

**FEASIBILITY STUDY ON
COMMUNITY-CENTERED RESILIENCE-BUILDING
IN NORTHEASTERN NIGERIA AND NORTHERN
CAMEROON
FOR CARITAS GERMANY**



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ACTION LOCALE POUR UN DEVELOPPEMENT PARTICIPATIF ET AUTOGERE (ALDEPA)
IN CAMEROON**

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AA	Action Aid
AAH	Action Against Hunger/Action Contre la Faim
ACADIR	Association Camerounaise pour le Dialogue Interreligieux
ACF	Action Contre la Faim/Action Against Hunger
AFDP	Allamin Foundation for Peace and Development
AGUF	Agaji Global Unity Foundation
AHI	Action Health Incorporated
AHSF	Albarka Health Spring Foundation
ALDEPA	Action Locale pour un Développement Participatif et Autogéré
ALIMA	The Alliance for International Medical Action
ALVF-EN	Association de Lutte Contre Les Violences Faites Aux Femmes
BAY	Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe states
BIR	Brigade d'Intervention Rapide/Rapid Intervention Bataillon
BMZ	German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development
BOWDI	Borno Women Development Initiative
BSADP	Borno State Agriculture Development Programme
CA	Christian Aid
CADEPI	Cellule d'Appui au Développement local participative intégré
CAFOD	Catholic Agency for Overseas Development
CBI	Care Best International
CCDRN	Centre for Community Development and Research Network
CCFN	Catholic Caritas Foundation of Nigeria
CDHI	Chabash Development and Health Initiative
CMM	Caritas Maroua-Mokolo
COHEB	Community Humanitarian Emergency Board International
COOPI	Cooperazione Internazionale
COWACDI	Concern for Women and Children Development Foundation
CPPLI	Child Protection and Peer Learning Initiative
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DHCBI	Damnaish Human Capacity Building Initiative
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
EFA	Education Fights AIDS International
EYN	Ekklisiyar Yan' uwa a Nigeria
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
FGD	focus group discussion
FHI360	Family Health International
FINDEF	Finpact Development Foundation
FNPHI	Federal Neuro-Psychiatric Hospital
FREE	Foundation for Refugee Economic Empowerment
FSACI	First Step Action for Children Initiative
GBV	gender-based violence
GISCR	Grassroots Initiative for Strengthening Community Resilience
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GPON	Goal Prime Organisation Nigeria
GRA	Grassroots Researchers Association
GREENCODE	Green Concern for Development
GZDI	Goggoji Zumunchi Development Initiative
HH	household
HHI	household interview
HLI	Hallmark Leadership Initiative
HMB	Hospital Management Board
HRAF	Hope and Rural Aid Foundation
IAI	Integrated Aid Initiative

ICDSO	Inter Community Development Social Organization
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IDS	Intercommunity Development Social Organization
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IMC	International Medical Corps
IOM	International Office of Migration
IRC	International Rescue Committee
ISWAP	Islamic State Western Africa Province
JAS	Jama'atu Ahl al-Sunna l-il-Da'wa wa-l-Jihad (= Boko Haram)
JDF	Jireh Doo Foundation
JDPC	Justice Development and Peace Commission
JDPH	Justice Development Peace and Health Programme
JRS	Jesuit Refugee Service
KII	key-informant interview
LBDI	Life at Best Development Initiative
LESGO	Life Saving Grassroots Organization
LGA	Local Government Area
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
MC	Mercy Corps
MDF	Mary Dinah Foundation
MdM	Médecins du Monde
MEAL	monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning
MINADER	Ministère de l'Agriculture et du Développement Rural
MINTP	Ministère des Travaux Publics
MLGECAB	Ministry of Local Government and Emirate Council Affairs Borno
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
NBA	Nigeria Bar Association
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid
NEYIF	North East Youth Initiative Forum
NFI	non-food items
NGO	non-governmental organization
NICDF	Ngarawa Initiative for Community Development Foundation
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
NRM	Nkafamiya Rescure Mission
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PC	Public Concern
PESAEC	Réseau d'animateurs pour l'éducation des communautés
PI	Plan International
PPI	Positive Planet International
PUI	Première Urgence Internationale
RHHF	Royal Heritage Health Foundation
RIDEV	Research Institute for Development
RoHI	Restoration of Hope Initiative
RRI	Relief Rescue Initiative
SC	Street Child
SCI	Save the Children International
SFCG	Search for Common Ground
SHO	Salient Humanitarian Organization
SI	Solidarité Internationale
SiCF	Sirri Care Foundation
SILC	small internal lending communities
SMOH	State Ministry of Health
SMoWASD	State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development
SOSCVN	SOS Children's Villages Nigeria
SPHCDA	State Primary Health Care Development Agency

SUBEB	State Universal Basic Education Board
TCDI	Taimako Community Development Initiative
TDH	Terre des Hommes
TKC	The Kukah Centre
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
VOT	village observation tour
VSLA	village savings and loans association
WASH	water, sanitation and hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme
YIPDI	Youth Integrated for Positive Development Initiative
YOSEMA	Yobe State Emergency Management Agency
YSPHCMB	Yobe State Primary Health Care Management Board
ZSF	Zireenza Support Foundation

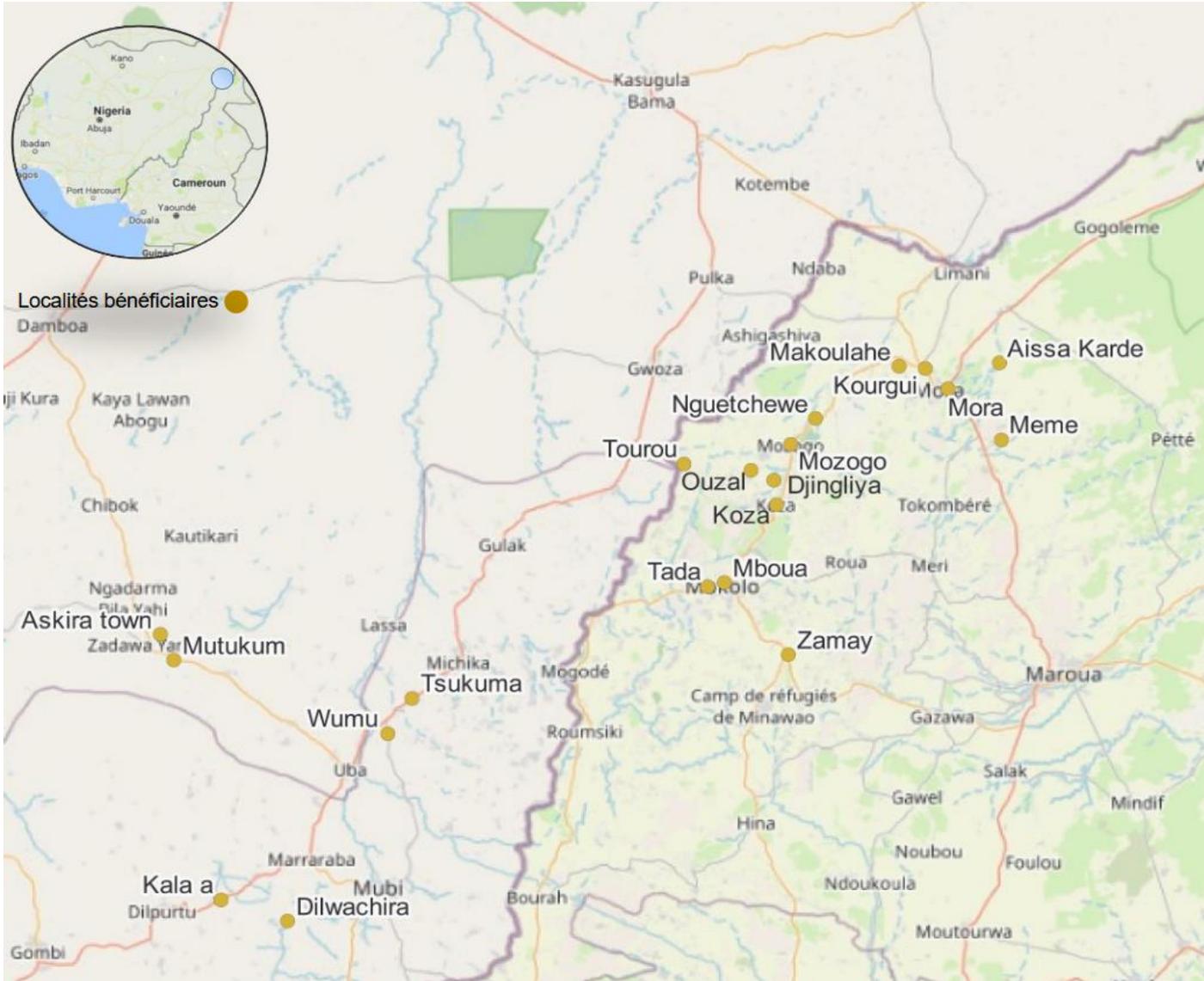


Figure 1: Map of the Research Areas in Nigeria and Cameroon

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background: Insecurity, Protection, and Food Insecurity

Since 2011, armed conflicts have ravaged Northeastern Nigeria and the Far North of Cameroon. They have caused great suffering and undermined resilience. The best-known armed group is Boko Haram. The military forces of Nigeria and Cameroon have driven Boko Haram North and it has split into several groups that sometimes compete with each other. Less known, but still deadly conflicts, include those between pastoralists and agriculturalists, and theft, extortion, and kidnapping for ransom by gangs. In addition, generational, gender-based, political, and religious tensions weaken communities. Worsening climate change and the internal displacement of approximately 2 million people further compound insecurity and poverty. In most local communities, government services barely function or are absent, protection is puny, and food security is low. Many people only have one meal a day at the end of the hunger gap.

Caritas Germany and its three partners—the Justice Development and Peace Commission (JDPC) in Maiduguri, in Northeastern Nigeria, and Caritas Maroua-Mokolo (CMM), and *Action Locale pour un Développement Participatif et Autogéré* (ALDEPA) in Northern Cameroon—have implemented emergency programs since 2015. In particular those areas, where Boko Haram groups have been driven away or weakened, are now slowly stabilizing so that a more transitional program toward a higher degree of resilience is both feasible and needed.

Study Objectives

The aim of this feasibility study is to support the design of this transitional aid project by providing insights on five selected locations in Northern Adamawa State and one in Borno State, in respectively the Hong, Michika, and Askira/Uba local government areas (LGAs), in Nigeria and six locations in the *Extrême Nord* region of Cameroon, in particular in the *Départements* of Mayo-Sava and Mayo-Tsanaga. The insights from this study will also be shared with external stakeholders in both countries, including the humanitarian clusters and state institutions, to enhance advocacy of the Caritas Confederation. In sum, this study has three objectives:

1. Provide an analysis to support the development of an early transition project in Nigeria (Adamawa State) and Cameroon (*Extrême Nord*), slated to run from 2022 to 2026.
2. Provide an analysis to inform Caritas Germany's and its partners' transitional aid programming in Northeast Nigeria and Northern Cameroon in general.
3. Provide insight into the risks and community - and partner-based response strategies in Northeastern Nigeria and Northern Cameroon, to inform Caritas Germany's and its partners' humanitarian strategy and advocacy activities.

This study is part of a larger set of programs by Caritas Germany and its partners that, for instance, also include humanitarian action and ending gender-based violence (GBV).

Methods

In January and February 2022, we prepared the field study with desk research and meetings with Caritas Germany and its three local partner organizations, as well as two research bodies, The Kukah Center (TKC) and Léopold Mamtsai's research team. Field research took place from 23 February to 26 March in both research areas.

We used four data collection methods, namely Focus Group Discussions (FGD), Household Interviews (HHI), Key Informant Interviews (KII), and Village Observation Tours (VOT). We created separate semi-structured questionnaires for the FGDs, HHIs, and KIIs (See Appendix). As the questions were open-ended, we were able to ask more probing and specific follow-up questions during the FGDs, HHIs and KIIs. For Cameroon, we translated the questionnaires into French and we made slight changes in response to the local context.

In the villages, we carried out FGDs with men, women, and youths. After a few days, the research team also split the youth FGDs in male and female ones, because both groups expressed different needs and experiences. With the HHIs, we attempted to interview a broad array of respondents, such as young farmers, persons with a disability, and widowers and widows, to reflect the diversity of the communities. We also carried out KIIs with staff members from the three partner organizations and other organizations active in both research areas. During the VOTs, we observed the houses, workplaces, fields, tools, boreholes and puts, and storage areas of the villagers.

The population faces a lack of access to land, social services, water, wood, education, and jobs. Social cohesion among men and women, old and young, as well as among the different religious denominations is also in decline but can be reinforced.

The Conflicts

It would reduce overall risks to the population considerably if Boko Haram, or more accurately its successor groups, such as ISWAP and several splinter groups, would cease to exist. Nevertheless, even if these fragmented forces would be defeated militarily, the root causes of Boko Haram's rise and violence would persist. These root causes, and therewith the main risks, are insecurity, bad governance, ongoing corruption, high population density, land conflicts, and displacement, as well as climate change and environmental decline. These root causes have not been addressed by the military or other Nigerian and Cameroonian state institutions.

Importantly, the role of Boko Haram was changing in one village, where it seemed to be turning into a highly violent protection racket. As this change was only mentioned in one village, it cannot be generalized to other villages. Further North, ISWAP is trying to take over state functions. Several respondents argued that the military did not want to defeat Boko Haram, because the ongoing conflict would strengthen its political and economic position. A few even contended that the military and Boko Haram cooperated, as they both benefit from the armed conflict.

In addition, people also suffer from land conflicts, particularly between herders (Fulani/Peul) and farmers. Harvests are being destroyed by migrating cattle. Respondents in Nigeria especially blamed the foreign Fulani.¹ In Cameroon, people had severe conflicts with the Peul, but did not blame this on foreign ones.

Rising levels of banditry and kidnapping for ransom by gangs also mean that communities are forced to defend themselves in the absence of security provided by the government. Unfortunately, the circulation of arms (local and sophisticated ones) in the hands of ordinary citizens can spiral into vicious cycles of conflict, which may disrupt the transition to stability. Displacement, deforestation, and soil erosion compound the security problems.

Vigilantes, and more generally civil society, play a role in warning and preventing violence, but they cannot replace the security services (judiciary, police, military and to a lesser extent traditional leaders) that do not function well at the moment.

Religious tensions among Muslims, Christians, and Animists also occur and need continuous attention to prevent escalation. Most communities (see below) still have a rather high degree of social cohesion, but this is slowly deteriorating due to the insecurity and poverty the communities are facing.

In addition to criticism of absent or corrupt state services, it also appears that the quality of the traditional leaders is highly variable. Whereas some work hard to reduce or prevent religious tensions and strengthen social cohesion, it also happens regularly that poor people do not receive sufficient support during conflicts about land purchases and other resources, as well as with addressing theft.

Protection

¹ This ethnic group is called Fulani in English and Peul in French. The Fulani are a large ethnic group that lives in the broader Sahel region and is made up of different sub-groups.

Caritas Germany cannot do much about the large-scale security questions alone. Addressing Boko Haram groups, foreign Fulani, and gangs requires cooperation from civil society organizations, national government institutions, traditional leaders, and international funding. The state authorities hold legal responsibility for the welfare and safety of people within their territory. However, aid actors may support authorities to fulfil their responsibilities or assist people in dealing with the consequences of state neglect (Sphere Association 2018, p. 36).

An issue of special concern is the return of BH combatants and hostages. Their return is necessary to alleviate their suffering and weaken Boko Haram groups but needs to be accompanied by a special program to establish trust and cooperation with the communities that have suffered under Boko Haram and to counter stigmatization. In addition to state institutions, the *plateforme des militaires et de la société civile* in Cameroon or other civil society bodies in both countries can contribute to such a program, including its evaluation. Activists from civil society have established this *plateforme* to check and influence the conduct of the military. They pay special attention to addressing the problem of soldiers leaving behind pregnant girlfriends or young mothers, which raises opprobrium in the communities.

The protection issues of new IDPs, orphans, persons with disabilities, and pregnant girls and young mothers, as well as the poverty trap when one of the parents dies, indicate the great strains that families and communities are under. Although most people try very hard, they barely have the resources to take care of each other. As a result, some people fall through the local safety nets, while social cohesion and resilience are increasingly limited.

Hence, Caritas Germany and its local partner organization can work on accountability of traditional leaders and the military, integration of IDPs, obtaining birth certificates, fighting GBV, and long-term land contracts. The conflicts with the “foreign Fulani”/Peul require more attention by state institutions, the military, and traditional leaders. Caritas Germany and partners can, however, promote negotiations or peacemaking. More generally, they can work on reducing religious tensions, and improving protection and food security. Together, these will contribute to greater resilience.

Food Security

In both research areas, agriculture is the main source of livelihoods and alternative activities, such as construction and tourism, barely exist. Agriculture and animal husbandry are very similar in both areas. Interestingly, people in Cameroon use more terracing than in Nigeria. They also grow more cotton. As many people have to limit their food intake during the hunger gap (*soudure*) in both countries, farmers require more training, seeds, and tools, and ideally organize themselves in farmer’s associations (FAs).

The high population pressure, deforestation, rapid desertification, and intensive use of land are leading to severe soil deterioration. The decline in soil quality is reinforced by the short-term nature (1 year or less) of renting most parcels. Investing in soil quality would be more profitable, if people would be able to obtain long-term leases for land and could work together with owners on improving soil quality and productivity, (e.g., with reforestation, improving crops, and collecting water with FAs). Especially in Nigeria, terracing could help increase the size of cultivable land.

Caritas Germany and its partners can either strengthen existing FAs or establish new ones. Building these associations dovetails with the desire of the population to resort more to neighborly help (*sourga*) and to improve agriculture and establish new ways to strengthen social cohesion.

Agricultural and vocational training in the classroom and on-the-job can contribute to higher income and more diversified livelihoods, in particular when agricultural training is accompanied by tools, seeds, and seedlings, and vocational training by start-up kits and capital. One part of agricultural training could focus on home gardening of vegetables and fruits. In addition, reforestation, improving soil quality, and building or expanding value chains of agricultural products also require training and could be part of FA activities. Either savings and internal lending communities (SILC) or village savings and loans associations (VSLA) can also help to unleash new investments—if not entrepreneurship—in local

agriculture. The agricultural extension services and demonstration centers also require more investment. They can help to promote agricultural training, increase reforestation, and building and expanding value chains.

As lack of water is another impediment to better agriculture and public health, FAs, and other civil society actors can support creating boreholes and restoring wells, as well as maintaining them, which may also reduce tensions within communities. Rain harvesting can also play a role in this respect.

The Communities

Surprisingly, large scale ethnic conflicts do not exist. In many communities, formal and informal local groups include people of different religions and ethnic backgrounds. Moreover, IDPs are generally included in such groups, and some of them even gain leadership positions. At the same time, respondents indicated that the traditional forms of mutual help (with farming and building houses) were less strong than before Boko Haram struck. Respondents were afraid that large groups of people working together would attract the attention of Boko Haram or gangs. Moreover, everybody had to rebuild simultaneously after attacks, and this was often done alone. Nevertheless, the limited current practice and memory of more extensive traditional mutual aid forms and the actual level of organization in groups (e.g., church, mosque, and youth groups) is still high enough to build upon for new initiatives that reduce risks and strengthen resilience.

Poverty and insecurity undermine social cohesion and resilience, for example with new internally displaced persons (IDPs), orphans, young mothers (with children out of wedlock), and single parent households after the death of one parent.

In addition, the vigilantes and the *plateforme des militaires et de la société civile* and other civil society organizations could play a role in raising awareness of and negotiating with the military, state authorities, and traditional leaders to strengthen food security and protection. Finally, there could be training for other groups, for example youth, church and mosque groups, on tolerance, fighting extremism, and improving social cohesion.

Actor Mapping of Organizations Involved in the Provision of Aid

Local communities, IDPs, religious groups, traditional leaders, and other local and international organizations value Caritas and its partners in terms of their management and the *relevance* and *impact* of their activities. Caritas International and its three local partners have developed a close working relationship. Although a large number of actors is active in both regions is, most of them work on relatively short-term, humanitarian projects and leave after a while. Especially in the areas where Boko Haram groups have become less active, the risks associated with insecurity are declining and more transitional development-oriented projects are becoming possible.

To be able to carry out such a transitional project, it is crucial to coordinate in the clusters. In addition, in order to reduce the risk of no or only partial success it is important to cooperate with local leaders and other government institutions, as well as civil society organizations. For example, the agricultural extension services and the agricultural centers of both governments should be reinforced.

When the multi-ethnic village communities organize themselves in FAs, they contribute simultaneously to better food security and social cohesion. Crucially, they will be able to improve their farming techniques and outputs, so that they become more efficient farmers. The area under cultivation may also increase. As a result, the farmers can multiply their produce of staple crops, vegetables, and fruits. They can then also rear more animals. Overall, these changes can considerably improve food security for the 35 communities.

Recommendations

In line with the Humanitarian Response Plans for both regions and the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development's (BMZ) policy, this report offers recommendations to strengthen the resilience of populations affected by crisis. More specifically, it prepares the ground for a transitional project in the areas of food security and protection. Most recommendations focus on building local capacities. The report also provides management suggestions for Caritas Germany and its partners.

In terms of security, Caritas and its partners can only play a limited role in ensuring it, because they cannot take over state functions. They can, however, assist returnees and former Boko Haram combatants, strengthen civil society, and help IDPs integrate in their new communities. When peace breaks out, they may help with voluntary return programs for IDPs or relocation programs of IDPs and host community members to less densely populated areas. They can also set up programs to reduce religious tensions and inter-generational and political conflicts.

To reach a higher level of food security, Caritas and its partners can establish and train FAs, fight soil degradation, start reforestation and home (vegetable) gardening, incorporate micro-credit (SILC or VSLA), expand vocational training, improve transport of produce, build or repair boreholes and wells, and work on building value chains. As stated, they can also support agricultural extension services and agricultural training centers.

Improving protection dovetails with the recommendations above, but can also include humanitarian action, helping the state to rebuild social services, support vigilante committee members, train local mediators, and help civil society to demand accountability from the military, state authorities and traditional leaders. In all communities, obtaining birth certificates, identity cards and/or passports will also have important benefits for education, livelihoods, and protection. Particular attention should be paid to the situation of girls/young women in their families and with gender-based violence in the communities.

The report further discusses cooperation with other actors and the next steps for advocacy, project formulation with a more specific needs assessment and areas of activity, including an evaluation plan.

Reader's Guide

Those readers not interested in the methodological aspects of this research can skip chapter two on methods and progress directly from the introduction to chapters 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. They can also skip the bibliography, and the appendices, which contain the various questionnaires.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This introduction first provides a brief background to the crises and shocks in North-Eastern Nigeria and Northern Cameroon and the resulting risks for local communities. Next, it gives a quick overview of the work and history of the organizations that participate in this research. It also describes the objectives of this feasibility study. Finally, it ends with a note of thanks to the staff members of the partner organizations and of course the respondents who participated in this research.

1.2 Background of North-Eastern Nigeria and Northern Cameroon

The problems in the greater Lake Chad region, which also comprises the Local Government Areas (LGAs) and *Départements* that this report studies, predate Boko Haram. In the 1970s and 1980s, the region's population grew rapidly, while severe droughts began to hit more often. This was exacerbated by undocumented internal and cross-border migration. At the same time, governmental neglect and corruption eroded basic social services and security. Subsequently, socio-economic development stalled, leaving jobs increasingly scarce and forcing most of the population to continue to rely on agriculture. This contributed to an increase in tensions among agriculturalists and pastoralists, who competed for limited land and resources. Dense populations, environmental decline, climate change and the associated lack of rains lead the Fulani/Peul herders to go further South earlier in the dry season than before. They often arrive when the local farmers are about to harvest, destroying (a large) part of the harvest, which contributes to economic decline and armed violence.

Crucially, dissatisfaction with growing economic and political marginalization, as well as with bad governance and corruption created a breeding ground for Boko Haram,² which originated in Maiduguri in Borno state in North-Eastern Nigeria (in one of the LGAs where Caritas Germany would like to support resilience and where we did field research). Originally, Boko Haram was more of a Salafist protest movement, but in 2009, it began taking up arms and evolved into a Jihadist movement that rejects Western education and institutions. Armed conflict with Nigerian security forces led to further radicalization. In 2011, Boko Haram conquered large parts of North-Eastern Nigeria and spread across borders to Cameroon, Chad and Niger. Its brutality, which was not just directed towards Christians and Animists, but also towards Muslims, caused large-scale displacement and further economic decline.

Table 1: Displacement in Nigeria and Cameroon³

Displacement Tracking Matrix Data	Nigeria (2022)	Cameroon (2021)
Refugees	331,206	116,564
Returned Refugees	158,398	6,267
IDPs	2,200,357	339,670
Returned IDPs	1,802,160	128,990

In Nigeria, the army drove Boko Haram to the North and many communities installed joint vigilante committees to protect themselves. Nevertheless, displacement, sometimes from Nigeria to Cameroon, still occurs regularly. In Cameroon, the national army, including its so-called *Brigade d'Intervention Rapide* / Rapid Intervention Battalion (BIR) also drove Boko Haram further North.

² The name the group has given itself is *Jama'atu Ahl al-Sunna l-il-Da'wa wa-l-Jihad* (JAS). Boko Haram literally means "No to Western education." This was actually a slogan used during some JAS gatherings that caught on in the international media (Vivekananda et al. 2019, p. 34).

³ The information in this table has been collated from several Displacement Tracking Matrices. The information available for Nigeria is more recent than the information for Cameroon. See IOM Cameroun 2021, IOM 2022, IOM 2022a, and UNHCR 2022.

Boko Haram has now split into several rebel groups. One of those groups metamorphosed into Islamic State West African Province (ISWAP), which implies that the conflict is not purely local or regional, but also has international ramifications, including a partnership with Islamic State. Internal fighting among some splinter groups ensued. ISWAP defeated Shekau, who once led Boko Haram, and is now the strongest rebel group in the North, but it is less present in the areas, where we did research (International Crisis Group 2022).

At the same time, heavy-handed military action and restrictions of movement by the armies in both Nigeria and Cameroon now also constitute a security risk for the population. An increase in crime and gang activities has further complicated the lives of Nigerians and Cameroonians.⁴

In sum, for many communities, access to land, access to water, and access to economic opportunities and social services have become increasingly restricted as they suffer from insecurity and climate change. Due to the evolution of the armed conflicts in the Lake Chad Basin, as well as the long duration of deprivations experienced by the local populations, many communities, even those now less directly affected by Boko Haram, have struggled to regain their pre-crisis standard of living, in material as well as social and psychological terms. Social cohesion has been deeply damaged.

1.3 Caritas Germany and its Partners in Nigeria and Cameroon

Caritas Germany and its partners, Justice Development and Peace Commission (JDPC) Maiduguri, Caritas Maroua-Mokolo (CMM), and *Action Locale pour un Développement Participatif et Autogéré* (ALDEPA) have implemented emergency programs in Northeastern Nigeria and Northern Cameroon since 2015. As Caritas Germany's and its partners' involvement in the Lake Chad region intensifies, they seek to learn more about effective, community-centered ways of supporting the transition of communities from emergency to recovery. They want to strengthen the resilience of local communities.

In November 2021, Caritas Germany submitted a concept note to BMZ, aiming to support resilience-building and recovery of 35 communities in both Northeastern Nigeria and Northern Cameroon. This study focuses on the two proposed project areas, Northern Adamawa State, in particular the Hong, Michika, and Askira/Uba LGAs⁵, as well as the *Extrême Nord* region in Cameroon with the *Départements* Mayo-Sava and Mayo-Tsanaga. Both areas of study are just across the border from each other and share many ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and climatic similarities. Trade, ethnic and family ties, as well as personal contacts are common.

This study concentrates on two closely-related key domains of resilience: food security and protection. It aims to assist the project design for the resilience-building and recovery of the 35 communities. In addition, it identifies the lessons learned for external stakeholders in Nigeria and Cameroon, including the humanitarian sectors/clusters, as well as political stakeholders, to enhance humanitarian advocacy of the Caritas Confederation.

1.3.1 Justice, Development and Peace Committee (JDPC), Maiduguri, Nigeria

The predecessor organization of JDPC Maiduguri, the Social Welfare Programme, was established in 1971 in response to the Nigerian government's call for national reconstruction in the wake of the Biafran war. In 2010, the Diocese of Maiduguri officially established JDPC to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable people in its area of responsibility. Five years later, JDPC Maiduguri registered as a national NGO.

The organization has executed food aid, potable water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), food security, and livelihoods support programs with funding from MISEREOR. In 2017, JDPC began partnering with Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in the Feed the Future Nigerian Livelihoods project. Since then, it has expanded further in cooperation with the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD), Caritas

⁴ Just as with Boko Haram, economic and political marginalization, as well as corruption, foster the creation of such gangs.

⁵ An LGA is the Nigerian equivalent of a municipality.

Germany, Christian Solidarity International, and the Catholic Caritas Foundation of Nigeria (CCFN). As a result, the organization has grown rapidly, and its current activities bridge humanitarian and more longer-term transitional aid.

1.3.2 Caritas Maroua-Mokolo (CMM), Cameroon

CMM is the technical branch of the pastoral charity services of the Diocese of Maroua-Mokolo. Its mission is to assist the most vulnerable people and to promote charity and solidarity in accordance with the social teachings of the Church. Caritas has been operating in the parishes of the diocese since the arrival of the first missionaries in 1947. Noting that the region of Far North Cameroon has faced multiple vulnerabilities due to insecurity caused by Islamist terrorist groups, conflicts, its weak economy, and climate change, and that almost three quarters of the population lives in extreme poverty (Institut National de la Statistique 2015, p. 43), the diocese established a diocesan Caritas with a permanent secretariat in Maroua to coordinate emergency activities in June 2014. Its main mission is to respond to the humanitarian crisis resulting from the influx of the Nigerian refugees and armed violence. Since then, it has implemented projects in the areas of 1) health, including sexual and reproductive health services for survivors of gender-based violence (GBV); 2) nutrition to prevent severe and moderate acute malnutrition among children aged 0 to 5 years and pregnant or breastfeeding women, through therapeutic management and nutritional education; 3) WASH to improve access to drinking water by the construction of drinking water points (drilling and mini-irrigation/water supply); 4) food security, including assistance in food items (cereals, vegetable oil and iodized salt) to households threatened by famine; 5) cash transfer; 6) education, both basic education for children and vocational training for out-of-school youth; and 7) protection to ensure the safety, dignity and rights of people affected by natural disasters and armed conflict. Since 2015, CMM has received support from Caritas Germany and the Leger Foundation for humanitarian projects.

1.3.3 Action Locale pour un Développement Participatif et Autogère (ALDEPA), Cameroon

ALDEPA is a non-profit NGO. It operates in the Far North, North, Adamoua, and East regions with headquarters in Maroua, 5 operational offices (Kaele, Mokolo, Mora, Kousseri and Garoua Boulai), and 2 more operational offices are currently being opened (Guider and Ngaoundere). With a multidisciplinary team of 74 people, including 39 women, ALDEPA promotes the rights of women and children. Its goal is to contribute to building a just and equitable society with responsible, popular participation. This goal supports equal rights, justice and equity, and ALDEPA focuses especially on gender issues. Civic participation of youth, empowerment of women and girls, professional reintegration of youth, the fight against gender-based violence and the promotion of peace are other crucial components of its interventions in more than 50 localities.

These interventions include schooling, vocational training, and capacity building of children, especially girls, and youths. ALDEPA regularly carries out awareness-raising and training sessions for traditional and religious leaders, police officers, teachers, and civil society organizations to facilitate the holistic management of GBV victims and survivors and the professional reintegration of young people. ALDEPA interventions focus on the prevention of all types of violence through awareness-raising and community mobilization, support for youth and women's micro-projects, care for victims of violence and social and professional reintegration. It also produces and popularizes educational materials.

1.4 Objectives of This Study

As already indicated, this study has three objectives:

1. Provide an analysis to support the development of an early transition project in Nigeria (Adamawa State) and Cameroon (Extrême Nord), slated to run from 2022 to 2026.
2. Provide an analysis to inform Caritas Germany's and its partners' transitional aid programming in Northeast Nigeria and Northern Cameroon in general.

3. Provide insight into the risks and community- and partner-based response strategies in Northeastern Nigeria and Northern Cameroon, to inform Caritas Germany's and its partners' humanitarian strategy and advocacy activities.

1.5 Thank You

This research would not have been possible without my Nigerian and Cameroonian colleagues. The Kukah Center in Nigeria and Mamtsai's research team in Cameroon provided highly relevant and up-to-date information on the conflict, contributed to the selection of the research methods, and played a crucial role in data collection and data analysis. They thus helped ensure the quality of this research project.

The three local partner organizations, JDPC, ALDEPA, and CMM turned out to be real partners indeed. Before the research started, they provided me with a considerable amount of information. I had never worked with them in the field before, but I could not have worked without them. I apologize to all Nigerian and Cameroonian colleagues for twisting their names and mispronouncing local words. I greatly appreciate their patience while teaching me about their work, local context, and culture. Without their great contributions to data collection and analysis, this report would have lacked depth.

Volker Gerdesmeier and Patrick Kübart in Freiburg and Lukas Müller in Nigeria and Cameroon helped shape many of the ideas for this study. It became clear that they feel strongly about the need for better and more transitional aid to both countries. Over the years, I have worked several times with Caritas Germany on aid in the greater Sahel region. I appreciate the continuous learning experience on armed conflict and food security.

Finally, I would like to express my great gratitude to the local respondents. Without their willingness to provide information about their lives and families, even on such sensitive topics as losing loved ones, religious violence, displacement, hunger, and despair, as well as on their hopes for the future, this study would not have been possible. I hope that this study will contribute to a better understanding of their lives and livelihoods and ways to protect and improve them in a resilient manner.

2 METHODS

2.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the comparative mixed-methods design of this study with desk research and qualitative data collection in the field, the analysis methods, as well as the limitations of this research approach. The study is comparative in the sense that it contrasts the organizations and communities from both Nigeria and Cameroon. Such a comparative approach generally facilitates fast learning. In this way, this study will help to generate ideas for a transitional aid project and concomitant needs analysis and that can help strengthen the resilience of the communities in the areas of food security and protection.

2.2 Preparations and Desk Research

The partner organizations sent a considerable amount of relevant scholarly literature and project documents before the field research commenced. I also searched for recent “grey” literature by advocacy and research organizations, such as the International Crisis Group and Human Rights Watch. Some members of the research teams from both countries, as well as my PhD and working students, also supported me with relevant scholarly literature. In addition, I reviewed documents from my earlier studies in South Sudan and Northern Uganda on food security.

2.3 The Research Teams (Selection, Composition, and Skills)

Caritas Germany had already worked with the research assistance from the Kukah Center (TKC) and Leopold Mamtsai’s research team on other projects. Together with the three partner organizations and these two research outfits, Caritas Germany and I discussed the research approach, areas where this study should take place, and formulated the Terms of Reference of this study.

I was fortunate to work with Fr. Atta Barkindo, Vicham Hajara Waziri, and Stephen Klanzama Pius from TKC during our field research in the Hong, Michika and Askira/Uba LGAs. Together with Patrick Thomas and James Gambo of JDPC and Lukas Müller and Amos Arubi from Caritas Germany, they helped to develop the questionnaires. Vicham focused on the women and female youth FGDs. Fr. Atta and I carried out the men and male youth FGDs with the help of JDPC staff, Patrick Thomas and James Gambo, as well as with Stephen Klanzama from TKC with translation of Hausa or other local languages into English. We all worked on the HHIs. Amos Arubi also took pictures, including the one on the cover.

In Cameroon, we worked with staff from Leopold Mamtsai’s research team and ALDEPA. This experienced team consisted of an agro-economist (Abel Chindanne), a senior agricultural technician with a degree in international development (Martine Danadam), a private lawyer with a degree in social security (Philippe Ngatsbai) and a social worker (Raphael Baldena). ALDEPA added two members to the Cameroonian research team, namely Etienne Adama, a lawyer working in the field of child protection, and Edouard Madagal, an education specialist in the field of child protection in emergency situations. CMM provided transport, guidance, and feedback.

Table 2: Local Research Partner Organization

<p>The Kukah Centre</p> <p>The Kukah Centre for Faith, Leadership and Public Policy Research (also known as The Kukah Centre) is a non-governmental, not-for-profit, public policy organization. The Centre commenced operations in 2008 in Kaduna, North-West Nigeria, as a Centre for Faith and Public Policy under the leadership of then Monsignor Matthew Hassan Kukah. In December 2012, the Centre altered its name to the Kukah Centre for Faith, Leadership and Public Policy Research, and was successfully registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission. Its operational base was moved to Abuja, while its operations and presence continued in Kaduna.</p> <p>It is a leading mediation institution conceived as a platform for offering alternative approaches to the challenges of leadership and the impact of conflict on national development. The Centre deepens the discourse on leadership, linking it to the larger issues of governance and democratization. At the heart of TKC’s work is interfaith dialogue, which involves promoting conversations among Nigeria’s faith communities, as well as between faith and public policy. Its mission is to “aspire towards the attainment of a more humane, democratic</p>

and free society where citizens can live in real and true freedom, unencumbered by any structure of exclusion based on ethnic, religious, social status, economic or gender differences.”

Leopold Mamtsai’s Research Team

Léopold Mamtsai Yagai has been leading a social science research team on gender-sensitive local governance since 2013. The team has conducted, among others, feasibility studies of communal services for the promotion of income-generating activities and employment for youth and women, studies to improve the quality of services rendered by the Communes, as well as evaluations of socio-economic projects in the North and Far North of Cameroon, on behalf of the national government, supported by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and non-governmental organizations. Léopold Mamtsai Yagai contributed to the Adelphi study on the combined effects of climate change and Boko Haram non-state armed groups in the Lake Chad Basin countries.

2.4 Data Collection

The data collection started with preparatory conversations with the main partner organizations via Zoom. To cover the diversity of communities, as well as the diversity within the communities, we relied on purposive sampling. We first determined which areas of the two countries the 35 communities were located. We discussed whether we could also work closer to the border, but rejected this due to the prevailing insecurity there. In general, communities suffering from a high level of insecurity require humanitarian action; more long-term (re-)construction and resilience-building are likely to be very difficult. As long as Boko Haram groups are still very active in border areas, destroying (parts of) villages and forcing the local population into displacement, research and rebuilding are simply not feasible yet.

Altogether, we selected six communities in Adamawa State and six in the Départements Mayo-Sava and Mayo-Tsanaga. In Adamawa State, we selected a large and a small community for each LGA. We did the same in the municipalities in Cameroon. In this way, we also created a sample of more (peri-)urban and rural communities. Although we attempted to visit communities off the road, which tend to be worse off than communities close to the main roads, we only succeeded in doing so in one case in Nigeria, because travelling (on poor roads) to the communities was already very time-consuming. In Cameroon, however, 5 out of the 6 communities that we visited were off the main roads.

Table 3: Samples of Communities in Nigeria and Cameroon

Selected Communities	Nigeria	Cameroon
1	Mutukum	Zamay
2	Kala’a	Tada
3	Tsukuma	Koza
4	Rumu	Djingliya-Plaine
5	Askira	Mémé
6	Dilwachira	Komgui

The field research provided insight into the respondents’ communities, markets, workplaces, agricultural fields, and living areas. For example, farmers showed their fields, irrigation, and planting methods, produce, and tools. We used four data-collection methods:

1. *Community Focus Group Discussions*, which are useful to collect a considerable amount of relevant data in a relatively short time. They also functioned as an introduction to the (heterogeneous) communities. Usually, we would hold separate male, female, and youth FGDs, because this allowed us to understand the overall situation of and differences within the communities. Increasingly, we split up the youth FGDs into a male and a female youth FGDs to pay more attention to gendered power relations and GBV. Most FGDs started with 10 to 15 participants, but during the course of the discussion more people would come in and participate in the focus groups. We always allowed this to happen.

2. *Household interviews* (HHI) with questions on insecurity and protection, making a living, agricultural production, food aid, training, memberships of agricultural and other local groups and associations, as well as coping mechanisms and consumption patterns. We focused on interviews with 1) a displaced person; 2) female headed HHs; 3) HHs with a person with disability; 4) HHs with a person, who is either active as vigilante in Nigeria or as a *membre de comité de vigilance* in Cameroon; 5) HHs led by an older person; 6) HHs with a person of average local income; and 7) HHs relatively well-off compared with other people in their community.
3. *Key-informant Interviews* (KII) with people with specific knowledge of and perspective on the communities and the ability to express these. With staff from the partner organizations, as well as other international and local organizations working on similar topics, we discussed the history of their organizations, the main activities, and their impact. The organizations usually sent relevant background literature on their areas of activity. In addition, we had several unstructured, brief KIIs with the traditional local leaders (*emir, djauro, or lamido*) and administrators. In the latter interviews we also discussed the reasons for and approach to our research.
4. *Village observation tours* through the community, which helped to affirm or further explain what people said during the FGDs and both types of interviews; for example, we looked at dry-season farming, dry wells, water pumps, and markets. We also looked at the settlements and the conditions of nearby rivers (many but not all, were running dry in this part of the year) and markets. Where possible, we would look at IDP settlements.

2.5 Questionnaires

For the questionnaire, we simplified questions from the IFRC food security guide—and combined them with information from the Sphere guidelines on food security—to save words and facilitate the respondents’ understanding of the questions. We added a section on protection based on suggestions of the partner organizations and Sphere. This semi-structured questionnaire was used for the community FGDs. We created separate questionnaires for the HHIs and KIIs. As the questions were open-ended, we were able to ask more probing and specific follow-up questions during the FGDs, HHIs and KIIs.

For Cameroon, we translated the questionnaires into French and made only slight changes in response to the local context. In particular, we asked more explicitly which shocks took place, and as there were no armed vigilantes in both *départements*, we instead asked whether youths had become *membres des comités de vigilance* in their communities.

2.6 Schedule

Table 4: Schedule of Research

DATE	ACTIVITIES
23 Feb.	Flight Frankfurt – Abuja, Field research preparation
24 Feb.	Field research preparation
25 Feb.	Flight Abuja-Yola. Arrival in Mubi. Introduction to the Nigerian field research team. Preparation of questionnaires
26 Feb.	Visit Mutukum villaga. FGDs (Men, Women, Youth). Field pilot of the questionnaires Further development of questionnaires, training session with the research themes
27 Feb.	Sunday , Further improvement and finalization of the questionnaires
28 Feb.	Visit to Kala’a village.with FGDs (Men, Women, Youth), HHIs, VOT to wells
1 March	Visit to Tsukuma village with FGDs (Men, Women, Youth), HHIs, VOT
2 March	Visit to Rumu village with FGDs, HHIs, and VOT
3 March	Visit Askira village, FGDs with men and women, HHIs and VOT. Discussion with the Emir of Uba town, his royal highness Ali Samaila

4 March	Visit Dilwachira village. FGDs, HHIs, and VOT, including visit to river and dry season farm. Return to Yola.
5 March	Yola, Data Analysis
6 March	Sunday , Yola. Data Analysis. Feedback session with Research team
7 March	Return flight Yola-Abuja
8 March	Flight Abuja-Yaoundé
9 March	Data analysis Nigeria, Preparation Field Research Cameroon
10 March	Flight Yaoundé-Maroua cancelled, Preparation Field Research Cameroon
11 March	Flight Yaoundé-Garoua. Ride Garoua-Maroua. Introduction to Cameroonian field research team. Planning field research.
12 March	Visit to Zama. FGDs, HHI, and VOT, Discussion with the <i>Lamido</i> (a second degree chief)
13 March	Sunday , Team Discussion on Interview Transcription and Analysis
14 March	Visit to Tada, with 4 FGDs, HHIs, VOT, including a newly built market and a visit to a <i>Lawan</i> (a third degree chief) and his terraced gardens
14 March	Visit to Koza, with 4 FGDs, HHIs and VOT
16 March	Visit to Djingliya-Plaine with 4 FGDs, HHIs and VOT
17 March	Visit to Mémé, with 5 FGDs (incl. Sisters of Mary and Joseph) HHIs and VOT, incl. visit to and discussion with the <i>Lamido</i> (a second degree chief)
18 March	Visit to Kourgui, FGDs, HHI, and VOT, incl. visit to the agricultural center “Baba Simon” with defunct demonstration garden, as well as a discussion with the <i>Lamido</i> (a second degree chief)
19 March	Writing and Analysis
20 March	Sunday Research Team Analysis
21 March	Writing and Analysis, Ceremony <i>Légion d’Honneur</i> for Marthe Wandou
22 March	Return flight Maroua-Yaoundé
23 March	Return flight Yaoundé-Abuja, KIIs, Analysis and Writing
24 March	Interviews, KIIs, Analysis and Writing
25 March	Return Flight Abuja-Frankfurt, Analysis and Writing
26 March	Arrival in Bochum

In total, we completed 16 key informant interviews, mainly with staff from international and local organizations, 48 household interviews, 44 FGDs (13 male, 13 female, as well as 8 male youth, 7 female youth, and 3 mixed youth), 12 village observation tours and 1 visit of an agricultural demonstration site. The Appendix contains the different questionnaires. In the villages, I also had many brief, informal conversations with FA and other community members.

Table 5: Data Collection Methods in the Field

Nigeria							
KII	HHI	FGD Men	FGD Women	FGD Youth Men	FGD Youth Women	FGD Mixed	VOT
9	23	7	6	2	2	3	6
Cameroon							
KII	HHI	FGD Men	FGD Women	FGD Youth Men	FGD Youth Women	FGD Mixed	VOT
11	25	6	7	6	5	0	6

2.7 Data Analysis

All the members of the research teams helped with transcribing the FGDs and HHIs. Data analysis took place in four steps. First, we concentrated especially on the ideas and analysis that the respondents themselves offered. Second, the members of the two research teams contributed to the analysis by offering their ideas, which formed the basis for the recommendations and several of the tables in this report. Third, the responses to the qualitative questionnaires were further analyzed during desk research

in Nigeria, Cameroon, and Bochum, Germany. Fourth, we compared our analysis with findings from earlier research projects in South Sudan, Uganda, Nigeria, and Cameroon, as well as with both scholarly literature and grey literature from organizations active in the same areas. Finally, all the research team members provided feedback on earlier drafts of this report.

2.8 Limitations of This Research

The first limitation of the research was the short period of time, one month, to carry out field research in the two countries. In addition, we had to cut short some visits to villages to avoid potential security threats, in particular when we got closer to areas where Boko Haram groups are still active.

With a longer research period, we would have had more time to develop and test the questionnaires, visit more communities, receive feedback, and crosscheck the outcomes with respondents. In addition, I would have liked to participate in one or more UN coordination cluster meetings, hold more KIIs, as well as to visit non-project villages for in-depth comparison.

Although we made an effort to include persons with disability, we were often dependent on non-disabled persons to establish contact and we did not meet any persons with speech impairments. As a consequence, we do not know whether we have interviewed a representative sample of persons with disabilities. We could, however, quickly note that persons with disabilities faced more barriers in community decision-making.

Due to the dry season, we could only observe dry season farming, although the rain season is the main agricultural season and plays a much larger role in (the attempts to achieve) food security in both regions.

3 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Introduction

This section briefly describes the main theoretical concepts used in this research, namely resilience, protection, and food security. For each concept, it presents a definition and an overview of its changing meaning and components over time. The conclusions discuss the close relationship between these three concepts.

3.2 Resilience

Resilience has become a buzz-word in development cooperation and humanitarian action. The term is derived from the Latin *resilire*, which means to bounce back or rebound. It was originally used in materials science, where it describes "the property of a material to return to its original form after an external shock" (Gebauer 2017, p. 14, in Borgmann et al. 2018, p. 18).⁶ In ecology and psychology, resilience refers to the ability of respectively ecosystems or people to remain functional during a crisis and recover afterwards (Manyena 2006). This definition earned empirical and normative criticism: to what extent is a return to the status quo ante feasible or desirable for people affected by a crisis (Dijkzeul and Addis, p. 60)?

Rarely used in aid debates before the 1990s, resilience has become almost ubiquitous since the Hyogo Framework for Action (UN 2005), which aimed at "building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters." This framework also focused on anticipation and preparation for the consequences of climate change. Over time, the meaning of resilience has broadened from bouncing back to be able to remain functional through anticipation/preparation (before a crisis), coping (during a crisis), and restoring/recovering (after a crisis). As a result, the concept of resilience has gained popularity as a potential framework for fostering the transition from humanitarian action to development cooperation (International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement 2012; McRae et al. 2012). One component of resilience that requires special attention is social cohesion. As the term implies, social cohesion focuses on the social aspects of resilience and comprises a set of societal resources and capacities, i.e. social networks, values and norms, social trust, reciprocity and participation, as well as equal opportunities for participation (Lukas et al. 2021). A high level of social cohesion helps to reduce vulnerabilities and build capacities, thereby strengthening the overall resilience of a community (CARE International 2018, p. 5; CRS 2017, pp. 7–8; Mercy Corps 2017, p. 1).

All in all, resilience has become a broad umbrella concept under which many different activities can fall. Normatively, resilience focuses on working with or strengthening the capacities of the actors themselves.⁷ A commonly used working definition of resilience is "*the ability of individuals, communities, organisations, or countries exposed to disasters and crises and underlying vulnerabilities to anticipate, reduce the impact of, cope with, and recover from, the effects of adversity without compromising their long-term prospects*" (IFRC 2012, p. 7). In the context of international aid, 'resilience' is frequently used as shorthand for resilience building or resilience programming (e.g., Bunch et al. 2020; Mitchell and Harris 2012). In sum, by spanning the range from disaster preparedness to post-disaster development, resilience building can foster an 'integrative' approach for combining humanitarian and developmental aspects into a transitional aid program or project.

⁶ Translation by the author.

⁷ By focusing on the actors themselves, resilience can have an emancipatory effect by focusing on local actors instead of (international) aid organizations. However, it can also lead to withdrawal of donors when actors do not become resilient (fast) enough. Resilience analysis without attention to structural global North-South issues or state malfunctioning thus runs the risk of paying too much attention to what actors can do themselves, while disregarding the outside factors that influence them deeply.

3.3 Protection

Whereas resilience is an umbrella concept that can provide a strategic sense of direction for all activities, protection is a cross-cutting aspect that ideally should be integrated into all activities of an organization working in humanitarian action and development cooperation. Sphere and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee define protection as: “all activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the relevant bodies of law” (Sphere Association 2018, p. 35).

Protection is about taking action to keep people safe from violence, coercion and deliberate deprivation (ibid). Sphere works with four protection principles (Sphere Association 2018, p. 36), namely:

1. “Enhancing the safety, dignity and rights of people, and avoid exposing them to harm.
2. Ensuring people’s access to assistance according to need and without discrimination.
3. Assisting people to recover from the physical and psychological effects of threatened or actual violence, coercion or deliberate deprivation.
4. Helping people claim their rights” (ibid.)

The Protection Principles support the right to life with dignity, the right to humanitarian assistance and the right to protection and security (ibid). However, aid organizations cannot take over the roles of the state. “The state or other authorities hold legal responsibility for the welfare of people within their territory or control and for the safety of civilians in armed conflict. Ultimately, it is these authorities that have the duty to ensure people’s security and safety through action or restraint.” (Ibid.) Sometimes, aid actors “may be able to encourage and persuade the authorities to fulfil their responsibilities and, if they fail to do so, assist people in dealing with the consequences” (Ibid.) In other words, aid organizations may be limited in the extent to which they can promote and assure protection. But knowing limitations does not mean that aid organization can neglect the four protection principles. Instead, they need to work hard on achieving as much protection as they can achieve, while acknowledging how challenging this can be.

3.4 Food Security

A high degree of food security bolsters both protection and resilience. According to the IFRC (2007, p. 7), “a person, household or community, region or nation is food secure when all members at all times have physical and economic access to buy, produce, obtain or consume sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for a healthy and active life.” Food security has three components: availability, access, and utilization.

Table 6: The Three Components of Food Security

<p>Food availability in a country, region or local area means that food is physically present because it has been grown, processed, manufactured, and/or imported. For example, food is available because it can be found in markets and shops; it has been produced on local farms or in home gardens; or it has arrived as part of food aid. This refers to all available food in the area, and includes fresh, as well as packaged, food.</p> <p>Food availability can be affected by disruptions to food transport and production systems due to blocked roads, failed crops or changes in import and export tariffs, amongst other factors. Such occurrences can influence the amount of food coming into an area. In addition, food availability is dependent upon seasonal patterns in food production and trading.</p> <p>Food access refers to the way in which different people obtain available food. Normally, we access food through a combination of means. This may include: home production, use of left-over stocks, purchase, barter, borrowing, sharing, gifts from relatives, and provisions by welfare systems or food aid. Food access is ensured when everyone within a community has adequate financial or other resources to obtain the food necessary for a nutritious diet. Access depends on a household’s available income and its distribution within the household, as well as on the price of food. It also depends on markets, and on the social and institutional entitlements/rights of individuals.</p> <p>Food access can be negatively influenced by unemployment, physical insecurity (e.g. during conflicts), loss of coping options (e.g. border closures preventing seasonal job migration), or the collapse of safety-net institutions that once protected low-income groups.</p>

Food utilization is the way in which people use food. It is dependent upon several interrelated factors: the quality of the food and its method of preparation, storage facilities, and the nutritional knowledge and health status of the individual consuming the food. For example, some diseases do not allow for optimal absorption of nutrients, whereas growth requires increased intake of certain nutrients. Food utilization is often reduced by factors such as endemic disease, poor sanitation, lack of appropriate nutritional knowledge, or culturally-prescribed taboos (often related to age or gender) that affect a certain group's or family member's access to nutritious food. Food utilization may also be adversely affected if people have limited resources for preparing food, for example due to a lack of fuel or cooking utensils. A deficit in any of the above-mentioned factors can lead to food insecurity.

3.5 Operationalization

The three research themes of resilience, protection, and food security are closely related. In essence, we study how insecurity and climate change have negatively influenced protection and food security and how the communities can counter this negative influence. Obviously, insecurity is a threat to protection. In addition, insecurity hampers or even denies safe food production and therewith reduces food access and availability.

Focusing on improving resilience in such a context means asking how greater social cohesion and agricultural production in communities can contribute to less insecurity and better protection. Such a focus makes clear that local governmental institutions are often weak, and traditional institutions can at best only partly compensate for this. How can forms of local cooperation and organization, as well as agricultural and vocational training contribute to improved livelihoods and more resilient communities? How strong is social cohesion? Which forms of social organization already exist or were used in the recent past? By whom? Men, women, youths? Together or with their families? What do communities do, for example through *comités de vigilance* or peacebuilding committees, to improve protection? What roles do government authorities, UN organizations, and NGOs play in this process? And what can they not do or have so far failed to do? A higher degree of security means both more protection and a higher degree of food security. Better protection and more food security, in turn, are crucial components of stronger resilience.

4 FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes both research areas comparatively. First, it describes the situation in Northern Adamawa (Hong and Michika LGAs) and Borno (Askira Uba LGA). Subsequently, we will use the same set-up to, first, present the findings from the two *départements* in Cameroon. The chapter ends with a comparative analysis of the risks in both research areas.

4.2 North-Eastern Nigeria

4.2.1 Conflicts and shocks

It is surprising how many conflicts—latent and open—exist in the three LGAs. They are associated with environmental decline, climate change, strong population growth, bad governance, and extremism (Vivekananda et al. 2019). However, it would be wrong to think that there is a mono-causal relationship between the conflicts and environmental change or the quality of governance. Instead, these interact in many ways that negatively impact both food security and protection.

The best-known conflict concerns the Jihadist rebel group *Boko Haram*. In recent years, Boko Haram has split into several groups, which also move around the Lake Chad Basin. As a consequence, it is often not clear to the local population which Boko Haram group(s) operate in their area and where these groups are coming from. ISWAP, one of the successor organizations, is currently active closer to Lake Chad than to the areas visited in the context of this research and was not seen as a direct threat. Nevertheless, one or more of the ongoing successor groups remain active in or close to the areas examined in this study. Boko Haram, in whatever form it currently exists, influences the local populations by both direct and severe violence and the fears it inspires.

The further to the North our communities are located, the more attacks they experience. Boko Haram affects men and women differently. Men are most often killed, and women are more often abducted and forced to become wives or domestic servants. Young men are also abducted. Boko Haram burns houses, churches, and loots possessions and harvests. Especially richer households seem to be targeted.

- The kidnapped people are forcefully Islamized. If and when they return to their communities of origins, they are rarely trusted or accepted by the community members because they have contributed or may have contributed to the violence. Some are then killed or evicted.
- Most families and friends do not receive any messages from their relatives and friends and live without knowledge of what happened to them.
- Since Boko Haram attacks seem targeted, people suspect that there are informers in their communities. As the informers operate in secret, people do not know which neighbors they can trust and which they cannot. This acutely impedes social cohesion.
- The attacks continue to cause severe displacement. Some people have been displaced several times. Every time, they lose their possessions and fields, as well as friends and family. The receiving communities are often hard pressed to help the displaced people because they also lack agricultural land and live in poverty. As a result, social cohesion in the affected communities is stretched to the limit.
- People who live in villages that have been attacked by Boko Haram or are living close to them sleep outside in the fields or hills so that they avoid Boko Haram's attacks. They are consequently exposed to the elements and lose time and energy while moving back and forth to their villages.
- People no longer dare to go to farmland far away from the village. This decreases agricultural output. The loss of fields, possessions, and harvests severely reduces food security.

- The latter also makes it much more difficult for communities to take care of orphans, the elderly (especially when they are alone), or people with disabilities.

Most people interviewed are at a loss to explain Boko Haram and its violence. Generally, when we asked during FGDs and HHIs what motivated Boko Haram, most people, Christian, Animist, as well as Muslim, would explain that they simply did not know and would express their abhorrence against all the killing and violence. A few would mention territorial control, economic gain, extremism, *maraboutisme*, or just having enough food, but would then sigh that they could only speculate. Some people wished they would know the reasons for Boko Haram's attacks, because then they would be able to initiate negotiations with the rebel group(s), but this has so far been impossible.

Importantly, all communities indicated that they currently also suffer profoundly from *pastoralist herders* (Fulani) that bring herds to their fields, and attack, maim, and even kill people that protect their fields. Sometimes, they rape women working the field. The community members also expressed their anger that their animals would ruin their crops right at harvest time. They also complain that the Fulani cut down trees, so that their cattle can eat the leaves. This further intensifies the already rapid deforestation and desertification. Occasionally, the communities and the Fulani engage in armed fights, in which people on both sides lose their lives. Nevertheless, the communities would draw a clear distinction between Fulani that came from abroad and the local Fulani. They could notice that the armed Fulani were foreign because they would speak a different dialect and wear different clothes. The local Fulani respected the local farmers and were usually not considered a problem. Respondents would express their surprise that the *foreign Fulani* made it clear that they “*came in through the front door*”, meaning that traditional leaders and government authorities allowed them to cross borders and enter their territory.⁸ The respondents felt angry and neglected by these leaders and authorities and did not understand why the foreign Fulani were allowed to move in. They assumed that the leaders and authorities were gaining money from the foreign Fulani. Just as with Boko Haram, loss of fields and harvests negatively impact food security.

- Some people could not pay for the rent of the fields, because their crops had been destroyed. Particularly, elderly people could not cover the costs any longer, and would therefore lose their fields and livelihoods, and become severely food insecure.
- Similar to the situation with Boko Haram, many people no longer dare to go to farmland far away from the village any longer out of fear of being attacked or raped by the foreign Fulani. This also reduces agricultural output.

Respondents further mentioned problems with *theft* and *gangs*, but not as often as Boko Haram or the foreign Fulani. Nevertheless, theft of goods and animals (cows, goats, chickens, etc.) and kidnapping for ransom are serious problems that further impoverish already poor populations.⁹ Knowing that some of the information about the goods or products stolen and perhaps thieves or gang members themselves come from their communities once again reduces social cohesion. It is not clear to which extent Boko Haram, the foreign Fulani, and armed gangs know about or cooperate with each other. One community member remarked “*the foreign Fulani cannot talk about Boko Haram otherwise they will be killed.*”

The Nigerian government sent the *military* to the Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe (BAY) states, where it succeeded in driving Boko Haram groups further northward. Yet, it has not comprehensively defeated them. They often hide in wildlife reserves and crosses borders to escape military confrontation. While the military was relatively popular, people also complain that they do too little too late when attacks

⁸ Only during one youth FGD did a woman remark that local and international Fulani would team up to harass the farmers together. She could not substantiate this claim, but such substantiation is hard, as with all explanations of the armed violence.

⁹ The availability of light weapons and more sophisticated arms in the greater Lake Chad region can also contribute to a further escalation of violence.

occur (see below). In addition, some girls bear children from the soldiers, but many soldiers refuse to take care of the young mothers and children. Increasingly, there are stories that the military are hassling the local population (see below). This bears an eerie semblance to Afghanistan, where military corruption and hassling contributed to the resurgence of the Taliban. Moreover, there are strong rumors that the military do not want to defeat Boko Haram. In this line of reasoning, having a long-term conflict actually strengthens the economic and political position of the army in both the government and society at large. At the moment, there are no serious (peace-making) negotiations with Boko Haram groups.

With land entitlements, soil quality, reforestation, and the military, as well as with negotiating with Boko Haram groups, the government could in principle play a positive role. However, its role is limited. Communities complain about absent authorities and services, and do not know how to counter corruption. They often talk about corruption and bad governance while laughing, but the joking and laughter hides powerlessness and shame. All in all, the population lives under severe pressures and protection is limited.

4.2.2 Protection

It is not surprising that the conflicts and tensions cause great protection problems. Even military action, initially intended as form of protection, is leading to new protection risks. The communities often do not know which Boko Haram splinter groups operate in their area, and generally just speak about “Boko Haram”. As stated above, these groups usually kill men and abduct young women. The communities indicate that there is little they can do to prevent this. They see no way to control Boko Haram. The most common answer to the question what the community can do to protect themselves is to “pray.” And when Boko Haram comes, “*you run for your life.*” As stated, those who cannot run well because of children, old age, or a disability stay behind (see below).

The above-mentioned military is the most visible part of the national government. Some respondents indicated that they have contacted the military or other authorities with attacks, but only in one community did the military respond on time. In all other cases, they came too late, which is partly a result of the long distances and bad roads involved. Only in one community did a village leader remark that the soldiers came immediately. However, he also remarked that his community was so spread out over a large distance, that the military and police could not reach the distant parts of the community easily. In addition to the increasing corruption by the military, this contributed to disappointment. One community (Tsukuma) also accused soldiers of extortion, human rights abuses, and sometimes brazen interference with families, when they forcefully took other peoples’ wives as concubines. Consequently, the moral and ethical conduct of the military has been called into question in some communities.

When they face problems, such as theft or poverty, most people contact traditional leaders, who are officially part of the government. All in all, the governments’ capacities are small, or social services are either substandard or simply not present. Most communities feel they are out on their own, and only have very limited opportunities to seek or ensure protection.

In north-eastern Nigeria, armed community vigilantes now watch their villages from 11:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. in the night. Although they are armed, they are not strong enough to fight Boko Haram. They usually function as watch dogs that warn other people to run and escape. In one village, all vigilantes were IDPs, who thus tried to make a positive contribution to their new community. Vigilantes are always men. It is not always easy to become a vigilante. “*You need to become officially accredited, buy boots and a uniform, which costs money.*” Moreover, informal vigilantes were afraid that they would meet the military at night, who could then confuse them with Boko Haram and put them into prison. Quite often, family members sleep badly until their “vigilante” husbands and fathers come back. Some men, and sometimes whole families, spend the night sleeping in the hills to evade attacks.

Communities judge the prevalence of GBV differently. As noted in the chapter on methodology, it was important to split youth FGDs into young men FGDs and young female FGDs. If we did so, some female FGDs talked more openly about GBV, as well as alcohol-induced violence, in their families and

communities. In some communities, these topics did not come up as strongly as in others. We were not able to determine whether this means that GBV is stronger in some communities than in others, or that is more of a taboo topic in some communities.

Another regular type of conflict occurs at boreholes. People, especially women and children, have to wait for long times standing in line in the sun. As a result, tensions build when people skip the line or get irritated. Although low-key tensions do not lead to large-scale insecurity, it regularly leads to fights or shouting matches, reinforcing other tensions based on religion, ethnicity, host vs. IDP status, or wealth, within a community.

NGOs and UN organizations are generally limited in working on security. They will never take on policing or military tasks. Still, they can work on sensitization of the police and military, for example on gender issues, corruption, and land rights. Importantly, they can also help with building or renovating infrastructure, such as police offices. Additionally, they can help community members to claim their rights by working on birth certificates and land rights/entitlements, as well as addressing GBV and strengthening social cohesion, for example with local FAs. In particular, they could try to institute longer-term land contracts in cooperation with local traditional leaders and religious authorities. In this way, people would have stronger incentives to improve soil quality and plant trees.

4.2.3 Food security

In general, northern Nigeria knows a broad diversity of crops and animals. The main staple crops are maize, sorghum, rice, groundnuts, cassava, and beans, in particular cowpeas.¹⁰ Local farmers also grow a broad range of vegetables and other plants: lettuce, spinach, okra, tomatoes, onions, sweet potato, taro, yam, hibiscus, amaranthus, sesame, and moringa. Fruits such as mango, citrus (orange, citron, tangerine, grapefruits, lemon, etc.), banana, watermelon, pineapple, guava, and papaya are rather common. Bambara nuts and guinea bone seeds are less common. Partly due to the lack of water, the respondents almost never do vegetable gardening at home. The main animals for husbandry are cows, goats, sheep, pigs, chickens, and ducks. Pigeons are least often mentioned. Theft of animals is common.

Most farmers depend on the rainy season. Although dry season farming is not uncommon close to (dry) rivers, most people cannot afford the required investments in irrigation, transport, agrochemicals, and rent. Those able to do farm during the dry season, often, but not always, make a nice profit.

Apart from the conflicts, the population is experiencing *environmental shocks* on an almost continual basis. Due to climate change, rains have become more infrequent, causing droughts so that planted crops wither away. When the rain finally comes again, it is often heavy with stormy winds, which causes flooding, ruins crops in low-lying fields, and destroys houses (mud-huts and walls). After droughts or floods, farmers need to plant again. This is expensive and crop production is then often rather small at the end of the harvest season. As mentioned above, the flooding is worsened by deforestation for firewood and construction. The land is literally denuded, with too little vegetation to hold the water. More trees would function as windbreakers, keep the soil more humid, reduce the temperature a bit, and help attract rains. Some types of trees also help to improve soil quality. The latter is important because the intensive use of land, as well as the use of agro-chemicals, have lowered soil quality and reduced agricultural productivity. In most FGDs and HHIs, respondents would note that the climate was changing but they rarely knew why this was the case or what they could do about it.

Due to overpopulation, competition for land has become intense. The parcels from parents are split up among the sons at inheritance. Most people rent land, but this is expensive. Additionally, due to violence many people cannot farm fields further away from their villages. Terracing of hills, however, is less often practiced in the three LGAs than in Cameroon. If done well, this would be one of the few ways to improve access to (better) land.

¹⁰ Cotton cultivation is more common in Cameroon than in Nigeria.

Moreover, the issues of birth certificates and land entitlement are important for improving food security because they allow people access to credit and security with their landholdings. Both credit and secure land entitlements allow for longer-term investments in soil quality, irrigation, and reforestation. In addition, people need agricultural training. Most have learned from their parents and neighbors, but lack knowledge of methods to improve their crops and production. People usually apply rather expensive chemical fertilizer, herbicides, and pesticides. In particular, Roundup is frequently used, but the farmers are unaware of its carcinogenic impact and deleterious effect on soil quality.¹¹

Just as with protection, the government has been rather weak in improving agriculture.¹² Agricultural and husbandry extension services exist and some of them are of good quality, but many agricultural extension workers have fled and stay in the bigger towns nearby. Transport is expensive for them, so they cannot go back and forth to the villages easily. As a result, the local communities receive little support in agricultural training, with the exception of the training provided by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), NGOs, such as Caritas and Action Contre la Faim (ACF), and UN organizations, particularly the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO).

In sum, insecurity, lack of access to land and water, soil depletion, limited training, and the relatively rare presence of agricultural extension workers severely limit food availability, access, and utilization.

4.2.4 The communities

It is hardly surprising that the conflicts, in combination with climate change, environmental decline, and bad governance (see below), create and further *tensions* within the communities. These tensions do not mean that there is always open conflict, instead people face problems in cooperating with or trusting each other.

Both *men and women* suffer from the violence and killing of their family members and friends. Yet, sometimes they do so in different ways. Men are being killed, women and youngsters are more often abducted. When Boko Haram attacks, most people run for their lives. As men are stronger (and afraid to be killed), they run faster, leaving mothers and children, as well as the old, sick, and persons with disabilities behind. Boko Haram groups treat those left behind in different ways. They abduct and kill some, while leaving others untouched. When fathers are killed, the mothers have great financial problems running their single-headed households. Some also become displaced. Generally, losing a parent constitutes an immediate poverty trap; it becomes much harder to ensure food security and pay for education, and more generally to establish livelihoods. Many families have taken in cousins, children, or grandchildren, or simply orphans from their own or other communities. Parents take in displaced grown-up children, whose places have been destroyed. Yet, opportunities to do so are limited because people rarely have enough land, housing, food, and money themselves. Sometimes, fleeing families fall apart or husbands migrate to big cities to search for jobs. As a result, there are not just more single-headed households, but also many more unaccompanied minors (the local population uses the term orphans), elderly, or persons with a disability, who do not or barely receive any care. The issue of orphans and how a community could care for them was frequently brought up as a huge challenge during HHIs and FGDs.

Men and women play different roles in society, with women staying closer to the house, taking more care of the children, and, for example, producing more groundnuts, men work more with larger animals and in fields further away. Strong tensions arise about income (for example from harvests), some women stated that men spend it on alcohol or taking another wife.¹³ This weakens their position and that of their children. For most families, it is already hard to pay medical bills, school fees, shoes, and clothing, if

¹¹ See Weisenburger 2021.

¹² The same holds true for healthcare centers. Family planning services are almost completely absent.

¹³ Although there are organizations providing mental health and psycho-social support (MHPSS), the degree of trauma, which is potentially, has not been studied in detail. Nor do we know the extent to which people rely on traditional healers to address trauma.

everything goes right. As in other parts of Africa, most women tend to spend more of their income on their children's well-being than men do.

In a similar fashion, there is an implicit *generational conflict*. Due to the generally high population pressures and displacement, access to land is very limited. Yet, only a few other types of livelihoods exist. For young people, it is difficult to be taken seriously by their parents and other elders before they marry and have children. They can only marry once they have income to pay for the dowry. Even when they are educated at university level, some need to resort to agriculture due to a lack of jobs or, more precisely, personal contacts to obtain jobs. Female youths also indicated that their brothers generally received better educational and other opportunities than they did (partly, because the families they marry into will receive more economic benefits from their education than their family of birth). One young man provided another sign of intra-family competition "*With a large family, you compete with your own brothers for land.*"

Northern Nigeria is a region where Animists, Muslims, and Christians, often belonging to the same ethnic groups, live together. Often, several religions are practiced within the same family, and religious identities can be fluid, sometimes based more on economic or political advantage than personal beliefs. Yet, tensions do arise. First and foremost, Boko Haram has sown distrust among Muslims and non-Muslims. To which extent can people trust their neighbors if there are informers in the community? And what about people who have left Boko Haram and want to (re-)settle in their communities? At the same time, Christians and Animists are well aware that Boko Haram's looting and killing also deeply harms their Muslim neighbors. Generally, Muslims, Animists, and Christians work together in traditional mutual-help activities¹⁴ (but these are weakening) and formal or informal FAs. In these groups, they often share leadership positions. Even displaced persons and people from different ethnic backgrounds can obtain leadership positions, but not all members of the community are members of such associations and cooperatives. In addition, community members often celebrate their religious festivals (e.g., Christmas, *Eid al-fitr*) together. One woman noticed that one effect of Boko Haram was that local Muslims nowadays actually more often join Christian festivals, even the inauguration of new priests, as a sign of respect and unity. However, one young Christian man remarked that traditional leadership positions (*djauro*, *lamido*, *emir*) are usually "*taken by Muslims and that they consider this normal.*" Another issue is inter-faith marriages. Muslims marry Christians and Animists, especially girls, but then require them to become Muslims. Their children will also become Muslims. They do not allow marriages the other way around. This led to scathing remarks by Christian youth. "*They will not allow you to marry a Muslim-girl, and even if you do, they will do everything to make the marriage fail.*" All in all, people attempt to prevent and manage religious tensions, but they cannot fully resolve them.

People also frequently share the little they have with displaced people. However, due to limited resources, they cannot share very much, and this limits their solidarity. Creating places to live for displaced people also takes up limited land. However, communities always allow displaced people with diverse ethnic backgrounds to come in. As stated, they participate in the formal and informal groups and associations and over time take up leadership positions. Many IDPs were not sure whether they wanted to go back, they felt that their places of origins were not safe, and that they had to rebuild their houses and make their land ripe for agriculture (if it was not taken by others, which could also lead to conflict). Return is a huge and expensive challenge. Some IDPs have settled so well in their new communities that fathers regularly suggested that they would "*go home and work the fields, but that their families could stay to go to school, meet friends, and work here.*" In sum, host communities do an impressive job in taking up displaced people, but they are poor and tensions arise regularly.

One community, originally a hunter-gatherer tribe, came down from the nearby hills to become farmers about 150 years ago. The Margi ethnic group then allowed them to settle on their lands. Now that land

¹⁴ These were already weakening before Boko Haram became active, but people now increasingly work alone in their fields. They do not always know which neighbors they can trust. They do know that working in groups prevents killing and looting by the herders, but it also makes them more of a target for Boko Haram.

has become scarce, the Margi sometimes take this land away from community-members who have been working on it for so many generations. This leads to despair and anger. These people felt that they do not have meaningful recourse to the traditional leaders, because these are also Margi.

As stated above, land entitlements and birth certificates have not been clearly arranged. Most people rent land on an annual basis. Some can rent land from the government, which is a bit cheaper, but this is rather rare and relies on a bureaucratic application procedure. Occasionally, landlords take away rented land just before the harvest or when it has been made ripe for agriculture. The fact that renting land is often insecure and contracts need to be renewed on an annual basis, renders investment in the quality of the soil or irrigation unprofitable. The incentives to fight land degradation and deforestation are low due to limited land, insecure entitlements, and high population pressure. To put it in the language of economic institutionalism, property rights are insecure. In order to improve food security and resilience, it would be wise to start working more with long-term contracts (e.g. ten years) to ensure property rights and concomitant investments to prevent land degradation.

Finally, the upcoming elections in 2023 also mean that the attention of the government has shifted from humanitarian support and conflict intervention to gaining votes at the local, state, and national levels. This means that the intrigues and incitement, including religious and ethnic bigotry, will likely hamper the communities’ efforts at recovery, reconciliation, and stability, at the very least for the election period.

4.2.5 Actor mapping of organizations involved in the provision of aid

What are international organizations doing to address food security and protection, and more generally to promote resilience in North Eastern Nigeria? In its latest overview of the North-East Humanitarian Presence (July-September 2021), OCHA indicates that “128 partners provided humanitarian assistance across 61 ... LGAs ... in Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe States ... 7 UN agencies were active in 61 LGAs, 40 International NGOs were active in 47 LGAs, 68 National NGOs were active in 51 LGAs and 13 Government partners were active in 60 LGAs” (OCHA 2021a, p. 1).¹⁵ They are active in nine sectors: protection, nutrition, WASH, food security, health, early recovery and livelihoods, education, camp coordination and camp management, and shelter and non-food items. Table 7 provides an overview of the organizations active in the two states, where JDPC is also active, in the sectors related to protection and food security.

Table 7: Protection and Food Security Actors

Sector	Borno State	Adamawa State
Food Security Sector	FAO, WFP, BSADP, BOWDI, CCFN, CHJPID, DHCBI, EYN, GREENCODE, HCIDI, JDPC, JDPH, RRI, SHO, AAH/ACF, CA, CARE, CCFN, COOPI, CRS, DRC, IMC, INTERSOS. IRC, MC, NRX, PI, PUI, SAHaRA, SCI, SFCG, ZOA	FAO, WFP, AADP, CCDRN, CCFN, DHCBI, GZDI, HRAF, JDPC, JDOH, CCFN, DRC
Early Recovery and Livelihoods	WFP, ICDSO, AA, AAH/ACF, CA, DRC, MC, PI, Caritas Nigeria/UNHCR	DRC, Caritas Nigeria/UNHCR
Cash Transfer	No information available	No information available ¹⁶
Protection	IOM, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, MLGECAB, SMoWASD, AFDP, AHI, BHF,	IOM, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, NBA, SMoWASD, BOWDI, CCFN, FSACI, ICDSO,

¹⁵ The OCHA North-east Humanitarian Presence is a slimmed down version of a complete 5W document (See the section on Cameroon).

¹⁶ Most of the partners/actors involved in food security sector do some form of cash voucher assistance (CVA)-direct cash transfers or food vouchers and others agriculture and livelihoods assistance. For instance, most of the food security projects implemented by Caritas/JDPC in Borno and Adamawa States over the past 4 years have entailed direct cash transfers to beneficiaries and small livelihoods support. IRC, DRC, and AAH/ACF have also worked with cash transfers in the past.

	BOWDI, CCHD, CDHI, COWACDI, DCR, EGI, EYN, GEPDC, GISCR, GPON, GSF, GZDI, ICDSO, LBDI, LETSAI, NF, REBHI, HHF, SHO, SOSCVN, WINN, WYEI, YIPDI, ALIMA, CARE, DRC, FHI360, IMC, IRC, MC, INTERSOS, MdM France, NCA, NRC, PI, SC, SCI, TDH	RHHF, CCFN, DRC, IRC, NRS, PI
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At first sight, table 7 gives the impression that there are so many organizations that the region is very well covered. However, the BAY states extend over a large area and most organizations confine themselves to selected villages, target groups, and sectors. Many of them have relatively small projects for a limited duration of time. As a result, the actual coverage is far more limited than it appears at first sight.

National NGOs: Allamin Foundation for Peace and Development (AFDP), Agaji Global Unity Foundation (AGUF), Action Health Incorporated (AHI), Albarka Health Spring Foundation (AHSF), Borno Women Development Initiative (BOWDI), Centre for Community Development and Research Network (CCDRN), Catholic Caritas Foundation of Nigeria (CCFN), Chabash Development and Health Initiative (CDHI), Concern for Women and Children Development Foundation (COWACDI), Child Protection and Peer Learning Initiative (CPPLI), Damnaish Human Capacity Building Initiative (DHCBI), Ekkliyyar Yan' uwa a Nigeria (EYN), Finpact Development Foundation (FINDEF), Foundation for Refugee Economic Empowerment (FREE), First Step Action for Children Initiative (FSACI), Grassroots Initiative for Strengthening Community Resilience (GISCR), Goal Prime Organisation Nigeria (GPON), Grassroots Researchers Association (GRA), Green Concern for Development (GREENCODE), Goggoji Zumunchi Development Initiative (GZDI), Hallmark Leadership Initiative (HLI), HOPE360, Hope and Rural Aid Foundation (HRAF), Integrated Aid Initiative (IAI), Inter Community Development Social Organization (ICDSO), Intercommunity Development social Organization (IDS), Jireh Doo Foundation (JDF), Justice Development and Peace Commission (JDPC), Justice Development Peace and Health Programme (JDPH), Life at Best Development Initiative (LBDI), Life Saving Grassroots Organization (LESGO), Mary Dinah Foundation (MDF), Monclub International, North East Youth Initiative Forum (NEYIF), Ngarawa Initiative for Community Development Foundation (NICDF), Nkafamiya Rescue Mission (NRM), Royal Heritage Health Foundation (RHHF), Restoration of Hope Initiative (RoHI), Relief Rescue Initiative (RRI), Salient Humanitarian Organization (SHO), Sirri Care Foundation (SiCF), SOS Children's Villages Nigeria (SOSCVN), Taimako Community Development Initiative (TCDI), Youth Integrated for Positive Development Initiative (YIPDI), Zireenza Support Foundation (ZSF)

International NGOs: Action Aid (AA), Action Against Hunger (AAH/ACF). ACTED, The Alliance for International Medical Action (ALIMA), Christian Aid (CA), CARE International, Caritas, Care Best International (CBI), Cooperazione Internazionale (COOPI), Christian Relief Services (CRS), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Family Health International (FHI360), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), International Medical Corps (IMC), INTERSOS, International Rescue Committee (IRC), Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), Mercy Corps (MC), Médecins du Monde (MdM), MSF Belgium, MSF France, Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Plan International (PI), Première Urgence Internationale (PUI), Street Child (SC), Save the Children International (SCI), Search for Common Ground (SFCG), Terre des Hommes (TDH)

UN Organizations: Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Organization of Migration (IOM), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), World Food Programme (WFP)

Government Institutions: Borno State Agriculture Development Programme (BSADP), Federal Neuro-Psychiatric Hospital (FNPH), Hospital Management Board (HMB), Ministry of Local Government and Emirate Council Affairs Borno (MLGECAB), Nigeria Bar Association (NBA), State Ministry of Health (SMOH), State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development (SMoWASD), State Primary Health Care Development Agency (SPHCDA), State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB), Yobe State Emergency Management Agency (YOSEMA), Yobe State Primary Health Care Management Board (YSPHCMB)

International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement: ICRC.

Many national NGOs, international NGOs, and government bodies implement projects that are funded by UN organizations. Most respondents do not know these funding organizations well, they mainly mention local and international NGOs, and sometimes government institutions. In case, of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, respondents often did not know whether it was the ICRC or the national Red Cross that helped them.¹⁷ Respondents did not always remember the names or the activities of the organizations that helped them. For example, one person mentioned support from DRC, but could not list any measures.

Crucially, most humanitarian funding is allocated only on a short-term basis (e.g., half a year). Once projects are finished, the actors may no longer be present or may need some time to secure the next round of funding. As a consequence, the number of actors and their activities may change rather rapidly. In the six villages we studied, a much smaller group of organizations was involved.

Table 8: Protection and Food Security Actors mentioned in FGDs and HHIs

LGA	Askira Uba		Michika		Hong	
Village	Mutukum	Askira/ Uba	Wumu	Tsukuma	Kala'a	Dilwachira
Food Security	Caritas, FAO (distribution of fertilizer and seeds), JDPC (training), ACF	Caritas, FAO, JDPC (improved seeds, fertilizer and training), ACF	Caritas, FAO, JDPC (farm input, rehabilitation of hand pumps), ACF	Caritas, FAO, JDPC, ACF	Caritas, FAO, ICRC, DRC, JDPC, ACF, NURU Nigeria (FAs, VSLAs)	Caritas, FAO, JDPC, ACT
Early recovery	JDPC	JDPC	JDPC	JDPC	JDPC	JDPC
Cash transfer	CAFOD/JDPC (Cash and livelihoods kits)		JDPC		ICRC, DRC	
Protection	Christian Aid (pit latrines)	IRC (pit latrines)				

In conclusion, although many actors have become active in the BAY states, they are not active in all communities and certainly not in continuous fashion. For each new project, it is essential to carry out a needs assessments and work in the OCHA coordination clusters in order to prevent geographical overlap

¹⁷ the Nigerian Red Cross are usually the first to respond to emergency situations in close collaboration with ICRC and the National Emergency Management Agency / State Emergency Management Agency. Consequently, the population hardly differentiates between these organizations.

or duplication of activities, and to work in a complementary fashion. This may also allow for greater synergies and better follow-up.

4.2.6 Conclusions on North-Eastern Nigeria

The military has contributed to the splintering of Boko Haram, but it has not been able to defeat it. Even if the military would be able to do so by force, the root causes of the Jihadist movement and other armed conflicts, which lie in bad governance, corruption, high population pressures, displacement, climate change and deforestation, would not be taken away. In addition, herders and farmers also engage in armed conflicts as harvests are being destroyed by migrating cattle.

Rising levels of banditry and kidnapping for ransom also mean that communities are forced to defend themselves in the absence of security provided by the government. The circulation of arms (local and sophisticated ones) in the hands of ordinary citizens can spiral into a vicious cycle of conflict, which may disrupt the transition to stability. Displacement, environmental decline, deforestation, soil erosion, and climate change compound the security problems.

The population faces a lack of access to land, water, wood, education, and jobs. Social cohesion among men and women, old and young, as well as among the different religious denominations is also in decline, but can be reinforced. Agriculture is the main source of livelihoods and there are only a few alternative activities. Farmers also need more training. Many people have to limit their food intake during the hunger gap. Food security and protection are limited.

4.3 Northern Cameroon

4.3.1 Introduction

This section presents the research findings from Cameroon. Many similarities, but also important differences exist between North-Eastern Nigeria and Northern Cameroon. In order not to duplicate much of the text on North-Eastern Nigeria, this section will indicate the main similarities as well as elaborate the differences.

4.3.2 Conflicts and shocks

Although the many conflicts in Cameroon are rather similar to those in Nigeria, they are not always perceived and addressed in the same manner.

The most obvious conflict concerns Boko Haram. Although it originated in Nigeria, it has been active in Cameroon since November 2013. For the local population, it is not clear where the Jihadist fighters currently come from or how the group(s) functions. People know that it hides either close to the border or in wildlife reserves. The BIR has been able to push Boko Haram further to the North, but it has not defeated it. Even respondents in communities who have not been attacked describe how they lived in fear and often sleep outside of their village. Sometimes people can hear the noise from Boko Haram attacks closeby. In one such village, with many displaced people, one person remarked: *“It is only a matter of time, before they attack us too.”* Due to the attacks, displacement continues to grow, and newly displaced people keep moving to safer areas. Such displaced families have often lost family members and possessions. Away from their homes and fields, IDPs only have a few options to earn an income (see below).

The same pattern in the attacks with men killed and women abducted, burned down houses and churches, looted goods and harvests, and forced Islamization of kidnapped villagers also plays out in most communities we studied in Cameroon. Similarly, people fear that informers from their own community help Boko Haram, but they do not know who they are. Especially women are afraid to go to fields far away; at the same time people increasingly sleep in the hills away from their homes.

South of Maroua, a community of former Boko Haram hostages lives in a separate settlement. In addition, former combatants who voluntarily come back—in response to an official appeal by the authorities—or persons associated with them, in particular wives and children, live in a DDR center

north of Maroua, which is part of a reintegration program. However, the communities are afraid to accept these former hostages and combatants, and want them to be “*deradicalized*.” These communities do not know whether these returnees can be trusted, whether informers are among them, and what crimes they (may) have committed., but they fear the worst.

In only one community, a women FGD explained that Boko Haram was changing. The community still did not comprehend its violence, but she noted that some kidnapped family members had returned home for a while. They welcomed them back, “*because they are our children or brothers and sisters*.” But they did not understand why the (temporary) returnees did not tell what happened during their stay with Boko Haram, or why they would go back again. One woman thought that perhaps Boko Haram had “*better food*.”

Another woman mentioned a ritual where Boko Haram members, including those kidnapped, had to eat “*two dates soaked in human blood*.” The exact meaning of the ritual was not clear to her, but it made it hard to fully leave Boko Haram and most returned children would later go back to the Jihadist rebels. One local observer confirmed the existence of this ritual and remarked that consuming blood-soaked dates “*was a syncretic ritual and definitely not pure Islam*.” The woman could neither explain the ritual, nor did she know why her son had gone back. Other women confirmed that Boko Haram definitely still exerted a pull.

In the same community, women related that Boko Haram would not kill as much as before, as long as they were provided with food and other goods. She remarked that not knowing if and when they would come, she had to prepare food for them every night, even though she herself “*had nothing to eat and would go to bed hungry*.” It was only in this one community that Boko Haram was changing its role: its Jihadist extremism waned, and it became more like a protection racket. If this would become a trend, it would mean that Boko Haram, or at least this specific sub-group of Boko Haram, would become more like an extremely violent mafia extracting resources from the local population.

The relation with the *pastoralist* Peul/Fulani was also loaded with conflict. People would notice the destruction of harvests, killing, and aggression, as well as the cutting of trees for cattle fodder, but they did not speak about *foreign* Peul. They actually acknowledged that the “*lack of grazing areas*” was putting the Peul into a difficult situation. They thus understood that the Peul also suffered from the lack of access to land. Communities did make an effort to negotiate with the Peul, but this did not always work out; violent conflicts, even leading to deaths on both sides, occurred in some cases. The population also noted that local Peul sub-groups now occasionally fight each other over scarce grazing lands. It may indeed be that the lack of land forced some Peul to Nigeria, where they are considered the *foreign Fulani*. However, proving this conjecture would require more research.¹⁸

Corruption, theft and gangs were also mentioned in Cameroon. For example, one old man explained that he had bought four hectares a few years back. He paid the owner, but never received the land. Instead, other people started farming it. He went to the local traditional chief, but did not receive any help and people falsely testified that he had not paid anything. He then went to the police and once again did not receive any justice. He was now renting land, but had a hard time paying the rent. Recently his goats and chickens had been stolen. The little children in his household suffered from Kwashiorkor¹⁹, a clear sign of malnutrition. His daughter in law was making *bil-bil*, a millet beer forbidden by Muslims and some Protestant churches, to earn at least some money.²⁰ Theft and a lack of protection from local authorities—both traditional and governmental—were mentioned in various interviews and FGDs. Our local researchers confirmed that this lack of protection was common. Gangs responsible for theft, locally

¹⁸ This research could not study whether or to which extent the Fulani/Peul would come from Niger or Chad.

¹⁹ Kwashiorkor and red hair were common among small children in the communities studied in Cameroon.

²⁰ Making and selling *bil-bil* as it is one of the few traditional ways for women to earn quick money. However, alcoholism is common in many communities and often leads to violence within families. In this sense, making *bil-bil* is a negative coping mechanism.

called *le banditisme*, were also a serious issue, undermining social cohesion within communities, as well as trust in the capacities of local authorities. Just as in Nigeria, these gangs have access to the arms that are being traded in the region. Finally, as unemployment is high and many parents cannot pay for secondary or higher education, idle youths are also causing trouble by behaving aggressively towards their neighbors in the communities.²¹

In Cameroon's Far North, the *national army*, in particular the BIR has a better image than the *military* in Nigeria.²² BIR soldiers "*share their food with children*". However, they have not been able to completely defeat Boko Haram groups. A common gripe against the soldiers is that they would leave the girls they made pregnant behind when moving to another region. This is an issue that requires more political attention. A few local people have also established a *plateforme des militaires et de la société civile* in order to sensitize military and other authorities about this problem. We did not hear any stories about corruption of the BIR in Northern Cameroon.

As stated, the Nigerian and Cameroonian research areas share the same *climatic* and *environmental conditions*. Hence, agriculture takes place mainly in the rainy season. Climate change complicates rain season farming by causing later and less rain overall, so that farmers cannot begin to plant according to their traditional time schedule. After dry spells, they often need to plant again, with fast-growing varieties, but their harvests then disappoint. Last year, the harvest was particularly bad. For example, some farmers measured their harvest of maize in cups instead of bags, meaning that they produced less than one bag of maize. With such a harvest, they cannot feed their families. Other farmers were aware that their farming barely made a profit and in some cases even made a loss. One of those farmers had started his own pharmacy, after he made almost no money with a combination of rainy and dry season farming close to the river. In addition, ongoing deforestation has negative effects on micro-climate, soil fertility, and water resources. Yet, selling wood is one of the few ways to earn an income. Just as with wood, many community members now either need to obtain water from a few kilometers away or buy it. In several villages, wells had run dry. Nevertheless, the communities also had to deal with inundations, partly due to late, but very strong rains, and partly due to the lack of vegetation. Combined with very strong winds, another effect of climate change and deforestation, the rainstorms would sometimes destroy walls, houses, crops, and fields. Both flooding and droughts have become more common.

4.3.3 Protection

With all the insecurity, it is not surprising that there are many protection problems. With the exception of the one community mentioned above, the communities indicated that there was not much they could do to protect themselves from Boko Haram's attacks. Just as in Nigeria, they "*pray*", "*sleep in the hills*", and "*when necessary, run for their lives*." Similarly, those who cannot run fast—children, their mothers, elderly, the disabled—stay behind. Respondents could not detect a pattern in Boko Haram's reaction, some of these people would survive, and some would be killed, but the reason why this difference occurred was not clear to them.

In contrast with Nigeria, there were no armed vigilantes in Cameroon. Instead, unarmed *membres de comité de vigilance* would together patrol their community until 1:00 a.m. so that they could warn the community when necessary. These committees solely consist of men.

The degree of GBV seemed to differ from community to community, but women, especially young ones, are in a vulnerable position. Girls from some families (especially Muslims) are married from the age of 13, encouraged by their parents who are afraid that they will get pregnant out of wedlock or

²¹ One young widow referred to a recent suicide by a friend of her son, whose parents were still searching for money to pay the last part of his tertiary education. She worried about the mental health of many youngsters in her community.

²² As the BIR is the most successful military force in the Far North, the local population knows them better than other military forces also present in the area.

because they have no means to keep them in school. Some girls want to continue their studies, but their parents force them to get married, especially among IDPs.

Early and out-of-wedlock pregnancies are becoming more and more frequent, especially with the military. Once pregnancies out of wedlock occur, the parents insist that the boys or men responsible marry the girl or woman concerned, but the soldiers and even the young men from the community increasingly refuse.

Some pregnant girls or young mothers are rejected by their families. Some resist and stay with their family until they give birth, but others flee to work in restaurants or for families where they can eat and receive some pay (e.g., 3,000 FCFA per month). Other pregnant girls, cornered by their parents and relatives, have committed suicide by taking drugs meant to kill mice. Yet, other girls carried out abortions by taking specific drugs, and some of them have died in the process. Others do marry, even after having children out of wedlock, but this is increasingly rare, because most new partners do not want to care for the children from other men.

Some parents prefer the schooling of boys to girls. If parents cannot afford it, girls are the first to be withdrawn from school. "*Many girls stay at home and sell their mothers' products,*" said a participant in an FGD. There are parents who do not obtain birth certificates for their children, especially for girls. Often, girls stop their education in the fifth grade because they do not have a birth certificate or because their parents have not paid the registration fee for final examination. Girls and women do not inherit cultivable land. They can only rent or buy. We were also told during a focus group that "*some women have shops in the market, but are forbidden to run them themselves. They are forced to have them run by men.*"

In addition, alcoholism is a problem that leads to violence in families. Many (unemployed) men regularly get drunk at *bil-bil* "pubs." Back home, some men violently harm, even abuse, their wives and children.

Crucially, NGOs and UN organizations cannot address most security issues directly, but they can contribute to reinforce local authorities' capacity to handle security issues. Currently, they pay most attention to birth certificates, and GBV issues. They could do more to work on land rights with long-term contracts and strengthening or setting up FAs. This would address environmental decline and support social cohesion.

What does the government do? Just as in Nigeria, the military is the most visible part of the national government. Most respondents reported that they received no or only a few government services. The traditional leaders were the most visible parts of local administration. And just like in Nigeria, people narrate many stories about corruption, when they speak about the government. However, we did not hear stories about the BIR being corrupt (with the important exception of the hardship of young mothers left behind). Most communities feel they first and foremost need to take care of themselves and do not count on protection services being delivered to them any longer.

4.3.4 Food security

Just as in Nigeria, the Cameroonian communities that we studied produce a broad diversity of foodstuffs. They produce the same staple crops, vegetables, and fruits, and work with the same types of animals. The Cameroonian communities, however, grow more cotton than their Nigerian counterparts. Due to the lack of water, they almost never do vegetable gardening at home. For some people, dry season farming is possible but only close to rivers, where onions are the main crop. Towards the end of the *soudure* (hunger gap), many people only have one meal a day.

As indicated above, due to the unpredictable rains, droughts, and violent winds, rain season agriculture has become less predictable and productive. Due to the high population pressure, parcels of land are very small. An indication of the pressures on land is that in Cameroon, terracing is more common than in Nigeria. It gives the impression that every inch of land is being used. People usually try to deal with

declining soil fertility by using agrochemicals (fertilizer, herbicides, and pesticides). Farmers regularly use Roundup, but they are unaware of its negative effects. In one community, respondents indicated that CMM had helped them working more with compost. Tree planting, however, is not common yet. People need more information on the ways in which different types of trees (and other plants) help improve the soil, break winds, improve the micro-climate, attract rains, and produce food.

Due to the high population density, access to land has become a rare good. Most people rent the land they farm on. Together with the costs of agrochemicals, plowing (either by donkeys or oxen), and low yields, it has become hard for many of them to earn enough. As described in the case above of the farmer who started a pharmacy, some farmers are turning away from agriculture due to high costs and low yields. Nevertheless, some farmers make a good profit. One farmer, for example, was very successful with seed selection for the next growing season. Crucially, most farmers have not received any agricultural training, except from their parents and neighbors on-the-job. Training by international and local organizations, including the agricultural extension workers, would be a way to improve soil quality, deal with water shortages, and become more productive and food secure, while replacing the use of Roundup and other agrochemicals with compost and natural herbicides.

Most respondents need better access to water points (boreholes and wells) and education about rain harvesting methods. In addition, access to vocational training for young people is extremely limited. Very few of the young people interviewed during the FGDs or HHIs benefited from such training. For example, of the 35 boys present at a youth FGD in one community, only two received training in sheep farming (fattening, care, housing, feeding, deworming, vaccination, etc.). One of the few vocational training centers we could visit in one of the communities is almost in ruins since the Boko Haram crisis. "*NGOs and public services used to come and rent this center for their training sessions when there was electricity and water, but they don't come anymore since the electricity has been cut*", a staff member lamented (see below).

In sum, there are many problems in agriculture that limit food security. The *soudure* has always been a tough period, but nowadays the population pressure is high and access to water, wood, and land is very limited. Moreover, although the farmers have already had to deal with extremely low agricultural productivity, soil quality is likely to decline further.

4.3.5 The communities

Given resource scarcity and ongoing insecurity, all communities face tensions between host populations and IDPs, young and old generations, and men and women, as well as among different religious nominations. All communities have taken in IDPs, but have little land to share with them. Hence, many IDPs have to survive by either selling firewood (which increasingly implies walking long distances to find wood) and petty-trading or as day-laborers (*baryama*). In one IDP settlement, two Peul widows, whose husbands had been killed, lived peacefully together with IDPs from many other ethnic and religious backgrounds. They stated that they had tried to make *bil-bil*²³ and sell groundnuts, but barely made a profit. In the hills, many IDPs also produce gravel (*gravier* in local French), essentially by crushing rocks, for construction. A female youth group remarked how hard this backbreaking work was. Nevertheless, according to an IOM study (2021), 76 percent of the IDPs do not want to return to their places of origin, mainly because of insecurity, but also because some of them have settled in their new communities, where their children go to school. Returning home can also be difficult, because either land must be prepared for agriculture or other people have taken their land. In most families, only the father or an older brother would return first, and either families would be divided over their places of origin and arrival, or the other family members would go back only when the father or brother indicate that resettlement would succeed.

²³ Normally, the Peul do not make *bil-bil*. The fact that these two widows attempted to do so, indicates how limited their economic opportunities are.

In all communities, people organize in formal and informal groups. In particular, women organize more often than men in farmer’s groups/associations. Most communities also had mixed famers groups in which IDPs, and members of different religions, and ethnic groups would cooperate, but a sizable share of the population is not part of a farmer’s association. Mixed groups of young people would often work together to earn money to help people pay for weddings or medical costs. Churches and Mosques would also have their own groups, that normally fulfilled social tasks like cleaning, supporting people in need, and learning. These are generally the only groups that are not inter-denominational. One old Christian man stated that his cooperation with his Animist neighbors was minimal. Some people use insults, such as "kirdi" (meaning dirty, subhuman, or pagan), when standing in long lines for boreholes. Others then reply with more insults. This usually leads to fights. When there are inter-religious marriages, the women usually change their religion and follow that of their husband. Yet, when a Christian or an Animist wants to marry a Muslim girl, the girl's parents force her to remain Islamic. All in all, although social cohesion is still strong, it is under growing pressure; people of all denominations celebrate important religious holidays together, but intermarriage is restricted, and most traditional leadership is in Muslim hands.

Just as in Nigeria, traditional neighborly help with planting, harvesting, and house building (*sourga*) is in decline. One man remarked that they “miss it, but after Boko Haram everybody was on their own, now we only help each other with building houses.” Yet, this desire for more cooperation, combined with the need for agricultural and vocational training, can help with setting up FAs and cooperatives.

Many people would like to receive agricultural and vocational training. Agricultural training could help them to improve output and contribute more actively to value chains, for example with onions, maize, and groundnuts, but such agricultural and vocational training also requires start-up kits and start-up capital, so that they would be able to start their own micro-enterprises.

Despite all the tension, community members attempt to work together. More investment in birth certificates, long-term land contracts, setting up FAs and cooperatives, as well as agricultural and vocational training, would help to establish more effective social organization and stronger social cohesion. Ideally, this would also involve government institutions, such as agricultural extension services.

4.3.6 Actor mapping of organizations involved in the provision of aid

What are international and local organizations doing to address food insecurity and the lack of protection, and more generally to promote resilience in the far North of Cameroon? According to OCHA’s (OCHA 2021c) latest 5W²⁴ overview of humanitarian actors present in the Far North of Cameroon, 57 organizations carry out the humanitarian response in the Far North region. These include 17 international NGOs, 15 national NGOs, 11 UN organizations, 8 government actors, and 2 organizations from the Red Cross movement. They are active in 10 sectors, namely Food Security, WASH, Health, Nutrition, Education, Protection, Early Recovery, and Shelter and Essential Household Items. The organizations implement almost 83 percent of their activities in the departments of Logone et Chari, Mayo-Sava, and Mayo-Tsanaga. In December 2021, these actors executed 154 projects, and reached 416,000 people (39% men, 61% women) out of a total of 951,000 targeted persons.

Table 9: Protection and Food Security Actors

Sector	Mayo-Sava	Mayo-Tsanaga
Food Security Sector	ACF, ADPS, CADEPI, Caritas, EFA, FAO, GIZ, INTERSOS, MINADER, PPI, WFP	ACF, ADPS, CADEPI, Caritas, CRS, EFA, FAO, GIZ, INTERSOS, PC, PPI, SI, WFP
Early Recovery	PLAN, UNHCR	

²⁴ 5W stands for Who’s doing What, Where, When and for Whom. It is a document that provides a quick overview of all the actors present in a crisis area. 5W is a component of OCHA’s information management for a more coordinated response. It includes activity and gap analysis.

Cash Transfer	ACF, Caritas, COHEB Int'l, INTERSOS, IRC, LWF, NRC, PUI, UNICEF, WFP	ACF, Caritas, COHEB Int'l, INTERSOS, IRC, LWF, NRC, PC, PPI, SI, WFP
Protection	ALDEPA, ALVF-EN, Caritas, INTERSOS, IRC, MINTP, NRC, ONE, PLAN, RESAEC, RIDEV, UNFPA, UNHCR; UN Women	ALDEPA, ALVF-EN, Caritas, CRF, INTERSOS, IRC, LWF, NRC, ONE, RESAEC, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF; UN Women

National NGOs: Association pour la Promotion de la Pisciculture dans le Septentrion (ADPS), ALDEPA, Association de Lutte Contre Les Violences Faites Aux Femmes (ALVF-EN),), Cellule d'Appui au Développement Local Participatif Intégré (CADEPI), Codas-Caritas, Education Fights AIDS International (EFA), ONE, Public Concern (PC), Réseau d'animateurs pour l'éducation des communautés (RESAEC), Research Institute for Development (RIDEV).

International NGOs: Action Contre la Faim (ACF), Community Humanitarian Emergency Board International (COHEB Int'l), Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), INTERSOS, International Rescue Committee (IRC), Lutheran World Federation (LWF), Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Plan International (PI), Positive Planet International (PPI) Première Urgence Internationale (PUI), Solidarité Internationale (SI).

UN Organizations: Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN Women, World Food Programme (WFP).

Government institutions: Ministère de l'Agriculture et du Développement Rural (MINADER), Ministère des Travaux Publics (MINTP).

International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement: Croix Rouge Camerounaise, Croix Rouge Française, and Croix Rouge Internationale.

Table 10: Protection and Food Security Actors mentioned in FGDs and HHIs

Département	Mayo-Sava		Mayo-Tsanaga			
	Village	Mémé	Kourgui	Zamay	Tada	Koza
Food Security	Caritas, Red Cross, IRC	Caritas, Red Cross, (NFIs)	Caritas, WFP, INTERSOS, Red Cross, LWF, IMC	WFP, Caritas	Caritas, Intersos, Red Cross, LWF, WFP	Caritas, Red Cross (seeds, fertilizer), LWF (agriculture), SI (rehabilitation of (seed) storage)
Early recovery	Caritas, RESAEC (youth training in tailoring)	Caritas, NRC, CADEPI (legalization of groups)	Caritas, UN Women, UNDP,	EFA (CFW), NRC (husbandry, petty trade)	Caritas, CAPROD (rehabilitation of youth centers)	Caritas, RESILAC ²⁵ (functional literacy)

²⁵ RESILAC stands for Inclusive Economic and Social Recovery around Lake Chad. It is a project that aims to assist people living in the Lake Chad Basin with a combination of emergency relief and long-term economic and social development. RESILAC is implemented by Action Contre la Faim (ACF) (lead agency), CARE, and Groupe URD, in partnership with the CCFD-Terre Solidaire network, Search For Common Ground, and local organizations in Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria and Chad (See Groupe URD 2022).

			Care International (AVEC) Public Concern Plan International (IGAs)	IEDA (IDP shelter) Sare Tabitha	IOM (rehabilitation of youth centers)	
Cash transfer	Caritas	Caritas, IRC	Caritas, Première Urgence (Cash for Work)	Caritas	Caritas	Caritas Red Cross (Cash for Work) LWF (cash for work)
Protection	IRC (protection against GBV)	CDJP ACADIR ²⁶ ALDEPA (birth-certificates) Caritas (birth-certificates)	ALDEPA, UN Women (mediation training)	IOM (multi-purpose hall, child friendly spaces)	ALDEPA IMC	

Many national or international NGOs and governmental actors execute projects funded by UN organizations. Our respondents often did not know the UN organizations, but they mentioned the international NGOs, and to a lesser extent the government ministries. The respondents sometimes indicated that they did not know or had forgotten the names of some of the organizations that helped them. They also know some local NGOs, such as CAPROD and ACADIR, that were not mentioned in the 5W, because they are not considered as humanitarian organizations.²⁷ Some organizations mentioned in the 5W may have been active in other villages than the ones we studied, so that the respondents did not know them.

The field of actors tends to change rather rapidly. Most actors intervene with humanitarian projects that last a year or less and many projects from the 5W September 2021 have already been completed or these organizations may be active in different villages. Other actors may not be active, while trying to mobilize more funding. Other NGOs, such as Première Urgence, have already left the region, because it is not as unstable as it was five years ago.

In sum, many actors are active in the region, but not in all communities and certainly not in continuous fashion. Just as in Nigeria, it is essential for each new project to carry out a needs assessments and cooperate in the OCHA coordination clusters to prevent geographical duplication or overlapping activities, and to work in a complementary fashion. This may also allow for greater synergies and better follow-up.

4.3.7 Conclusions on Northern Cameroon

Just as in Nigeria, the Cameroonian communities suffer from insecurity by Boko Haram groups and conflicts between herders and farmers, as well as rising crime. There are less issues with the military, but especially the problem of leaving behind pregnant girlfriends or young mothers is considered a problem. Also, in Cameroon, people do not talk about foreign Fulani/Peul. Just as in Nigeria, insecurity and land conflicts, weak governance, corruption, high population pressures, displacement, climate

²⁶ Association Camerounaise pour le Dialogue Interreligieux.

²⁷ Hence, ACADIR is not part of the 5W analysis.

change and deforestation, contribute to a lack of land and soil deterioration, lack of social services, lack of job opportunities and education, lack of safety and stability, and a lack of water and wood.

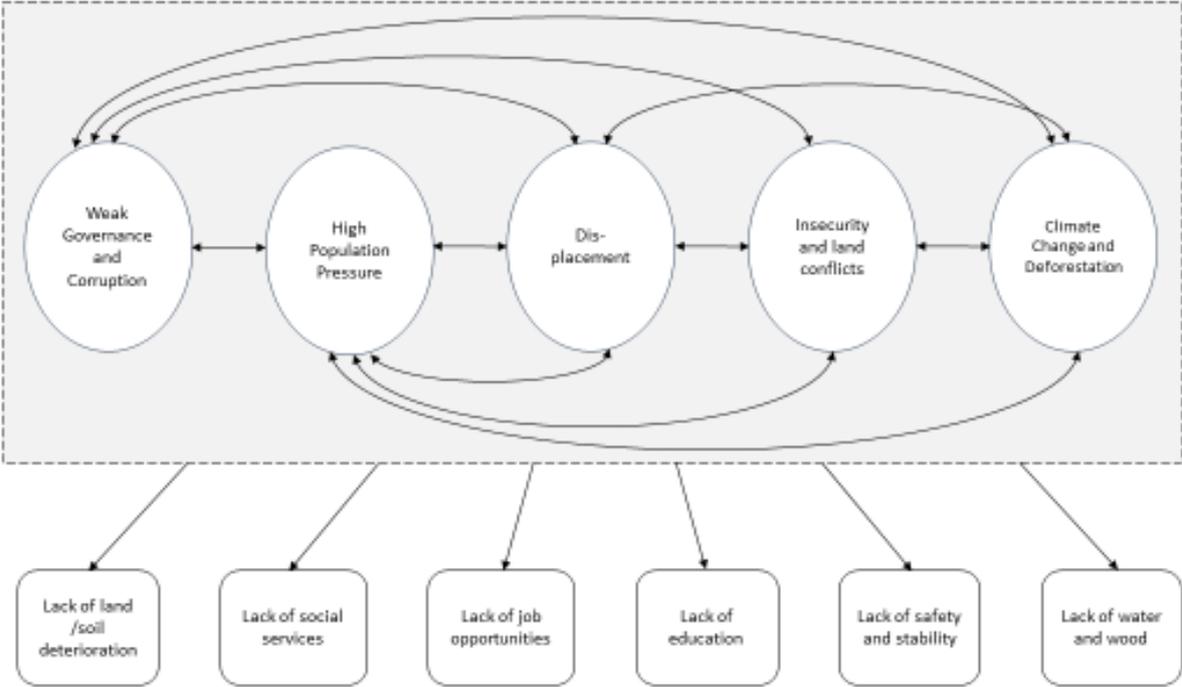
Agriculture is the main economic activity and there are only a few, limited alternatives. People in Cameroon use more terracing than in Nigeria. During the *soudure*, many people only have one meal a day. In sum, food security is low and protection needs are high.

4.4 Comparative Analysis of Risks

This section analyzes the risks that the communities studied faced in a comparative fashion. It shows that both research areas face a similar set of interacting risks.

As stated above, bad governance, ongoing corruption, high population density, climate change, insecurity, land conflicts, and displacement reinforce each other’s negative effects. They contribute to a lack of resources (lack of land, soil deterioration, lack of water and wood). Agricultural productivity is declining, but value chains and alternative economic sectors, such as tourism, are underdeveloped. Together this contributes to a lack of opportunities (work, education, and social services). Unfortunately, the populations often lack specific knowledge and resources to get them out of this penury. As a result, the population in the communities studied runs the risk of malnutrition, unemployment, violence, and more generally poverty. Social cohesion is under pressure; resilience is weak.

Figure 1: Summary of Interacting Risks



All these interacting risks culminate into one overarching risk, namely that the situation will get worse instead of better. Yet, such a situation is not inevitable. In response to the manifold risks, a GIZ staff member stated during a KII, “we need to get out of the humanitarian mindset and also provide longer-term developmental aid.” He argued that humanitarian action helped to save lives, but did not allow for a switch to improve resilience. He further stated “we could already have started this in 2018.” The next chapter will indicate recommendations to move towards more transitional aid and build on local initiatives to support better food security, more protection, and ultimately a higher degree of resilience.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This section provides the recommendations to address the risks indicated in the previous chapter and boost resilience. It follows the set-up of the previous chapter with security, food security, protection, community, and actor-mapping. In the conclusions, we will apply the resilience capacity matrix. These recommendations combine humanitarian with development and peacebuilding aspects. In other words, together they are part of the local humanitarian-development-peace nexus. These recommendations are calibrated to Do-No-Harm by addressing conflicts and tensions, strengthening protection, and enhancing food security in particular the community level.

5.2 Security

The various types of conflicts require different actions and cannot always be addressed directly by Caritas and its partners.

1. Boko Haram groups;

This is the most disruptive conflict of all conflicts in both regions and the hardest to address. The roles and actions of the Nigerian and Cameroon governments and military are crucial. As stated, even a military defeat of Boko Haram will not remove the root causes of its founding and rise. In other words, Caritas and its partners cannot fully eliminate the security risks. However, there are several steps that Caritas and its partners can take to reduce these risks:

- *Raise awareness that a military solution alone does not suffice to address the root causes of the conflict, but also includes the need to fight corruption, improve social services, and deal with the consequences of climate change and environmental decline;*
- *Support the plateforme des militaires et de la société civile and other civil society bodies to foster dialogue on improving the policies and behavior of the military (e.g., to reduce hassling and support pregnant girls/young mothers);*
- *Help Boko Haram returnees and former combatants to reintegrate and/or relocate to other areas. Reintegration may also include traditional and religious methods to forgive and reconcile and/or the local equivalent(s) of a truth and reconciliation committee. Building trust will take years, if not generations. Nevertheless, support of returnees and former combatants can aid in weakening Boko Haram groups and help foster stability;*
- *Work on a diversified approach to different Boko Haram groups and look for opportunities for negotiations with each of these groups individually;*
- *Help IDPs integrate into host communities and local agriculture. If peace comes, Caritas Germany and its partners can support voluntary return programs (e.g., return observation visits, transport, conflict resolution with remainees, reestablishing social services, and making land ripe for agriculture), but most IDP families do not want to go back straightaway and they may temporarily split between their places of origin and refuge;*
- *Forced return should be prevented.*

2. Pastoralists vs agriculturalists, in particular with the foreign Fulani in Nigeria:

- *Let FAs negotiate with traditional leaders and state institutions, including the police and military, as well as with the (traditional) leadership of the Fulani/Peul on access and transit rights and periods. This also includes establishing opportunities for trade and exchange with the pastoralists;*
- *(Re-)establish (traditional) bodies for conflict management among pastoralists and agriculturalists*
- *Establish grazing zones and post-harvest roaming rights for cattle and ensure that their manure will be used as fertilizer and/or fuel);*

- *Develop a standing committee that involves FAs, traditional and religious leaders, police, military, and other relevant state institutions for protection when pastoralists come during the harvest periods;*
 - *Carry out a study with foreign Fulani/Peul on improving their livelihood and coping strategies, as well as on existing or potential forms of social organization/association; and*
 - *Establish veterinary and income generating projects for local and foreign Fulani/Peul.*
3. Intergenerational conflicts (see also below);
 - *Create special youth bodies and let the youth representatives discuss more with state institutions and traditional leaders;*
 - *More agricultural and vocational training (see below);*
 - *Lower dowries, so that young people can get married and are taken seriously by the older generations.*
 4. Religious tensions:
 - *Continue with either establishing or expanding forms of inter-religious cooperation, such as FAs and religious exchange and training programs on religious tolerance (see below);*
 - *Address the strong representation of Muslim traditional leaders by establishing bodies that (also) represent Christians and Animists. Similar bodies should be instituted for women;*
 - *Pay more attention to Animists and Christians in case of succession of traditional leaders and for functions in state institutions;*
 - *Ensure that all religious denominations have equal chances to work with and benefit from state services, traditional leaders, and humanitarian action,*
 - *Discuss the inter-religious tensions with religious leaders, FAs, and religious groups in order to identify potential solutions for inter-religious marriage, conflicts at boreholes, etc.*
 5. Tensions at water points:
 - *Create more water points and boreholes, as well as committees for their maintenance (in agricultural areas, FAs can take on this role, in the villages themselves maintenance committees should be either set up or strengthened).*
 6. Tensions stoked by political parties during election periods:
 - *Religious institutions/groups, traditional leaders, schools, and FAs discuss the politics and strategies of the political parties, and how these can divide or strengthen communities.*

In addition, measures to enhance food security and improve protection can also contribute positively to greater food security and resilience.

5.3 Food security

The main question for food security is how to strengthen the quality and quantity of food production, which will enhance food availability and access. There are three steps necessary. First, most people who rent or own land, do not have strong enough incentives to improve soil quality over time. Second, there is a lack of knowledge on improving agriculture. Third, the level of cooperation in communities can be ameliorated further. Respondents noted the decline in mutual village aid, especially since the attacks by Boko Haram have started. Fourth, the limited alternatives to agricultural work should be strengthened further, in particular with vocational training. Finally, agricultural value chains and environmental protection should be enhanced.

1. *Establish Farmer's Associations*
 - *Provide agricultural and management training of FAs on:*
 - *Sustainable agriculture (e.g., natural pesticides and fertilization (compost) and prevent the use of Roundup);*

- *Home gardening of vegetables;*²⁸
 - *Market linkages;*
 - *Livestock management;*
 - *Ox- and/or donkey plowing (depending on soil type and availability of animals);*
 - *Seed selection, seed improvement, and seed storage;*
 - *Terracing, especially in Nigeria;*
 - *Techniques to reduce erosion and improve water management, depending on produce (reforestation, mixed planting, barriers, water collection points, leaving vegetation next to riverbanks untouched, etc.);*
 - *Water harvesting; and*
 - *FA management.*
 - *Establish FAs' own simple demonstration gardens at the community level. Such a demonstration garden is useful for on the job training, and providing crops, seeds, saplings, and seedlings. It may also contribute to the acceptance and adaptation of water harvesting and irrigation techniques;*
 - *Fight erosion and promote terracing with cash-for-work or food-for-work projects, in particular during the dry season.*
 - *Start long-term reforestation program(s) with fast-growing trees for firewood, fruit trees for food, wind-breaker and shade trees, and trees that help improve soil quality;*
 - *Construct new boreholes and set up their maintenance committees;*
 - *Establish SILC or VSLA for investments in agriculture and micro-enterprise. To some extent VSLAs can function as a social fund (e.g., in the case of illness of family members of FA members);*²⁹
 - *Work on improving value chains for agricultural products (e.g., groundnut oil, onion, and cotton products)*
2. *Establish long-term contracts for renting land, and training opportunities, so that the farmers, who rent benefit from improving the quality of the land. In all likelihood, land owners and renters should cooperate on such improvement processes, in particular in FAs (for example during the dry season).*³⁰
 3. *Reestablish the agricultural training centers (e.g., the Baba Simon Center in Cameroon), and look for similar opportunities in Nigeria, so that more people can be reached with training, seeds, seedlings, saplings, and tools;*
 4. *Support the functioning of state agricultural extension services;*
 5. *Improve transport opportunities (e.g., bus services or tricycles) for produce and other products as these usually fetch higher prices in towns and cities and/or establish market outlets;*
 6. *Work with vocational training, which provide more income-generating opportunities and help improve food access. Given the high degree of poverty in the communities, most vocational training will need to be accompanied with start-up capital and start-up kits. Training could focus on;*
 - *Traditional crafts and beads;*
 - *Baking bread, biscuits, and pasta;*

²⁸ DMI in South Sudan executed a successful food security project that increased the use of vegetable farming at home.

²⁹ Nigerians use the term SILC. The actual differences and local applicability of SILC and VSLA require more study to determine which method is the most effective. In South Sudan, VSLAs were a successful part of the FA activities. They are also a successful element of support to South-Sudanese refugees in northern Uganda.

³⁰ In South Sudan, DMI cooperated with traditional leaders, local administration officials, and churches to establish such long-term land-lease contracts.

- *Soap making;*
 - *Block laying and concrete (construction) practices;*
 - *Hair cutting and hair dressing;*
 - *Tailoring and garments;*
 - *Carpentry and joinery;*
 - *Driving and basic motor vehicle mechanics;*
 - *Producing and repairing energy-saving-stoves (metal and mud versions) and solar stoves;*
 - *Metal fabrication; and*
 - *Catering and hotel management.*
7. *Set-up a federation of FAs when there are more than three FAs in a village. In this way, the FAs can learn from each other and communicate their needs with traditional leaders, government institutions, and the police and military.*

Some FAs may be able to provide humanitarian support, in particular food aid, to vulnerable people or persons in need in their own communities. Over time, well-functioning FAs can evolve into cooperatives, in particular when they are able to move up the value chain. For example, from establishing pig stables or chicken runs to butchering and selling meat (products), and from selling groundnuts to selling oil and oil-based products.

Table 11: Interview with Vouto Marcel (Baba Simon Center)

<p>The Baba Simon Center has 20 rooms with 3 beds, which means it can accommodate 60 people. There is a training room, a kitchen and a shed used as a dining room, two trainers' rooms, a permanent manager's house, a 64-meter well with water and a water tower, but the center has been out of order since the power has been cut, although electricity is available in the community and the center can be reconnected.</p> <p>The center has short training sessions (one day to one week) for leaders of Catholic Church groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catechist training or refresher sessions (in languages and French) • Training or refresher courses for Cop Monde groups • Training sessions for leaders of liturgical groups <p>Since the departure of the Italian engineer Nino, who was in charge for several years, the Center no longer organizes agricultural training sessions. Nino used to rent fields for agricultural experimentation from the landowners of the village. NGOs used to come and rent land for their various training sessions when there was electricity and water, but not since the electricity was cut off. ACADIR (<i>Antenne de Mora</i>) organized some training sessions for its members, but again not since the electricity has been cut off.</p> <p>A commissioner used to organize one-day training sessions for members of the vigilance committees and the "guards" who provide security at Masses, but since he was assigned elsewhere, these training sessions have also been discontinued.</p> <p>It is possible to use the center as a tree nursery, because there is room for boreholes.</p> <p>Based on the experiences of hosting training sessions in the center, Caritas Germany and its partners could rehabilitate it to relaunch short-term agricultural training, for example on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeds; • Tree nursing; • Sustainable agriculture; • Promoting dialogue between girls; young women; young people; generations; religious groups; and ethnic groups; • Management training for craftsmen, farmers and other young entrepreneurs.

In some areas, where population density is high and agricultural production is low, some people may want to relocate, if they receive support, to less densely populated areas where land for farming is still available.³¹ Similarly, over time, the return of IDPs to their places of origin may reduce pressure on land use. It should be noted, however, that such return requires careful planning and implementation, as other people may either have taken over the land, which can lead to conflicts, or land needs to be made ripe

³¹ Suggested areas included a part of the nature reserve close to Zamay and the North-East of Makalingaye in Cameroon. And perhaps other parts of the North of both countries, such as Adamawa and Adamaoua.

for agriculture again, and boreholes, wells, as well as market places, transport systems, and social services may need to be either rebuilt or built from scratch.

5.4 Protection

Much of the activities on security and food security positively influence protection. Both the training and the FAs help to build and increase social cohesion. Many people expressed a desire to restore forms of mutual aid (*sourga*).

1. *Provide humanitarian aid, when necessary (food aid, shelter, non-food items, etc.) to bridge difficult periods (e.g., the end of the hunger gap, displacement, or destruction due to armed conflicts). Such humanitarian action can also function as an entry point for community building/strengthening social cohesion and more developmental activities, such as FAs, to build resilience;*
2. *Help the state to rebuild and provide social services again or strengthen already existing ones (e.g. health, education, agricultural extension services, and care for orphans, the elderly, the chronically ill, or persons with disabilities);*
3. *Provide training on conflict mediation;*
4. *Train vigilante members on their rights and obligations, as well as on negotiations and mediation, to enhance social cohesion for resilience;*
5. *Help civil society, including FAs, to fight corruption. This is a hard task, but these organizations can foster accountability over time.³²*
6. *Ensure that all community members obtain birth certificates, identity cards and/or passports. In this way, they gain access to services, such as education and banking, so that they are better protected;*

5.5 Communities: peaceful co-existence and building social cohesion

Respondents also provided specific recommendations for peaceful coexistence and local protection. Partly these recommendations concern building and acquiring individual skills and knowledge, partly they concern community development towards greater social cohesion. They can take place within FAs and already established forms of social organizations, such as Church and Mosque groups.

1. For all communities
 - *Establish local forms of psycho-social care to address trauma, GBV, and more generally provide psychological support to foster peacemaking and greater resilience.*
2. Within families:
 - *Organize dialogue and awareness-raising meetings with girls, and then with parents, to address the specific problems, including GBV, of girls and young women.*
 - *Establish a community fund to support education of (pregnant) girls, single mothers, and orphans;*
 - *Training girls and young women in various income-generating activities that strengthen their autonomy, especially those who do not attend school;*
 - *Educating families on the proper/effective ways to discuss with each other, acknowledge each other's needs, and/or ask for and obtain permission from parents;*
 - *Raise awareness on trauma, alcoholism (and more broadly drug use), and inter-family violence.*
3. *Among religions (religious leaders as well as religious groups):*

³² The implementation of this recommendation should be monitored carefully. It may contribute to a Do-No-Harm approach, but that is not a given. It may also raise tensions and even cause violence.

- *Train communities, including FAs, youth, church and mosque groups, to understand and counter violent, extremist narratives in Christianity, Islam, and Animism. Do not only popularize (biblical and koranic) verses, stories or traditions against gender-based violence and favorable to peaceful cohabitation, but also foster understanding of the teachings, ideologies, and narratives that are used to incite and spread hatred and how these undermine social cohesion and contribute to poverty.*
- *Make a concerted effort for all, especially non-Muslims, to be clean and hygienic, and to respect each other's religion (e.g., a Muslim woman asked that bil-bil tools should not be cleaned at communal watering holes).*

5.6 Actor-mapping of organizations involved in the provision of aid

Especially in the areas where Boko Haram groups have become less active, the risks associated with insecurity are declining and more transitional development-oriented projects are becoming possible. In this respect, the actor mapping in both research areas has indicated that many actors are active in the region, but not in all 35 communities and certainly not on a continuous basis. Most of them work on relatively short-term, humanitarian projects and leave after a while.

The above recommendations for Caritas International and its three local partners build on their close working relationship. They are in line with the Humanitarian Response Plans for both regions (OCHA 2021b, 2022), and fit with the BMZ policies on resilience (BMZ 2020). It would be interesting to also check out the BMZ and its partners in the Sahel Alliance in other countries in the region.

In addition, to carry out such a transitional project, it is crucial to coordinate in the coordination clusters to prevent geographical duplication or overlapping activities, and to work in a complementary fashion. In addition, in order to reduce the risk of no or only partial success it is important to cooperate with local leaders and other government institutions, as well as civil society organizations. For example, the agricultural extension services and the agricultural centers of both governments should be reinforced.

When the mostly multi-ethnic, multi-religious village communities organize themselves in FAs, they contribute simultaneously to better food security and social cohesion. Crucially, they will be able to improve their farming techniques and outputs, so that they become more efficient farmers. The area under cultivation may also increase. As a result, the farmers can multiply their produce of staple crops, vegetables, and fruits. They can then also rear more animals. Overall, these changes can considerably improve food security and protection for the 35 communities.

5.7 Resilience

As the Resilience Capacity Matrix below shows, the recommendations contribute to resilience in various ways at various levels of society.

Table 12: Resilience Capacity Matrix

	Stabilization Capacity	Adaptation Capacity	Transformation Capacity
Definition	<i>Allows people to satisfy their basic needs, to ensure functionality of key structures, and to ensure survival during and after shocks.</i>	<i>Allows people and structures to adapt to long-term changes and to mitigate or minimize their negative effects.</i>	<i>Allows people and structures to focus on underlying causes of problems and to pursue structural change for sustainable livelihoods.</i>
Individual Level	Agricultural and vocational training, Humanitarian Action, Protect girls/young women and orphans, Agricultural and vocational training	FAs, Agricultural and vocational training, Sustainable agriculture, Improving soil quality, Reduction of agrochemicals, Agricultural and vocational training	Land-contracts, FAs, VSLAs, Agricultural and vocational training

Household Level	Agricultural and vocational training, Humanitarian Action, Protect girls/young women and orphans	FAs, Reforestation, Agricultural and vocational training	Land-contracts, FAs, VSLAs, Agricultural and vocational training
Community Level	Agricultural and vocational training, Humanitarian Action, Protect girls/young women and orphans	FAs, Reforestation, Agricultural and vocational training	Land-contracts, FAs, FA federations, Agricultural and vocational training
(Other Levels)	Involve state institutions; Involve religious communities and leaders; Involve traditional leaders	FAs, reforestation; Involve state institutions; Involve religious communities and leaders; Involve traditional leaders	FA federations; Involve state institutions; Involve religious communities and leaders; Involve traditional leaders

This matrix shows how important it is for advocacy and the conception of the project, including its evaluation plan, to cooperate with other organizations at the different levels of society in both countries. This also includes working with the coordination clusters and to think through which potential partners can support the project and its follow-up.

5.8 Next Steps

On the basis of this study and depending on funding by BMZ, Caritas Germany and its partners can take several steps to move project design forward.

1. *Hold a feedback session with the colleagues and organizations involved in this research;*
2. *Discuss an advocacy strategy on the basis of this study;*
3. *Set priorities for a follow-up project, in particular which areas of activity to include, for example:*
 - *Setting up farmer's associations;*
 - *Agricultural and vocational training;*
 - *Improving soil quality;*
 - *Starting reforestation;*
 - *Reintegrating ex-associates of Boko Haram (e.g., former combatants and people who had been kidnapped).*
4. *If Caritas Germany and its partner are interested, identify areas for further study (e.g., managerial/organizational change of the partner organizations, reintegration of people associated with Boko Haram, such as ex-combatants, their family members, and kidnapped people, integration or return of IDP families, and the functioning of traditional leaders).*
5. *Carry out a needs assessments and an update on the actor-mapping for the 35 communities. The needs assessment can form a baseline for further evaluations.*
6. *Determine how the partner organizations in both Nigeria and Cameroon will cooperate and exchange experience during the project, which would be a form of South-South cooperation.*
7. *Visit Caritas partner organizations in other countries, for example, South Sudan and northern Uganda, to learn how they have dealt with similar challenges in the recent past.*
8. *Compare VSLA, SILC and CCE methodologies to see which one is the safest and/or most effective;*
9. *Participate in the OCHA coordination clusters to understand the context and activities of other actors better. This may also enable greater synergies and better follow-up.*
10. *Engage with the state institutions, such as agricultural extension services and demonstration centers during project design, project execution, and advocacy.*
11. *Link up with the local partners, as well as organizations associated with the broader Caritas family, such as MISEREOR and CAFOD. They may have programs and projects that offer synergies or follow-up activities. In addition, specific organizations, such as Just DiggIt, which is active in improving soil quality, may also offer additional inputs;*

12. *Plan a 3 to 5-year program (or longer when there are more partner organizations involved);*
13. *Include an evaluation plan on the basis of the information from this study and the needs assessment / baseline study. Such an evaluation plan could be linked with further, more detailed studies (see point 4).*

6 CONCLUSIONS

This study aims *to support the design of a transitional aid project* by providing insights on six selected locations in Northern Adamawa State, in particular the Hong, Michika, and Askira/Uba LGAs, in Nigeria and six locations in the *Départements* of Mayo-Sava and Mayo-Tsanaga in the *Extrême Nord* region of Cameroon.

Specifically, this study 1) provides an analysis to support the development of an early transition project in Adamawa State (Nigeria) and the *Extrême Nord* (Cameroon), which should run from 2022 to 2026; 2) informs Caritas Germany's and its partners' transitional aid programming in Northeast Nigeria and Northern Cameroon in general; and 3) provides insight into the risks and community- and partner-based response strategies in Northeastern Nigeria and Northern Cameroon, to inform Caritas Germany's and its partners' humanitarian strategy and advocacy activities.

Both Northeastern Nigeria and Northern Cameroon are rife with *conflicts* that pose severe risks for the communities:

1. Boko Haram groups, taking into account that the response by the military also creates problems;
2. Pastoralists vs agriculturalists, especially with the foreign Fulani in Nigeria;
3. Intergenerational conflicts;
4. Religious tensions among Christians, Muslims, and Animists;
5. Gangs and theft;
6. Tensions at water points;
7. Tensions stoked by political parties, especially during election periods.

These conflicts have their origins in *bad governance, ongoing corruption, high population density, climate change, insecurity, land conflicts, and displacement*. These risk factors are getting worse, in particular by reinforcing each other's negative effects. Together they contribute to a *lack of land, soil deterioration, and a lack of water and wood*. Consequently, agricultural productivity is in decline, whereas value chains based on agricultural products (e.g., groundnuts, onions, and dairy products) and alternative economic sectors, such as construction and tourism, which could be sources of livelihoods, remain underdeveloped. For the local communities this means that they face *a lack of opportunities to work, educate themselves and their children, and to obtain social services*. They thus continue to run the *risks of malnutrition, unemployment, violence, and poverty*. And they usually lack specific knowledge and resources to improve their situation economically, socially, and politically. As stated, social cohesion is under pressure; resilience is weak.

In response, this report offers recommendations to strengthen the resilience of the affected populations in Nigeria and Cameroon. In this way, it prepares the ground for a transitional project in the areas of food security and protection by building (on) local capacities.

In terms of security, Caritas and its partners can only play a limited role, because they cannot take over state security functions. They can, however, assist returnees and former Boko Haram combatants, strengthen civil society, and help IDPs integrate in their new communities. If both regions become more peaceful, Caritas and its partners may help with voluntary return programs for IDPs or relocation programs of IDPs and host community members to less densely populated areas. They can also set up programs to reduce religious tensions and inter-generational and political conflicts.

To reach a higher level of food security, Caritas and its partners can establish and train FAs, fight soil degradation, start reforestation and home (vegetable) gardening, incorporate micro-credit (SILC, CEC, or VSLA), expand vocational training, improve transport of produce, goods, community-members, and officials, build or repair boreholes and wells, and work on building or extending value chains. As stated, they can also support agricultural extension services and agricultural training centers.

Improving protection dovetails with the recommendations above, but can also include humanitarian action, helping the state to rebuild social services, support vigilante committee members, train local mediators (e.g., vigilante members, religious and traditional leaders), and help civil society to demand accountability from the military, state authorities and traditional leaders. In all communities, obtaining birth certificates, identity cards and/or passports will also have important benefits for education, livelihoods, and protection. Particular attention should be paid to the situation of girls/young women in their families and with gender-based violence in the communities, including preventing early marriage and abandonment when girls/women are pregnant. Similarly, it is important to assist orphans/unaccompanied minors.

The main recommendations and their (potential) impact at different levels of society have been summarized in the Resilience Capacity Matrix above. The report also provides management suggestions for Caritas Germany and its partners. It is important to note that many of the above issues cannot—and should not—be addressed by Caritas Germany and its partners alone. They require cooperation with either embassies, donors, government institutions, the military, traditional leaders, and different humanitarian, development, or IDP organizations. Finally, this report also provides the next steps for setting up a resilience project.

APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRES

Community Focus Group Discussions – Men / Women

Protection

1. Has your community been peaceful and stable?
2. What different forms of conflict exist in your community?
3. How have you been affected by the conflicts?
4. What are the causes of these conflicts?
5. What other shocks and crisis (e.g. droughts, floods, new arrivals) affect your community?
6. In what ways have you been able to mitigate the conflicts and foster peace as a community?
7. Has the government played any role? How?
8. Have NGOs or UN organizations played a role? What did they do?
9. Has the fact that your community is close to Cameroon influenced its stability?
10. Are men and women affected differently by the conflict? How?
11. Are there any specific measures being taken to protect women and girls? Which ones?
12. Are other vulnerable groups affected by the conflict? How?

Food Security

13. Are agricultural activities your main source of livelihood?
14. What kind of agricultural activities do you practice?
 - a. Staple crops? maize, sorghum, groundnuts, rice, cowpeas?
 - b. Animal Husbandry
 - i. Chicken
 - ii. Goats
 - iii. Cows
 - iv. Sheep
 - v. Pigs
 - vi. Other?
 - c. Vegetable farming
 - d. Fruits
 - e. Other?
15. In which other ways do community members earn a living?
16. Do you practice agriculture as individuals or in groups? If in groups, in which ways?
17. Are these groups formal or informal? If formal what is the type of group (e.g., SILK, association, cooperative, Church, Mosque, other?)
18. What is the average number of people in a group?
19. Do members in the farming group come from different tribes, or are they from the same tribe?
If the latter, do they speak different dialects?
20. Are Christians and Muslims both members of the same farming group(s)?
21. What are the different leadership roles in the farming group?
22. How do you select the leaders?
23. Are these leadership positions occupied by either Christians or Muslims or both?
24. How often do you have your meetings?
25. What are the main discussion points in the farming group meetings?
26. Are the farming groups only active during rainy season or dry season as well?
27. Are farm products consumed here or sold in the market?
28. Are the farming groups involved in the sale of farm products for members?
29. Are your agricultural products able to sustain you and your family?
30. Did the conflict(s) influence agricultural production? How?
31. Do you practice dry season farming?
32. Are women more involved in agricultural activities than men?
33. Which agricultural activities are practiced by men and women differently?
34. Are there farming groups (formal or informal) that are specifically for women?

35. Are women involved in farming groups with men?
36. Are these women in positions of leadership?
37. Could the farming group be strengthened? If yes, how?
38. Would you like to include new activities as a farming group? Which ones?
39. Is climate change affecting agriculture? If yes, how?
40. What would you like to change about the community's farming group in light of the recent conflicts?

Have we forgotten to ask something?

Do you have any questions?

Thank you!

Observations:

Community Focus Group Discussions – Youth Men / Women

1. Do the elder people in this community listen to you? If not, why not? If yes, how?
2. If necessary, what should be done to make your voices heard better?
3. What are the specific problems that you as youths face in this community?
4. What are the problems that youths share with the rest of the community?
5. Do youths have access to land? If yes, do they own or rent? How do they pay the rent? If not, why not?
6. Do youths have sufficient access to education? If yes, which one? If not, why not?
7. Do youths have sufficient access to agricultural training?
8. Do youths have sufficient access to vocational skills training? If yes, which types of vocational skills? If no, which types of vocational training would you like to receive?
9. Do youths have sufficient access to jobs?
10. Do you experience violence? If yes, which forms of violence? (Religious, domestic, herders vs. farmers, ethnic, other?)
11. Can you mitigate such violence? If yes, how? If no, why not?
12. Are there specific youth groups in your community? If yes, which ones? If not, why not?
 - a. If there are church and mosque groups: Do people of different religions interact in them? Or are they exclusive for youths of one religion?
 - b. Do different ethnic groups/tribes come together in these groups?
 - c. Are there political youth groups? If yes, how do they function?
13. Do you have the resources to marry?
14. Are there underage marriages? If yes, why?
15. What happens when in your community, youths from different religions want to intermarry? Do they have to elope? What else happens?
16. Are there youths that have become vigilantes? If yes, why?
17. Are there youths with a disability in your community? If yes, how are they being treated?

Did we forget to ask you something?

Do you have any questions?

Thank you very much.

Observations:

Household Interview

Protection

1. How many people live in your HH? How many children?
2. In what ways has your family been affected by crisis?
3. What different forms of conflict exist in your community?
4. What are the causes of these conflicts?
5. What other shocks and crisis (e.g. droughts, floods, new arrivals) have affected your family?
6. How does your family try to protect itself?
7. Have you appealed to the government security services for protection?
8. Have you appealed to volunteer security services (CJTF, hunters) for protection?
9. Who mediates conflicts in your community?
10. What groups can you turn to for support during hardship?

Food Security

1. Do you practice your agriculture as a family?
2. Do you own or rent land?
3. How much land do you rent/own and cultivate?
4. How did you meet the person you are renting land from/to?
5. What crops do you cultivate and how much do you harvest on average (in bags)?
6. Do you experience the lean season? If yes, during which months?
7. What actions do you take during the lean season?
8. What farming tools and inputs do you use? How much do they cost for one planting season?
9. Do you sell your harvest? If yes, when, where, how much, and through whom?
10. What agricultural training have you received and by whom?
11. Have you been part of a farming group?
12. What are the activities of the farming group?
13. Which of the farming group activities helped you the most?
14. Do you have a higher income because of the activities of the farming group?
15. What do you do outside the farming season?
16. Would you rather do dry-season farming or other income-generating activities during the dry season?

Have we forgotten to ask something?

Do you have any questions?

Thank you!

Observations:

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