

---

The Forum noted ongoing efforts to improve human security, human mobility, and cross-border trade in the region. The concrete example of the cross-border initiative across Banki (Borno State Nigeria) and Amchide (Far North region Cameroon) provided a sense of the immense potential of cross-border interventions in the region. The Governors further emphasised the importance of Lake Chad to the region's socio-economic base and future and called for the recharging of the lake as the viable sustainable pathway for improving and sustaining the economy of the region.

## REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION OF EX-BOKO HARAM ASSOCIATES

---

It was emphasised that community-based Disarmament, Demobilization, Repatriation, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (DDRRR) should be expanded and strengthened across the region, taking greater account of the views, interests and needs of victimized communities and the necessity for the voluntary, safe, and dignified return of both displaced persons and rehabilitated former members of Boko Haram and ISWAP.

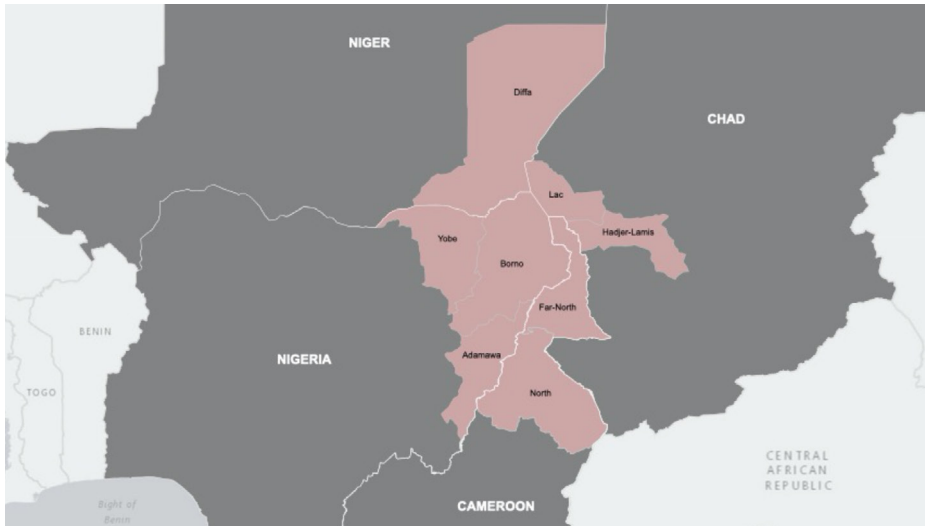
## FOUNDATIONAL NATURE OF STABILIZATION INTERVENTIONS:

---

The Forum provided an opportunity for the Governors to reflect on the impact of Stabilization interventions across the eight territories of the Lake Chad Basin region. Examples from the participants across the territories highlighted how Stabilization has led to the extension of State presence in the LCB region through the provisions of minimum-security conditions, essential infrastructure, basic social services, and livelihood opportunities for affected communities. The conversation also helped in bridging the gap and in identifying Stabilization at the middle space between humanitarian assistance and recovery programme. On this basis, the Governors called for recognising Stabilization as an important step towards recovery and they urged humanitarian actors to collaborate strongly with stabilization actors to optimise the efficiency of aid delivery and enable durable recovery



# RSS Territories



## The Forum identified

- ⇒ **01** | Improved Security
- ⇒ **02** | The urgent upscaling of resource infusions, including to the MNJTF
- ⇒ **03** | Swift implementation and monitoring of the TAPs
- ⇒ **04** | Improved socio-economic development and livelihoods
- ⇒ **05** | Stronger political cooperation and partnerships that ensure local ownership
- ⇒ **06** | The need for greater accountability and transparency on the part of all RSS actors in the region, as strategic priorities for 2021-2022 and beyond.

**Finally, it was agreed that the next Governor's Forum will be held Chad in 2022, where the governors will report on progress made on the agreed strategic priorities, including on the implementation, and monitoring of the TAPs.**











# INTRODUCTION



**The Lake Chad Basin (LCB) is currently beset by a serious humanitarian and security crisis. For more than a decade now, the region has experienced growing instability due to the Boko Haram insurgency.**

This conflict is cross-boundary in nature and has led to long-lasting instability in the four most affected Lake Chad Basin countries, Cameroon, Chad Niger, and Nigeria. The levels of conflict also continue to surge due in certain areas due to the intra- and inter-power struggle amongst the various groups, notably JAS (or Boko Haram) and ISWAP, with the latter terrorist group growing in power and influence in the region.

While this terrorist insurgency is underpinned by religious ideology, factors such as unemployment, poverty, and socio-economic challenges make children and youths particularly vulnerable to recruitment and radicalisation by the terrorist groups. Women and girls also face a higher risk of sexual based violence at the hands of these groups. Flooding and climate shocks are also worsening the situation. Agriculture, which is a major means of livelihood in the region, has shrunk by a huge margin since the beginning of the insurgency. The Lake Chad which supports agriculture has lost the bulk of its hydraulic capacity. These factors have disrupted food systems and intensified food insecurity in the region.

The impact of security and climate instability on the region's socio-economic and political life has been devastating. Public services, including education, have been disrupted for over a decade, and many government, private and community institutions in the affected areas have collapsed. Citizens now live in constant fear and distrust. Many people have also died from Boko Haram attacks, depleting human capital in the region. Although the exact number of deaths from Boko Haram attacks is difficult to establish, more than 40,000 people have died from Boko Haram attacks in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states alone since 2011, and a large number of others have sustained injuries that have led to disabilities, both physical and mental.

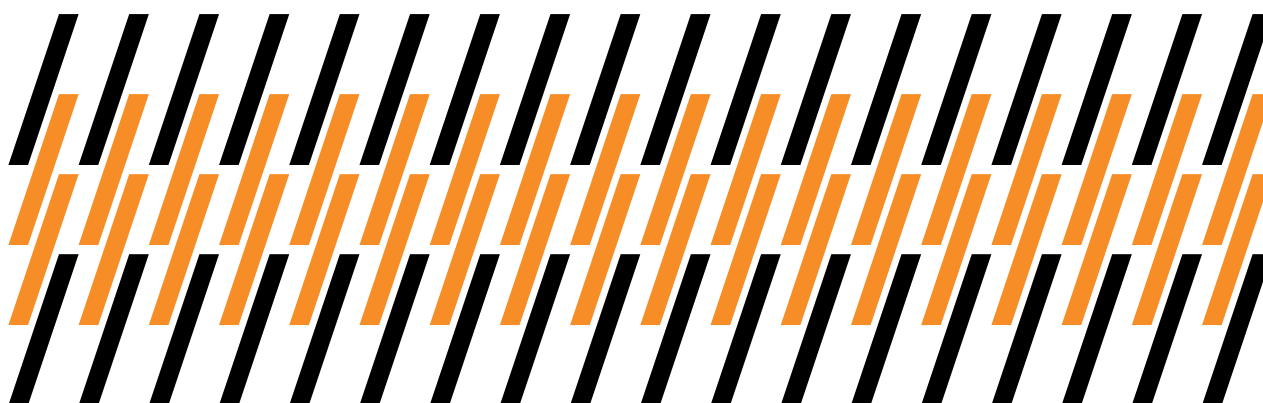
As the crisis protracts, over two million people have been forced to flee their homes, arriving in new homes and localities without economic and social opportunities and with low prospects for returning home. The demand for humanitarian assistance in the region is therefore now at an unprecedented level. Millions of people in the region need urgent humanitarian assistance and lack adequate nutrition. Yet, as the region's humanitarian needs rise, donor income has shrunk, undermining the possibility of optimal, swift, action to address the ongoing humanitarian crisis. As the local population continues to live with the impact of this widespread violence, with unequal impacts on youths and women, without swift and sustainable action, its impact will spill over to the next generation.

Against this background of growing humanitarian, development, and security needs in the LCB region, stabilising the area has understandably dominated the agenda of the Lake Chad Basin governors, as well as many security and development actors. To this end, the Governors from the eight most affected regions of the four Lake Chad Basin countries worked together with the Lake Chad Basin Commission as well as the African Union and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to establish the Lake Chad Basin Governors' Forum in Maiduguri, in 2018.

The Governors' Forum serves as an annual platform for cross-border dialogue, exchange and for identification concrete cross-border interventions at both policy and programme levels. In addition, the Forum also contributes to the development and implementation of policies that will facilitate the domestication and

integration of regional stabilization, recovery and resilience efforts into national development agendas. Earlier efforts by the governors to contribute to regional stabilization focused largely on military and security actions, including – for example – the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), a cross-border security apparatus established in 2015 with a counter-insurgency mandate. The MNJTF's presence has helped to reduce the number of Boko Haram attacks in the region. Humanitarian assistance is also reaching wider areas, as humanitarian agencies are now able to access previously unreachable zones due to the logistical support and protection of civilians and aid workers provided by the MNJTF. There is, however, a consensus amongst stakeholders that such military efforts must be complemented with other actions to address the root causes of the insurgency.

The Forum provides space for the Governors to advance stabilization in this holistic way, through its interaction with the military, civilians, civil society organisations (CSO) and policymakers, and sharing of ideas that will enhance cross-border cooperation and encourage the stabilization and development of the region in a more humane manner.







# SITUATING THE GOVERNORS' FORUM WITHIN THE RSS FRAMEWORK

The Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery & Resilience of the Boko Haram-affected Areas of the Lake Chad Basin Region (RSS) is a five-year multi-level strategy that outlines nine pillars (9) broken down into forty (40) strategic objectives, which together aim to facilitate the region's overall stabilisation, recovery, and resilience interventions. The RSS encompasses short, medium- and long-term interventions that focus on moving the region from immediate stability to recovery and longer-term development. The RSS is anchored on "the New Way of Working" which emphasises the need for cooperation and synergy between humanitarian, development, and peace (HDP) actors and the imperatives for a "whole of society" approach and the need for local ownership of the development processes.

The RSS approach recognises the impact of local and territorial realities on the humanitarian, development, and security challenges in the region. This recognition underpins that acceptance and appreciation of the nexus between local realities and regional complexities and the imperatives for taking a regional approach to addressing the crisis, through the establishment and utilization of platforms and structures that promote regional and cross-border dialogues amongst key stakeholders and interlocutors.

Political Cooperation is recognised by the RSS as the foundational principle upon which its implementation rests. The RSS also recognizes that the Lake Chad Basin Governors Forum for Regional Cooperation on Stabilization, Peacebuilding and Sustainable





Development serves as the primary mechanism for cross-border political cooperation amongst the Governors as well as the means of domesticating and giving political ownership of the implementation of this Strategy at the territorial levels to the political actors closest to the affected communities.

The Governors' Forum is now firmly established and entrenched as the most important and relevant cross-border platform for cross-border political cooperation in the LCB region. The first Forum, which took place in Maiduguri, Nigeria in May 2018 laid the foundation for understanding the possible role of the eight Governors within RSS framework. The second Forum, which was held in Niamey, Niger in July 2019 was the first post-RSS endorsement Forum

and reaffirmed the Forum as a crucial platform for RSS implementation. This third Forum consolidated the Forum as a viable structure for addressing the crisis and places the Governors at the centre of the discourse and decision-making on stabilization in the region.

The third meeting of the Lake Chad Basin (LCB) Governors' Forum addressed a number of closely interconnected themes, in a cross-cutting way, during its opening ceremony, thematic sessions, and closing ceremony. The chapters that follow focus on providing insight into these discussions and debates, their broad outcomes, key messages, recommendations, and action points.



CHAPTER ONE

**REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE  
LAKE CHAD BASIN REGION  
2019 - 2021**



**PROGRESS IN RSS IMPLEMENTATION**

A key theme that emerged from this Third Forum is that amid the continuing security, peacebuilding and sustainable development challenges being experienced across the LCB region, significant progress has nevertheless been made. While many of the examples of such progress are also highlighted in other parts of this section of the report, in other to provide a picture of the overall context within which the deliberations of the Forum took place, it is important to discuss key aspects of this improving situation here.

First, with the assistance of donors and funding facilities (such as the International Support Group and the RSF), and the technical input of key partners (including the African Union and the UNDP), the security of lives and property has been enhanced in the region (Pillar 2, Goal 6). This improvement is also the result of the military operations and other actions undertaken by the countries and state/territorial governments of the LCB region, including through their national military forces, local vigilante committees, the Multinational Joint Task Force, and other actors.

Much of the basic infrastructure and services in the affected areas have also been strengthened, and social indicators improved (Pillar 6, Goal 23; Pillar 5, Goal 18). Large numbers of destroyed homes, schools, health centres have either been rehabilitated or built. And key government agencies have also returned to many of the affected localities. As a result, life has been restored to a host of formerly empty villages and whole swathes of territory in the region, such as in the Banki/Amchide areas of Borno State of Nigeria and the Far North Region of Cameroon.



## OVER 36%

of the total number of persons displaced from the Diffa Region of Niger have now returned to their towns and villages thanks to a program focusing on the voluntary return of displaced persons.

Living standards in the region have progressively improved to an appreciable (though still insufficient) extent, among the people of the eight most affected states/territories. Significant increases in the involvement of women and young people at all stages of the design and implementation of state/territorial policies and projects were also reported.

The increasing surrender to the authorities in the region of ex-Boko Haram fighters/associates presents an opportunity for even greater progress to be made in building peace and advancing sustainable development in the LCB. In the light of these developments, progress has been made in the region in the use of community-based Disarmament, Demobilization, Repatriation, Reintegration, and Resettlement (DDRRR) to work toward the more effective reintegration of these ex-fighters into the community, while overcoming the challenge of operationalizing traditional DDRRR in a region where the victimized communities, to which these ex-fighters belonged before their recruitment by Boko Haram, were often strongly opposed to their reintegration (Pillar 3, Goals 9, 11 and 12; Pillar 4, Goal 14).

The LCBC has worked hard with its partners since the last Governors' Forum to advance RSS implementation, and has recorded appreciable and significant successes, including in establishing the Lake Chad Civil Society Organizations (CSO) platform and a regional platform across pillar working groups (PWGs). The LCBC is currently discussing with partners to develop a flexible financial mechanism that will promote coordination, tracking and local ownership of coherent long-term RSS implementation.

Some RSS partners reported the scaling-up of their actions and interventions since the last meeting of the Forum in the Niger Republic. One example is the Office of the UN Special Representative for West Africa and the Sahel, which grounds its strong interest and actions in partnering with other actors in the LCBC region on what it sees as the critical necessity of identifying and acting on the (structural and other) linkages between the situations in the Sahel and the LCB region. The World Bank and EU have also established programs to improve the socio-economic conditions in the region (Pillar 1, Goal 4; Pillar 4, Goal 13; Pillar 6, Goals 22 and 23).

The Territorial Action Plans (TAPs) of all the eight most-affected states/territories in the four target countries in the region have been successfully developed by their various state governments/territorial administrations, and this was done – in each case – through a participatory, inclusive and thorough bottom-up process, and with the assistance of the LCBC, AU, and national consultants (see the RSS – Means of Implementation). The fact that these TAPs are now on the cusp of being implemented was also evident from the presentations made by the Governors and the discussions held at the forum.

The discussions that took place at the Forum about the progress made so far in RSS implementation in the region do also underscore the very important point made by UN Assistant Secretary-General and Regional Director for Africa, Ahunna Eziakonwa, that RSS' implementing partners have, "over time, shown proof of concept" as "a robust framework for the humanitarian-development-peace nexus."

In the light of all the improvements so far recorded in the region, the Forum highlighted the fact that it was now even more imperative for RSS partners to focus more of their efforts and resources, than has hitherto been the case, on augmenting the growing confidence of the population of the LCB region in the progressive restoration of security, peace and sustainable development in their various areas.





## The Evolving and Emerging Security Environment

As has been noted, despite the significant improvements recorded so far, which are captured by the statement of the Commander of the MNJTF at the Forum that the region is now “generally calm but unpredictable,” the security situation in the region remains fragile and fraught with the risk of violence and insecurity. It is also evolving in a fairly rapid manner, leading to certain emergent features. Attacks, kidnappings, killings, and other atrocities continue to occur in the region, if at an appreciably lesser rate.

As such, the urgent need remains to clear remnants of Boko Haram fighters from their bases on the Tumbuns, islands on the fringes of the Lake Chad from which they continue to launch attacks on the surrounding areas and beyond. The Tumbuns serve as their logistics hub, secure havens, and staging grounds. Their occupation of these islands also facilitates their generation of funds through illegal fishing and farming activities. As noted, in chapter 10 (on stronger political cooperation and partnerships), the MNJTF needs urgent and greater support to be able to achieve this crucial, if not pivotal, goal – especially in enhancing its amphibious and naval capabilities in and around the lake.

ISWAP has consolidated its control of certain territories in the region. It has also continued to wage, and has even escalated, its ideological campaigns in the area, while reducing the rate at which it attacks civilians, and resorting to the tactic of distributing money and other

resources to the locals. ISWAP new approach is aimed at attracting recruits, creating and bolstering some degree of popular legitimacy for their existence and operations, and augmenting its capacity and ability to grow in numbers and strength. The deployment of these tactics appears to have intensified since the death of Boko Haram leader, Abubakar Shekau. In the light of these developments, there is an urgent need for the MNJTF to be supported to acquire the capacity to bolster the aspect of its non-kinetic operation that focuses on conducting information and other influence operations in the affected areas in the region (especially the use of flyers, press releases, radio broadcasts, CIMIC activities, medical outreach, and quick impact projects).

One of the indices of the improvement in the security situation in the region that was noted at the Forum, and which the commander of the MNJTF attributed in large measure to the effectiveness of the non-kinetic operation undertaken by the MNJTF and other actors, as well as to other important factors, is the relatively large numbers of Boko Haram fighters who have surrendered to the authorities in various countries in the region. For example, the Commander of the MNJTF reported to the Forum that in August 2021 alone, about five thousand (5000) repentant Boko Haram fighters surrendered to the authorities.

The improvements being experienced in the security environment in the region have provided more of an enabling environment for the conduct of humanitarian aid operations, the return and resettlement of large





numbers of displaced persons to their hometowns and villages, and the implementation of other RSS goals.

## ABOUT 6000

---

displaced persons returned to their homes in Baroua in the Diffa region of Niger in June 2021 alone, according to the report by the Commander of the MNJTF at the Forum.

In August 2021, a similarly large number of displaced persons returned to their homes in the Cross Kauwa, Baga and Dogon Baga communities in Kukawa local government area of Borno state.

## ABOUT 5000

---

refugees returned from camps in Minawao in Cameroon to their homes in Banki in Nigeria earlier on in March 2021.

Overall, however, the emergent (though rapidly evolving) security situation in the most affected areas in the region is currently appreciably better than it has been in previous years and months, though still significantly troubled, fragile and risky. Swift and even more robust action is therefore required (including the infusion of much more resources into the MNJTF and socio-economic interventions that deter locals from becoming more attracted to the terrorist groups) in order to prevent the region relapsing into a more violent environment.

## The Pattern of the Humanitarian Situation

Over more than one decade during which the region has been beset by the now protracted Boko Haram-induced crisis, a broad pattern of the occurrence of widespread violent attacks on civilians at a very high incidence rate has characterized it. This has resulted in the proliferation of IDP and refugee camps and the need for urgent humanitarian assistance to be extended to millions of people in the region. From 2015 to 2020, there was a dramatic deterioration in the security and humanitarian situation in the most affected areas.

More recently, the region has experienced a more undulating pattern of violent attacks, with a steep decline in such incidents being recorded around 2021, followed by a relatively small uptick later that year. This longitudinal undulation in the extent of security available in the region has been closely tracked by a resulting pattern of reduction and uptick both in the extent of displacement and the measure of the need for humanitarian assistance. While there has been some reduction in the numbers of persons housed in IDP and refugee camps, as a result of the return of large numbers of displaced persons to their hometowns and villages, the overall need for humanitarian assistance in the region has not diminished significantly.

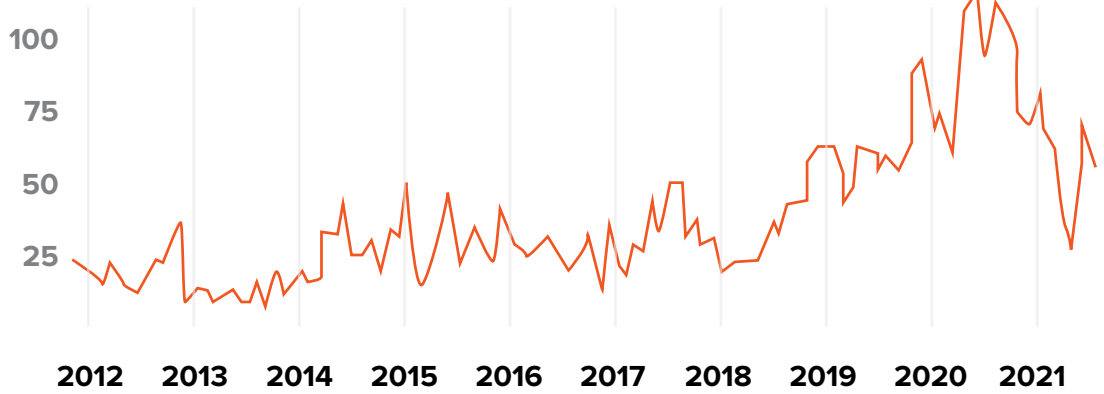
# A DRAMATIC SECURITY DETERIORATION

From 2015 to 2020 the number of violent attacks tripled in the Lake Chad Basin

## Trend of Security Situation

 **55**  
security incidents

 **96**  
people killed

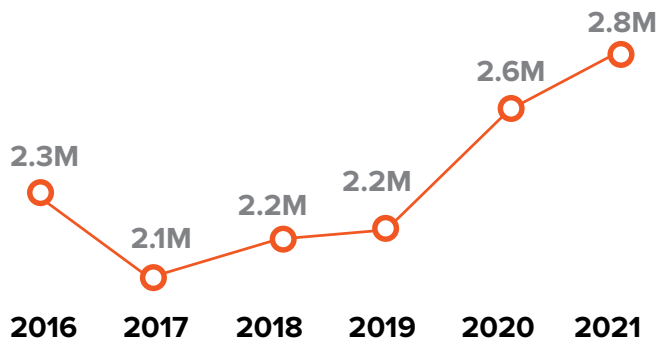


There are currently about 10.6 million displaced persons in need in the region, with only 8.2 million of them targeted for relief. This is a highly significant deficit. And about 3 million persons from the most affected communities in the region remain displaced (of this number 2.8 million are IDPs and 261 thousand are refugees). Additionally, strong food insecurity persists in the region, with about 5.1 million persons struggling to feed during the lean seasons.

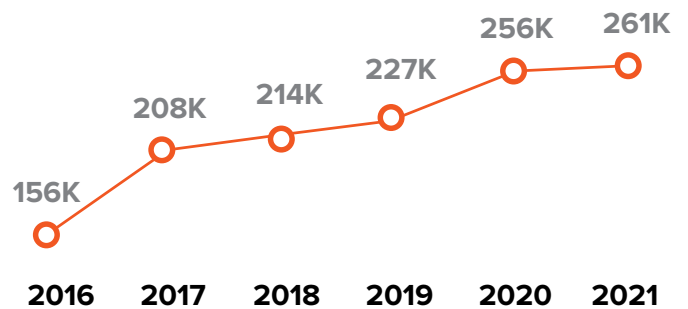
## DISPLACEMENT

Across the LCB, more than 3 million people are now uprooted: This is more than ever before

 **2.8M**  
internal displaced people



 **261k**  
refugees



## INCREASING FINANCING GAP

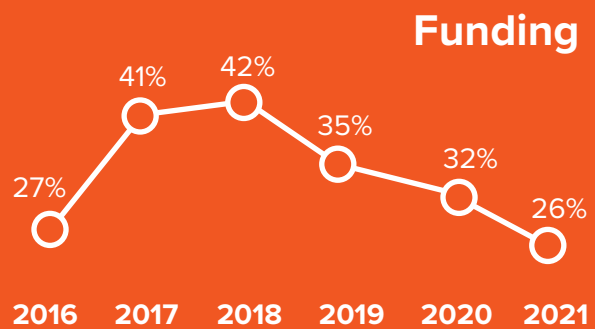
The Humanitarian Responses Plans (HRPs) of the four counties keep being underfunded

Yet, as the graph [below] shows there remains a massive financing gap in efforts to redress the current humanitarian situation in the region, with only 31% of the effort currently funded and an unmet need of US\$1.7 Billion. Rather than increase with the evident humanitarian need, the available funding has in fact declined steeply over the last few years, from its peak in 2018. This situation calls for swift redressive action.

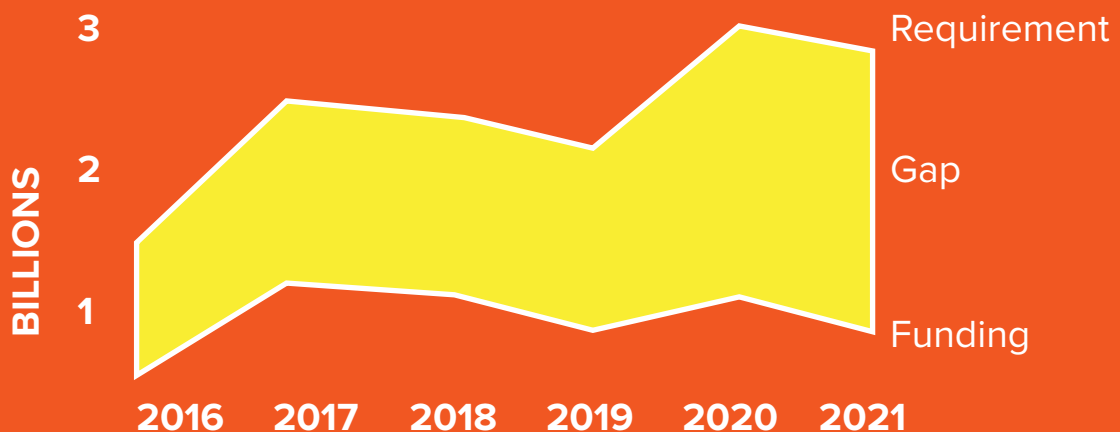


**31%**  
funded

**\$1.7B**  
unmet



Countries	Requirement	Funding	Unmet	%Funded
Cameroon	361.6M	105.1M	256.5M	29%
Chad	617.0M	116.5M	500.5M	19%
Niger	523.1M	110.7M	412.3M	21%
Nigeria	1,006.4M	443.2M	563.1M	44%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,508.0M</b>	<b>775.6M</b>	<b>1,732.5M</b>	<b>31%</b>





CHAPTER TWO

# **UNDERSTANDING TERRITORIAL PRIORITIES THROUGH THE TERRITORIAL ACTION PLANS (TAPS)**



## **RATIONALE FOR DEVELOPING AND PRIORITIZING THE TAPS**

One of the most important discussions that took place at the forum focused on the development, content and implementation of the Territorial Action Plans (TAPs) of the eight most affected states and territories in the LCB region. Launched at this third forum by the representative of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Cameroon, His Excellency Joseph Dion Ngute, these TAPs were conceived, designed and drafted – over many months of painstaking work – to localise and ground the RSS in more detailed frameworks that are each attentive to their specific local concerns, and deepen local ownership of the operational process of advancing stabilization, peacebuilding and sustainable development in each of the most affected sub-national states/territories in the LCB region.

The fundamental basis for this approach, as was re-emphasised by every Governor at this third forum, is that the governors are better placed in RSS design and implementation, being closest to the people affected than other RSS partners. As such, as was re-stated by the Executive Secretary of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) and Head of Mission of the Multinational Joint Task Force, His Excellency Ambassador Mamman Nuhu, the TAPs will help a lot to translate the nine pillars and forty strategic objectives of the RSS to meaningful concrete actions on the ground in each of the eight most affected states/territories.

## An Inclusive, Participatory and Bottom-up Development Process

All the eight TAPs operationalize the bottom-up, collaborative, and inclusive approach adopted in the design and implementation of the RSS. The development process for each of the eight TAPs was also in accordance with this approach. In each case, civil society actors, women, youth and other stakeholders were consulted and made inputs into the design and preparation of the relevant TAP.

## Commonalities in the Contents and Orientations of the TAPs

All Governors presented and discussed their state/territory's TAP; pointed out their priorities for the implementation of the various RSS pillars; and highlighted in some detail the various concrete actions that they are already taking, or will soon take, to implement the RSS/TAPs over the next four to five years, monitor their implementation efforts and processes, and thus, contribute in a critical way to the optimal success of the effort to implement the RSS more effectively.

### All the TAPs share certain common features

- ⇒ **01** | **Root Causes:** An important issue that emerged from the Forum in this regard was the reiteration of the value of paying attention to the root causes of the crisis in the LCB region and its persistence despite years of effort to stem its tide. All the TAPs outline plans to pay attention to such root causes. All of them also pay some attention to the critical need for the deployment of more effective local policy, planning and implementation measures which pay greater attention to this issue in order to increase the rate of success in combating the crisis.
  
- ⇒ **02** | **Alignment of the Nature and Sequencing of Territorial/External Interventions:** Another key point that was commonly highlighted in the discussions concerned the need to align the operationalization of each TAP to the policies of the state/territory for which it has been developed, including through paying more attention to the sequencing of any interventions by external RSS partners (especially HDP actors), so as work in greater harmony with state/territorial plans. As an example, the Governor of Borno State of Nigeria highlighted the alignment between the Borno State TAP and the Borno State Development Plan (BoSDP), which is “a 25 year long-term development plan that is built both as a conflict and post-conflict development plan aimed at laying solid foundation and engendering steady, consistent and sustainable development in the state.” He also underlined the importance of external intervention in his state being designed and implemented in ways also align with the BoSDP and TAPs. This necessity for alignment would apply even in states/territories that have not developed their own development plans, aside from their TAPs. Additionally, all interventions should ultimately need to align with the needs of the affected communities themselves. All of the TAPs pay a degree of attention to, or internalize, this issue.



## ⇒ 03

**Agency, Non-Dependency and Sustainability:** All the TAPs presented at the Forum also stressed the need to design and implement RSS programs in ways that emphasize and respect the agency of the peoples of the LCB region and the necessity for them to exercise control over their own lives and affairs. The need to create the conditions under which they can return to agricultural and economic activities in their own towns and villages, instead of remaining for years on end in refugee and IDP camps, and thus remaining dependent on humanitarian assistance, was also emphasized strongly in the presentations made by the Governors on the TAPs. This is important for the sustainability of RSS programs and measures. The TAPs presented at this third forum all paid close attention to this imperative.

## ⇒ 04

**Inclusion and Participation of Civil Society and Displaced Persons:** Another feature that is common to the eight TAPs presented at the Forum was their consistent attentiveness to the participation of civil society, women, youth, internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees, and vulnerable groups (such as disabled persons) in each state/territory in the region, throughout the full cycle of their development to their implementation, and the socio-economic/political interests of these groups. This is also discussed in more detail later in the report. Some of the TAPs also paid attention to the need to also take account of the views and interests of the communities that host IDPs and refugees in the region, and which are thus placed under particular socio-economic and other pressures, an issue that is rarely highlighted.

## ⇒ 05

**Cross-Border Interventions:** All the eight TAPs outlined ongoing or planned cross-border interventions of one kind or the other. These include the construction or rehabilitation of interdependent villages along the international border zones; the building or expansion of trans-border road networks connecting trade routes and socio-economic centres in some of the various countries; engagement in cross-border dialogues and interaction; the establishment of border town markets; boosting cross-border trade; and recharging the Lake Chad.

## ⇒ 06

**Emphasis on Monitoring and Evaluation:** Each TAP places a strong emphasis on the monitoring and evaluation of its implementation at the territorial level by the Governors Offices. This would allow for effective tracking of activities to determine the level of success being achieved, the challenges being faced in their implementation, and how to mitigate them. Such monitoring and evaluation would also promote accountability and transparency, which are hallmarks of good governance.









# The Specific Character of Each TAP



## Adamawa State of Nigeria



Adamawa state's TAP focuses on nine RSS pillars. Key priority interventions in these regards are as follows:

### **Pillar 1 (political cooperation)**

involve all stakeholders in RSS implementation, hold quarterly coordination meetings among state political leaders, and collaborate with the National Assembly (federal parliament);

### **Pillar 4 (humanitarian assistance)**

urgent improvement of health and education facilities;

### **Pillar 7 (education)**

building the capacity of teachers and trainers.

### **Pillar 2 (security and human rights)**

establish special human rights courts and early warning/response mechanisms;

### **Pillar 5 (governance and the social contract)**

adopt a more inclusive approach to budgetary planning and reduce bureaucracy;

### **Pillar 8 (PVE)**

produce and disseminate counter-narratives

### **Pillar 3 (DDRRR)**

provide skills to transition to new lives;

### **Pillar 6 (socio-economic recovery and environmental sustainability)**

improvement of water infrastructure and agriculture and cash transfers

### **Pillar 9 (women and youth)**

build one stop centres for survivors of gender-based violence and raise awareness;

The Nigerian state also aims to increase interaction between and among territorial and national governments, both within Nigeria's national borders and beyond them. It will do so through capacity-building for security agencies working in/across border areas, including through sensitization and training; identification and strengthening of links between the cross-border security facilities of the relevant local governments, other Nigerian states, and neighboring countries, in order to improve border operations and cross-border activities; and the reinforcement of cross-border cooperation on governance, service delivery, and other issues.



## Borno State of Nigeria

---



Some of the key priority interventions focused on in this state's TAP are as follows:

### **Pillar 3 (DDRRR)**

introduce community-based DDRRR, including through direct community involvement, broad stakeholder participation, and improving infrastructure and services in communities;

### **Pillar 6 (socio-economic recovery and environmental sustainability)**

Establish skills acquisition centres, improve agricultural production, promote agricultural value chains and improve cross-border collaboration, and facilitate skills acquisition;

### **Pillar 7 (Education)**

provide orphans and other vulnerable children with educational opportunities; restore access to quality education for all women, girls and boys in a safe and secure environment, and establish community-based vocational enterprise institutions and innovation centres.

---

The Borno State TAP also aims to strengthen cross-border cooperation on a range of issues, including research at the Lake Chad Basin, governance, and public service delivery. It aims to revive the traditional trans-Saharan trade route, with flourishing and secure border markets at Banki, Ngala, Damasak, and Baga. E.g Maiduguri-Banki Junction-Pulka-Kirawa Towns, Maiduguri-Gambaru-N'djamena and Maiduguri-Damasak-Diffa; open up the most productive areas of the lake through road construction but also through the maintenance of key rural trails and lake channels; build roads linking the communities within the Lake Chad region to boost and maximise cross-border commercial activities between the countries in the region; and support cross-border collaboration on a series of issues like climate action and championing the recharging of the Lake Chad.

## Diffa Region of Niger

---

The Diffa Region's TAP highlights implementation priorities for all nine RSS pillars as follows:



### **Pillar 1 (Political Cooperation)**

convene dialogue and accountability platforms involving all stakeholders;

### **Pillar 4 (Humanitarian Assistance)**

distribute essential products and services such as food, water, medication, school kits, tents, and organize the return of internally displaced persons

### **Pillar 7 (Education)**

build schools and universities, and recruit high-performing educational staff.

### **Pillar 2 (security and human rights)**

reinforce capacity within defence and security forces and judges;

### **Pillar 5 (governance and the social contract)**

build and/or rebuild administrative infrastructure affected by the Boko Haram crisis such as health services and other basic services;

### **Pillar 8 (PVE)**

organize intra and inter-community dialogues for peace and reconciliation;

### **Pillar 3 (DDRRR)**

map out the locations of persons formerly associated with Boko Haram in the region, to facilitate their context-specific socio-economic reintegration;

### **Pillar 6 (socio-economic recovery and environmental sustainability)**

improve agricultural and water resources, and facilitate the production of electric and solar power access; pillar

### **Pillar 9 (women and youth)**

build capacity among youth and women, by increasing access to micro-credit and employment;

---

The main cross-border initiatives proposed by the Diffa region are as follows: build border crossings between Komadougou and Toumour, in order to connect better with Nigeria; rebuild border crossings between Niger and Chad; develop cattle markets and health centers that will be accessible to all riverside communities; establish advanced border security posts and reinforce intelligence sharing with neighbouring countries; establish inter-regional joint patrols alongside the borders.



## Far North Region of Cameroon



The Far North Region's TAP focuses on eight RSS pillars. Planned key priority interventions in these areas are as follows:

### **Pillar 5 (governance and social contract)**

encourage citizen participation in local governance, strengthen the capacities of local representatives in participatory management, train youth and women on responsible citizenship

### **Pillar 3 (DDRRR)**

ensure community awareness on the rehabilitation and reintegration of persons formerly associated with Boko Haram and develop rehabilitation guides for development actors;

### **Pillar 6 (socio-economic recovery and environmental sustainability)**

rehabilitate or rebuild structural road infrastructure, build storage, conservation and processing infrastructures, formalize river navigation on the Chari and Logone, and rehabilitate or rebuild local markets;

### **Pillar 9 (empowerment and inclusion of women and youth)**

prevent gender-based violence (GBV) and ensure holistic care for survivors, support youth organizations in their community development initiatives, support individual and collective micro-projects, provide vocational training, and support the settlement of young people and other basic services;

### **Pillar 8 (prevention of violent extremism and peacebuilding)**

formalize Koranic schools and disseminate counter-discourses in the communities;

### **Pillar 2 (security and human rights)**

create and provide self-defence training to vigilance committees in the localities, train human rights monitors

### **Pillar 4 (humanitarian assistance)**

ensure the well-being of IDPs and refugees wherever they are, include displaced populations in immediate impact projects, and ensure psychosocial support and social cohesion;

### **Pillar 7 (education, learning, and skills development)**

rehabilitate primary and secondary schools, and create training centres for emerging professions.

This territory's cross-border interventions mainly aim at establishing interdependent villages in the border areas, pooling basic services across these border towns and villages, and revitalizing or building trans-border markets. These villages are areas occupied simultaneously by two or more administratively distinct localities across two or more different countries of the regions. In each interdependent village, basic services and markets will be shared. This initiative ultimately contributes to the strengthening of cross-border security, women cooperation and community response networks.



## Hadjer Lamis Province of Chad

---

The Hadjer Lamis region's TAP highlights their priorities for six RSS pillars, as follows

**Pillar 2 (security and human rights)**

local groups and promote human rights;

**Pillar 3 (DDRRR)**

develop traditional justice mechanisms and reintegrate persons formerly associated with Boko Haram;

**Pillar 8 (PVE)**

develop educational resources and infrastructures, along with promoting cross-border cooperation;

**Pillar 4 (humanitarian assistance)**

provide life-saving humanitarian responses, and manage local vigilante groups

**Pillar 7 (education)**

promote and develop access to professional skills and provide inclusive and safe education;

**Pillar 6 (socio-economic recovery and environmental sustainability)**

support access to means of sustainable livelihoods, foster a sustainable environment, and provide infrastructure that will foster regional integration.

---

The Hadjer Lamis region's main cross-border initiatives are focused on reinforcing physical border infrastructure as follows: establishing or developing border crossings between N'Djamena-Farah (Chad) and Goulfeï (Cameroon) and Mahada (Chad) and Balangwa (Cameroon); establishing road sections between Djarmaya and N'Djaména-Farah (18 km), Karal and Massakory (105 km), Massaguet and N'Goura (95 km), and Bokoro and Gama (75km). Additionally, the Hadjer Lamis region proposes that cross-border intercommunal dialogues be convened, specifically between Mani and Blangoua (Cameroon), and N'Djamena-Fara and Goulfeï (Cameroon), in order to foster greater cross-border cooperation between these neighboring communities.



## Lac Province of Chad

---



The Lac region's TAP highlights key priorities for all nine RSS pillars as follows:

### **Pillar 1 (political cooperation)**

equip governors with necessary material and technical resources for cross-border cooperation;

### **Pillar 2 (security and human rights)**

establish consultative platforms, and equip vigilante groups with metal detectors;

### **Pillar 3 (DDRRR)**

rehabilitate and equip detention centres to improve living conditions in those spaces, and develop a reintegration program for persons formerly associated with Boko Haram;

### **Pillar 4 (humanitarian assistance)**

build and restore health centres and welcome centres for children;

### **Pillar 5 (governance and the social contract)**

reinstate the High Court of Bol and train local youth on concepts of citizenship, leadership and civic engagement;

### **Pillar 6 (socio-economic recovery and environmental sustainability)**

develop capacity for hydraulic and agricultural exploitation, livestock farming and fishing, alongside restoring big market centres and rural roads;

### **Pillar 7 (education)**

build and equip centres for basic education and professional development, while focusing on girls' access of education.

### **Pillar 8 (PVE)**

train religious and traditional leaders on the fight against violent extremism;

### **Pillar 9 (women and youth)**

develop infrastructure and capacity in entrepreneurship, sports and culture;

---

The Lac Region identified 6 main cross-border initiatives, as follows: create a security post and a cattle market in Daboua (Chad), near Blablim (Niger); establish a mobile security team between Ngouboua (Chad) and Baga Kawa (Nigeria); work towards registering Lake Chad on the list of the common heritage of humanity ; create a portal on water quality in the Lake Chad Basin ; develop fora for cross-border exchanges on the protection of civilians in the Lake Chad Basin ; and develop cross-country information sharing on the risks of violent extremism, mainly through colloquia and university fora.

## North Region of Cameroon

---



The North Region's TAP is articulated around five RSS pillars. Key priority interventions in the implementation of this strategic vision for regional stabilization are as follows: pillar

### **Pillar 5 (governance and social contract)**

ensure thorough knowledge and application of law and regulations by the authorities and recruit competent staff in the administrations and build their capacity on local governance;

### **Pillar 9 (empowerment and inclusion of women and youth)**

create or rehabilitate multifunctional centres for the promotion of youth, facilitate the access of young people to credit for self-employment, and support women and youth organizations in the realization of network initiatives;

### **Pillar 8 (prevention of violent extremism and peace building)**

multiply awareness-raising activities for youth in schools, high schools, colleges and training centres in cross-border localities, and train traditional leaders on conflict management; and innovation centres.

### **Pillar 4 (humanitarian assistance)**

rehabilitate or build cross-border markets, storage warehouses, roads and bridges that are strategic for economic exchanges, create artificial ponds and rehabilitate zootechnical centres;

### **Pillar 7 (education, learning, and skills development)**

rehabilitate or build schools and training centres in sensitive areas, and train and assign teachers to the border areas.

---

Additionally, this territory's TAP emphasizes cross-border cooperation mainly through the creation of interdependent villages in the border areas and the building of cross-border markets. These villages are areas occupied simultaneously by two or more administratively distinct localities across two or more different countries. In each interdependent village, basic services and markets will be shared. The idea is to transform the cross-border space of the region into a place for meetings and exchanges, privileging markets and fostering peace.

# Yobe State of Nigeria



This TAP outlines a number of key priorities, covering the nine RSS pillars. They are as follows:

## **Pillar 1 (political cooperation)**

dialogue sessions with key political actors, traditional leaders and other stakeholders in the communities and country;

## **Pillar 4 (humanitarian assistance)**

provision of small and medium enterprises start-up packages to returnees, strengthening host community capacity to accommodate IDPs and returnees;

## **Pillar 9 (women and youth)**

prevent gender-based violence and build safe spaces for survivors;

## **Pillar 2 (security and human rights)**

empowering local security actors with intelligence gathering tools and capacity and awareness-raising on human rights via radio programmes and community fora;

## **Pillar 5 (governance and the social contract)**

Strengthen CSO and faith-based groups, build public service capacity, and enact the Violence against Persons Act into law;

## **Pillar 8 (PVE)**

establishment and strengthening community-based early warning/response mechanisms;

## **Pillar 3 (DDRRR)**

sensitizing community leaders and the general public and strong monitoring mechanism to prevent recidivism;

## **Pillar 6 (socio-economic recovery and environmental sustainability)**

desertification control and sand dunes fixation, empowering small holder farmers with integrated farming approaches to improve food security, and impartation of financial literacy and skills, leading to the establishment of village saving and loan Associations

## **Pillar 7 (education)**

building the capacity of teachers and trainers, enrolment of out-of-school girls aged 6-9 in primary schools across the state, provision of instruction and learning materials to teachers and children, and cash voucher incentives for vulnerable parents to increase demand for education.

This state's TAP also outlines its anticipated cross-border interventions, including plans to strengthen links between cross-border security agencies to promote border operations; provide road networks across the Nigeria/Niger border to enhance security and cross-border trade (for example the Geidam (YOBE-Nigeria) to Maine-Soro (Niger) road, the Nguru (Nigeria) to Gure (Niger) road, the Gure to Nguru in cooperation with Government of Niger republic, the Nguru-Ballanguwa which is currently under construction, the Ballanguwa to Kumaganam which is also in process); build the inter-state, intra-Nigerian, road between Geidam (Yobe) and Damasak (Borno) which will also serve similar goals; build an international Cattle Market in Geidam; hold quarterly meetings of Nigeria/Niger women's platforms in order to strengthen women's cooperation across that international border; and establish, and link, community response networks to promote intra- and inter-community coordination between communities on the Nigerian side of the Lake Chad basin and neighbouring territories in other countries in the region in order to strengthen security and prevent violence









## **Foundational Nature of Stabilization Interventions**

The Forum provided an opportunity for the Governors to reflect on the impact of Stabilization interventions across the eight territories of the Lake Chad Basin region. Examples from the participants across the territories highlighted how Stabilization has led to the extension of State presence in the LCB region through the provisions of minimum-security conditions, essential infrastructures, basic social services, and livelihood opportunities for affected communities. The conversation also helped in bridging the gap and in identifying Stabilization at the middle space between humanitarian assistance and recovery programme. On this basis, the Governors called for recognising Stabilization as an important step towards recovery and they urged humanitarian actors to collaborate strongly with stabilization actors to optimise the efficiency of aid delivery and enable durable recovery.





## Key Recommendations and Action Points

- ⇒ **01** | All RSS partners (in particular, the LCB countries, their most affected states/territories, the LCBC Secretariat, the African Union, donors, and civil society) should increase their support to the implementation and monitoring of the TAPs (Pillar 1, Goal 3).
  
- ⇒ **02** | RSS partners should remain conscious of the imperative need for strengthening the ownership of these TAP-related processes by the governments, administrations, and peoples of the eight most affected states/territories in the LCB region (Pillar 5, Goal 20).
  
- ⇒ **03** | The governments, administrations, and peoples of the eight most affected states/territories should strengthen the inclusion of members of the local communities, local civil society actors, women, the youth and particularly vulnerable groups (such as the disabled, refugees and IDPs) in the implementation of the TAPs (Pillar 5, Goal 20).



CHAPTER THREE

**LEVERAGING CROSS-BORDER OPPORTUNITIES AND ADDRESSING CROSS-BORDER CHALLENGES**



The Forum recognized that the improvements recorded so far in the LCB region in the enhancement of security and the provision of basic infrastructure and social services could be further leveraged through robust cross-border interventions. For example, it is estimated that the crisis in the region has led to a 91% decline in total imports to Nigeria from the other three affected countries in the region, and a 70% decline in total exports from Nigeria to these other countries. However, as much as these figures map the declines in cross-border in the region, they also highlight the opportunities that exist for the fuller resuscitation of such trade to drive socio-economic recovery and improvements in livelihoods in the affected areas, especially in border communities.



**Strong Commitment of the Governors:** Recognizing this reality, many of the Governors of the most affected states/territories, have taken steps to increase cross-border interaction and cooperation. For example, the Governor of Borno state of Nigeria informed this third forum that, since the last meeting of the Forum, he has visited each of the other LCB countries several times to promote cross-border cooperation, with the goal of establishing more robust cross-border trade, including through the establishment of free trade zones on key sites along the borders that Borno State shares with some of the other most affected territories in the LCB region. This project also has the potential to promote and aid the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA). Nevertheless, it was also noted that important challenges remain that will need to be swiftly overcome if such opportunities for cross-border interaction and cooperation are to be optimized and more beneficially harnessed.

The opportunities and challenges in cross-border interaction and cooperation debated and noted by the Forum are discussed under the following heads:



**Cross-Border Security:** While acknowledging continuing challenges (especially the continuing incidence of kidnappings for ransom and attacks on civilians by Boko Haram and ISWAP), significant improvements in the security situation across the region were acknowledged by all the Governors, the Force Commander of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), and other participants. Nevertheless, it was emphasised that, given the characteristically transnational nature of the terrorist tactics and operations of Boko Haram and ISWAP, it was imperative that a more robust cross-border approach to security in the region be adopted by LCB states, the LCBC, the AU and other RSS partners, if the threat of terrorism in the LCB region is to be more effectively addressed. Indeed, the Forum agreed that the simultaneous fostering and maintenance of security on all sides of the various international borders in the region is a minimum condition for the building of peace and advancing of sustainable development in the region. In the light of this, the Governors, the Force Commander of the MNJTF and other participants, recognized the need for the expansion and deepening of cross-border security cooperation, and much closer coordination between each of the national military forces engaged in the fight against Boko Haram/ISWAP, and the MNJTF.



**Cross-Border Human Mobility:** The Forum recognized that recent improvements in cross-border security in the LCB region have already had, and will likely continue to have, important positive consequences for increases in the extent of human mobility across the various international borders within the region. Such improvements in the facility of cross-border population movements will not just allow or augment family reunions, the return of refugees to their original homes and the revival of many otherwise abandoned communities and areas in the region, it will also facilitate the much-needed restoration and/or escalation of economic activities across the region. Nevertheless, the continuation of the kidnapping and violent activities of terrorist groups in these areas do present a serious challenge to the optimal harnessing of this key opportunity.



**Cross-Border Economic Activities:** It was also highlighted that an important consequence of the improvements recorded in cross-border security and population movements in the region is a notable increase in transnational trade and other cross-border economic activities across the region. The example was offered of the significant uptick in trade between the areas around Banki in Borno State of Nigeria and the zone close to Amchide in Far North region of Cameroon, towns that are right across the border from each other. To boost and benefit from such economic activities, the Forum noted that many of the most affected states/territories in the region have already built, or have drawn plans to provide, the necessary infrastructure to facilitate such activities. For example, the Representative of the Governor of Yobe State in Nigeria highlighted the fact that his government was already cooperating closely with the Governor of the Diffa region in the Niger Republic to plan and provide cross-border roads that have already boosted, and will in future boost, transnational trade between these two sub-national units, and the countries of which they form a part. Other states/territories shared their plans to build or improve cross-border markets which they hope will advance the same goal. Importantly, the Forum recognized that the enhancement of such cross-border economic activities has a very strong potential to contribute to the effort to ensure that affected communities become more prosperous, and their youth and women become much busier than they currently tend to be, thereby helping many of them better resist the allure of Boko Haram's and ISWAP's recruitment propaganda and tactics.



⇒ | **Recharging the Lake Chad:** It was pointed out at the Forum that Lake Chad, which straddles the borders of the four most affected countries, has historically served as the cross-border economic hub and source of sustenance for much of the population of the LCB region, and even beyond. Indeed, the very fact that Boko Haram relies on it for their socio-economic sustenance underlies its important socio-economic potential, even to this day. The lake has, however, lost much of its hydraulic capacity, greatly reducing its utility as a source of sustenance for the peoples of the region. In the light of these realities, and with a view to enhancing its capacity to support socio-economic activities in the area and contribute to sustainable development and therefore much greater peace and security in the region, the Forum called for the Lake to be recharged through the enhancement of the inflow of water and the taking of other necessary measures.

⇒ | **Continued Cross-Border Exchanges of Ideas and Best Practices:** The Forum highlighted the need for the LCB states and various governments and administrations of the eight most affected states/territories to continue their practices of joint reflection and information-sharing as ways of enhancing cross-border collaboration and mutually benefitting from existing good practices in the region. These exchanges of local ideas and practices about what works and what does not is essential for hastening and expanding the success so far enjoyed in RSS implementation in the region.

## Key Recommendations and Action Points

⇒ **01** | LCB States, the LCBC, the AU and other RSS partners should ensure a closer alignment of the planning and operations of national military forces and the MNJTF (Pillar 1, Goals 1, 2 and 4; Pillar 2, Goals 5 and 6; Pillar 5, Goal 21).

⇒ **02** | National military forces and the MNJTF should redouble their efforts to effectively provide protection to civilian populations in the LCB region (Pillar 2, Goal 6).

⇒ **03** | LCB countries, the governments or administrations of the eight most affected states/territories, the LCBC, the African Union, and other RSS partners, should swiftly take steps to boost cross-border economic activities in the region, including through the provision of the necessary road and other public infrastructure (Pillar 1, Goal 1; Pillar 5, Goal 21; Pillar 6, Goals 22 to 24; Pillar 8, Goal 35).

⇒ **04** | LCB countries, the governments, and administrations of the eight most affected states/territories, the LCBC, the African Union, and other RSS partners, should take urgent steps to recharge Lake Chad (Pillar 6, Goal 22).

⇒ **05** | LCB countries and the governments and administrations of the eight most affected states/territories should continue their practice of joint reflection and information-sharing (Pillar 1, Goals 1-3; Pillar 8, Goal 35).







UNION AFRICAINE  
FORUM DES GOUVERNEURS  
DU BASSIN DU LAC TCHAD  
REGION DE  
BORDO

UNION AFRICAINE  
FORUM DES GOUVERNEURS  
DU BASSIN DU LAC TCHAD  
REGION DE  
DEFA

UNION AFRICAINE  
FORUM DES GOUVERNEURS  
DU BASSIN DU LAC TCHAD  
REGION DE  
HADJER LAMIS

African Union  
3eme reunion  
du  
Forum des Gouverneurs  
du Bassin du Lac Tchad  
Yaounde, Cameroun  
4 - 5 OCT 2021

African Union  
3rd meeting  
of the  
Lake Chad Basin  
Governors' Forum  
Yaounde, Cameroon  
4 - 5 OCT 2021

African Union  
3eme reunion  
du  
Forum des Gouverneurs  
du Bassin du Lac Tchad  
Yaounde, Cameroun  
4 - 5 OCT 2021

Union  
africaine



CHAPTER FOUR

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND LIVELIHOODS: TACKLING THE ROOT CAUSES OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM IN THE LCB REGION



The Need for More Balanced Action: The crisis of violent extremism in Boko Haram is a multi-sectorial crisis, which requires a multi-sectoral, multi-level, and multi-stakeholder approach to stabilization. The recognition of this complexity is embedded in the RSS implementation framework, which highlights three interconnected clusters, namely:







Given this recognition, the second cluster (“development and humanitarian”) crucially speaks to the need for urgent actions that address the root causes of this complex security crisis, particularly poverty, human rights abuses, and climate insecurity. This urgent action requires an inclusive approach that prioritizes the security, development, humanitarian dimensions of the crisis in a more balanced manner. This is already recognized as a priority in the RSS and is also anchored within the AU’s Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals 2030, among other regional and international frameworks. The UNDP Regional Director for Africa, Ahunna Eziakonwa, summed up the complexity of the crisis perfectly when she said that there is a “triple threat” currently challenging the capacities of the four affected LCB countries in the pursuit of their security goals in the most affected areas: violence, the climate threat, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **Scaling-up Social Investments:**

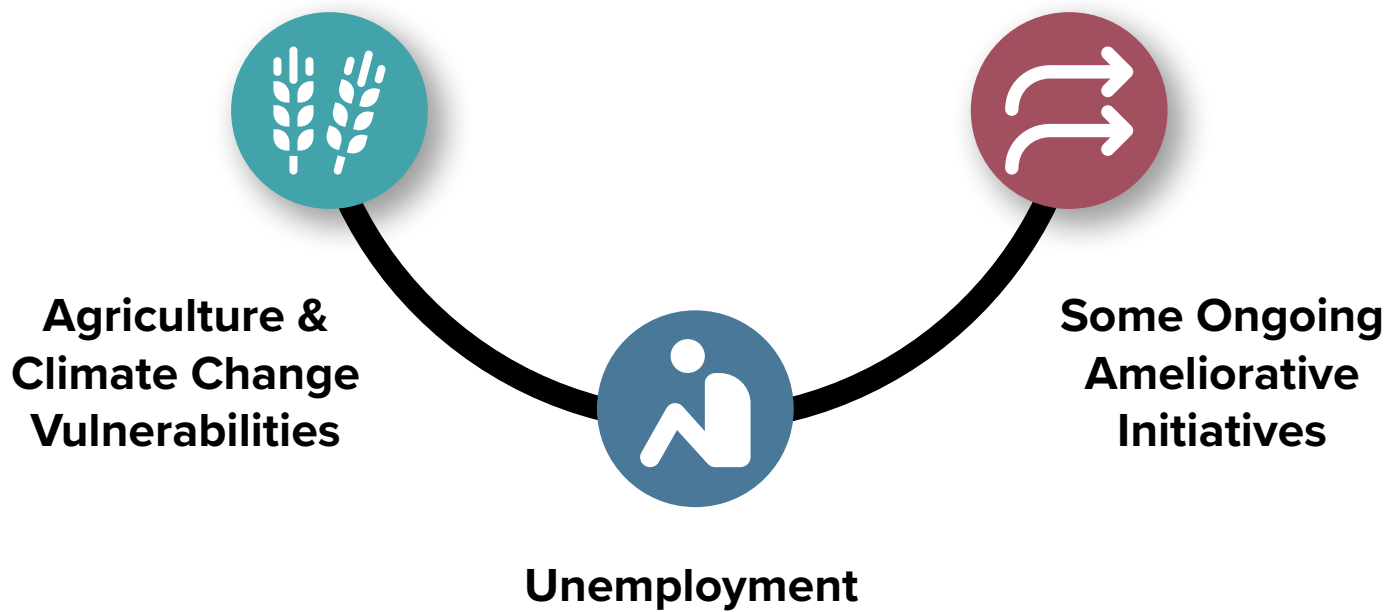
Throughout the Forum, participants acknowledged that there has been a relatively low investment in resources allocated to addressing human development challenges and the climate crisis in the Lake Chad region, as compared to some of the other aspects of the overall crisis in the region. Yet, these development and climate-related challenges crucially present prime conditions for radicalization. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these already critical challenges.

## **A Renewed Focus on Root Causes and Socio-Economic Revival:**

In the light of this, the Governors, along with their key bilateral, regional, and international partners renewed their commitment to addressing these root causes of the crisis. Their priority in this regard is to develop and expand community access to needed socio-economic services and infrastructure in the LCB, thus contributing to stabilization efforts through the pursuit of certain long-term sustainable goals. Achieving sustainable development requires an approach that not only recognizes the importance of the security dimension, but also the immense poverty and sense of socio-economic grievances present in local communities in the region.



**Key areas of targeted intervention identified at the Forum include:**



## **Agriculture & Climate Change Vulnerabilities**

Prior to the current crisis, the LCB was the food basin of the countries in the broader West and Central African region. However, the food sector in the area has been severely impacted by climate change (including drought and soil degradation), leading to food insecurity, all of which has contributed to community socio-economic depression and grievances, and exacerbated their vulnerability to violent extremism. The Governors emphasized that while some progress has been made in improving agricultural productivity in the affected areas, with hundreds of people in local communities being allocated land, much more funding is needed to revive access to means of livelihood, such as farming, fishing, and herding.

## **Unemployment**

The population of the countries and most affected communities in the Lake Chad Basin is predominantly young. Youth in this area suffer from a significant rate of unemployment and idleness, all of which contribute to prime conditions for their radicalization and recruitment into terrorist groups. Creating sustained opportunities for their education, professional skills training, and long-term employment will greatly help address this particular root cause of the crisis.

## **Some Ongoing Ameliorative Initiatives**

The Forum was informed of some newer initiatives designed to address this issues head on. One such initiative is the RESILAC (Inclusive Economic and Social Recovery around Lake Chad), a development initiative for the LCB funded by the French Development Agency and the European Union, which was established in 2017. The need for strong linkage between the RESILAC and RSS was highlighted to ensure that all partners working towards the stabilization of the region also support the core objectives of the RESILAC, which include promoting economic development, preserving social cohesion and providing institutional support to the authorities of Niger, Nigeria, Cameroon, and Chad. Another is PROLAC (Le projet pour la relance et le développement de la région du lac Tchad), a 170-million-dollar initiative funded by the World Bank to facilitate the coordination of development efforts in the Lake Chad Basin. PROLAC's core objective is to promote agricultural and other socio-economic activities while improving regional dialogue. This includes the creation of a regional platform for data and knowledge management, which will contribute to coordinating efforts for improving access to rural roads and public infrastructure. PROLAC activities directly contributes to RSS, therefore ensuring linkage between PROLAC and RSS is critical for monitoring and reporting of overall RSS implementation.

## Key Recommendations and Action Points

---

### LCB countries, their most affected states/territories, donors, and other RSS partners, should:

- ⇒ **01** | LCB states and all RSS partners should focus more of their efforts on capacity-building and training of local farmers in the context of climate change to address the rising food insecurity in the region (Pillar 6, Goal 22).
- ⇒ **02** | RESILC, and PROLAC should ensure alignment and linkage with RSS to ensure a coordinated approach in the monitoring and reporting of overall RSS implementation especially given that such both initiatives are designed to address the socio-economic root causes of conflict in the region (Pillar 6, Goal 22).
- ⇒ **03** | All RSS partners should swiftly and urgently scale-up and prioritize development funding and technical assistance to address the socio-economic root causes of the crisis in the region (Pillar 1, Goal 1; Pillar 6, Goal 22).
- ⇒ **04** | All RSS partners should ensure improved coordination of development projects, in order to avoid siloed efforts elaborated by a diverse range of actors. This means the continued and increased pooling of resources and ensuring the complementarity of development initiatives as well reporting of progress to RSS Secretariat (Pillar 1, Goals 1-4).
- ⇒ **05** | LCB countries, supported by their partners, should outline and/or implement local content policies when it comes to professional activities in the LCB to help address the unemployment crisis there (Pillar 7, Goals 26-31).



## CHAPTER FIVE

# EMPOWERMENT AND INCLUSION OF WOMEN AND YOUTH

////////////////////////////////////

**Historical Marginalization:** Women and youth are among the most populous and vulnerable actors in the Boko Haram affected region of the Lake Chad Basin. Yet they have often not been as effectively included in key governance processes related to the stabilization efforts in the region as possible. This is a major challenge, given that youth, who make up much of the population in the region, are also the key target of recruitment by violent extremist groups. Furthermore, women are often instrumentalized as weapons of war (through rape and kidnapping, for example), and are even further marginalized through such conflict-zone challenges as the increased incidence of sex work and loss of access to livelihoods, all the while carrying the burden of raising families in increasingly single-parent households.

**Increased Women and Youth Participation as a Priority:** The increased participation of women and youth in core RSS implementation and peacebuilding processes is therefore an immediate priority. In particular, it was noted that while there has been an increase in the participation of women and youth in the humanitarian and development components of RSS, their participation in the strategic and security aspects has been less significant. To create further opportunities for the empowerment and inclusion of women and youth in stabilization efforts, this participation gap needs to be addressed.

Key areas of targeted intervention identified at the Forum include:

**Enhanced development of socio-economic infrastructure and services:** To address their participation gap in RSS implementation processes, the creation or improvement of social centres catering to youth and women empowerment issues should be a focus in development projects. These development infrastructure and services should also be developed in a way that makes their connectivity with security processes clear.

**Education, Training and Professional Skills:** Enhancing the employability and employment of youth by enhancing their educational and professional skills is instrumental to the success of the DDRRR process. Specifically, the impartation of effective professional skills that will improve the youth employment rate will also contribute to the socio-economic reintegration of youth formerly associated with Boko Haram.

## Key Recommendations and Action Points

- ⇒ **01** | Enhance youth access to education, by diversifying the types of educational instruction available to them to include digital literacy courses, and targeting Islamic schools (Pillar 7, Goals 26 to 31).
- ⇒ **02** | Establish “Innovation Hubs” for young adults to help foster new professional and economic opportunities, by supporting the entrepreneurial pursuits of youth, and serve as centres for professional development and social integration/reintegration (Pillar 7, Goals 26-31).
- ⇒ **03** | Continue to develop scholarships and fellowships run by the Governors offices to cater to local youth at all levels of education (Pillar 7, Goals 26-31).
- ⇒ **04** | Support capacity-building of teachers and take measures to increase their motivation, through the provision and effective use of increased financial and technical resources (Pillar 7, Goals 26-31).
- ⇒ **05** | Increase their support to targeted technical and financial investments in enterprises and efforts led by women and youth in key socio-economic areas, including trade, agriculture, and herding (Pillar 7, Goals 26-31; Pillar 9, Goals 38 and 39).
- ⇒ **06** | Establish specific quotas for women and youth participation in key governance processes, to increase their representation and contribute to effective local ownership of the RSS process (Pillar 9, Goals 38 and 39).
- ⇒ **07** | Involve youth in the civil-military dialogue process overall to enhance buy-in of the youth to the RSS implementation process (Pillar 9, Goals 38 and 39).
- ⇒ **08** | Organize annual meetings for/by the youth in a separate forum than the Governors Forum, building on the gains of the Governors Forum and serving as an additional platform for facilitating their involvement in the RSS localization process (Pillar 9, Goal 38 and 39).
- ⇒ **09** | Strengthen partnerships between the LCBC and youth organizations, to foster meaningful dialogue between governing bodies and youth leaders, as well as elaborate concrete ways to support youth-led leadership in stabilization efforts (Pillar 9, Goals 38 and 39; Pillar 1, Goal 4).



CHAPTER SIX

# **BUILDING BRIDGES BETWEEN COMMUNITIES AND GOVERNMENTS – THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY**

////////////////////////////////////

**Past Efforts to Build Bridges:** Leading up to the Second Governor’s Forum in July 2019 Niamey Niger, the LCBC hosted the Regional Consultative Forum with representatives of civil society in June 2019 (the CSO Consultation). This involved women’s and youth organizations, as well as traditional and religious leaders and academics of the LCB. This CSO Consultation was designed to foster dialogue between all core actors, and to better understand the role of civil society in the stabilization process.





## **A Renewed Commitment by the Governors:**

At this third forum, Governors emphasized the continued importance of civil society in all aspects of the RSS implementation process, while reminding participants that civil society's contributions to peacebuilding efforts should be informed by the principle of cooperation and complementarity, which is one of the guiding principles of the RSS. Moreover, civil society's contribution to stabilization, recovery, and resilience in the LCB requires an inclusive approach to governance. In sum, while civil society is crucial to the efforts, there needs to be clear, transparent, and mutual accountability mechanisms in how civil society resources are deployed to support efforts.

## **A Trust Deficit:**

The main issue raised by all speakers in this regard is that there is a “trust deficit” between authorities and civil society actors. Effectively addressing this deficit and building a systematic and sustained trust-building process will fundamentally involve transparent information-sharing, as well as improved coordination of efforts between the various RSS actors.

## **The Role of Civil Society:**

The crucial need to enhance the participation and inclusion of women and youth, and that of civil society across the full cycle of TAPs implementation was recognized, as this was essential to the optimal success of the programs and projects undertaken. A critical outcome of the Forum was the need for stakeholders to reflect on post stabilization strategy toward recovery and community resilience and the needs to ensure the involvement of local civil society groups in co-creating long term interventions to ensure sustainability and promote locally owned process by both government at the local level and civil society groups.



## Key Recommendations and Action Points

In the light of RSS Pillar 5, Goal 20 and Pillar 9, Goals 38 and 39, it is recommended that:

### ⇒ 01 |

LCB countries, the LCBC, governors of their most affected states/territories and civil society actors should: (i) Ensure sustained trust-building processes through transparent information sharing with each other, at each level of intervention (including at the design stage). This will advance the inclusive approach to governance favoured by the RSS and can strengthen the foundation for civil society's engagement in stabilization efforts. (ii) Engage in dynamic, and continued consultations with each other, in order to build consensus at each stage of intervention, and establish clear, common goals of operation. This will contribute to increasing mutual accountability and transparency between civil society.

### ⇒ 02 |

LBC countries, the LCBC and governors of their most affected states/territories should: (i) Effectively implement the recently established regional civil society platform to further institutionalize the process of civil society engagement in the stabilization, peacebuilding and sustainable development process. This will only contribute to better coordination among civil society actors, as well as strengthen their overall efforts. (ii) Convene regular meetings between military, civil and humanitarian actors, as a way to enhance and institutionalize information sharing, for more effective, coordinated and transparent operations. (iii) Adapt the international frameworks for civil society participation in RSS implementation to local conditions. In the LCB context, this will, for example, include the recognition of the roles of traditional and religious leaders in the process, as well as the significance of vigilante groups in the reconciliation process.





African  
Union



3rd Meeting  
of the  
**Lake Chad Basin  
Governors' Forum**  
of the  
**Lake Chad Basin**



## CHAPTER SEVEN

# HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

As has been noted earlier, the humanitarian crisis across the Lake Chad basin is one of the world's most severe. As such, the provision of humanitarian assistance to the most affected communities in the region is universally understood as imperative.

**The Concept of Humanitarian Assistance:** The term 'humanitarian assistance' is today understood as the most prominent activity within the broader concept of 'humanitarian action,' the latter ranging from short-term relief to rehabilitation and reconstruction activities, and further to development cooperation, often even encompassing measures of disaster preparedness, prevention, and risk reduction . Humanitarian assistance activities in the narrower sense are referred to under a number of differing terms such as humanitarian aid, humanitarian relief, relief assistance, relief action, and often address all activities mentioned, excluding development assistance and cooperation. Humanitarian assistance is guided by the principles of impartiality and neutrality as having their legal basis in Art. 70 Geneva Conventions Additional Protocol I (1977) and respective customary international law, as well as the principle of independence. Humanitarian assistance thus comprises providing goods and services essential for the survival of those being directly affected by man-made or natural disasters. It may comprise material aid and/or the provision of certain services by humanitarian actors.

**The Goals of Humanitarian Assistance:** The fundamental objectives of humanitarian assistance are to prevent, reduce, mitigate and respond to threats against persons, groups and communities affected by on-going, imminent or future humanitarian crises; to reduce the vulnerabilities and increase the capacities of affected persons, groups and communities; to strengthen the capacity of the international humanitarian aid system to enhance efficiency, quality and effectiveness in reducing risks in on- going, imminent or future humanitarian crises. Humanitarian assistance further aims to enhance the safety, dignity and rights of people, and avoid exposing them to harm; ensure people's access to assistance according to their needs and without discrimination; assist people to recover from the physical and psychological effects of threatened or actual violence, coercion or deliberate deprivation; and help the victims claim their rights.

⇒ | **The Nature and Impact of the Humanitarian Crisis in the LCB Region:** During the two days meeting, the third LCB Governors' Forum highlighted the fact that the region has been severely impacted by the Boko Haram insurgency and other related conflicts. The impact of this crisis range from massive internal and cross-border displacement, the destruction of the social fabric and property, human rights abuses and disrupted public services, severe literacy deficits, economic crises, youth unemployment, and limitations on the capacities of government institutions to operate in the affected area. These direct consequences of the crisis have been exacerbated and rendered more complex by the incidence of increasingly frequent and severe weather events, and natural disasters, and the COVID-19 pandemic and many of the measures put in place to contain it. In this regard, the final joint communiqué of the Governors' Forum expressed the urgent need for collective efforts to effectively address and recover from the pandemic, as part of the overall strategy to address the multidimensional crisis in the region.

⇒ | **Applicable Norms:** The Forum recalled the UN Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2573 (2021) and S/RES/2475 (2019) on the protection of civilians in armed conflicts, stressing the particular impact that armed conflict has on women, children (including as refugees and internally displaced persons), and other civilians who may have specific vulnerabilities (including persons with disabilities and older persons), and the protection and assistance needs of all affected civilian populations. It reaffirmed that the protection of populations and communities encompasses all activities aimed at addressing violence, coercion, deliberate deprivation and abuse of persons, groups and communities in the context of humanitarian crises, in compliance with humanitarian principles and within the framework of international law, and in particular, international human rights law (IHRL), International Humanitarian Law (IHL), and Refugee Law.

⇒ | **Ameliorating Dependency on Humanitarian Assistance:** Despite the significant and urgent need for humanitarian assistance, the Forum recognized the need to ensure that humanitarian assistance frameworks and operations are, as much as possible, designed and implemented in ways that do not create or perpetuate dependency on humanitarian assistance among the populations of the IDP and refugee camps and local communities in the most affected states/territories in the region. This point implicates others discussed elsewhere in this section and report relating to the necessity for holistic program and project alignment, (HDP nexus approach) and the need to pay greater attention to local ownership and sustainability. It is also connected closely to the imperative of returning IDPs and refugees to their communities of origin, based on the principles of voluntary, safe and dignified return.

⇒ | **The Imperative of Local Ownership of the Humanitarian Assistance Framework/Operations:** The Forum noted that, although humanitarian assistance is also crucial to prevent and address the triple threats of violent extremism, climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic in the region, as the RSS recognizes, the primary responsibility for protecting the life, health and property of people within the affected regions and for maintaining the essential public services rests with the States and the Governors, and that humanitarian assistance from the international community can only supplement these efforts.

⇒ | **The Necessity for Holistic Program and Project Alignment:** As such, as was discussed earlier in this report (Chapter 2), the Forum agreed that more attention urgently needs to be paid to aligning much more, the content and sequencing of both internal and external interventions made by all HDP actors to the development and related priorities and plans of the each of the affected state/territories and countries. There also need to be such alignment to the needs of the targeted communities. This is important if the impact of RSS TAPs implementation is to be optimized in the affected states/territories, while showing greater respect for the need for local ownership, and augmenting program and project sustainability in these contexts.

⇒ | **The Need for Independent, Third Party, Monitoring of External Actor Activities:** As important an issue that was considered by the Forum is the necessity for improved governance arrangements to be put in place not merely in regard to the RSS activities of the affected state/territories or countries, but also at the external HDP actor end. These would include measures to ensure greater program and project transparency and accountability. To this end, mechanisms for independent, third party, monitoring of external HDP and other actor activities in the affected areas should be quickly established and made operational.



⇒ | **Greater and More Effective Coordination:** The Forum also highlighted the fact that the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance requires a comprehensive, multi-sectoral and coordinated set of national and cross-border humanitarian efforts for long-term stabilisation, recovery and resilience in the LCB regions from key stakeholders at both regional, national, and territorial levels.

## Key Recommendations and Action Points

In the light of RSS pillar 4, Goals 13-16, it is recommended that:

- ⇒ **01** | Humanitarian actors should better align their programs with the humanitarian, peace, and sustainable development priorities and plans of the local authorities in the countries and states/territories in which they operate; both in terms of their substance and sequencing.
- ⇒ **02** | Humanitarian actors should always inform, and discuss with, national and state/territorial authorities about their plans and programs before undertaking them.
- ⇒ **03** | All RSS actors should work to immediately establish mechanisms for independent, third party, monitoring of external HDP and other actor humanitarian assistance activities in the affected areas, and these mechanisms should be quickly made operational.
- ⇒ **04** | The Governors of the most affected states/territories and humanitarian actors should work closely to assist affected populations to better ensure that they have access to basic lifesaving assistance, including food and non-food items, clean water, health, and sanitation support regardless of their respective areas of settlement.
- ⇒ **05** | LCB Countries, their most affected states/territories, the LCBC, donors, and humanitarian actors should ensure that displaced persons are supported in returning to their communities of origin based on the principles of voluntary, safe and dignified return.
- ⇒ **06** | All RSS partners should ensure effective and full implementation of the Abuja Action Statement of 2016 on protection.
- ⇒ **07** | LCB countries, their most affected states/territories, the LCBC, donors, and humanitarian actors should cooperate to better provide affected populations access to quality psychosocial counselling services, and to ramp up “community cohesion and trust building” interventions in the most affected areas.
- ⇒ **08** | The LCBC should organize a high-level dialogue among humanitarian, development and security actors to discuss lessons learned so far from the implementation of humanitarian assistance programs and projects in the region.









## CHAPTER EIGHT

# **CIVIL-MILITARY COOPERATION**

////////////////////////////////////

Despite the progress recorded in the fight against terrorism and implementation of the RSS, the crisis in the LCB has not abated, and still poses security and destabilisation risks to the affected countries and peoples. The Governors' Forum thus highlighted the need to redouble efforts to completely eliminate the terrorist group. The Forum commended the efforts of the national and sub-national governments, and the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), in the fight against terrorist groups in the region which has significantly degraded the operational capabilities of these terrorist groups and enhanced civilian protection. It also recognised the AU's unwavering commitment and support to the MNJTF as highlighted in the Communiqué of the 973rd meeting of the African Union Peace and Security Council on the Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the Multinational Joint Task Force against Boko Haram. Yet, it was noted that much more remains to be done to stabilize the region, especially through improving the effectiveness of the security forces involved in the fight against the terrorists. The Forum agreed that improved civil-military relations is a key requirement for such improved effectiveness.





## **A Trust Deficit and the Building of Mutual Trust:**

Good relations and cooperation between the military and communities are critical to optimizing the latter's ability to stem the tide of violence in the region and facilitate humanitarian aid and development. Yet, a persistent mutual mistrust between civilians and the military exists in the region, one that is complicated by the punitive actions often taken by the terrorist groups that operate there against community members who cooperate with the security forces. For their own part, soldiers also tend to be suspicious of those members of the community they suspect of aiding and abetting the terrorist groups. In turn, many communities distrust the military for making blanket accusations against them for allegedly harbouring persons who are suspected to be members or collaborators of one of the terrorist groups, resulting in arbitrary arrests and detention, forced evictions, and extrajudicial killings. Some military strategies against Boko Haram have had unintended consequences that also deepen community mistrust.

## **The Role of CIMIC Cells:**

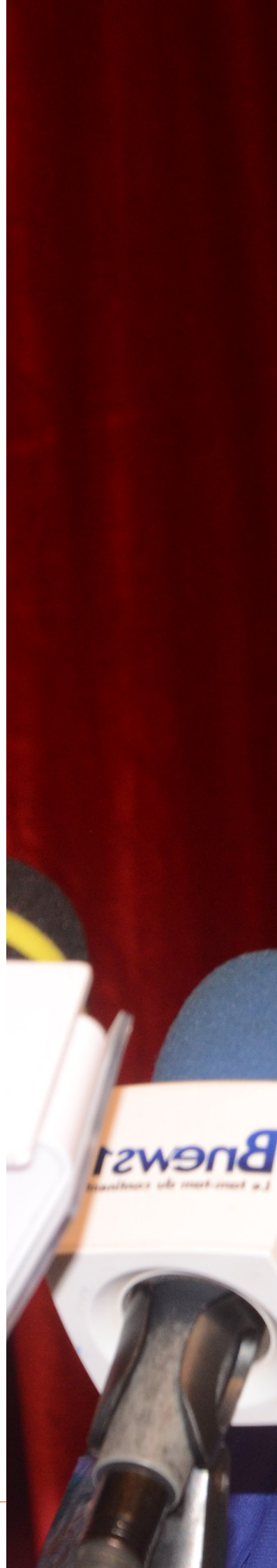
The Governors' Forum recognises that one of the central components of the RSS is the LCBC-MNJTF's Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) Cell. It is also a key instrument for building trust across the civil-military divide. The process of establishing the Cell through broad consultations with MNJTF and the African Union represents a new and positive dynamic and a progressive approach to ensuring civilian oversight of MNJTF CIMIC activities. The main objectives of the Cell are to ensure such adequate civilian oversight of CIMIC activities and to support MNJTF to better cooperate and coordinate with humanitarian actors operating in the region. Another objective is to strengthen weakened relationships between MNJTF and affected communities to improve communication, rebuild trust and ensure information-sharing between communities and MNJTF through appropriate and trusted information protocols. The last objective is a strategic articulation of the role of vigilante groups as potential sources of local knowledge, intelligence and manpower and set out to help organise them, with the assistance of local and traditional authorities. The overarching end goal is to ensure the coordinated planning, sequencing, and coordination of initiatives for extending humanitarian access, safe return of refugees, and secure the re-opening of borders. These activities support human mobility, cross-border trade, and other relevant activities.



## Key Recommendations and Action Points

In the light of Pillar 2, Goals 5 and 6; Pillar 5, Goals 19 and 20; Pillar 9, Goals 38 and 39, it is recommended that:

- ⇒ **01** | RSS actors should re-double their efforts to build trust and strengthen cooperation between civil and military actors in the region through periodic high-level meetings.
  
- ⇒ **02** | LCB countries, their most affected states/territories, donors and other RSS partners should ensure that, at the state/territorial and local level, the LCBC-MNJTF's Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) Cell should focus on support MNJTF to strengthen its relationship communities and humanitarian actors.









CHAPTER NINE

# COMMUNITY-BASED RECONCILIATION AND REINTEGRATION OF EX-FIGHTERS

////////////////////////////////////

**The Importance of Effective DDRRR:** The Governors’ Forum noted the emerging trend in the region of the increasing surrender of ex-Boko Haram fighters, and the urgent necessity for them to be fully demobilised and deradicalized before rehabilitated and reintegrated into the community, and called on LCB States, institutions, and partners to take steps to meet this challenge, including through the provision of the necessary human and material resources.

**The Normative Framework:** The Governors’ Forum recalled UN SC Resolution 2396 (2017), which calls on relevant stakeholders to “develop and implement comprehensive and tailored prosecution, rehabilitation, and reintegration strategies and protocols.” It also recalled UN Security Council Resolution S/RES/2349 on Peace and Security in Africa, recognizing that security, development and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing, and are vital to an effective and comprehensive approach to countering terrorism, stabilisation and reconciliation. This resolution also encourages governments in the LCB region, in collaboration with regional and sub-regional organisations, relevant United Nations entities and other relevant stakeholders, to develop and implement a regional and coordinated strategy that encompasses transparent, inclusive, and human rights-compliant disarmament, demobilisation, de-radicalisation, rehabilitation and reintegration initiatives.





**Regional Harmonisation:** The draft CBRR policy builds on the work led by the Borno State Governor on reconciliation and reintegration and focusing on ensuring a community-centred approach to reconciliation and reintegration of ex-Boko Haram associates. The Policy aims to foster a common approach to community-based reconciliation and reintegration across the affected territories and countries to ensure the juxtaposition of formal judicial process with community approach to ensure full community ownership and acceptance of the reconciliation and reintegration process.

**Categorisation:** Discussions and contributions around the draft policy focus on the needs to pay particular attention to the treatment and reintegration of women and children formerly associated with Boko Haram. Disaggregating and categorising the different persons associated with Boko Haram is critical in the process flow in a way that recognises situational complexities that surround persons' involvement with Boko Haram.

**Mainstreaming Transitional and Traditional in Criminal Justice Systems:** The Forum highlighted the urgent need to ensure that transitional and traditional justice systems of the affected communities are integrated into the criminal justice system for reintegration of ex-Boko Haram associates to ensure dual accountability to both formal and informal structures. Concerns were raised by Governors regarding the practical dilemma of reintegrating ex-Boko Haram associates to communities where they might have committed crimes without proper and adequate involvement of the communities. As governments of the affected territories continue to receive ex-Boko Haram associates who continue to surrender in their numbers, there are questions on the willingness of communities to reconcile and allow for the reintegration. Transitional and traditional justice mechanisms can complement the official state justice system in a manner that promotes community recognition, acceptance and reduces changes of stigmatization of ex and repentant associates.

The Forum recognises that traditional and religious authorities could play a very crucial and complex role in the fragmented and plural field of justice. Therefore, a synergy of efforts between state entities and traditional authorities would be the best guarantee for the sustainability of local mechanisms to organize reconciliation efforts, monitoring initiatives, and support healing, recovering, transformation and full reintegration.



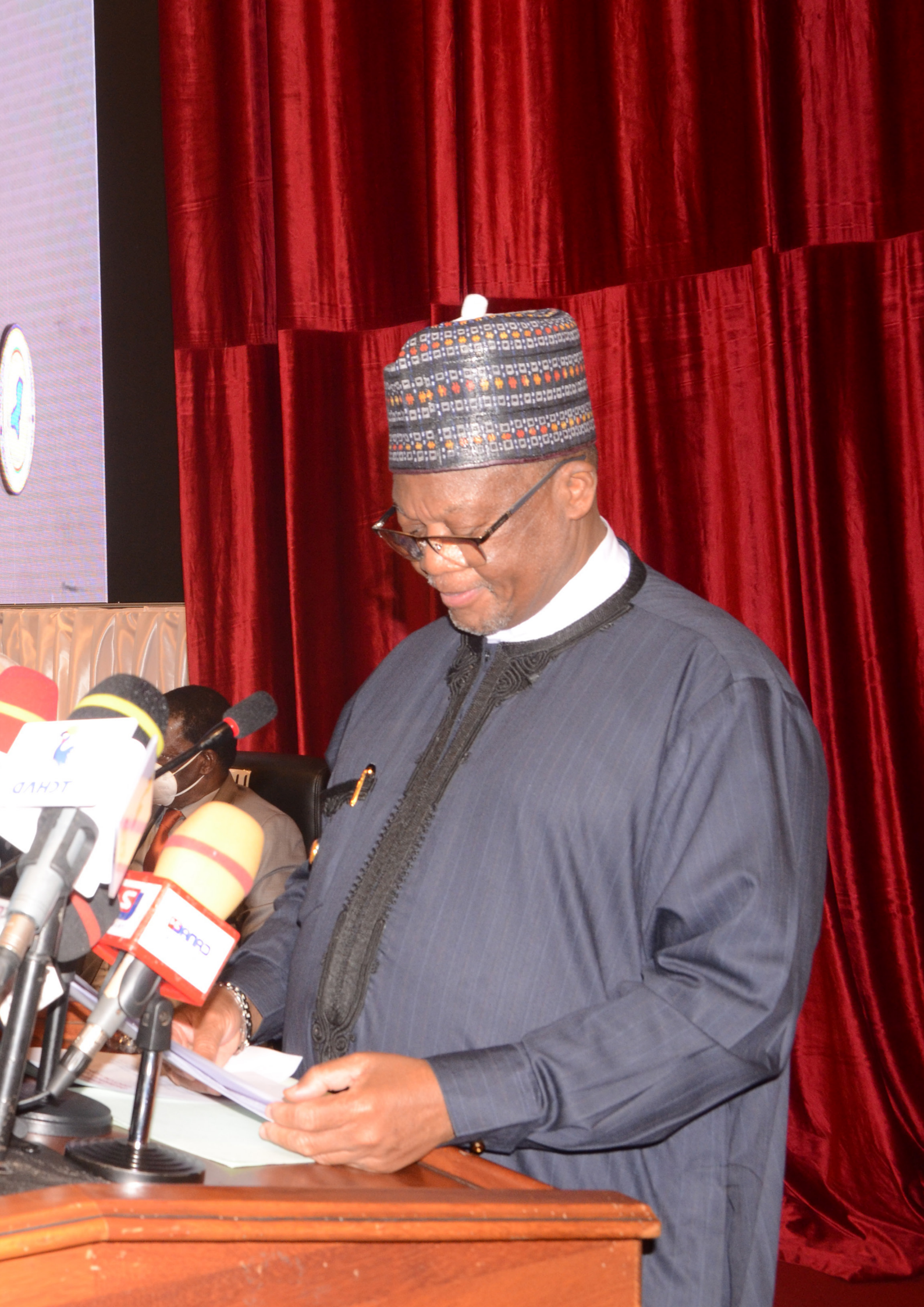
## Key Recommendations and Action Points

In the light of the RSS Pillar 3 Goals 9-12 it is recommended that:

- ⇒ **01** | The RSS Secretariat should prioritize and commission a study on how traditional and transitional justice could be mainstreamed into reconciliation and reintegration process in line with RSS Pillar 3 Goal 10. The analysis should better inform the role and consideration of women's and youth rights in traditional transitional and restorative justice systems
  
- ⇒ **02** | LCB countries, their most affected states/territories, the LCBC and all RSS partners should ensure the finalisation of the draft policy, ensure its domestication and operationalization at the territorial levels.
  
- ⇒ **03** | All RSS partners should take steps to ensure coordinated and integrated approach to supporting DDDR/SPRR process in the Lake Chad Basin region









CHAPTER TEN

# **POLITICAL COOPERATION, PARTNERSHIPS AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES FOR 2022 AND BEYOND**



In the light of the deliberations at, and decisions of, this third Forum, certain key messages about the imperative for stronger political cooperation and partnership came to the fore, and a number of strategic priorities for the 2021-2022 period and beyond emerged. They are as follows:

**The Continued Strong Commitment of RSS Donors and other Partners:** Various partners highlighted their continued interest in, and commitment to, the implementation of the RSS, and the nature and extent of their support to this process. Donors discussed the various kinds of support they have already extended to the countries, states/territories, institutions, civil society and peoples of the LCB region. Such support has included significant responses to the most urgent needs of the peoples of the region in the areas of the provision of military equipment to enhance security, basic services and livelihoods, and physical infrastructure.

**Specific Strategic Messages and Commitments:** Donors and other RSS partners highlighted important strategic messages at the Forum, while making certain specific commitments. The European Union (EU), represented by Emanuela Claudia Del Re, noted that it is a strong RSS backer and supported the first Governors' Forum and will continue to support peacebuilding efforts in the region. It also highlighted the importance of partnership that include civil society, good governance, local ownership, attention to the humanitarian, development, and security nexus, and cross-border cooperation for the success of such peacebuilding efforts. It noted it supports emergency protection and climate adaptation actions in Borno state of Nigeria and supports war veterans in Niger. The EU also noted that it plans to focus its strong support going forward on the implementation of three RSS pillars. Germany, the Co-Chair of the International Support Group (ISG), represented by Heike Thiele, noted that the RSS is a prime example of an African-led initiative and that the Governor's forum is key to its refinement and effective implementation; calling on all stakeholders to fully embrace the role of the Governors as the custodians of the TAPs. While pledging the ISG's continued strong financial and technical support, she also called on all actors in the region to fully respect human rights and international humanitarian rules. Calling for a shared vision and deepened/expanded partnership for security, peacebuilding and sustainable development in the region, one which is more attentive to the need for local ownership; for more attention to be paid to the root causes of the conflict in the region; and for the redoubling of efforts to safely return displaced persons to their communities, Ahunna Eziakonwa, UNDP Regional Director for Africa, highlighted the fact that UNDP will continue to show commitment to the LCB region through livelihood support and support in recovery efforts. The UN Special Representative for West Africa and the Sahel (SRSG-UNOWAS), Mahamat Saleh Annadif, noted that the UN has scaled up support to the implementation of RSS and pledged to support the efforts of the governors in promoting security, peace and sustainable development in the region. He stressed that the military effort alone is not enough and must be complemented with livelihood support. He also called for more effort to be made to mainstream youth and women participation in the peace and development process. As has already been noted elsewhere in this report, the World Bank highlighted its strong commitment to supporting stabilization in the region with its, multi-million dollar, PROLAC project designed to facilitate the coordination of development efforts in the Lake Chad Basin. The UN Special Representative for Central Africa (SRSG-UNOCA), Francois Lounceny Fall, also highlighted the importance of political cooperation and sustained collaboration and coordination among all RSS partners and emphasised the need to scale up the capacity of MNJTF, the resources available to implement the TAPs and scale of humanitarian assistance. He also noted the necessity for multi-sectoral development efforts; the need for more resources and flexible working pattern; the need to address the grievances that the terrorist groups leverage to advance their agendas; the circulation of arms in the region which exacerbates the crisis.

**Increased Resources for TAPs Implementation:** The expansion and sustainability of funding for RSS/TAPs implementation was also highlighted as of immediate priority. Without a significant increase in the provision of funding, it will be difficult to achieve key RSS goals, including as articulated in the TAPs. The implementation of the TAPs and systematically monitoring progress made toward the achievement of its more specific and localized objectives, were also identified as extremely important in the near to mid-term. Thus, the deepening of the localization and local ownership of the RSS (including through the TAPs), was seen as imperative and urgent to sustain the momentum and increase the chances of the success in the stabilization, peacebuilding, and sustainable development of the region.

**Exchange and Dissemination of Best Practices:** The continuation, and scaling up, of the exchanges of best practices among the governors and by various other actors within the region was viewed by the Forum as key to a more effective implementation of the TAPs and the RSS. The continuation of such practices will facilitate cross-border and interactor learning, with each sharpening and improving the other's capacity and ability to advance RSS goals, programs and projects.

**Significantly More Resources are Urgently Required by the MNJTF:** Nevertheless, speakers at the Forum agreed that there is still an urgent need for donors to provide more resources for the implementation of the RSS (and the TAPs), including through the fulfilment of existing pledges. In particular, the Forum noted the imperative need to urgently make available much more military hardware, and other kinetic and non-kinetic capabilities, to the MNJTF. In particular, the Commander of the MNJTF highlighted the need for his force to receive significantly more explosives-containment equipment, many more armoured personnel carriers, far more amphibious and other naval capabilities in order to clear remnants of Boko Haram fighters from their bases on certain islands in the Lake Chad, and its own sizeable fleet of dedicated fleet of strike aircraft. The Commander also called for more training in human rights and international humanitarian law for troops





...serving on this joint force, more civil-military cooperation (CIMIC) activities to strengthen understanding and effectiveness between actors who are positioned on either side of that axis; and the inclusion of the Office of the SRSO-UNOWAS in more RSS organs and meetings to bolster the impact of their valuable perspective in RSS decision-making and implementation.

**More Support to Vigilante Committees:** The Forum also identified the need for donors and other partners to agree to, and prioritize, the provision of much more material and other support to the various local vigilante committees that operate in the most affected states/territories. It was pointed out that these committees perform a crucial security function and are of great assistance to the national military forces and the MNJTF. Its members tend to leave their livelihoods as farmers and herders, and sacrifice time which they would otherwise spend with their families, in order to help secure their various communities. Without more support being extended to them, these committees are likely to lose many of their members who will likely return to their previous occupations in order to earn a livelihood.

**Better Operational Coordination among Military Forces:** Another important issue that the Forum identified as key to the achievement of the RSS goal of building and utilizing multi-stakeholder partnerships in order to advance other RSS objectives in the region (Pillar 1, Goals 1 and 3) is the need for better operational coordination between the various national military contingents fighting Boko Haram and the MNJTF. This will streamline the utilization of scarce security resources in the region and lead to more effectiveness in the fight against – which are of great assistance to the national military forces and the MNJTF – Boko Haram and ISWAP perpetrated terrorism, with a cascading positive impact on peacebuilding and sustainable development in the region.

**More Focus on Improving Livelihoods:** It was also recognized that there is a need to swiftly expedite, expand and deepen the implementation of the RSS pillar(s) that focus on resilience and improving livelihoods. Given the significant contribution of poverty and economic insecurity to the generation and persistence of the crisis in the LCB, this will – in turn – strongly support and increase the chances of success of the overall effort to ensure security, peace, and development in the area.

**Deepening and Expanding Local Ownership:** Despite the strength of the existing partnerships in the region, the Forum identified the deepening and expanding of local ownership of the entire RSS implementation





process as an imperative of immediate concern to the leaders and peoples of the region. The Forum agreed that, as was highlighted by the UNDP Regional Director for Africa, it is time to empower and advance local leadership, and for foreign RSS donors/partners to stand behind and not in front of local actors.

**Greater Inclusion of Women, Youth and Civil Society:** The greater inclusion of women, youth, and civil society actors across the full cycle of design to implementation of programs and projects was viewed by the Forum as an important way to achieve these local ownership and sustainable governance goals and advance the successful implementation of the RSS.

**Building More Civil/Military Understanding and Trust:** It was agreed that there was an urgent need going forward to make more effort to build greater understanding and trust between civilians in the region and the military forces fighting Boko Haram and ISWAP there. Without such trust, the security and peace that must undergird the success of the effort to implement other aspects of the RSS in the region will be much more difficult to achieve.

**Greater Transparency and Accountability:** Along these lines, and has already been discussed elsewhere in this report, the Forum noted the imperative for greater transparency and accountability on the part of all foreign humanitarian actors who work in the LCB region. It was recognized that there was a need to reconceptualize and expand the very understanding of good governance itself as it applies to the region – including in the sense that the well-accepted requirements of accountability and transparency need to be understood more holistically as applying to both local and external actors in the LCB region.

**Gratitude to Donors and other Partners:** The Forum expressed the deep gratitude of the peoples and governments of the LCB region to all RSS partners for their abiding commitment to the security, peacebuilding, and sustainable development region, even before and since the inception of RSS implementation. There was widespread agreement that existing RSS partnerships remain strong. Many donors have already provided significant resources toward the implementation of the RSS, other partners (including the AU and UNDP) have made their technical capabilities readily available, and some have since indicated that a scaling up of their interventions and activities in the region was underway or forthcoming, and inter-partner communication and collaboration has now become much more structured and regular.



## Key Recommendations and Action Points

In the light of the RSS Pillar 3 Goals 9-12 it is recommended that:

- ⇒ **01** | All RSS partners (especially the LCB States, sub-national states/territories, the LCBC, the African Union, the ISG, and civil society) should swiftly scale-up their provision of resources and technical capabilities to local actors working to implement the RSS (Pillar 1, Goals 1,3 and 4; Pillar 2, Goals 5 and 6).
- ⇒ **02** | All partners, in particular LCB States, the LCBC and donors, should scale up the provision of the necessary military hardware and other resources to the MNJTF (Pillar 2, Goals 5 and 6).
- ⇒ **03** | LCB countries and their sub-national states/territories, the RSS Steering Committee, the LCBC, donors, and all other RSS partners, need to strengthen in a coordinated way, the linkages between the RSS and the Regional Strategy for the Sahel. Along these lines, the LCBC and the RSS Steering Committee should ensure the inclusion of representatives of the Office of the SRSG-UNOWAS in all RSS organs and meetings (Pillar 1, Goal 3).











## CONCLUSION



The third Governors Forum enabled the governors from the Lake Chad Basin and RSS partners to come together and discuss the progress made towards the implementation of the RSS, while collectively identifying areas and opportunities for more concerted efforts to further stabilise and develop the region.

Despite the remaining challenges, the security situation in the Lake Chad region has markedly improved. There is, however, still a need to swiftly upscale the provision of resources to the MNJTF and for RSS/TAPs implementation in general. Another urgent priority is to increase trust between the civil society and the military. The Forum agreed that simply adopting military responses without resolving

the structural or root causes of the violence will not end the crisis violence or ensure that people who have fled their homes will return even when security improves.

The Forum acknowledged that many public and private infrastructure, such as health centres, schools and houses, have been reconstructed or built, and services restored in many areas. This has improved local standards of living and aided the recovery process. More displaced people are now returning to their locations of origin with access to basic services, improving their quality of life.

Many returnees lack the financial resources to rebuild their lives in their local communities after return.





Improving access to land, supporting agriculture and trade, and supporting other livelihood opportunities can encourage return and reintegration and ensure that returnees are less reliant on humanitarian assistance. Restoring the Lake Chad's hydraulic capacity and improving farmers resilience to climate change can improve livelihoods and strengthen local adaptation to climate change. More work is also needed to improve basic and digital literacy, as well as entrepreneurial skills education, in the affected areas.

While the RSS has made progress in making stabilization interventions pro-youth and gender sensitive, women's and youth participation has not yet been adequately mainstreamed in RSS

implementation, and this could be strengthened. This is particularly important in ensuring that the structural barriers to participatory governance are recognised and ensuring that the disproportionate impact of Boko Haram on youth and women is recognised and addressed.

RSS partners committed to providing continued financial and technical support to the efforts being made by LCB countries, the governors and other RSS partners, to provide a lasting solution to the region's instability in a collaborative, coordinated and sustainable manner.



3rd Meeting  
of the  
**Lake Chad Basin  
Governors' Forum**  
of the  
**Lake Chad Basin  
Commission (LCBC)**

In Partnership with

