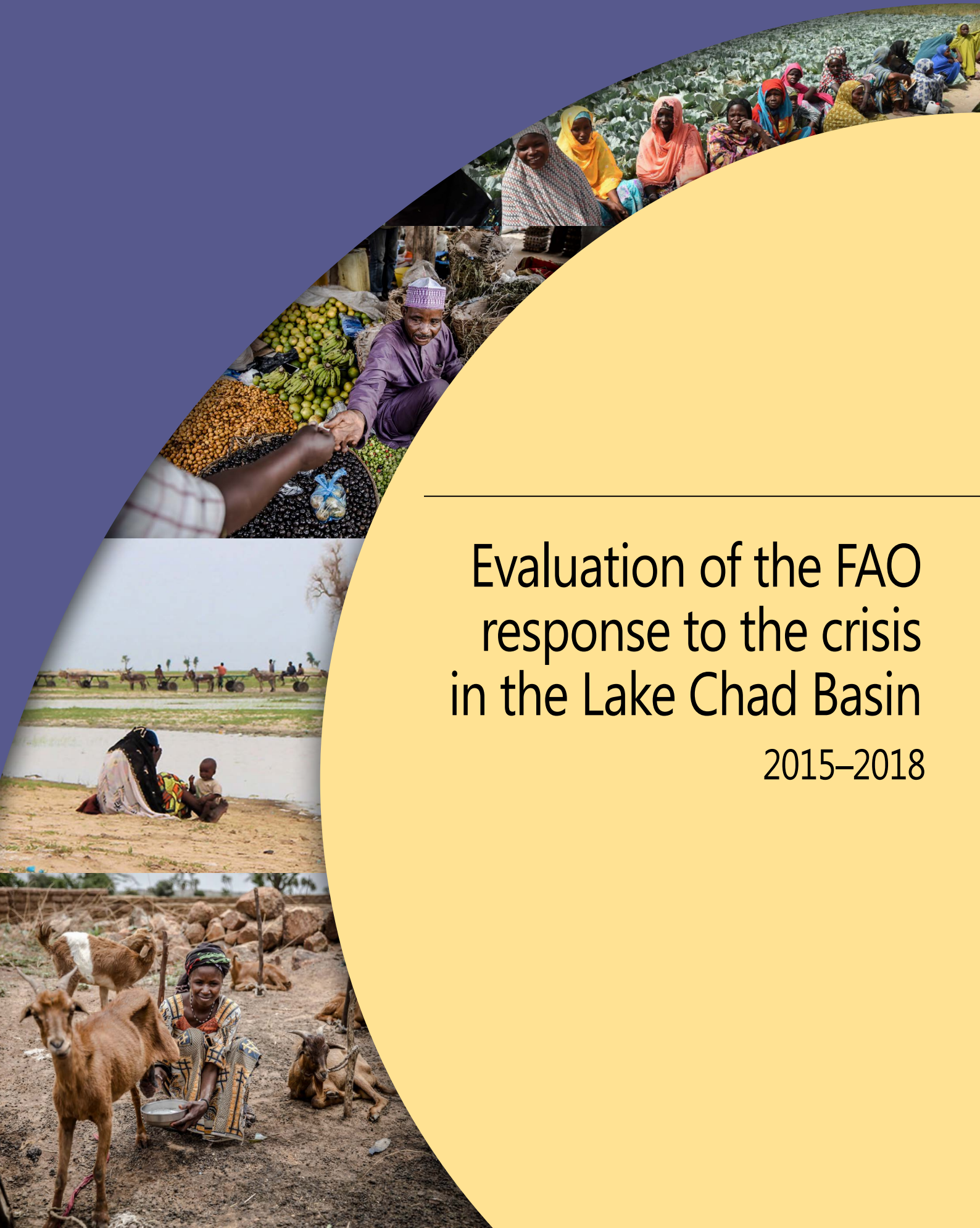




Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Programme Evaluation Series
01/2021



Evaluation of the FAO response to the crisis in the Lake Chad Basin

2015–2018

**Programme Evaluation Series
01/2021**

**Evaluation of FAO's response
to the crisis in the
Lake Chad Basin**

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Required citation:

FAO. 2021. *Evaluation of the FAO response to the crisis in the Lake Chad Basin 2015–2018*. Programme Evaluation Series, 01/2021. Rome.

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ISBN 978-92-5-133906-0



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Acknowledgements

The FAO Office of Evaluation (OED) would like to thank all those who contributed to the Evaluation of FAO's response to the crisis in the Lake Chad Basin (2015–2018). This evaluation was led by Sara Holst (Evaluation Manager) and assisted by Olive Zgambo (Evaluation Analyst) from OED. The evaluation team consisted of four independent consultants: Jeff Duncalf (Evaluation Strategic Adviser), Blanche Renaudin (Lead Evaluation Consultant), Andrew Onwuemele (Evaluator Expert in livelihoods and emergency assistance in Nigeria) and Kouassi De Syg Seke (Evaluation Expert in humanitarian interventions and gender in Cameroon, Chad and the Niger). The Office would like to thank the University of Diffa (the Niger), in particular Boukari Biri Kassoum and his students; the Finpact Development Foundation (FINDEF) in Maiduguri (Nigeria); the national enumerators in Chad and Babette Koulouchoumi, anthropologist Expert in the Far North region of Cameroon, who supported the evaluation team in collecting the data at community level in the regions neighbouring the Lake Chad.

The evaluation report benefitted from the insights from Aurélie Larmoyer, Evaluation Officer and Supervisor of this evaluation, and Marta Bruno, Evaluation Officer (Resilience team) who peer reviewed the evaluation terms of reference and the draft report, and offered numerous insightful comments.

Special gratitude goes to the evaluation focal points and staff of the four FAO decentralized offices visited by the evaluation team, FAO Country Offices in Cameroon, Chad, the Niger and Nigeria, and subnational offices in Maroua and Kousseri (Cameroon), Bol (Chad), Diffa (the Niger), Damaturu, Maiduguri, and Yola (Nigeria) for their invaluable assistance. The evaluation team would also like to acknowledge the important contributions from Jacques Conforti (Regional Office for Africa, RAF), Nourou Tall (FAO Nigeria - northeast), Luc Genot (FAO Niger), Mario Tedo (FAO Chad), Gerald Tchatchoua Toko (FAO Cameroon) who attended the evaluation workshop and provided invaluable insights and information on the evolution of the programme in the Lake Chad Basin.

The evaluation team is extremely grateful for the support and guidance received by colleagues in the FAO Regional Resilience, Emergency and Rehabilitation Office for West Africa (REOWA) (Coumba Sow and Ulrich Assankpon), the FAO Regional Office for Africa (RAF), and the FAO Emergency and Resilience Division (PSE) (Alberto Bigi, Roberta Canulla, Emmanuel Moncada and Céline Polini) and other colleagues from the Strategic Programme 5 team who participated in the evaluation workshop at FAO headquarters.

Finally, sincere gratitude also to the numerous government representatives, regional bodies, resource partners, development partners and FAO staff who responded to inquiries and contributed to enriching the results of this evaluation.

Acronyms and abbreviations

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
LGA	Local government area
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
REOWA	Regional Resilience, Emergency and Rehabilitation Office for West Africa/Sahel
SAFE	Safe Access to Fuel and Energy
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WFP	World Food Programme

Executive summary

Introduction and methodology

1. Forty-nine million people live in the Lake Chad region, exploiting its rich natural resources and relatively constant supply of water, fodder and fertile land all year round. The area used to be a food production hub, with local markets supplying produce to Cameroon, Chad, the Niger and Nigeria. However, poor natural resource management, poor coordination across the different countries of the region, and the widespread impact of climate change have contributed to the significant deterioration of the Lake's natural ecosystem capacity.
2. Agricultural soils and pastures have been widely degraded, leading to a huge reduction in food productivity and, thus, job opportunities, especially for the youth living in rural areas, who account for a high percentage of the population.
3. Conflicts and tensions have created a conducive context for young people in search of income and opportunities to join the Boko Haram terrorist movement originated in Nigeria.
4. This evaluation was conducted to address the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations' (FAO's) response to the Lake Chad Basin crisis, including interventions conducted in 2015–2018, as the FAO published the Lake Chad Basin Crisis Response Strategy (2017–2019) (FAO, 2017a) to address the needs of the identified 6.9 million people affected by soaring food insecurity in the Lake Chad Basin in early 2017.
5. The objectives of this evaluation were to analyse FAO's responses to the crisis at operating level, with a focus on efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability, while assessing the relevance and consistency of the regional approach from a strategic perspective.
6. The evaluation team visited many of the areas concerned, and at the end of each visit they organized a debriefing session with the respective FAO country team to share information gathered and collect complementary data and analysis to inform its deliberations. This helped to ensure transparency in the data collection process and to maximize the learning process.

Findings

7. FAO is uniquely positioned to address the agroecological and economic effects of the crisis on communities' long-term livelihoods. Framing FAO's interventions within a regional approach was an appropriate decision to coherently address the needs of the Lake Chad Basin. Furthermore supporting short-term food security through a resilience lens was relevant to the needs of crisis-affected communities.
8. Although based on ongoing country level FAO activities and forward-looking government policies, the Regional Response Strategy fell short of expectations owing to the limited involvement of governments at regional and national level, lack of cross-border programming, and the absence of an implementation plan. Thus, FAO missed an opportunity to play a leading role in regional humanitarian–development nexus programming, whereby it could have also built on its previous development programmes. The absence of leadership within FAO to preside over the Regional Response Strategy implementation did affect the implementation thereof and the achievement of the expected results across the Lake Chad region. The upcoming revision of the Regional

Response Strategy is an opportunity to promote national ownership, regional leadership and a contextualized and flexible approach that is appropriate to each country. A participatory approach driven by the Regional Resilience, Emergency and Rehabilitation Office for West Africa (REOWA) could encourage the buy-in of all stakeholders as well as FAO country offices' appropriation of and involvement in this strategy.

9. The Regional Response Strategy provided a reference framework linking emergency response to resilience building activities, yet FAO projects in countries lacked such a programmatic and strategic approach and did not follow the proposed transition. Except for Nigeria, FAO's work in the field mostly focused on short-term emergency response (e.g. through distributions of agriculture and livestock inputs), rather than longer-term resilience building activities. This focus on projects has not promoted a strategic positioning that fosters impact.
10. FAO needs to be more proactive so as to capitalize on its strengths and initiatives undertaken in the region and in each of the countries, especially in relation to the humanitarian–development nexus, where other UN agencies have been looking to FAO for leadership.
11. FAO could be far more active in other areas such as vaccination, where it could partner with other agencies and organizations at regional level, or promoting and securing interstate transhumance routes. A limited analytical capacity is also preventing the Organization from positioning itself strategically and acting in a timely manner, meaning it is missing opportunities to prove its leadership potential while generating a lasting impact.
12. Formalized joint programming by UN agencies has been welcomed by donors and should become a constant feature in the future. However, there are also other UN agencies working on resilience, livelihood and agricultural production, so FAO needs to strengthen its leadership and proactivity in this respect or it risks losing control of its mandate.
13. Funding at regional level remains weak and donors are often unaware of FAO's work in the field (excepting for Nigeria), particularly in response to the crisis. Communication needs to be strengthened, possibly through annual or biannual donor meetings to present in-country operational and funding needs (as experimented in Nigeria).
14. FAO has an undeniable role to play in the Lake Chad region and accordingly needs to strengthen its capacity and ability to play this role across the humanitarian and development nexus.
15. In terms of interventions at community level, FAO has focused primarily on seed distribution, in some cases at large-scale and repeatedly over time. While this short-term assistance was valid to address urgent needs, FAO could also have focused on underlying issues requiring longer-term strategies and solutions. FAO has been working directly with farmers yet it would be considered important to also deal with producer organizations, civil society, and local and national authorities.
16. Internal inefficiencies of its delivery processes have affected FAO's effectiveness across the various types of interventions it implemented in the region. As is the case in other countries beyond the Lake Chad Basin, FAO's internal procedures are time-consuming and cumbersome, and have caused significant delivery delays in time-sensitive interventions, with subsequent damage to FAO's reputation with its partners. Delays in donor funding

and high operational costs have also held up FAO in meeting stated objectives. These implementation hindrances have made FAO uncompetitive *vis-à-vis* other organizations.

Conclusions

17. For FAO to support the food security and nutrition of communities in the Lake Chad region effectively, a regional strategy focused on supporting the resilience of communities is relevant and appropriate. Complementary to FAO's country-based programmes, a regional strategy bears the potential to devise interventions that adapt to the cross-border nature of issues that each country faces and would allow supporting a more cohesive and collaborative way of working.
18. Despite its potential, the Regional Response Strategy did not effectively transform the way in which FAO has operated in the region, and therefore has a limited contribution to improving the coherence and effectiveness of FAO's response to the Lake Chad Basin crisis. A number of shortcomings affected the effectiveness and implementation of the Regional Response Strategy; in particular, the limited engagement of the country offices and their respective national counterparts and the lack of an operational/implementation plan. These factors are mainly due to a limited ownership and coordination of the Strategy itself. The subregional hub of REOWA did not embrace the leadership role as the main owner, which would have been essential to carry through the steps required to operationalize the Strategy and transform FAO's impact in the four countries. This has been a fundamental gap, which emphasizes the need for enhancing the clarity of respective roles and responsibilities related to the Strategy's design and implementation.
19. Based on its mission and experience, FAO can position itself as leader on interventions related to the humanitarian–development nexus, and play a key role in determining directions in this regard. The revision of the Regional Strategy could seize this opportunity to define and affirm this leadership role for FAO in the region.

Recommendations

20. Based on the Regional Response Strategy (2017–2019), FAO should revise its strategy and approach by incorporating governmental objectives, and translate it into an operational action plan, in line with other partners' strategies in the region. In doing so FAO should build on its comparative advantage in respect to resilience programming and the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, and on partnerships already established.
21. FAO's corporate resilience programme (SP5) should assign the lead responsibility to revise and operationalize the regional strategy to the most logically suited office, whether in the Regional Office for Africa (RAF) or in the resilience team within the Subregional Office (REOWA). It is fundamental to have one person clearly assigned to take charge for the Regional Strategy's oversight and coordination above the four country offices.
22. The Regional Strategy leader should ensure that all relevant actors are engaged into the Strategy revision and could set-up a task force in this regard. Stakeholders should comprise, at least, the four country offices and relevant regional units, as well as the national and regional counterparts that are geographically and thematically concerned.
23. FAO's interventions in the region, and the Regional Strategy overall, should reaffirm an approach that aims at addressing short-, medium- and long-term needs, whenever possible. In addition, the Regional Response Strategy should be reoriented towards a

greater focus on themes such as natural resources management, sustaining peace, mainstreaming of protection and support to young people (boys and girls) to develop economic opportunities and promote diversification of livelihoods within agricultural value chains and pastoralism.

24. FAO should conduct a communication needs assessment and develop an appropriate communication plan to ensure the revised Regional Response Strategy is disseminated, understood and embraced in full at all levels of the Organization as well as with external partners.
25. FAO needs to strengthen some of its internal processes, sensitize donors on the need for timely funding and develop a specific operational framework to ensure it is providing clear added value. Recommendations to address similar issues have been formulated by other corporate level evaluations, such as the one on the Strategic Results Framework.

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the evaluation

1. The decision to conduct an evaluation of FAO's response to the crisis in the Lake Chad Basin stemmed from interest within the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) – more specifically, the Strategic Objective (SO) 5 management and country teams, who wanted to learn from the implementation of the *Lake Chad Basin Crisis Response Strategy (2017–2019): Mitigating the impact of the crisis and strengthening the resilience and food security of conflict-affected communities* (FAO, 2017a), and gauge the results of emergency and resilience building interventions conducted since 2015 in the four countries concerned (Cameroon, Chad, the Niger and Nigeria).
2. Moreover, the Director General's Bulletin (DGB) (FAO, 2013) on FAO emergency declarations and response protocols stipulates that the Office of Evaluation (OED) must evaluate all Level 3 (L3)¹ emergency responses to ensure oversight and accountability, and to learn lessons, as in the case of Nigeria.
3. The purpose of the evaluation is, therefore, to provide FAO management and programme teams with evidence-based lessons and best practices to inform future strategic decisions, and to improve FAO's support for building resilience in the Lake Chad Basin, particularly in the areas of agriculture and food security.
4. The evaluation also aims to inform the revision of the Regional Response Strategy currently being conducted by the Regional Resilience, Emergency and Rehabilitation Office for West Africa (REOWA).
5. This evaluation has a learning focus. It examines the various means of support provided in response to the crisis and draws lessons from why certain results were or were not achieved.

1.2 Intended users

6. The findings and recommendations of this evaluation are primarily aimed at senior management and staff of the FAO Country Offices in Cameroon, Chad, the Niger and Nigeria, REOWA, the FAO Regional Office for Africa (RAF), and the FAO Strategic Programme (SP) 5 team. Primary stakeholders were directly involved in setting the evaluation's terms of reference and process, and shared their knowledge from the initial to the final evaluation stages.
7. In addition, the evaluation provides a platform for the exchange of good practices and lessons learned from other stakeholders, including FAO resource partners, national governments in the four countries concerned, regional entities and bodies (for example, the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) and the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel, CILSS), other United Nations (UN) agencies operating in the Lake Chad area, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations

¹ In line with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) definition, FAO categorizes a Level-3 (L3) emergency as a system-wide humanitarian emergency, where the capacities of the country, subregional and regional offices are overwhelmed, thus requiring full FAO corporate support. FAO Director General's Bulletin No. 2013/32 of 7 May 2013.

(CSOs), and the national populations (both beneficiaries of FAO's interventions and non-beneficiaries).

1.3 Scope and objective of the evaluation

8. The evaluation centred on FAO's response to the Lake Chad Basin crisis, including interventions conducted in 2015–2018² in areas affected by the crisis (northeast Nigeria, western Chad, the Far North of Cameroon, eastern Niger) before, during and after the publication of FAO's Lake Chad Basin Crisis Response Strategy (2017–2019) in March 2017 (FAO, 2017a). This included FAO operations before and after the L3-related operational scale-up in Nigeria meeting the mutually reinforcing objectives of accounting for results and learning from experience for future similar operations.
9. Thus, the objectives of this evaluation were to analyse FAO's responses to the crisis at operating level, with a focus on efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability, while assessing the relevance and consistency of the regional approach from a strategic perspective.

Box 1: Evaluation questions³

- 1) How **relevant** was the Regional Response Strategy and to what extent did it make FAO interventions more appropriate in terms of meeting regional, national and beneficiary needs?
 - 1.1. How relevant were the objectives of the Regional Response Strategy to regional, national and beneficiary needs?
 - 1.2. How appropriate was the design of the FAO response in the Lake Chad Basin to meet identified objectives?
- 2) What were the **results** of FAO intervention in terms of addressing short-term food insecurity and nutritional shortfalls and building resilience in the region?
 - 2.1. To what extent did FAO interventions help to improve short-term food security and nutrition and to achieve programmatic outcomes?
 - 2.2. To what extent did FAO interventions contribute to improved resilience?
- 3) How did FAO **operational** or **organizational** functionality affect the results of the response?
 - 3.1. To what extent and how did the Regional Response Strategy enable or improve FAO intervention in the region?
 - 3.2. To what extent did FAO's internal organizational set-up match the needs of the intervention and, as of 2017, the new Regional Response Strategy?
 - 3.3. To what extent did external operational arrangements support the quality of the FAO response?
- 4) To what extent have projects/programmes mainstreamed the cross-cutting issues of gender, disability, natural-resource management, climate change, conflict analysis for peacebuilding, protection and accountability to the affected population (AAP)?

² Of all of FAO's projects, OSRO/NIR/709/GER, OSRO/NIR/705/EC and OSRO/NIR/805/NOR have received special attention, as their levels warranted formal evaluation. In addition, the Emergency and Resilience Division (PSE) received a donor request for an evaluation of Norway-funded projects in Nigeria (OSRO/NIR/706/NOR, USD 3.5 million, and OSRO/NIR/805/NOR, USD 8 million).

³ The evaluation team also developed an evaluation matrix, listing questions and sub-questions answered by the evaluation, with respective indicators and sources of information.

1.4 Methodology

10. The evaluation was managed by the FAO Office of Evaluation (OED) and carried out by a team of four people with a range of sectorial expertise, divided into two sub-teams. One focused on assessing FAO's strategic positioning and overall contributions to national and regional priorities at central/capital level, while the other focused on the results of FAO's work in the field, at community level.⁴
11. The evaluation was participatory and involved both internal and external stakeholders in a systematic way throughout the evaluation process.
12. The evaluation questions and sub-questions were refined by the evaluation team and validated with FAO staff at headquarters and in regional, sub-Regional and country offices (see the evaluation matrix in Annex 5). A first round of discussions and consultations took place during the inception phase to build consensus on the main objectives and scope of the evaluation. Based on the information collected in this phase, the evaluation team constructed a perspective theory of change for FAO's work in the Lake Chad region, including the Regional Response Strategy, to better understand the programming documents being evaluated (see Annex 3).
13. Data collection started with a desk review of all relevant literature and documentation: FAO project documents and implementation reports,⁵ strategies, guidelines, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) reports, food security assessments, previous and ongoing evaluations,⁶ plus external documentation such as reports, UN regional response plans, in-country situation reports, etc. (documents consulted are listed in the Bibliography section) The Regional Response Strategy, along with the Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs) and other relevant strategic documents (at global, regional and national level), were reviewed to assess whether the analytical framework and design of the FAO programme aligned with the preliminary analysis of context, gaps and needs of the population and other relevant actors.
14. Semi-structured interviews were held at FAO headquarters and in country and local offices using a questionnaire⁷ based on the evaluation matrix (in person, by phone or Skype).
15. Between March and April 2019, the evaluation team visited Cameroon, Chad, the Niger and Nigeria to meet with governments and ministries associated with the activities implemented, civil society representatives, implementing partners, donors and other UN agencies (see Appendix 1 for a list of people interviewed). With the help of national enumerators specifically

⁴ Based on the evaluation terms of reference (TORs) developed in the initial stages of the evaluation, the team also developed a methodological note on the evaluation (Annex 4), which was finalized prior to the country visits.

⁵ Because of the large number of projects included in this exercise, the evaluation did not undertake a full evaluation of individual projects, but analysed certain projects and/or activities with similar objectives and took these as a representative sample of the overall response (portfolio analysis). In order to ensure a good coverage and analysis of FAO's work in the countries and in the region, the evaluation grouped projects according to the activities implemented and on the budget size.

⁶ A number of relevant evaluations were consulted during the process to complement data collection, including: the Evaluation of FAO's Strategic Objective 5: Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises (FAO OED, 2016); the Evaluation of FAO's Country Programme Framework in Cameroon 2013–2017 (FAO OED, 2017); the Synthesis of WFP Operations Evaluations for the West and Central Africa Region (WFP OEV, 2017); and the Evaluation of WFP's Corporate Emergency Response in Northeast Nigeria (2016–2018) (WFP OEV, forthcoming).

⁷ Based on the evaluation matrix, the evaluation team developed a set of semi-structured questionnaires specific to the type of interlocutors (UN, Government, NGOs, communities, etc.) that were used when conducting interviews.

recruited for this evaluation,⁸ the team conducted two weeks of fieldwork per country, meeting direct beneficiaries and assessing the relevance and effectiveness of interventions in these areas, as well as any positive and negative intended and unintended results at individual and community level.

16. The evaluation team selected project sites for field visits in consultation with each country office, with an eye on relevance, geographic and livelihood diversity, and issues associated with security and accessibility (see table of project visits in Appendix 2). The team also conducted semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) with beneficiaries, implementing partners and local authorities to gather their views.
17. At the end of each country visit, the evaluation team organized a debriefing session with the respective FAO country team to share information gathered and collect complementary data and analysis to inform its deliberations. This helped to ensure transparency in the data collection process and to maximize the learning process.
18. As part of the data collection phase, the evaluation team also organized and hosted a one-day workshop at FAO headquarters in mid-April to gather additional views and information from key FAO stakeholders from the Emergency and Resilience Division (PSE), Regional Office for Africa (RAF) and the Cameroon, Chad, the Niger and Nigeria Country Offices (the workshop report including the list of participants is available in Annex 6). The focus of the workshop was the Regional Response Strategy, based on the experience of the different countries. The discussion helped the countries to share their experience and the evaluation team to triangulate and give context to some of its preliminary findings. It also encouraged all participants to start an important conversation and point to areas that needed further attention in the Lake Chad Basin.
19. Within the evaluation team, two team workshops were organized at the beginning and towards the end of the main mission, the first to brainstorm on the evaluation framework and develop the evaluation matrix and the theory of change, and the second to discuss the initial findings and emerging conclusions and review the matrix together in light of fieldwork and a preliminary analysis.

1.5 Limitations

20. Due to the highly insecure and volatile context, access to certain areas was limited. Furthermore, due to time and resource constraints, the evaluation was unable to cover all the areas targeted by FAO interventions. To mitigate these limitations, local enumerators were used for data collection, supervised remotely by evaluation team members. Nevertheless, the remote management of the data collection resulted in a variable quality of the information, which in some cases could not be used.
21. Due to time limitation the evaluation team also did not visit the REOWA office, although interviews were undertaken remotely with key regional office staff and key informants from other agencies based in Dakar. In this respect the evaluation team could have benefited

⁸ In each of the four countries, national enumerators were identified, trained and monitored by two evaluation team members to collect qualitative and quantitative data based among communities targeted by FAO projects on pre-defined methodology and questionnaires. Participatory rural appraisal techniques were employed to enhance the quality and reliability of data collected. The population sample included direct beneficiaries and their communities, as well as local implementing partners.

from the opportunity to discuss in person with other key staff and regional institutions REOWA works with. Furthermore, no representative of REOWA was able to attend the evaluation workshop in Rome due to other commitments.⁹

22. There were significant difficulties when it came to attribute the results of interventions aimed at increasing food security and bolstering livelihoods from a resilience building perspective in such a multi-stakeholder operational context. Many factors can contribute to an improvement or a deterioration in food security.
23. To counteract this, the evaluation tried to quantify change by utilizing a theory of change approach, whereby pathways generating change and relevant indicators of change could be identified, such as changes in productive capacity (farming and livestock support), income diversification, safeguarding of assets, etc. among the people interviewed by the evaluation team. These were analysed for their potential role in improving availability and/or access to food, also based on the review of projects' indicators upon availability.

⁹ The workshop took place at the same week as the newly established Subregional Office for West Africa (SFW) was inaugurated with the presence of the then Director-General, several ministers, regional institutions representatives, and UN partners.

2. Overview of FAO's work in the Lake Chad Basin

2.1 Background and context

2.1.1 Regional context

24. Forty-nine million people live in the Lake Chad region, exploiting its rich natural resources and relatively constant supply of water, fodder and fertile land all year round. Before the crisis, the area was a food production hub, with local markets supplying produce to all four countries. The region's farming systems are labour intensive (fishing, livestock, flood-recession agriculture, hunting and gathering) and generate significant direct and indirect employment (processing, trade, craft and transport). However, poor natural resource management, poor coordination across the different countries of the region, and the widespread impact of climate change have contributed to the significant deterioration of the Lake's natural ecosystem capacity (Lake Chad has lost 90 percent of its surface area coverage over the past 50 years). Agricultural soils and pastures have been widely degraded, leading to a huge reduction in food productivity and, thus, job opportunities, especially for the youth living in rural areas, who account for a high percentage of the population.
25. This situation has created a conducive context for young people in search of income and opportunities, to join the Boko Haram terrorist movement originated in Nigeria. The challenges and hardships faced by the population make the region a hotbed of tensions, and the Lake Chad Basin has been the scene of mounting violence and insecurity in the last two decades, affecting four countries: Cameroon, Chad, the Niger and Nigeria (Carnegie endowment for international peace, 2019). The incessant attacks on civilians by Boko Haram have forced millions of people from their homes and destroyed vital infrastructure, especially in Nigeria. The insecurity caused by Boko Haram's actions has affected the poorest areas of the countries in question, further weakening their social and economic conditions, with the effect of cross-border trade, livestock farming and transhumance,¹⁰ agriculture, fishing, and tourism, having slowed consistently.
26. An estimated 17.4 million people live in areas affected by Boko Haram violence across the four countries. Of these, 2.5 million people are currently displaced and more than 10 million need assistance to meet basic protection and humanitarian needs (OCHA, 2019). Furthermore, over 80 percent of these internally displaced persons and refugees have sought shelter in areas populated by extremely poor communities, placing an additional burden on the livelihoods of these host families and increasing their vulnerability (ibid).
27. Women are particularly affected by this conflict, being deprived of access to basic social services, such as education, health and economic well-being, and subject to sexual violence and other forms of abuse, such as slavery and abduction. Since 2014, Boko Haram has kidnapped more than 2 000 women and girls, some of which were forced to marry and/or take part in armed attacks (Amnesty international, 2015). Amnesty International reports

¹⁰ For example: livestock farmers being exposed to thefts of livestock by Boko Haram elements; imposed restrictions on livestock grazing have significantly reduced the grazing orbit which further escalates as the security situation further deteriorates; destruction of veterinary infrastructure and disruption of services to due inaccessibility or displacement of service providers; susceptibility to disease increases due to debilitation resulting from insufficient feed or water.

that more than a dozen attacks involving women and girls as suicide bombers were perpetrated in the four countries in 2015 alone (Amnesty international, 2018). Furthermore, poverty, unemployment, illiteracy and weak family structures, as well as extreme religious teachings from itinerant preachers have resulted in many of the youth joining Boko Haram as a new source of income and opportunity (United States Institute of peace, 2014).

28. The prolonged conflicts have exacerbated the rampant food insecurity and malnutrition prevailing in these crisis-affected areas, worsening the food security and nutrition situation of both displaced and host communities and eroding household assets, production and food systems, social services and natural resources. Reduced humanitarian access due to insecurity has compounded negative coping strategies and food and nutrition insecurity in these areas. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) estimates that 5 million people in the region are severely food insecure and in need of better and sustainable food and livelihood assistance. In most of the area affected by the conflict, severe acute malnutrition has reached emergency levels: OCHA estimates that around half a million children (490 000), for example, are suffering from severe malnutrition (OCHA, 2018).

2.1.2 Country specific contexts

Cameroon

29. The Lake Chad region in the Far North of Cameroon, host an estimated 7.3 million people, and has the country's highest poverty rate (74.3 percent of the population living below the poverty line) (Pérouse de Montclos *et al.*, 2018). In 2017, the Far North was home to around 90 000 Nigerian refugees (risen to more than 108 000 in September 2019 (UNHCR, database on Refugee situation), which has burdened host areas' resources and facilities, heightening social tensions. With a late resurgence of violence, over 223 000 Cameroonians fled the border areas. Some 1.5 million people are reportedly food insecure and severe acute malnutrition has exceeded the alert threshold, with this region hosting half of all children suffering from severe acute malnutrition in Cameroon (24 000) (OCHA, 2018). In a region often hit by climate change events, leading to droughts and flooding, the crisis has increased the risk of natural resource depletion and exacerbated environmental issues, such as desertification. Living conditions have deteriorated, as people cannot farm or travel to market. Sectors of the local economy have been destroyed, such as the hotel trade (Cameroon Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development, 2014).

Chad

30. The western regions of Chad, specifically the Lac and Kanem, have combined chronic vulnerability and instability. Since 2014, economic crisis compounded by climate change-induced drought and soil degradation, led to fodder shortfall, and subsequent conflict over resources in livestock transhumance regions. According to OCHA, 142 000 people have been displaced in Chad and 328 000 people are food insecure in the areas hit by Boko Haram insurgency (OCHA, 2018). Regional instability has exacerbated pre-existing vulnerabilities and affected livelihoods, with many families deprived of access to vital areas for agriculture, fishing or trade, and consequently exhausting assets and food stocks. The security crisis caused by Boko Haram has also compromised Chad's oil production by hampering the construction of a pipeline connecting production areas to the port of Kribi in Cameroon (Facinet Sylla, 2015).

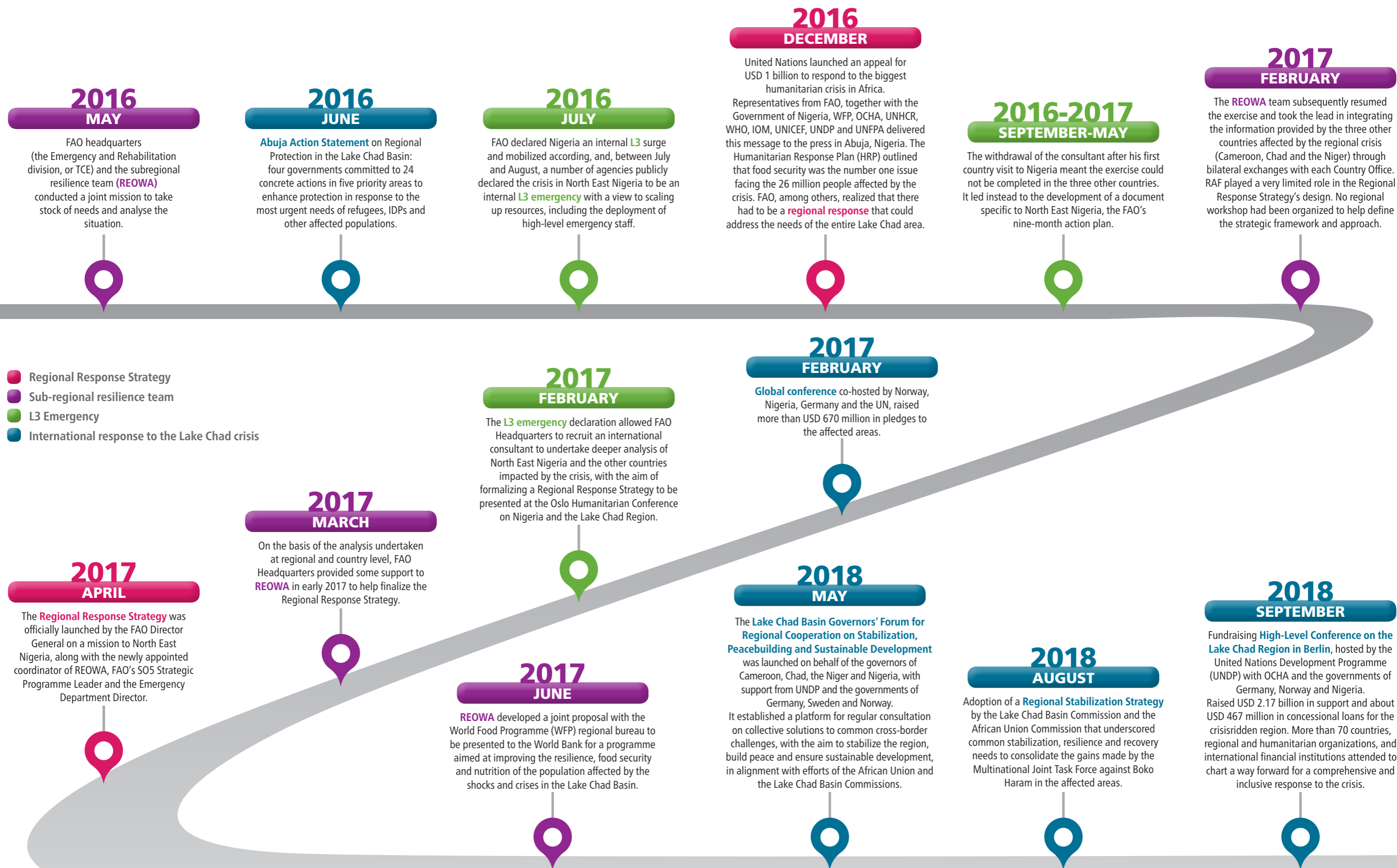
The Niger

31. Recurrent climatic variations have chronically affected Niger's south-eastern region of Diffa, with production shortfalls recorded every year for the past ten years, and fodder deficits in eight of those years. Since 2015, Boko Haram insurgents have blocked access to key fodder-growing zones, restricted transhumance and transboundary agro-industrial trade. Poor animal feed and depressed calving rates affected animal sales revenues and damaged milk production, a key element of daily food intake, thereby further reducing pastoralists' resilience to shocks. Persistent insecurity and a state of emergency also severely limited fishing and agriculture, and the rising costs of imported products and limited access to lakeshore grazing land led to hunger and malnutrition. The conflict has caused the highest-ever levels of food insecurity with 408 000 people in need of food aid in 2018 (OCHA, 2018), including 129 000 internally displaced persons (IDPs), 108 000 refugees in very fragile situation (FAO and WFP, 2018). About 101 000 people, including 15 600 children suffering from severe acute malnutrition, have needed nutritional assistance since 2018.

Nigeria

32. The Boko Haram-related conflict and the resulting displacement situation have therefore contributed to the loss of critical assets including lands, property and other productive assets, rendering both displaced population and members in the host communities vulnerable to food insecurity. Large numbers of people fled these affected areas or were killed, leaving their farmlands fallow. In local government areas (LGAs) that received IDPs across all six states there have been serious negative impacts on agriculture and consequently on food security. In displacement-affected states, government-owned farmlands have been converted to camps for IDPs. The northeast region (Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe states) of Nigeria saw an estimated 1.9 million people (out of an estimated total 16.6 million) (Caritas, 2018) in situation of internal displacement in June 2018 due to the conflict (FAO, 2018). Market disruption, restricted agricultural activity and higher staple-goods prices have left inhabitants reliant on humanitarian assistance and host communities.
33. Fear of attacks and the need to be prepared to flee on short notice, have prevented households in some communities from farming. Limited access to quality agricultural inputs (seeds and fertilizer) and the abandonment of fields and agro enterprises (as people fled from Boko Haram activities) led to a lower productivity of main crops. The reduced agricultural production resulted in turn in a critical food shortage situation.
34. Nevertheless, since early 2017, military gains and improved security in parts of north-eastern Nigeria have spurred a greater focus on conflict stabilization measures. At the international level, key donors set-up the Oslo Consultative Group on Prevention and Stabilization in the Lake Chad region to coordinate their response activities. The Lake Chad Basin Commission and the African Union Commission have adopted a regional stabilization strategy, which highlights short-, medium- and long-term stabilization, resilience, and recovery needs. In parallel, donors have also begun expanding bottom-up stabilization programmes aimed at addressing the drivers of insecurity at the local level. Well-designed local conflict stabilization measures are yet to be scaled up to national level. Currently, there are some noticeable disparities within the regions; for example, more people in the Adamawa, Yobe and southern Borno states have returned to their homes than in other areas of Borno (Carnegie Endowment for international peace, 2019).

Figure 1: International response to the Lake Chad crisis and FAO's greater involvement in the region

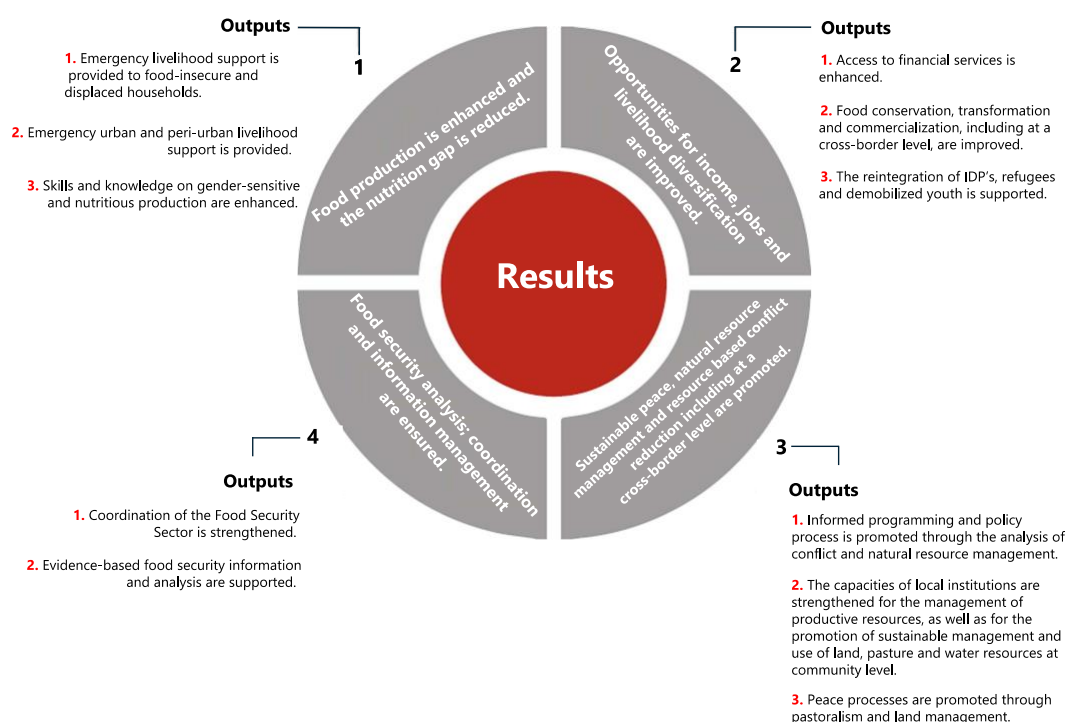


2.2 FAO's Lake Chad project portfolio: key elements

35. Following the intensification of the crisis in northeast Nigeria, in July 2016, with a view to scaling-up resources, staffing and support to the country office, FAO declared Nigeria an internal L3 emergency as the number of food insecure beneficiaries had risen to an estimated 4.4 million in Yobe, Borno and Adamawa States, but not the other Lake Chad countries, where the situation was less severe - 454 000 Food Insecure in Diffa, Niger; 136 000 in Lac Chad, Chad; 1.4 million in Extreme North, Cameroon (WFP, 2016). By the end of 2016, however, many humanitarian agencies had expanded the scale of their response to the entire Lake Chad area, recognizing the regional dimension of the crisis.
36. By early 2017, FAO published the Lake Chad Basin Crisis Response Strategy (2017–2019) (FAO, 2017a) to address the needs of the identified 6.9 million people affected by soaring food insecurity in the Lake Chad Basin.¹¹ The main objective of the Strategy was to improve food security and nutrition and to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable communities in the crisis-affected areas of the four countries.
37. FAO thus set out to respond to the region's immediate needs as a springboard for longer-term activities to strengthen resilience, with objectives that aimed at:
 - i. enhancing food production and reducing the nutrition gap;
 - ii. improving opportunities for income, jobs and livelihood diversification;
 - iii. promoting sustainable peace, natural resource management and reducing resource-based conflict, including across borders;
 - iv. safeguarding food security analysis, coordination and information management.
38. The Regional Strategy aimed at mitigating future land and water tenure-related conflict to sustain peace; demonstrating how improving food security, rehabilitating agriculture and building resilience could contribute to conflict prevention and sustaining peace and stability; and tackling the underlying and systemic (socio-environmental and ecological) factors affecting rural and urban livelihoods.
39. The Strategy was structured around four outcomes and a number of outputs as shown in Figure 2.

¹¹ According to the Response Strategy, more than 6.9 million people were severely food insecure in the affected regions of the four Lake Chad countries as of January 2017, with more than 5.2 million food insecure people in Nigeria and 1.4 million food insecure people in Cameroon. An estimated 515 000 children across the affected countries were suffering from severe acute malnutrition (SAM), while global acute malnutrition (GAM) rates were well above 10 percent in the areas around Lake Chad.

Figure 2: Regional Response Strategy logical framework



Source: Lake Chad Basin Crisis Response strategy (2017-2019) Document.

40. The document did not include any plan of action describing how the Strategy would have been implemented nor the roles and responsibilities of each office involved in the achievement of these expected outcomes in the countries, and therefore in the overall region. Nevertheless, the implementation of the Regional Response Strategy was in the hands of each country office under the overall coordination of the subregional resilience hub for West Africa (REOWA) and operational support from the resilience team sitting in the Regional Office for Africa (RAF). As for the principle of subsidiarity of FAO's decentralized offices, the Emergency and Resilience Division (PSE) intervenes in case the subregional team or the regional office cannot provide the needed support to the country office.
41. The Response Strategy was developed by pulling together the activities that each of the four countries was implementing in the effort of adopting a more regional approach: Nigeria had the biggest portfolio of USD 191 million, with more than 2.5 million beneficiaries targeted in the northeast. With a budget of USD 11 million, 155 000 beneficiaries were targeted in the south-eastern region of Niger. Chad and Cameroon had budgets of USD 12.5 million and USD 13.8 million, respectively, with target beneficiaries numbering 120 000 and 200 000, respectively.
42. Altogether, 24 projects were implemented before the launch of the Regional Response Strategy in March 2017, for a total budget of USD 19 604 288. Nine of these were implemented in Nigeria between May 2015 and January 2017. Three projects were implemented in Niger between February 2016 and January 2017. One OSRO project was a regional project and was implemented in Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria from April to December of 2015. Additional four and seven projects were implemented in Chad and Cameroon, respectively.

43. Of the 24 projects implemented before the Regional Response Strategy, 18 were OSRO projects, whereas only a few were Technical Cooperation Programmes (TCPs) (4), United Nations Joint Programmes (UNJPs) (1) and projects funded by United Nations Population Fund (UNFA) (1); showing that even before the launch of the Regional Response Strategy, FAO was providing emergency assistance to refugees, returnees and IDPs, and building their resilience (FAO, 2017b), as well as improving their food security (FAO, 2015). More information on the projects (titles, objectives, budgets and donors) is highlighted in Annex 1.
44. Most projects in the Lake Chad Basin focused on improving the food security and nutrition status of vulnerable people or strengthening their resilience to food insecurity. Project activities centred on agricultural and livestock production, with seed and ruminant distribution as core activities. Other projects included social and financial elements, as well as gender, natural resource management and sustainability issues, such as a focus on climate change adaptation, good practices and services to build resilient livelihoods. As shown in Figure 3, mapping relevant projects against Regional Response Strategy outcomes, over half of all projects were aligned to Regional Response Strategy outcome 1, focused on food production and nutrition.

Figure 3: Projects mapped against Regional Response Strategy outcomes



Source: FAO project documents.

45. The list of relevant projects examined by the evaluation is available in Annex 1, presenting a comprehensive portfolio analysis. In particular, it shows that 70 percent of the projects could be classified as emergency response to the Lake Chad crisis, while for the other 30 percent projects' outcomes were geared towards building resilience of the affected population. The portfolio analysis also shows that almost 50 percent of the total number of projects implemented over the period under evaluation (30 out of 59), and about 73 percent of the volume of funding, were implemented in Nigeria.

3. Main findings

3.1 Appropriateness of FAO's strategic positioning in the region

3.1.1 Relevance of the Regional Response Strategy

Finding 1. FAO, as a technical agency, is uniquely positioned to analyse and address the agroecological and economic effects of the crisis on communities' long-term livelihoods. Framing FAO's interventions within a regional approach was an appropriate decision to coherently address the needs of the Lake Chad Basin. Furthermore supporting short-term food security through a resilience lens was relevant to the needs of crisis-affected communities.

46. The Lake Chad Basin's ecosystem and livelihoods are highly interconnected, and its coherent agro-ecological system holds strong opportunity for food production and diversification. This region, though administratively divided between four countries, presents common and comparable constraints, opportunities and potential to drive development.

Box 2: Key features of the agro-ecological and socio-economic coherence of the Lake Chad Basin

Some of the common features include:

- i. climate and disaster risks;¹²
- ii. pressure on the already fragile ecosystem, increasing significantly with population growth;¹³
- iii. weak governance and weak presence of state institutions;
- iv. weak agricultural performance;
- v. lack of or weak public services (for example, health and education);
- vi. lack of international road corridors and energy transmission links;
- vii. poor connectivity around the lake and rural access roads, which are old and not regularly maintained;
- viii. shared ethnicity;
- ix. common religious beliefs (Christian/animists).

¹² Extreme temperatures, extreme precipitation, flooding and drought are projected to increase in Cameroon, Chad and the Niger, especially in the Lake Chad region. Forecasts show the mean annual temperature rising between 1.0°C and 3.4°C by 2060. The annual number of 'warm' days and nights is also projected to increase. The expected increase in inter-annual rainfall variability is also likely to exacerbate drought risk in the future. Projected increases in seasonal rainfall, total runoff, and the proportion of rainfall in heavy events will have profound implications for flooding. These extreme climate and hazard events affect marginalized groups more severely (The World Bank, Lake Chad Region Recovery and Development Project - P161706, 2018 also available at <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/173031561736455307/pdf/Concept-Project-Information-Documents-Integrated-Safeguards-Data-Sheet-Lake-Chad-Region-Recovery-and-Development-Project-P161706.pdf>).

¹³ The population of the four countries around Lake Chad has more than quadrupled over the past 50 years, from 60 million in 1960 to more than 243 million in 2017 (United Nations Population Fund. West and Central Africa Regional Office, 2018).

47. The Boko Haram conflict has imposed a further common factor on this regional context, generating a socio-economic impact with subsequent effects on livelihoods and income opportunities, among other things. What was initially a Nigeria-centred crisis, shifted to a more regional focus following the mass migration of families affected by violence across the region. Linked by the same ecosystem and livelihood activities, all four countries of the Basin require immediate support to meet the food security needs of the communities affected by violence, and also support to address the underlying structural causes of the crisis (environmental, economic, etc.). In the face of a regionalized humanitarian crisis, all humanitarian agencies including FAO thereby adopted a regional approach to their response, as was appropriate.
48. As such, the rationale behind the development of a regional strategy was in line with the evolution and the expansion of the crisis, which began in Nigeria and expanded affecting the other three countries. FAO perceived the value of addressing the needs of such regional ecosystem by proposing a cross-border approach and, given its technical knowledge, was well positioned to offer the integrated solutions required. For example, Outcome 3 of the Strategy ("Sustainable peace, natural resource management and resource-based conflict reduction, including at a cross-border level, are promoted") demonstrates FAO's intention and will to seize the opportunity and the momentum to develop cross border livelihoods support and natural resources management programmes to enhance productivity and preserve the environment. Despite the good intentions, such programmes developed in 2018 but did not start to be implemented until 2019.
49. FAO's abilities to lead on initiatives addressing short- and long-term food security issues and natural resource management are very suited to these combined needs. FAO has a highly relevant role to play in the Lake Chad Basin context, in supporting short-term needs and preserving livelihoods, while continuing to consider opportunities to build on the region's agricultural and environmental potential.
50. The Regional Response Strategy developed in 2017 represented a summary of FAO's areas of interventions in this context and was thus an adequate response in view of both the regional dimension of short- and longer-term solutions, and the need for a resilience-focused approach. As stated in the document itself, FAO's Strategy was designed to "address the far-reaching impacts of the crisis and to build resilient livelihoods through a multidisciplinary perspective. It benefits from FAO's wide expertise in the areas of food security and nutrition, creating and diversifying income-generating opportunities, and integrating the management of natural resources while strengthening food security analysis and coordination".
51. The evaluation found that responding to immediate needs is a good entry point for a longer-term phased approach to interventions that will help build the resilience of the population. Therefore, the fact that the Regional Response Strategy envisaged actions in the short-term (emergency interventions), medium-term (conservation, transformation, marketing, access to credit, reintegration of IDPs and refugees) and long-term (analysis of conflicts and management of resources, local capacity building in areas such as land management, pasture, water resources and agro-pastoral conflict) was found to be appropriate to the context. Having a Regional Response Strategy underscored FAO's commitment and willingness to position itself as a leading actor in tackling the effects of the Lake Chad Basin crisis and underpins relief, rehabilitation and short-term interventions, as well as longer-term resilience-focused work.

52. The most recent key international events, in particular the Oslo II Conference held in Berlin (September 2017) and the first Lake Chad Basin Governors' Forum (May 2018), have strongly reiterated the need to address issues from both a humanitarian and a development perspective. This requires longer planning horizons, more strategic interventions and flexible, longer-term funding across the full spectrum from humanitarian to development programming.¹⁴ The conference also highlighted the regional dimension of the Lake Chad crisis, and the crucial role of local actors, cross-border cooperation and ownership at all levels.
53. The FAO Regional Response Strategy represented an opportunity for the Organization to reinforce and affirm its positioning, given its mandate and long history of engagement in both emergency and development interventions to support food security and agricultural livelihoods for affected households. Moreover, FAO's prior involvement into long-term interventions in the Lake Chad countries prior to the Boko Haram crisis, offered a useful experience to link emergency responses to long-term livelihood building activities.

Finding 2. Albeit based on ongoing country level FAO activities and forward looking government policies, the Regional Response Strategy fell short of expectations owing to the limited involvement of governments at regional and national level, lack of cross-border programming, and the absence of an implementation plan. Thus, FAO missed an opportunity to play a leading role in regional humanitarian–development nexus programming, whereby it could have also built on its previous development programmes, utilizing Regional Response Strategy itself, in collaboration with other actors in the region.

54. The Regional Response Strategy was mainly developed and framed around what each country had been working on individually (providing information on the response plans, food security analyses, and activities already in place in each country), and there was little reflection on what could have been done at regional level, or in terms of cooperation between countries. The evaluation commends the attempts made by FAO to analyse in depth the context and interrelations between different issues (e.g. the analysis of the relationships between food insecurity and conflicts in collaboration with the International Security and Development Centre (ISDC) (Baliki, G. *et al.*, 2018), which provided good learning on the situation in northeast Nigeria and extrapolation to the whole region. Nevertheless, the Regional Response Strategy could have further analysed the relationships between degradation of natural resources, social cohesion, climate change and food insecurity, and resilience building in this specific context, so as to design activities that addressed those cross-cutting issues and go beyond responding to emergencies.
55. The lack of a solid regional perspective within initial assessments affected FAO's ability to design a well-framed, contextually-based strategic position, with the Regional Strategy having little impact on activities undertaken at the country office or sectorial level. Few assessments have been conducted with the involvement of technical experts from headquarters, REOWA and Regional Office for Africa (RAF) but their contribution to build a regional perspective was limited. Although there are many similarities between the four countries, they have evolved in different ways in recent years. Furthermore, the governments of the four countries did not approach the crisis in a coordinated or

¹⁴ "There needs to be an urgent change in operational modalities and programming to ensure closer collaboration between humanitarian and development actors to provide simultaneous life-saving assistance as well as undertake development, social cohesion and peace building activities" (Conférence de Berlin, 2018).

consultative way. The only collaborative effort was through the governors' forum, where FAO did not play any specific role.

56. Countries as well as humanitarian and development actors need such deep contextual analysis in addition to the shared experiences of organizations working at this strategic interface of humanitarian, development and peacebuilding efforts, on which to build their activities and interventions. Many partners met by the evaluation team said they would like FAO to share its nexus-related lessons learned specific to the targeted context, to help the international community with the nexus operationalization at country level. Many were expecting FAO to take a decisive lead in this regard and encouraged it to be more proactive on proposing approaches that could also be owned by other actors, beyond participating in discussions within the Food Security Cluster. In Niger, for example, several actors mentioned the need for FAO to meet with (humanitarian, development, governmental) partners to lead a deep reflexion on areas of focus to be developed. In Chad FAO has initiated a discussion on how to operationalize and translate the discussion on the nexus: it started with a discussion within the Food Security Cluster on indicators and targets that could be used by the actors, and then expanded outside as to involve other partners, who were not part of the Cluster. Evidently, the Regional Response Strategy (and its possible revision) presents a significant opportunity for FAO to influence sectorial direction, as well as to validate its expertise, by establishing a leadership role at the regional level.
57. FAO could be the best-placed organization to work at the interface between humanitarian and development on agricultural issues, which is exactly in line with the context of this crisis. While in countries like Nigeria FAO has demonstrated an effort to bounce back on linking short- and long-term interventions in the context of the humanitarian–development nexus within this specific regional crisis, this was not that explicit and evident for the other three countries. In Chad, for example, the Strategy has mainly allowed the country office to attract and mobilize financial resources devoted to emergency actions. Nevertheless, FAO has actively contributed to the formulation of a local development plan for the Lake province, which is based on the humanitarian-development nexus. The main axes of the plan nowadays constitute the basis of partnership arrangements between Chad local authorities and their main development partners. As a result, FAO could easily build on previous FAO development programmes and thus play a key role in contributing to larger initiatives in the region; in addition, the evaluation did not find any clear evidence of complementarity or contribution to initiatives of other development and humanitarian actors (with the exception of the example mentioned above).
58. In addition, Chad, the Niger and Nigeria are among the six countries chosen to pilot the “new way of working” (OCHA, 2017) at country level, framed within the humanitarian–development nexus. This will require a step-up in efforts to share with partners' data on vulnerability, joint assessments and analysis of needs, responses and future risks, as well as collaborations on planning and programming, backed up by appropriate financing modalities and stronger leadership in support of collective outcomes (FAO, 2018a). Hopefully this effort will also be embedded in the process of the next United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) in each of the countries, together with the food security data being used to inform the common country analysis (CCA), as in the case for the Niger and Nigeria.
59. The possible revision of the Regional Response Strategy could take into account additional feedback received during the course of the evaluation from FAO staff, donors and key

stakeholders, which would have influenced ownership and usage. The key points raised included:

- i. The issue of natural resources management could have received greater consideration: how to address the challenges of long-term natural resources management in a crisis context could have been analysed in greater depth.
 - ii. There is a need to work on cross-cutting issues, such as conflict sensitivity, environmental issues and policy processes, which are only mentioned briefly in the Regional Response Strategy.
 - iii. The relevance of a value-chain approach in the Lake Chad region (market linkages between countries and at the border level) needed further in-depth examination. In fact, difficulties surrounding the possibility of promoting resilience within the Lake Chad context needed to be further elaborated.
 - iv. A Regional Response Strategy should have facilitated a more innovative approach and bolstered FAO's strategy positioning at country level. Instead of compiling activities previously implemented by each country office, the Strategy could have offered a vision that enabled country offices to push forward and increase the relevance of their operations.
 - v. The strategic framework was relevant but could have been adapted to many crisis contexts; it should have been tailored more to this particular context. And also, it could have been beneficial to provide broad guidelines as to what might be considered a consistent targeting approach.
 - vi. There was no system for monitoring achievements in terms of Regional Response Strategy outcomes at national level (nor national contributions to regional expected outcomes).
 - vii. There was limited collaborative, integrated management or learning between countries when implementing national actions.
60. In terms of issues addressed and covered, the Strategy focused on general issues (emergency response, resilience building, etc.) and although it covers a lot of areas generally, it provides little specificity in terms of what programmatic interventions should be undertaken. For example, interventions on pastoralism, conflict resolution mechanisms, and youth-oriented activities, which are key for the population in the area, are mentioned as being important, but exactly how this would be done is, for the most part, not detailed. On the other hand, the Strategy incorporated transversal protection issues and preservation of natural resources, which were quite relevant, and which are increasingly brought up by many stakeholders as key issues to be addressed in the region.
61. The subregional resilience team (REOWA) also recognized that there is a need to expand on the Strategy to make it more detailed on key themes such as pastoralism, the preservation of natural resources and youth, and also strengthen FAO's specific role within its mandate by establishing a clear strategic framework of FAO's interventions in the region as a whole.
62. The conduct of strong analysis on food security resilience factors would help define and specify orientations and operations to be proposed for the region and per country. Also, a deep analysis of climate change and natural resources degradation being some driven

factors of the conflict, would have enabled advocating on the importance of these issues, which FAO is specifically competent to work on, as well as on the regional crisis itself. For example, an effort has been made by the Chad country team; together with the Chad Government, and supported by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), developed a project on *Strengthening agro-ecosystems adaptive capacity to climate change in the Lake Chad Basin* (project code GCP/CHD/040/LDF) trying to address the challenges caused by climate change in the regions surrounding the Lake, which are also affected by the conflict.

Finding 3. The absence of leadership within FAO to preside over the Regional Response Strategy implementation did affect the implementation thereof and the achievement of the expected results across the Lake Chad region. The upcoming revision of the Regional Response Strategy is an opportunity to promote national ownership, regional leadership and a contextualized and flexible approach that is appropriate to each country. A participatory approach driven by REOWA could encourage the buy-in of all stakeholders as well as FAO country offices' appropriation of and involvement in this strategy.

63. Looking back over approximately two years of the Regional Response Strategy implementation, although a multitude of beneficiaries were supported with relevant programmatic activities, the evaluation identified several factors which, combined, provide evidence to explain why some objectives of the Strategy were not achieved, specifically the minimal level of cross-border activities, the lack of information sharing and learning between countries, and an overall lack of a regional approach.
64. First, while the effort that went into devising a regional perspective was clearly relevant, the Regional Strategy was partly motivated by the expectation that it would serve to attract funding from donors, which failed to materialize. This motivation being lost, together with a certain turnover of FAO staff in the subregional resilience hub, may explain a lack of ownership of the Strategy by the newly established staff in REOWA, who were supposed to lead on its implementation although they had not initially conceptualized it. Furthermore, the Regional Office for Africa (RAF) had played a very limited role in the Regional Response Strategy's design.
65. Additionally, with respect to who was supposed to lead on the Strategy, the evaluation found that there was a certain lack of clarity regarding the allocation of roles and responsibilities between teams in REOWA and the Regional Office for Africa (RAF) resilience unit which may have created confusion. With support from TCE (now PSE), REOWA launched the Regional Response Strategy initiative in 2017, however, the need to push forward with the adoption and implementation of the Response Strategy was lacking. No other office, including the RAF resilience team, stepped in to take up the lead. Furthermore, beyond the consultation of the four country offices individually, no regional workshop had been organized to help define the strategic framework and approach.
66. Furthermore, the evaluation found the issue had been further complicated by the fact that the Regional Response Strategy covered in reality two subregions – the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Economic Community of Central African States (CEMAC) – and involved two subregional offices for the four countries.¹⁵ This

¹⁵ The Niger and Nigeria fall under the Subregional Office for West Africa SRO, first in Accra, then in Dakar, while Chad and Cameroon come under the Subregional Office for Central Africa (SFC) in Libreville.

could have added to the confusion about ownership, coordination and managerial reporting lines.

67. With limited drive, there was a failure to actually steer the process and transform the Strategy into a usable implementation plan, to influence in country and regional FAO programming, and to generate significant partnerships with donors and other UN partners in the region, with the exception of the World Food Programme (WFP).
68. This insufficiency, among other issues, also came up in the evaluation workshop, which was conducted towards the end of the evaluation.

Box 3: Extracts from the workshop report

Some key observations, analysis and conclusions of the discussion held at the workshop on this topic are listed here below:

- i. Two Subregional Offices (for West Africa – SFW and for Central Africa – SFC respectively) deal with the four countries; there are various options as to what office could be tasked with overseeing the Regional Response Strategy pilot: be it the Regional Office for Africa (RAF), the two subregional offices or REOWA. Emergency and Resilience Division (PSE) management is pushing for REOWA, arguing that it has the necessary operational and technical expertise.
- ii. It has been widely agreed that a multidimensional task force should be established to support the implementation of the Regional Response Strategy.
- iii. The absence of REOWA from this workshop (all other counterparts were present – four country offices, RAF, FAO headquarters) was keenly felt, especially as it has been in charge of implementing the Regional Response Strategy since 2017 and will probably retain that responsibility moving forward. Participants also discussed that it would be useful if REOWA could organize a regional workshop to validate the key elements discussed at the last workshop and in this evaluation, on the revised Regional Response Strategy, its design, implementation, the allocation of roles and responsibilities, and accountability.

69. The lack of ownership and drive towards the implementation of the strategic intent eventually meant that country offices continued working, as before, on an individual basis, with limited collaboration and communication between them, as if the Regional Response Strategy had never existed. Relevant FAO country offices barely communicated and were not effectively engaged into the implementation of the Regional Strategy. The evaluation was informed of a few virtual meetings being organized at the outset with REOWA, aiming to coordinate efforts in the four countries, but nothing followed. Countries therefore did not use the Regional Response Strategy at national level to drive national strategies and plans.
70. FAO's presence in the four countries was in principle an enabling factor that could have guided strategic implementation, coordination and monitoring. And although FAO could have played a role in getting countries together on the management of natural resources, population needs (refugees, IDPs, host communities), etc., there was little or no dialogue between the four countries touched by the crisis and targeted by the Strategy. Furthermore, the Regional Response Strategy could have helped FAO identify new opportunities and find complementary positioning for its work and have aided in the design of cross-border programming. Essentially, each of the countries acted individually, with little integration, and failed to capitalize on the chance for greater information exchange and peer support. There was a missed opportunity to exploit economies of scale and scope through integrated approaches and the sharing of best practices in a more systematic manner. The lack of communication and systemized follow-up once the initial

dissemination of the Regional Response Strategy to FAO's partners had taken place¹⁶ is a clear factor that has affected the success of the document. None of the organizations met by evaluators had heard of it.

71. With a high variability of capacities available in individual country offices, a regional effort to manage capacities, resource mobilization and knowledge exchange, would have created a more even distribution of organizational strength across the Lake Chad Basin. The L3/surge capacity declaration in Nigeria empowered FAO to mobilize additional resources and capacity to intervene in a consistent way in the northeast. This enabled the office in Maiduguri to benefit from a large team (more than 20 technical staff) wholly dedicated to the response. In contrast, in the Niger, due to a lack of funding and other projects to finance, FAO had only one member of staff in Diffa to coordinate activities in the region. As WFP declared an L3 in Diffa, this begs the question as to why FAO did not do the same. Similarly, the number of technical staff in the Far North of Cameroon could be counted on one hand.¹⁷ Each country encountered different opportunities and hurdles when it came to resource mobilization. For example, there was a dearth of donors interested in funding activities in the Diffa region in the Niger, in contrast to the L3 operations in Nigeria, where there was high donor interest, as it was the source of the crisis, and donors wanted to stabilize the situation there to reduce the impact on the other countries.
72. The question on how the Regional Strategy would have been translated into financeable regional or national projects was already raised by the evaluation of FAO's Programme in Cameroon (2013–2017) conducted in 2017, however, this question as not been answered yet.
73. A couple of transborder projects (such as a United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) project in Chad and the Niger in 2019, and the SFERA (Belgium) project on pastoralism in Chad and Cameroon) were developed and implemented. Such initiatives were, however, too limited in view of the potential for cross-border programming considering the amount of cross-border population movements, through migration or transhumance, and reported donor interest. Initiatives to share experiences between countries were also lacking, despite the potential benefits, and alignment with the Regional Strategy intent.
74. The lack of operationalization of the Strategy led to the absence of elements such as a progress monitoring system, or a dedicated resource mobilization strategy, tied to the Regional Response. The Regional Response Strategy was initially launched at the same time as a huge programme financing opportunity with the World Bank, and to be presented to the Oslo International Conference on the Lake Chad in 2017, however, it was not valorized as anticipated and did not help to raise as much new regional funding as it could have. The joint FAO/WFP project targeting the four countries and presented to the World Bank was

¹⁶ The Regional Strategy was launched by the FAO Director-General in April 2017.

¹⁷ In early 2017, the FAO Emergency and Rehabilitation Division (TCE) conducted a country office needs assessment mission for the emergency programme. TCE had previously suggested that the country office recruit, using funds mobilized by emergency projects, an international consultant to manage the emergency programme and mobilize additional resources. However, due to the limited funds available, the country office did not see this as a relevant option and chose to recruit a national consultant. Following the mission of early 2017 and the allocation of funding from the Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities (SFERA), an international consultant was assigned (as of July 2017) to the country office for a few months to support the development of project proposals to mobilize resources for an intended expansion of the emergency programme (Cameroon Country Programme Evaluation Report, FAO OED, 2017). Despite the effort, such an intended expansion did not occur in the country.

supposed to secure the resources to implement the Strategy but it was not funded. The lack of involvement of national governments in the Regional Strategy formulation partly explains why it did not attract the expected World Bank funding. Neither REOWA nor the country offices were able to find other resources to implement the Strategy. The country offices were concentrated on funding for their own country level activities.

75. The short version of the Regional Strategy was available for the international conference. The Strategy also served as a model for a joint position paper by FAO, WFP and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), supported by REOWA, on the emergency response to the drought in the Sahel in 2018 (FAO, WFP and UNICEF, 2018).¹⁸ However, very few key informants interviewed by the evaluation team knew that FAO had developed a Regional Response Strategy, although they appreciated the initiative once informed of it by the evaluation team.
76. The lack of an effective translation of intentions as laid out in the FAO Regional Response Strategy, into action, therefore led to significant lost opportunities. The plans to revise the Regional Strategy remain relevant; the actual decision to invest into a new strategy should imperatively be preceded by an allocation of roles and definition of accountabilities for turning intentions into facts.

3.1.2 FAO's positioning on regional coordination

Finding 4. FAO has a strong reputation and track record as a convenor and coordinator as well as the proven capacity, experience and ability to define operational priorities among other organizations and donors. However, it needs to be more proactive so as to capitalize on its strengths and initiatives undertaken in the region and in each of the countries, especially in relation to the humanitarian–development nexus, where other UN agencies have been looking to FAO for leadership.

77. At national level, FAO has had a prominent coordination role at both the Food Security Cluster and Inter-Cluster Meeting level, which has been appreciated in all four countries, according to in-country feedback. This has led to strong strategic positioning that has enabled FAO to contribute to honing focus on the humanitarian–development nexus in some countries (Chad and Nigeria).
78. On occasion, FAO has also taken a leadership role at national operational level. This is evident in the activities undertaken at country level, as related by the key stakeholders interviewed during the evaluation process.
79. Before the crisis, there was no humanitarian actor working in northeast Nigeria. FAO was thus able to fill a vacuum, although the few national NGOs that were present in the territory were not familiar with emergency operations, which created some problems when it came to coordinating interventions. Despite this, FAO showed a clear capacity to bring people together, ensuring there was no duplication of humanitarian interventions.
80. FAO clearly has the capacity, experience and ability to define operational priorities among other organizations and donors. Since 2017, for example, it has field-tested and implemented fuel-efficient stove initiatives in northeast Nigeria following a joint Safe Access to Fuel and Energy (SAFE) assessment with WFP and the UN Refugee Agency

¹⁸ This joint position paper has been widely distributed in the international community and has facilitated fundraising for assistance.

(UNHCR). At the end of 2017, FAO had set-up three production centres for fuel-efficient stoves (in partnership with the International Centre for Energy, Environment and Development, or ICEED). FAO now leads a SAFE working group in the Food Security Cluster, which oversaw the recent integration of SAFE interventions into the programmes of several NGOs in northeast Nigeria.

81. In the Niger, FAO's has successfully coordinated the country's Technical Group on Food Security, despite having no funding for it (WFP provided 100 percent of the funding). It also participates in the country's National Agency for the Prevention and Management of Food Crises (*Dispositif National de Prévention et de Gestion des Crises Alimentaires*, DNP-GCA), liaising with the Ministry of Humanitarian Action, the Food Crisis Unit (CCA) and the early-warning system coordination unit (CC-SAP). In addition, FAO actively participates in a Technical Working Group on Resilience chaired by WFP in the Diffa region.
82. In recent years, FAO has played a key role in promoting a humanitarian–development nexus approach among national stakeholders in Chad. For example, from 2015, FAO encouraged the Humanitarian Country Team to address humanitarian–development nexus issues, rather than just prioritize humanitarian responses, in order to address the root causes of the crisis and better support resilience building in affected communities. The nexus was integrated into Chad's National Response Plan 2017–2019, finding consensus among humanitarian actors.
83. These examples highlight the solidity of FAO's basis for regional leadership and coordination. FAO has already had some success in this regard, for example, with its pastoralism strategy for the Sahel. Based on the Lake Chad Basin Regional Response Strategy and its short- and long-term intervention approach, and together with WFP and UNICEF, REOWA oversaw the formulation of a strategic document in February 2018. This provided a welcome opportunity for countries to share experience and undertake self-analysis, based on an internal FAO workshop to collect data and analysis from pastoralist experts of each country concerned. Since then, REOWA has been leading this process and disseminating the pastoralism strategy for the Sahel (FAO, WFP and UNICEF, 2018) among actors at both regional and national level. This has also had a beneficial effect on resource mobilization. The pastoralism strategy also illustrates the importance of partnership in addressing complex crisis.
84. Regional and country level actors are looking to FAO to carry out this role in other areas. For example, in the Niger, humanitarian and development stakeholders have said they expect FAO to share its expertise on the humanitarian–development nexus and to be a force in bringing forward propositions for strategy orientation on this issue. OCHA staff met on mission in the Niger noted that there was a need for FAO "to further reflect on the nexus". They felt FAO should take a leading role on this topic. WFP representatives agreed, saying that FAO needed to define and share its position on the nexus and share operationalization" (for instance, there is only one FAO operational staff based in Diffa, while they are over 20 staff at WFP, sitting in the nearby office.) In Chad, FAO has been leading the nexus for the past two years by creating a dedicated group within the Food Security Cluster, which has been well appreciated. This could be replicated in other countries and at regional level.

3.1.3 FAO's partnership management

3.1.3.1 Partnership with government

Finding 5. FAO has good access to and working relationships with the country governments in the Lake Chad Basin, especially the ministries in charge of agriculture. It needs to capitalize on these relationships and include governments in the design of the revised Regional Response Strategy, while simultaneously supporting government capacity at local, national and regional levels, for them to be able to respond to the challenges and thus reduce conflict-driven factors. Such activities would very much fall under nexus requirements for a lasting solution to short- and long-term crises.

85. In all of the countries visited by the evaluation team, FAO was viewed as a strong partner of the Ministry of Agriculture, largely thanks to its long-term presence in the country and its close working relationship. All parties expressed strong mutual respect. Government officials voiced their appreciation of the Food Security Cluster coordination work undertaken by FAO (in partnership with WFP).
86. According to interviewees FAO, in contrast to other humanitarian organizations, is always content to let the government take the lead on the humanitarian response, providing support as appropriate and required by frontline functions. This can also create challenges, however, in cases where there is poor government capacity, a lack of competence, high rates of personnel turnover, or slow operational capability within national, provincial and local institutions.
87. FAO clearly has good access to and working relationships with government authorities at local and national levels, so including them in the Regional Response Strategy design process should improve its use, implementation and ownership by the country. This is important, as one of the main reasons the joint FAO/WFP regional programme was not funded by the World Bank was because governments had not been involved in its formulation. The World Bank felt that this lack of cooperation would have compromised both the ownership and effectiveness of activities at national level and did not want to take the risk.
88. FAO has, by all accounts, significant experience and well-established long-term relationships with governmental partners in all of the Lake Chad countries. How to capitalize on these partnerships while simultaneously building government capacity, both at national and local level, is something FAO can focus on in the years to come. The capacities to be strengthened by FAO should be based on conflict-driven factors analysis, to precisely define the capacities that authorities should develop to reduce the risk of conflicts in the Lake Chad region. Such activities would very much fall under nexus requirements for a lasting solution to short- and long-term crises.
89. Thanks to its long lasting and trust relationship with governments of the involved countries, FAO could play an important role in bringing ministries from the different countries of the region to discuss and agree on topics that are of cross-border interest (for example, on the root causes of the regional crisis and their link with food insecurity, as well as interventions to be proposed, such as: the validation of access and conditions for transhumance crossing points, or also the creation (or reestablishment) of marketing opportunities of agricultural commodities between countries, fostering job creation (including young people) in the agriculture, livestock and fishing sectors, etc.).

90. In Nigeria, stakeholders view FAO as the lead partner on agriculture at both federal and state level. FAO's work with the authorities on the emergency response in the northeast has been particularly effective and it has taken the lead on agricultural activities among humanitarian actors in the area and carried out various capacities building activities including training for government agencies. Specifically:
- i. FAO has a close relationship with the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) at a federal level.
 - ii. FAO also has a strong relationship with the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), particularly in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe States, with a good level of information sharing and collaboration and frequent meetings. SEMA is in charge of coordinating and providing life-saving emergency interventions at state level, reporting to the state government.
 - iii. FAO also works with Nigeria's Presidential Committee on the northeast Initiative, coordinating all humanitarian interventions in concert with SEMA and NEMA.
91. With respect to project implementation, FAO's main partner is the agricultural development programme (ADP), which is responsible for public extension services at grassroots level. When FAO started operating in the northeast, there was no NGO specializing in agriculture and rural development, so ADP became its partner of choice for all distribution and emergency response activities, not least because of its strong presence in the field.
92. In the Niger, FAO has reasonably good relations with local and regional authorities, despite having only one staff member on the ground in the Diffa region. FAO operates through technical and extension services - agriculture, livestock, environment, etc.- and NGOs for all distribution activities (seed and other inputs), which compensates for the lack of FAO staff in the field. Due to such limited presence in the field, FAO has not been able to engage in any capacity building of partners or of the technical services, which is unfortunate. Nevertheless, in 2018/2019 actions to strengthen the capacities of partners have been organized with the support of the Representation in Niamey, REOWA and headquarters - training on gender and accountability, 2018; training on CASH, 2018; and training on SAFE, 2019.
93. The Government of the Niger is involved in monitoring seed quality and FAO's seed distribution to farmers is carried out by local technical services. Indeed, 80 percent of the seeds distributed are FAO seeds. Through their partnership with FAO, local authorities can make seeds available to farmers and herders at subsidized prices. The service reportedly works well.
94. FAO, however, does not have any formal agreement with the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs in the Niger, while UNHCR, OCHA, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and UNICEF do. Furthermore, FAO's contribution to DNP-GCA in Diffa is comparatively small compared with that of other agencies, such as WFP, whose mandate is more in line with the "*plan de soutien*" supported by the DNP-GC and given that the percentage of support spent on food distributions would always dominate.
95. With a significant focus on livestock destocking, FAO is fully engaged with Chad's National Office for Nutrition and Food Technology (DNNTA) and is part of the technical standing committee. In particular, FAO works closely with the livestock and health technical services

and the National Agency for Support to Rural Development (ANADER) on meat transformation: i) the livestock technical service ensures the quality of animals distributed by FAO and their partnership works very well; ii) ANADER is the implementer of FAO's activities in the field; and iii) the sanitary service (CECOQDA) of the Ministry in charge of livestock is responsible for controlling the meat's transformation process. The partnerships with ANADER and the livestock technical service also include the provision of seeds and fodder at subsidized prices for farmers and herders.

96. Thanks to its good relationships with Chad's national and local authorities and technical services, FAO can easily mobilize their assistance and identify focal points for its interventions. These entities are purely partners in the implementation of FAO's activities, but do not receive any capacity strengthening support, although there is a need for it. Furthermore, the very high turnover of local-authority staff does not help build strong long-term relationships.

3.1.3.2 Partnerships with other United Nations agencies

Finding 6. FAO and WFP have had a close relationship at regional level, leading to joint projects in areas such as the pastoralist crisis response in 2018 in the Sahel (for which also the partnership with UNICEF has been consistent) and seed distribution in Nigeria (since 2017). Formalized joint programming by UN agencies has been welcomed by donors and should become a constant feature in the future. However, there are also other UN agencies working on resilience, livelihood and agricultural production, so FAO needs to strengthen its leadership and proactivity in this respect or it risks losing control of its mandate.

97. FAO and WFP have had a close relationship at regional level, resulting in the formulation of the joint regional project that FAO hoped would fund the Regional Response Strategy. Although the funding and, hence, the project did not materialize, the collaboration formed the basis for another joint pastoralism initiative in response to the Sahel crisis, which also involved UNICEF. As previously mentioned (section 3.1.2), the three regional offices in Dakar developed a joint document and organized a large workshop in Dakar.
98. Similar relationships have been established at country level. In Nigeria, FAO's collaborative relationship with WFP is highly consistent and has translated into a number of joint projects, such as the response to the pastoralist crisis.¹⁹ FAO and WFP work together on food and seed distribution, targeting a number of mutual beneficiaries. This joint targeting could be much improved, however, and lessons learned from this experience in northeast Nigeria could be analysed and shared. The two agencies also work closely in the food security sector, coordinating the various actors who say they appreciate the collaboration.
99. In the Niger, FAO and WFP have collaborated well in Diffa creating operational synergies (other joint Rome-based Agencies initiatives are implemented by FAO, WFP and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in neighbouring regions but not in Diffa). However, UNHCR has signed a memorandum of understanding with WFP for joint programming in six areas around Diffa, while FAO is still in discussions. Food security data analysis is mainly conducted by WFP due to the lack of FAO human resources in Diffa. However, FAO and WFP jointly lead the Food Security Clusters with the authorities, both at national and regional level.

¹⁹ There are also some collaborative initiatives with UN Women and UNHCR in Nigeria.

100. In Chad, FAO has good relations with WFP both in the capital (including through the Food Security Cluster) and in the regions affected by the crisis. A new joint transboundary FAO/WFP project is starting, involving FAO and WFP Chad and FAO Niger. There is a sub-Food Security Cluster in western Chad, coordinated by the one FAO staff member present in the area.
101. Following an official visit by the Director of FAO's Emergency and Resilience Division (PSE) together with representatives of WFP and the European Commission humanitarian aid department in May 2018, a concept note was written in support of joint nexus-related operations for the next four years in the Kanem and the Lac regions of Chad. The collaboration between UN agencies as well as with the European Union was also reiterated during a country workshop that same year, leading to the discussion and the development of a joint draft action plan for a better coordination of actors' activities towards the Humanitarian Development Nexus (OCHA, 2018b).
102. The collaboration between FAO and the other UN agencies at the time of the Evaluation of FAO's Country Programme in Cameroon (2013–2017) (FAO OED, 2017) translated into the development of three joint resilience projects in the Far North, led by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).²⁰ Such projects present opportunities for donor resource mobilization. As noted in the country evaluation, due to the limited capacity of the Cameroon Country Office, collaboration with other agencies increases its credibility and opportunities to attract funding.
103. FAO participates in Humanitarian Country Team meetings in the four countries but could at times play a bigger role and is more proactive in discussions about the humanitarian and development nexus, according to stakeholders' feedback. There have also been requests for more joint leadership among Rome-based Agencies on information management and early warning systems.
104. The formalization of joint programming between UN agencies is generally very appreciated by donors in each country and is an approach that should be pursued consistently in the future. However, there are many UN agencies working on resilience, livelihood and agricultural production (for example, UNHCR supports watermelon production in the Niger and WFP is involved in soil rehabilitation), so FAO needs to strengthen its leadership and proactivity in these areas or it runs the risk of leaving itself open to losing some ground under its mandate and of losing its comparative advantage in the field of emergency agriculture support. WFP is already well positioned on resilience interventions and could expand its activities much more if FAO reduced its presence in any particular country.

3.1.3.3 Partnerships with resource partners

Finding 7. Funding at both the regional and country level (except for Nigeria) remains weak and donors are often unaware of FAO's work in the field, particularly in response to the crisis. FAO has struggled to show what it has achieved and does not communicate sufficiently on funding needs and gaps, even when donors are willing to listen and potentially contribute.

²⁰ (1) Rapid response for enhancing resilience and conflict prevention in the Far North and East regions of Cameroon; (2) Preventing radicalization and strengthening early recovery efforts of women and youth in response to the deteriorating human security situation in the Far North of Cameroon; and (3) Enhancing human security in the councils of Maga, Kousseri and Moulvoudaye in the Far North region of Cameroon as a means of achieving the sustainable development goals.

Communication needs to be strengthened, possibly through annual or biannual donor meetings to present in-country operational and funding needs (as experimented in Nigeria).

105. The four FAO country offices have good relationships with donors in their own countries and were concentrated on getting funding on their own in country activities. However, this did not help FAO in its efforts to find funding for the Regional Response Strategy.
106. Donors need to be made more aware of FAO activities, specifically in response to the Lake Chad crisis. FAO has also struggled to show how it has learned from experience and adapted accordingly, as well as its outcomes and outputs within its reporting structure. This leaves donors unimpressed. On the other hand, it is important to mention that in many offices, FAO lacks the capacity (human resources) to interact with resource partners to seek funding (as was the case especially in Cameroon and the Niger up to 2018).
107. Gaps in funding need to be communicated more consistently. Communication and cooperation in general could be strengthened, both between countries and with partners and donors, for example by organizing annual or biannual donor meetings to present in-country operations and any issues associated with them, as was done in Nigeria also in collaboration with WFP. This type of meeting is much appreciated by donors and an effective way of raising funding (as similar efforts by WFP and other UN agencies have shown), though FAO rarely engages in such events. Another example from Nigeria is how resource partners have benefited from site visits through which they could see and attest tangible results of FAO's projects and discuss with farmers benefitting from the intervention, and this in turn has persuaded them to renew/increase funding allocated to FAO.
108. In general, there has been a lack of proactivity from FAO in Abuja on fundraising for the Lake Chad crisis. Given a lack of interest in humanitarian funding by current FAO Nigeria senior management, donors are worried that after key individuals have left the country, FAO will not be as active as before, leading to a serious loss of reputation for the Organization. Senior management of FAO's emergency operations have been focused on fundraising for the northeast crisis. Their departure poses high risk for FAO funding opportunities in this operational area if they are not replaced quickly with highly experienced and competent managers.
109. While the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) is a significant donor to FAO in Chad and Nigeria, neither FAO in Cameroon nor the Niger received any such funding during the period under review. Indeed, FAO Niger did not succeed in mobilizing much funding at all for the Lake Chad crisis (the country portfolio is the smallest of the four in the region), though Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) funding has enabled the opening of an FAO office in Diffa.
110. In Chad, FAO does not open new offices in programmatic areas where there is a need for food security and livelihood support, as the short-term funding involved (normally six months) does not allow such investments. WFP has been opening offices in such areas, however, replacing FAO and working on activities that should fall within FAO's remit. ECHO funding is also on a steep decline in Chad. FAO continues to depend on ECHO to fund the Food Security Cluster after seven/eight years.
111. Considering the significant reduction in available donor funding, FAO should systematically improve its capacity to fundraise and become more proactive *vis-à-vis* donors. For instance,

ECHO, the main backer of Food Security Cluster coordination in Chad, Cameroon and Nigeria, is undergoing a major cut in funding in Chad, from EUR 60 million to EUR 22 million, so it is vital that FAO find other funding sources for Cluster coordination and other activities.

3.1.4 FAO's comparative advantage

Finding 8. FAO is widely acknowledged as the go-to source of agricultural expertise. While its authority in the fields of agriculture and food security may never be challenged, still, in recent years, FAO corporately has tended to move away from emergency support and faced operational challenges that affected its capacity to deliver timely and effectively. Resilience building is an integral part of the overall humanitarian response, and FAO has an undeniable role to play in the Lake Chad region and accordingly needs to strengthen its capacity and ability to play this role across the humanitarian and development nexus. It will thus reclaim its rightful position as one of the main agency leading a coordinated response to agriculture, livestock and natural resource management needs in the region.

112. FAO has a clear mandate, very much focused on the provision of key livelihood support and the conveyance of agricultural expertise. It needs strong leadership at all levels to operate at its full potential. Resilience building being part of the overall humanitarian response, the Organization needs to understand and communicate its role in both the humanitarian and development spheres and push proactively in both directions.
113. All of the humanitarian and development actors interviewed during the evaluation mission noted the essential role FAO could play in this context by working on environmental and agricultural issues, so as to increase food production, bolster job opportunities and mitigate against risks. They expressed their expectation that FAO share its knowledge, experience and proposed solutions more broadly and comprehensively, especially in a nexus-related context.
114. A perceived lack of proactivity on FAO's part was a common criticism. This lack of proactivity and responsibility is allowing other actors to take on roles FAO should be playing. In the course of interviews, it became clear that FAO should play a more active role in terms of short- and long-term strategic interventions, conducting and sharing deep contextual analysis related to agricultural systems and markets, sharing their expertise and building the capacities of actors, experimenting innovative approaches, analysing their impacts, and sharing lessons learned and recommendations that arise out of them (FAO's core functions). Interviewees also highlighted that FAO should be a driving force, demonstrating its expert contextual and technical knowledge and strategic orientation, rather than merely acceding to donor priorities. FAO needs to undertake thorough contextual analysis of agricultural production and markets. Once this gains recognition in the emergency and development sector, it should drive donor priorities.
115. During the evaluation workshop conducted by the evaluation team in April 2019 as part of the data collection process, participants discussed FAO's comparative advantage, including the following:
 - i. There is strong technical expertise among FAO teams, but does it capitalize on this?
 - ii. FAO's mandate clearly defines its role, which should give it leadership in all agriculture activities. Do we take best advantage of FAO's mandate in this context?

- iii. There is significant agricultural potential in the Lake Chad region and FAO should capitalize on economic opportunities to address crisis factors and drivers.
 - iv. FAO has an established presence and relationships with government authorities, which should give it keen insight into the context and agricultural landscape of the area.
 - v. Late programmatic delivery will erode hard-won donor trust.
 - vi. In the Niger, there is strong community confidence and trust in FAO thanks to its strong interventions on desertification.
 - vii. FAO has operational capacity in both humanitarian and development intervention, but it is not consistently interwoven into interventions and not very visible on the ground.
 - viii. FAO's partners and donors reported that they would like to see a greater effort by FAO in conducting in-depth analyses of both the context in which they are about to operate but above all of the results achieved through its activities, to possibly build upon what FAO has done and scale-up interventions to reach greater coverage.
 - ix. There are considerable environmental and value-chain opportunities FAO could capitalize on to potentially lessen the causes of crisis.
116. In Nigeria, key international organizations turn to FAO on matters related to agricultural capacity building, as FAO's technical expertise and capacity are universally recognized. No other organization has FAO's specific agricultural focus. The national agencies interviewed said they wanted to see FAO giving direction and advocating for more sustainable livelihood support (fisheries, poultry, micro-gardening, etc.) rather than providing emergency relief.
117. In the Niger, the Ministry of Agriculture noted that the prohibition on fishing and growing peppers (important economic sectors) in the Diffa region had been lifted in March 2019 and underscored the crucial need to support youths in regaining control of economic activities in this sector. FAO is well positioned to capitalize on this opportunity.
118. At the time of writing, a nexus-related roadmap (citing the need to reduce humanitarian intervention and enhance community resilience and sustainable intervention) is awaiting government approval in the Niger. Nexus-related implementation has not been coordinated at this point; the creation of a national technical committee spanning government institutions, donors and humanitarian actors would therefore be very useful.²¹ Again, FAO is well positioned to act on this opportunity and several actors voiced a desire to see FAO commit to action on this issue.
119. There appears to be sufficient demand for FAO's expertise and knowledge, giving FAO a clear comparative advantage over other agencies. However, this advantage must be maintained. The evaluation considers the revised Regional Response Strategy an opportunity to reverse this trend in the Lake Chad Basin and to return FAO to its rightful position as the main agricultural response actor in the region.

²¹ Decree n. 0094 - 29 June 2018, established a High Level Tripartite Committee on the Humanitarian-Development Nexus in the Prime Minister office of Niger. This high-level tripartite committee on the humanitarian development nexus is a permanent consultative structure which ensures the link between the government, humanitarian actors and development actors.

120. Furthermore, in Nigeria, FAO has been playing a leadership role in the food security sector (FSS) on protection-related issues and, in particular, in raising awareness on the relationship between food security and protection risks. Through the dedicated work of a Gender and Gender-based Violence Specialist based in Maiduguri, FAO has provided guidance and capacity strengthening activities to the other FSS actors with the aim of mainstreaming protection in food security and livelihood programming in northeast Nigeria, which could be scaled-up to the neighbouring countries. FAO and WFP have jointly organized²² a capacity needs assessment of partners on protection and gender-related issues followed by a number of trainings and presentations to respond to the emerging needs (Food Security Cluster, 2018a). FAO has also recently conducted an analysis of people's protection needs in terms of threats, vulnerability, capacity and risk, which represents a reference document for all of FAO's interventions in the northeast. Stakeholders commend FAO for having shared its knowledge and experience and are grateful for having been provided with greater awareness about risks faced by the population in the northeast, and on how to address them through their interventions. This work is even more timely and appropriate in a context where the armed conflict has progressively become a "protection crisis", as defined by the international community (Nigeria INGO forum, 2019). An overriding approach of "do no harm" prevails.
121. In addition, conflict and access issues could be FAO's entry points in such a crisis context. For example, FAO could have further engaged in issues such as land reclamation, the development of pastureland through fodder seeding (where possible and accessible), the revival of agricultural and fishing activities, the construction of pastoral hydraulics (to reduce agricultural conflicts), the marking of transhumance corridors (also to reduce agricultural conflicts) or the setting-up of rural committees as a mechanism to prevent and resolve conflicts. These topics are very relevant and do fall under FAO's mandate, without saying that they could represent a possible area for cooperation with the neighbouring country facing the same issues. However, other agencies appear to be more active in these areas and on a larger scale. Nevertheless, in 2017 FAO approved a corporate framework to support sustainable peace in the context of the 2030 Agenda, which committed the Organization to robust and sustained context and conflict analysis to tailor interventions and approaches along with the ability to respond flexibly to rapidly changing circumstances. As a result, Nigeria, for example, has been object of an in-depth context analysis by a team of conflict analysts (FAO headquarters) so as to inform conflict-sensitive interventions and more broadly inform strategic programme decisions. As a next step, FAO could consider undertaking a similar exercise at regional level as to contribute to a more regional programming approach.

3.2 Main findings on FAO's intervention results

122. This section presents the key findings and lessons on FAO's activities in the main sectors of work across the four countries concerned by the Lake Chad crisis. Each of the four countries has been analysed separately, and individual country reports contain further detail on specific results.

Finding 9. Although the Regional Response Strategy provided a reference framework linking emergency response to resilience building activities, FAO projects in countries lacked such a programmatic and strategic approach and did not follow the proposed transition. Except for

²² Through FAO Gender and Gender-based Violence (GBV) Specialist; WFP Protection and Gender Adviser.

Nigeria, FAO's work in the field mostly focused on short-term emergency response (e.g. through distributions of agriculture and livestock inputs), rather than longer-term resilience building activities. This focus on projects derives from a rather country-specific and donor-driven programming, which has not promoted a strategic positioning that fosters impact.

123. Of the five projects conducted in the Diffa region (Niger) during the period in question, four were emergency responses (of 5–12 months in duration, mainly involving seed, animal and fodder distribution) and one involved sustainable longer-term resilience building interventions.²³ Due also to its limited presence in terms of field staff, FAO has struggled to abandon a project-based approach and to strategically position itself in the region, which has led to a tendency in carrying out the same type of short-term response projects year after year, despite calls from stakeholders for interventions that focus on long-term support.
124. The scope of interventions is wider in Chad than in the Niger (seed, animal and fodder distribution; animal destocking; production of meat flour and its distribution to malnourished children; pastoralists' livelihood resilience building). However, also in Chad, FAO's approach was found to be substantially project-based and with a limited strategic vision and positioning in the sectors at the core of FAO's mandate. This may be linked to a limited capacity of the office to reflect on and explore the possible opportunities of expanding the scope of its interventions towards a more programmatic approach, which would require further analysis, research and understanding of existing dynamics and opportunities in the country but also of the impact of FAO's work that could be capitalized and built upon.
125. According to stakeholders, for example, the Chadian destocking intervention combined with the production of meat flour (the capacity building of butchers and women as the main actors regarding meat transformation) and the consequent distribution to malnourished children is a very new project that could be highly effective in terms of livelihood support, women empowerment and hygiene practices. This is deemed a relevant field-test, from which FAO can learn lessons before deploying on a wider scale.
126. Despite the experience and knowledge developed by FAO on the transformation of meat into powder, multiplication and replication would only be possible through the conduct of strong analysis of the possible results in terms of nutritional aspects, sustainability and impacts to showcase and share lessons. FAO has in fact the potential to go much further with its interventions, but the lack of analysis, especially impact analysis, and of capitalization on the results achieved does not allow to go beyond the usual project. For example, FAO has strong opportunities of intervention with regard to environmental issues and value chain development, which are proper of FAO's mandate and expertise and which can potentially reduce crisis drivers.
127. In fact, FAO also has a key role to play as a bridge between research institutions and producers. Not only innovative interventions at the interface between research and action

²³ Project OSRO/NER/701/SWE (FAO, 2017b) is a three-year initiative (2017–2019) providing farmers and herders with good quality seeds, small ruminants and animal feed, but also promoting vegetable production through micro-gardens as well as farmers and pastoralist field schools to improve production techniques. In addition, the project set out to promote income-generating activities through trade of agricultural products, provision of training on nutritional education and best familial practices and promotion of Dimitra listeners clubs to improve natural resources management.

could provide valid strategies to respond to people's needs and prior technical and contextual analysis, but further research and development could also be used as a reference to improve, duplicate and broaden these interventions by other actors in the areas where FAO could not reach out.

128. The programme in the Far North of Cameroon included seed and animal distribution, as well as more structured interventions for cereal processing and conservation and for rehabilitating transhumance corridors. As already stressed by the Evaluation of the Country Programme in Cameroon in 2017, FAO had implemented actions with different time horizons and interventions are often determined by the type of funding available, rather than by strategic goals. According to stakeholders interviewed, FAO could intervene in several areas to strengthen the resilience of beneficiaries. The country level evaluation in 2017 already raised questions as to how the Regional Response Strategy could have been implemented and translated into fundable regional or national projects.
129. FAO's Programme in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states in northeast Nigeria between 2015 and 2018 also included distribution of agricultural kits, seeds and animals, together with the provision of vaccinations and veterinary support, micro-gardening activities and fuel-efficient stoves. All these activities have been implemented progressively year after year and in accordance with the changing needs of the different groups targeted (IDPs, refugees and host communities) with the aim of strengthening their resilience and adopt a community-centred approach. For example, after having provided the population with tools to restore their agricultural and livestock production, FAO promoted the creation of group savings and loans association (GSLA) to transform their production into more solid businesses. Another example concerns the provision/transfer of cash in addition to seeds and animals (the so called Cash+ programme) as a way to discourage recipients from selling their productive assets and resort to other negative coping practices.

Finding 10. Country offices of the Lake Chad region lacked the capacity to appropriately consider the programmatic options for resilience support to address regional and transboundary needs. This lack of capacity in country also affected cross-country learning, which was almost inexistent and hampered the contextualization and scale-up of effective and innovative interventions. A Regional Strategy coordination unit could have provided the additional capacity and cross-country vision needed.

130. FAO operates on a broad geographical scale having good coverage of food insecure areas, and greater visibility than many of the humanitarian and development actors in the country. However, and despite the effort in developing a Regional Response Strategy and possibilities of cross-country work as to respond to common needs and similar challenges faced by the population in the region, FAO country offices kept working on their programming individually and did not develop any regional project or activity in cooperation with the others as to respond to the crisis' effects.
131. Furthermore, although FAO's Strategy did stress the importance of shifting from a short- to a longer-term approach, the type of activities implemented in three of the four countries did not follow that aimed shift in full. This is not true indeed in the case of Nigeria, where FAO's programme over the years 2015-2018 did show a progression from re-creation and distribution of productive assets to more resilience building activities through savings and sustainable business creation (*caisses de Résilience* (CdR) approach). Again, the fact that countries did not fully own the Regional Strategy and its conceptual framework in addition

- to the limited support (almost none) offered by REOWA in terms of oversight and regional approach, constituted a limitation to countries programming capacity. Instead, such support could have instead promoted a greater knowledge and experience sharing between countries.
132. However, in the other countries, for example in the Niger, stakeholders stated they would like to see less humanitarian intervention and more development programming. This was also reiterated by the FAO team itself concurring that the Organization should be helping the authorities to set-up their emergency response rather than conducting emergency interventions itself. However, FAO country office has little capacity (in the field as well as in the programming team in the capital) to advocate, attract and mobilize resources for interventions that go beyond the usual six to nine months period. Furthermore, FAO's lack of long-term engagement and reluctance to switch to long-term responses has enabled other organizations to operate in FAO's usual sphere of intervention (WFP is supporting land rehabilitation and UNHCR is supporting watermelon production in the Diffa region, for example).
 133. One explanation of why FAO did not engage into resilience type of activities although it was appropriate and recognized as relevant (or it did insufficiently) can be found in FAO's operational inadequacy in countries like Cameroon, Chad and the Niger where FAO has limited staff resources, compared to Nigeria, for example, which benefitted from a large support as the surge capacity following the L3 declaration. In fact, the case of Nigeria shows that, when well-resourced, FAO can achieve good results and be effective, by also engaging into more complex and long-term resilience building. It would be useful to share knowledge and capitalize on what it has achieved in Nigeria and expand these best practices to other countries in the region.
 134. Surely, this difference in terms of capacity between the four countries did not help FAO to adopt a more regional and long-term approach or perspective. The presence of an adequate oversight (from REOWA for example) could have bridged the capacity gaps by, for instance, coordinating knowledge transfer and lessons learning within the region, supporting resource mobilization and the proposal write-up functions on resilience programming. FAO will always have country offices with little capacity, so it is fundamental to have an office above the countries that could play the role of main implementer and custodian of the regional strategy in support of and in coordination with the country offices that are least staffed.
 135. For example, FAO team in Nigeria has had the means that allowed to improve its M&E capacity and conduct baseline analysis (even though for few projects only), monitor the programme's outputs and outcomes, and communicate lessons learned. This was a first attempt and a lot of work still needs to be done to affirm a rigorous approach for transparent analysis and communicate interventions' results, but this already represents a possible path for the other countries to improve their work and benefit from the experience of northeast Nigeria. It would be useful if the monitoring of innovative interventions could produce sharable knowledge and lessons and serve as the basis for specific recommendations for the sector as a whole and for the other countries.
 136. Despite its smaller capacity and the absence of a surge/L3 response from headquarters, the evaluation commends the effort made by the FAO team in Chad in improving its M&E function throughout its large programme. However, resources are still needed to better

use the M&E results to promote a programmatic approach. As mentioned above, for example, although FAO Chad has been able to scale-up its work on destocking and bring it forward to integrate it into transformation and nutrition activities, results have been limited due to the lack of thorough contextual analysis (general context and production specificities) and of field experiments, which instead could have contributed to a further potential upscaling or large-scale deployment by implementing partners and operational actors (NGOs). This would allow FAO to position itself more strategically and underscore its added value at the intersection of research and action.

137. With regard to targeting, although the priority was given to the most vulnerable to food insecurity and those affected by the conflict (based on the data from the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, IPC; and the *Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel*), the targeting process for FAO's emergency responses was not harmonized through the four countries. The Cadre Harmonisé has become a major targeting instrument at geographical level and is widely used by FAO as well as by international and national NGOs. Cadre Harmonisé represents a dependable and reliable tool in all four countries thanks to the good and long-lasting collaboration between CILSS, FAO and the national governments. Although in Nigeria there have been problems in the past with regard to food security data and analysis (mostly for political reasons), the quality of the data has significantly improved over the last two to three years under the lead of FAO and the Government.
138. The crisis is complex and becoming protracted, so FAO needs to refine its targeting process and justify its approaches and actions. For example, in Nigeria, there is an important problem related to areas that are inaccessible to the UN agencies and where, according to OCHA, about 1 million people are suffering from food insecurity. Inaccessibility to these areas is due to the fact that the Government of Nigeria does not take responsibility for what happens to any actors intervening in areas outside its control, therefore FAO (as other UN agencies) can only work in areas under military control. Nevertheless, and since the needs of the accessible areas are still vast, FAO is present in almost all of the accessible local government areas of the three crisis-hit states (Food Security Cluster, 2018b) and collaborates with partners tackling the very same issues in the inaccessible areas.

3.2.1 Agricultural production

Finding 11. FAO has focused primarily on seed distribution, in some cases at large-scale and repeatedly over time. While this short-term assistance was valid to address urgent needs, FAO could also have focused on underlying issues requiring longer-term strategies and solutions. FAO has been working directly with farmers yet it would be considered important to also deal with producer organizations, civil society, and local and national authorities.

139. As previously mentioned, across the four countries, most of the projects implemented between 2015 and 2018 have provided emergency agriculture and livelihoods support to protect people's livelihoods and build their resilience. In particular, FAO aimed at restoring agricultural livelihoods and improving the food security and nutrition conditions of IDPs, returnees and vulnerable host communities through access to healthy, nutritious and diversified fresh food. The main activities targeting agriculture-based farmers include procurement and delivery of agricultural inputs such as seeds and fertilizers, monitoring of agricultural production, rehabilitation of boreholes, training on best farming practices, and assessment of harvests (the latter mainly in Nigeria).
140. In the four observed countries, FAO has focused mainly on seed, tool and fertilizer distribution to meet the livelihood needs of displaced populations (IDPs, refugees, returnees) as well as host communities, and reduce the need for food assistance in the medium-term. These short-term interventions allowed to give urgent assistance to people who have lost their means of production. However, they cannot remain FAO's main interventions (as was the case in the Niger). In few cases, these activities were also complemented with farmers field school (FFS) to equip farmers with relevant agronomic skills to make optimum use of the seeds, tools and fertilizers that were distributed to them.
141. In interviews across the four countries, populations who benefitted from FAO's support acknowledged and implementing partners reported on the relevance and effectiveness of the interventions, although some operational aspects could still be improved. In terms of positive results, the evaluation found that there were moderate changes in food production and diversification, income and households' dietary status, as also indicated by the majority of focus group discussions' participants. In fact, some beneficiaries pointed to the diversification in their agriculture production (thanks to the provision of both vegetable and rainfed seeds together with trainings on how to cultivate them), which also translated in a greater availability and variety of food and nutrition components within the household itself (for example, through the introduction of products like tomatoes, onion, carrots, etc.). For example, in Diffa Niger, local pepper producers who were no longer allowed to produce it (due to government's decision),²⁴ had the opportunity to expand their production to other vegetables thanks to the seeds distributed by FAO.
142. In a few cases, it was also reported that trainings on possible income-generating activities - some of which supported by cash transfer (either unconditional or cash for work) - have also led to slight increase of the household's income. For example, in Chad, a group of women who received both tomato seeds and trainings on post-harvest processing and commercialization, started noticing an increase of their income thanks to the production (and sale) of tomatoes but most importantly of the tomato powder they were producing

²⁴ Boko Haram Islamist rebels from neighbouring Nigeria were suspected of extorting money from the red-pepper trade in the Diffa region to fund their activities, which prompted the Government to ban the crop for about two years, until late 2017.

from the fruit. In fact, the transformation into powder allowed producers to store and conserve the produce for a longer period of time and sell it once the good became scarce on the market (i.e. when the tomato harvesting was over).

143. Nevertheless, several factors affected the achievement and sustainability of results such as the limited quantity of seeds and fertilizers distributed, the short durations of the interventions (often between three and six months) and the micro-nature of the support in terms of coverage, as it was mainly an emergency response. Undoubtedly, the little availability of funding for project implementation may have contributed to the above factors.
144. Furthermore, in most of the interventions there seems to be no exit strategy. Although evidence from the document review reveals some elements of exit strategy like, for example, linking the beneficiaries to relevant government agencies to continue the support at community level, findings from the field do not support the existence of any exit strategy. In one of the meeting with the implementing partners in Nigeria, it was mentioned that the absence of exit strategy was a key weakness of FAO interventions as noted here: "The implementation period was too short for some of the activities. There is no exit plan to be candid. We move to the communities; distribute the items and we depart from the communities" (Interview excerpts from meeting with IPs in Adamawa state).
145. In addition, the continuous conflict and uncertainties across the region, including the areas targeted by the interventions, pose another serious threat to sustainable food production and diversification. In Nigeria for example, project beneficiaries in different communities are subject to the incessant attacks from armed groups provoking continuous loss of productive assets thereby decreasing the productive capacity of households, which has implication for households' sustainability of food production and diversification. Insecurity in general also affects implementation itself, as for example in Cameroon, where population struggle to find sites where trainings and farmer fields schools can be held: not only it is difficult to find safe and accessible pieces of land but also sometimes those that are suitable do not offer fertile ground for planting even though FFS would still be implemented there.
146. Lastly, the capacity building element of the interventions is sometimes weak and a risk of dependency on FAO's support, and seeds' provision has been found in all four countries. Although there is evidence of training of beneficiaries in micro-gardening and the implementation of farmers field school, these are very limited to a few intervention areas. Also, the quality of FAO's seeds was recognized to be high and very adequate to the cultural practices and conditions, however, these seeds were not easily to find or available on the local markets after FAO's intervention (particularly in Cameroon and the Niger). Also, even if the seeds and other higher quality inputs were available, it is not sure that populations, in the Niger for example, could afford to buy them on the market. Given the often-critical conditions of the populations when interventions are implemented, farmers do not manage to store the good seeds for the next season, but they rather buy lower quality seeds (Cameroon). This could be perhaps avoided if FAO created some improved seeds producers to collaborate with the farmers that need those seeds; however, such work was not found.²⁵ Nevertheless, some interventions have dealt with this, for example, in

²⁵ Among the projects implemented in Nigeria, OSRO/NIR/801/SWE aimed to support the local production for a variety of seed by providing trainings to seed producers and creating clusters on enhanced seeds production systems. However, no evidence was found on the results of such intervention.

- Nigeria there is a collaboration with the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) to support seeds production in the southern part of Borno and in Yobe (concentrating on safe LGAs), which has led to the organization of seed fairs in 2018 and 2019 in Yobe State; more initiatives in this domain, across all countries, would be beneficial.
147. In view of the protracted security crisis, the region's considerable agricultural potential and the underlying causes of the crisis, which have led to the loss of agricultural productivity, FAO did not identify a strategic vision to ensure tackling underlying factors of the conflict. This would surely require multiple, integrated technical and operational approaches to address the consequences of the crisis and respond to the needs of the population by bolstering their medium- and long-term production and organizational capacity, backed by farmers' organizations, civil society and local and national authorities, which FAO addressed to a certain extent in Nigeria but not in the other three countries.
 148. FAO's assistance to producer organizations working in key areas of intervention, such as value chain development, processing operations, and access to finance and markets was limited though it is at the heart of FAO's mandate. In a context such as the one of the Lake Chad, further analysing commercial opportunities across borders could also represent an opportunity of work between countries, which are historically (or used to be) extremely interlinked in terms of markets and commercial relations. The evaluation team found that FAO missed an opportunity by not developing options for cross-border interventions that could have contributed to strengthen agricultural value chains, when appropriate, in a context where commercial opportunities are restricted (borders closures, movement restrictions for both people and goods, lack of financial support systems at local level, etc.). For example, in the Niger strong pepper production is still poorly valued, but the sale of dried peppers of mediocre quality to Nigeria has transformed its value and sales, especially for export; the proximity of the Nigerian market is a significant commercial opportunity that could be exploited by the three other countries. Also, youth could be considered the main recipient or actors in this area, though the inclusion of youth in agriculture support activities was not consistent.
 149. Climate change is another factor underlying this crisis, causing significant losses of agricultural and pastoral production: seeds provided by FAO include short-cycle seeds and off-season seeds for adaptation to climate change. These adaptation efforts should be maintained and strengthened, as FAO could further promote and popularize research on the topic of adaptation to climate change and be a driving force in this area, especially as issues related to agricultural production are both a cause of and a solution to this security crisis.
 150. FAO's expertise and comparative advantage in terms of providing appropriate seeds is overshadowed by the predictable tardiness of their support and a lack of a strategic vision. A long-term solution to the underlying causes of food insecurity within the region needs to be identified to include harnessing local capacity and expertise.
 151. In Nigeria, there is a ban on the supply of chemical fertilizers in the north east of the country to prevent the use of ammonium nitrate (contained in the fertilizer) as a component in improvised explosives. All stakeholders interviewed on the subject welcomed the important advocacy work conducted by FAO *vis-à-vis* the federal Government as well as other partners, on the importance of fertilizer to farmers as to allow a certain increase in their

agricultural productivity and discourage them to get fertilizers through smuggling and black market.

3.2.2 Livestock production

Finding 12. The work conducted by FAO in the livestock sector is composed of a variety of activities very relevant to each of the countries' needs. Despite the injection of cash into household budgets in a few cases, the overall approach was seen by the evaluation team as a pure emergency response action without meeting the objective of preserving livestock. FAO could be far more active in other areas, such as vaccination, where it could partner with other agencies and organizations at regional level, or promoting and securing interstate transhumance routes. A limited analytical capacity is also preventing FAO from positioning itself strategically and acting in a timely manner, meaning it is missing opportunities to prove its leadership potential while generating a lasting impact.

152. An assessment carried out in December 2016 by a livestock senior expert from the FAO Regional Office for Africa (RAF) demonstrated the urgent need to support animal restocking and to launch vaccinations activities in the northeast region of Nigeria (FAO, 2018b). Livestock restocking was also identified as priority as many IDPs in the region had lost their animals due to the crisis, and this was their main source of food and income. In addition, reports from the Humanitarian Country Team on food security and livelihood assessment in Nigeria confirmed that livestock production among the displaced households was reduced tremendously as many displaced households lost their animals when fleeing the insurgency (OCHA, 2016). The report further confirmed that over 80 percent of the displaced livestock farmers had experienced total loss of livestock. The Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) report recommended that to boost livestock production, it is paramount to distribute livestock as start-up relief packages to IDP household farmers who have lost all livestock in order for them to start breeding (Nigeria. Presidential Committee on the northeast Initiative, 2016; and OCHA, 2016). Although the FAO mission was focused on Nigeria only, the context in the neighbouring countries was similar and population and herders were facing similar challenges and needs.
153. Within the overall response, FAO's livestock interventions in the four countries were varied over the evaluation period as elaborated in Box 4.

Box 4: Summary of projects' focus in the four countries

- i. In Nigeria FAO's focus was more on the restocking activity, including the procurement and the provision of vaccinated and dewormed small ruminants, starter pack feed, animal treatments and vaccines (in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), who provided storage in the absence of cold chain systems within States). Thinking long-term, one project also included a financial component: the allocation of grants to 800 women organized in groups to resume savings and loans activities. Beyond the provision of livestock inputs, FAO also provided trainings to community-based animal health workers and extension agents, on vaccination and treatment of livestock (in areas at risk) against major livestock diseases, through a community-based animal health service delivery system. In addition, in a few cases, FAO also delivered cash transfers as well as training and extension support on good livestock management to beneficiaries and recruited security guards to ensure safety of the livestock during the quarantine period. Poultry restocking is also an important part of FAO's interventions in the northeast, providing income, food and source of livelihood to women in IDP camps and host communities.
- ii. The context in Chad was slightly different, thus FAO privileged reinforcing the value chain/process of destocking of livestock to improve the availability of animal protein in the household by the drying of slaughtered meat. This has entailed the provision of animal feed, vaccination and deworming to breeders, technical capacity building of butchers and groups of processors (mainly women), distribution of inputs for transformation, and ultimately the distribution of dried meat to persons accompanying severe acute malnourished children and/or pregnant and lactating women, together with nutritional education. Emphasis was put on the implementation of vaccination and animal deworming campaigns, identification and training of community-based animal health workers (CBAHWs) and implementation of post-vaccination and monitoring.
- iii. In Cameroon, activities included supplying inputs (small ruminants, local poultry, animal feed and veterinary supplies), vaccination of the animals and training to beneficiaries on the upkeep of animals; also, line ministry staff have been trained on the techniques of livestock production and protection. Differently from the other countries, in Cameroon FAO also supported the construction of infrastructures - such as animal shelters (huts), vaccination parks and boreholes or water retaining dams along transhumance corridors - and planting of pastureland with improved seeds of pasture.
- iv. The focus in the Niger was the provision of quality seed and fodder to communities in order to strengthen the food security and resilience of targeted peoples. Activities included vaccination and deworming operations in regions affected by diseases and the provision of animal feed via livestock services and NGO animal feeds banks to mitigate animal mortality risks among small herders. For example, complementary feed per day and per head for each small and big ruminant, vaccines, deworming treatments and cash transfers for one month to cover other household needs (e.g. vitamin supplement for animals) were provided. Other activities included the reintroduction of drought-resistant forage species on pastureland using cash-for-work related activities to produce forage for the next season, and the installation of firebreaks to protect grazing areas.

154. People who lost their animals are willing to have new animals to start their activities again and animal restocking was considered an urgent matter for that group. Goats (for fattening and breeding) and bulls (for fattening) were highly in demand, especially by women and youths respectively for family nutrition and income generation.
155. As a result, FAO's interventions on livestock restocking and fodder distribution were found to be relevant and appropriate to respond to people's needs. Nevertheless, some challenges in the implementation affected their effectiveness and sustainability, as distributions have often been logistically complex. Even fodder distribution, which avoids excessive loss of livestock, can also be expensive and require a lot of procurement work, which, for FAO, can mean important delays in implementation.
156. For example, the distribution of animals has proved very difficult in Chad and many have died shortly after distribution due to poor transport conditions (heat, lack of food, long

travel times, etc.). Similarly, in Nigeria, progress reports and interviews with communities reported that the planning of the livestock distribution did not align with the seasonal calendar as some of the animals were distributed during the Harmattan which led to some deaths. In Nigeria, pastoralists not living in conventional IDP camps, but found on the outskirts of relatively secure towns and villages in the northeast are largely excluded from FAO's restocking interventions within the period, except for vaccination. They could be assisted with restocking kits, fodder and animal health services.

157. Also, in the case of fodder distribution, for example in Chad and the Niger, these commodities often arrived after the end of the pastoral lean season owing to the heavily bureaucratic processes of FAO's procurement regulations. To counter this, the FAO Niger team has often swapped fodder for cash transfers, thus avoiding a lack of fodder and injecting cash into the budgets of targeted households. However, this practice did not meet the objective of preserving the livestock of targeted populations. On a different note, the quality of pastures is an area which needs to be enhanced to allow an improvement of the nutritional status of animals but FAO did not engage in this despite its internal knowledge and expertise. This is a very relevant and important topic, and FAO could play an important role first in working at the junction between research and action, and then disseminating the knowledge through NGOs and other actors for duplication, and further dissemination.
158. Generally, grazing management was reported as being a sector on which FAO could play a role at regional level in promoting and securing interstate transhumance routes, facilitating dialogue between states and promoting access to grazing areas. FAO is expected to work on the coordination and inter-country decision-making regarding transhumance routes, the conditions of passage, and the facilities and infrastructures to be developed, etc. Cross-country activity to target transboundary animal diseases of economic importance should also be implemented. On the other hand, and thanks to its relations with farmers groups and organizations intervening in the zones, FAO could further relay this information to the concerned communities so as to avoid more conflicts. For example, in Nigeria, the rehabilitation of grazing reserves and stock routes within national and across inter-state boundaries should be considered to mitigate farmer-herder conflict. The evaluation finds that FAO's work in this domain would be essential to extend pasture areas, and thus facilitate the resilience of transhumant livestock to climate hazards.
159. In fact, conflicts between farmers and herders is another area of focus for FAO, relevant at both national and regional level (the latter is also highlighted in the Regional Response Strategy as part of Outcome 3). Although FAO tried to address the issue through agro-pastoral farmer field schools in some countries, it did not make any effort or have the capacity to coordinate any cross-country activity in this regard. Also, stakeholders reported the need for FAO to work further on pastoral hydraulics and transhumance corridors to expand pastoral areas, especially at regional level among the four countries. There is a significant lack of capacity and involvement in the field of pastoral hydraulics (many requests have been made in the Niger). As FAO is not involved in this area in the Niger (Lake Chad side), requests are being routed to other organizations, such as UNICEF. FAO could conduct a needs analysis and FAO positioning in this area could be strengthened. This would be a good opportunity for the Organization to take advantage of its technical expertise and regional experience on pastoralism as a whole while taking the lead on this issue in this region.

160. Vaccinations against major livestock diseases that FAO implemented in the four countries were found relevant and effective, thanks also to the great level of coordination with the national authorities and community health services. Given the good work undertaken in this area and FAO's recognized role in the animal health sector, stakeholders in the region highlighted the need for countries to be more coordinated in their vaccination campaign as a way to improve health conditions of animals crossing the national borders (for pastoralism, transhumance, trade, etc.). Indeed, mainly government and technical ministries officials requested a stronger presence and the increased participation of FAO in supporting vaccination interventions at a regional level; i.e. harmonizing and coordinating vaccinations across countries. In order to achieve the desired objectives, the actions would need to be coordinated and planned upstream, with all relevant stakeholders involved, both locally and across borders on transhumance routes. Although so far FAO intervened on this domain on the national level, it would have a key role to play here at regional level in partnership with national and international animal health organizations. National level interventions could have been linked to regional activities of the Economic Community of West African States or of the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel . In this respect, perhaps the subregional and/or the regional office would be better placed to assist and support such type of coordination as a way to also overcome the capacity gaps between the different country offices.
161. FAO conducted an analysis in 2017 to assess the impact of the conflict on the pastoral situation in the Lake Chad region. The report was published a year later, which was far too late and illustrative of FAO's lack of engagement. This implied FAO was unable to position itself strategically on the subject, giving other agencies scope to position themselves in the intervening period and attract associated funding. FAO should have engaged on these issues in the region, but its lack of capacity to mobilize knowledge and to undertake deep analysis hamstrung its ability to act.
162. As previously mentioned, a destocking intervention followed by transformation into meat meal, was carried out in the region of Lac (in Chad). The project was highly relevant, as it enhanced existing dietary practices by strengthening a meat processing method that preserved food for longer and targeted women (main actor in those processing activities). This intervention was considered as a pilot by donors to potentially be scaled up based on its analysis and results. However, FAO conducted insufficient prior analysis, lacked follow-up and impact assessments (the intervention did not yield results in terms of nutrition, cohesion and economic impetus). Moreover, the targeting process and selection of the areas, the villages and the beneficiaries were not clearly defined (based on donor analysis). One resource partner noted that it was an idea that should have worked well and been ripe for upscaling, but in the end due to inappropriate targeting and an absence of results-based analysis, this opportunity was missed.

3.2.3 Safe Access to Fuel and Energy/environment/other activities

Finding 13. FAO's commitment to improved stoves in Nigeria has not only helped people reduce their impact on the environment, but also helped to create jobs and reduce the risk of conflict between displaced and host populations. In terms of competition around natural resources, FAO has been innovative on this subject and, through the analyses and actions undertaken, it has been able to mobilize many other organizations on the subject, and thus to assert its leadership and its technical expertise in this sector.

163. Access to firewood is a key problem in the region, exacerbated by the crisis and the consequent access restriction to wood collecting areas. Moreover, concentration of IDPs and refugees increases depletion of firewood for miles around camps. This led to competition, and thus tensions or even conflicts, between displaced people and host communities, as well as contributing to soil depletion and soil erosion on sloping lands.
164. FAO has done extensive analytical and advocacy work on the subject in northeast Nigeria, sharing information and communication tools. A quantitative analysis of the reduction in firewood consumed, based on specific experiential feedback, should be conducted in other areas encountering such problems, so as to put such interventions on a solid analytical footing and quantify the impact.
165. SAFE Nigeria adopted an integrated approach to provide protection, empowerment, resilience and early recovery through sustainable energy approaches (see for example project OSRO/GLO/704/KUW; FAO, 2018c). The provision and distribution of fuel-efficient stoves could contribute to sustaining food and nutritional needs. When energy access is improved, this will result in lower rates of malnutrition, increased time for women to engage in other income-generating activities and reduced pressure on scarce natural resources.
166. One project (OSRO/NIR/805/NOR) addresses climate change adaptation good practices and services to build resilient livelihoods. It aims to increase food and nutrition security on a sustainable basis, by ensuring that farming households achieve agricultural productivity, and have access to diversified livelihoods, markets and credit facilities – especially for women in the vulnerable communities. The project also set out to ensure that conflict affected people, mostly women, have better access to energy and to environment-friendly livelihoods. Outputs include to ensure that institutional capacity in policy development and implementation is strengthened.
167. The ultimate goal of work on SAFE is to enable vulnerable populations, especially women and youth, in northeast Nigeria to improve their access to food, nutrition and economic welfare, while also enhancing their absorption, adaptation and transformative capacity to climate change. As previously mentioned, SAFE is also a concrete action of translating protection into action by reducing the risk of women to be abducted by reducing their exposure to risk when going for firewood. Activities went beyond seed distribution to build the capacity of local/decentralized institutions in climate-smart agriculture (CSA) practices and technologies, and promote the sustainable management and use of wood fuel for energy. The project also contributed to the implementation of Nigeria climate adaptation and mitigation related policies in a conflict sensitive area.

Box 5: Safe Access to Fuel and Energy programme in northeast Nigeria

FAO initiated a fuel-improved stove project in late 2017 in northeast Nigeria, which allowed FAO, WFP and UNHCR to carry out a household cooking energy baseline assessment across several LGAs to well understand the context. The results of the assessment were that: one fuel improved stove may not be sufficient for all households because most households are quite large; most households use fuel-improved stoves for several other reasons than cooking; the conflict caused an evolution of the use of the stove (e.g. the unsafe bushes and farms impeded firewood collection causing an increased use of charcoal and reduction of wood); change in priorities and needs (e.g. stoves that significantly reduce use of fuel allow households to reduce the cost on buying wood or charcoal).

Based on the baseline assessment, FAO has set-up efficient woodstove production and training centres able to accommodate up to 100 people in a training session and to store up to 400 stoves. These centres have also been excellent demonstration centres for other organizations. Trainings have also been organized, which have enabled building local capacities on fuel-improved stoves production, business development and marketing, and sustainable wood fuel production. This has enabled the creation of jobs locally and has been a source of attraction for youths that had no previous technical competences - indirectly this may have reduced enrolment of some young people in Boko Haram groups. Moreover, it has allowed an injection of cash in local economy (instead of buying fuel stoves from abroad).

The Safe Access to Fuel and Energy programme had very limited effect on natural resource management as the intervention was implemented in only three LGAs (MMC, Jere, Konduga) in Borno state.

168. As previously mentioned, FAO has supported the establishment of a SAFE sub-sector working group under the food security sector in Maiduguri (see section 3.2), having as main goal to facilitate a coordinated, predictable, timely and effective response to the fuel and energy needs of IDPs, returnees, host communities, bringing together all stakeholders (from the government, local community organizations, NGOs, UN agencies).
169. Those experiences and implementation processes should be shared with experts from the three other countries in order to be duplicated and adapted to their respective areas of interventions in the Lake Chad region and perhaps even on wider scale.
170. Interventions to facilitate access to fuel-improved stoves or solar-powered cookers are also a very good opportunity for job creation, particularly for young people vulnerable to the risk of enlistment, as they involve skill building, integration into a sector and direct economic appraisal of their activities.
171. WFP is very engaged on the subject through food for assets interventions on watershed rehabilitation, so FAO could be further engaged and jointly contribute to enable replenishing water tables, fighting against erosion, and preserving soil fertility, through construction of small stony dams.
172. Another activity FAO has started working on concerns the group savings and loans associations, which are much appreciated by communities. This activity falls under the overall *caisses de résilience* approach, which complements the usual capacity development FAO provides on technical aspects of agriculture and livestock production with support on how to make an activity more rentable and financially sustainable through a group credit system. The additional element to the technical and financial support that characterizes the CdR is the social component, which usually focuses on improving and enabling social cohesion through listening groups (similar to the approach developed in the context of

DIMITRA).²⁶ In northeast Nigeria, this specific activity helped strengthen the financial generation of IDPs also based on community cohesion, which is often pre-existing. It would be interesting to replicate in other locations, and perhaps to try to have longer-term projects (currently six months projects).

3.3 Delivery performance and partnership management

173. This section summarizes the main bottlenecks in FAO's organizational procedures at corporate level which affected and had an impact on the implementation and delivery of the different activities in the four countries. This relates to FAO internal procedures in terms of procurement, financial management, logistics, human resources, etc. These findings are similar to those found in other countries beyond the Lake Chad region.²⁷

Finding 14. Internal inefficiencies of its delivery processes have affected FAO's effectiveness across the various types of interventions it implemented in the region. As is the case in other countries beyond the Lake Chad Basin, FAO's internal procedures are time-consuming and cumbersome, and have caused significant delivery delays in time-sensitive interventions, with subsequent damage to FAO's reputation with its partners. Delays in donor funding and high operational costs have also held up FAO in meeting stated objectives. These implementation hindrances have made FAO uncompetitive *vis-à-vis* other organizations.

174. Across the four countries, communities, implementing partners and other actors in the sector did report on the significant backlog in FAO distribution. This observation, which has been an issue for many years, discredits FAO's interventions in emergency operations and encourages donors to work with other actors. However, stakeholders in Chad commended the effort made by FAO country staff in improving the timeliness of their interventions (for example seed distribution), which in turn generated positive results in terms of greater production (timely distribution allowed farmers to plant at the right moment *vis-à-vis* the agriculture season and therefore benefit from the harvesting as aimed by the project itself).
175. On the other hand, to cope with the severe delays in seed distribution, some farmers in Nigeria, for example, have adopted an adaptation strategy of storing the seeds until the following year. This means that not only are they failing to meet the short-term objectives targeted by FAO (to reduce the need for food assistance), but that there is a risk of degraded germination quality during storage. In Cameroon, farmers experienced from two weeks to one month delays, which have put agricultural producers at risk of losing their whole production/harvest. As a consequence of the lack of FAO's seeds and in order not to lose the agricultural season, farmers had to buy seeds that were available on the market while waiting for the high-quality seeds to be distributed. Despite the involvement of an implementing partner, which could have helped FAO speed-up the distribution/delivery process, delays in Cameroon also relate to the time needed by FAO to finalize the lists of

²⁶ FAO-Dimitra is a participatory information and communication project that contributes to improving the visibility of rural populations, women in particular. The goal of Dimitra is to highlight the role of women and men as producers, so that their respective interests are better taken into consideration and they can fully participate in the rural development of their communities and countries. The project builds the capacities of rural populations, women in particular, through the dissemination of information and the exchange of experiences.

²⁷ A recent Evaluation of FAO's Strategic Results Framework focused on and stressed the importance for FAO to intervene and change its modalities not to negatively influence the achievement of results in the different countries. For more information on the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation consult the report online (see FAO OED, 2019).

- beneficiaries and villages to be targeted by the activity. For the same reasons, delays in seeds' and/or inputs' distributions in the Niger are estimated at around three to seven weeks, therefore missing the agricultural season, due to the heavy FAO procedures.
176. In the case of late fodder distribution (sometimes occurring after the lean pastoral season), FAO has adapted to this problem by changing the intervention into cash distribution (though it still did not respond to the pre-identified needs to avoid animal destocking during the lean pastoral season).
 177. From an operational perspective, FAO interventions are subject to internal limitations, such as cumbersome procedures, donor funding that arrives too late with respect to the agricultural calendar and high operational costs, all of which combine to hamper FAO's competitiveness compared with NGOs and other UN organizations. Not only does the Organization have problems with delayed delivery, which ultimately has an impact on the quality of its interventions, but it is also more costly than NGOs (for example operational costs, in terms of money and time).
 178. To overcome these factors, FAO needs to modify some of its internal processes, sensitize donors on the need for timely funding and develop an operational framework to ensure it is providing clear added value through emergency responses. Ultimately, FAO needs to significantly improve its operational capabilities or face the alternative of having to restrict its interventions to institutional support, reducing its emergency operational interventions for food-insecure populations, accepting that operational partners perform better than FAO on emergency-type of interventions (i.e. seeds distributions that are very sensitive in terms of period of delivery), therefore eventually gaining donor support and positioning themselves as lead actors in the areas of resilience and livelihood support (FAO OED, 2016).
 179. As already mentioned in section 3.2.1, the main consequence of these delays is that FAO cannot meet the objectives it has set to support food security or to assist the production capacity of the most vulnerable farmers and pastoralists, which ultimately leads to an important loss of credibility in front of the target population and its partners. Some farmers have explained that to adapt to FAO delay on seeds distributions, they have kept them to be planted the coming year, which means that FAO did not respond to the current emergency food security needs and the risk of seeds being deteriorated before usage is increased.
 180. Simple operational changes could make a significant difference. For example, funds received from donors for the distribution of seeds and animal fodder are often too late for the planting season and therefore do not achieve the desired results. If FAO buys seeds well in advance of the planting season, it could ensure that distribution takes place in a timely manner, averting the risk of a last minute rush, delays and associated consequences. To this end, Emergency and Resilience Division (PSE) staff based in FAO headquarters have been working together with the country office to map and analyse the procurement and other procedural problems field staff face in the different countries. The evaluation hopes this exercise will trigger a change in strategic terms on the way FAO procures and delivers inputs, in particular in the context of emergency response.
 181. Delays are also experienced in the payment of implementing partners, who can have to wait months before getting what they were supposed to receive as part of the partnership agreements: payment procedures for implementing partners and suppliers require the

clearance and validation (e.g. of financial and narrative reports) by different offices, which take a long time and delay the implementation of the operations.²⁸

182. Research is being conducted on how to adapt planting periods and types and varieties of seed to the climate conditions of subsequent growing seasons, but this is of little use or value in such chronic crisis situations. FAO does have an important role to play in this regard, however, as a bridge between research institutions and producers, to disseminate information and provide recommendations. Similarly, FAO has a role to play with respect to the seed multiplication programme that would allow stock supplies of drought resistant good quality seeds.
183. FAO is expected to share contextual analyses and technical competences, test innovative approaches and undertake comprehensive analyses of the impact, relevance and lessons of its interventions, in order to decide whether they should be scaled up and how. It should also be equipped to provide strategic advice on positioning and analysis to programmes implemented and their future potential.

Finding 15. FAO's procedures for drawing up contracts with implementing partners are time-consuming, leading to missed deadlines and opportunities. Delays can have serious implications for beneficiaries and for FAO's reputation and ability to play its role as an emergency response actor. FAO interaction with the private sector and research institutes is another area that can be improved under REOWA's leadership and guidance.

184. The short-term nature of funding and a lack of implementing capacity led FAO to use implementing partners. However, the system for drawing up and agreeing contracts is rarely smooth and efficient (similar to other UN agencies facing the same efficiency challenge). Procedures for establishing new partnerships with FAO are reportedly time consuming and cumbersome for partners.
185. It is often the case that by the time a contract has been awarded and contracts signed, the time frame for implementation has shrunk, leaving, for example, a six-month contract to be carried out in four months. Sometimes, by the time contracts for seasonal activities have been agreed, it is too late to implement them. This inevitably affects the quality and impact of work undertaken.
186. In Nigeria, while implementing partners appreciate FAO's expertise and willingness to share its knowledge, there have been complaints about the FAO Letters of Agreement (LOA), specifically: i) late resource funding, notably for seed distribution, which fail to match the seasonal calendar; ii) delays in contractual procedures, leading to delays in distributions; and iii) poor communication between FAO and implementing partners.
187. In the Niger, FAO has not taken advantage of its implementing partnerships. In addition, in the past 18 months it has not been possible to transfer funds to Government implementing partners via their accounts with commercial banks. The Government requires that all funding for public institutions and technical services go through the National Treasury Account. Therefore, the assurance that these funds will reach the implementing

²⁸ An easy example comes from the evaluation process itself: the University of Diffa in the Niger collaborated with the evaluation team for field data collection, for which a mission was conducted in March 2019 yet the country office could only pay for the service in February 2020 with the result that the University had to contract a loan to their bank to pay out all expenses associated to their field mission.

partners is not certain and even less in the time available. The Representation has initiated other types of collaboration with the national services (through Terms of Reference instead of Letters of Agreement) but they require more work and are more restrictive for both parties. There are further difficulties in identifying reliable local financial organizations for cash-transfer interventions.

188. In Chad, the identification and selection of implementing partners is said to be highly transparent and disbursement procedures are clear.
189. Implementing-partner management and support is an area that needs to be improved upon and FAO needs to draw on lessons learned. In particular, FAO needs to coordinate better with implementing partners involved in the same programme. There should be an exchange of views on ongoing activities, opportunities and challenges to find joint solutions.
190. Streamlining procedures must become a focus, as there can be serious programmatic impact for beneficiaries if projects are delayed, as well as damage to FAO's reputation as a serious emergency response actor, particularly among donors.
191. Although some activities are ongoing (for example in Nigeria a partnership with the private sector – ENI- initiated in 2017 led to water points' development for IDPs and host communities through the drilling of solar powered deep boreholes), FAO's interaction with the private sector and research institutions is another area that can be improved upon and one in which REOWA could take the lead and provide guidance. This is very much linked to the aforementioned need to be more proactive on fundraising.
192. FAO has long associations with research institutes, particularly on testing seed quality and identifying the right seeds for specific locations. In Nigeria, FAO works with the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture to do research on seeds and pest management in Borno State and with the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics to promote good agriculture practices in Yobe State. In the Niger, it aims to expand local work with the Regional Centre for Agro-Hydrometeorology to regional level.
193. Regional level interaction with major private sector organizations and institutions can trickle down to country level. How REOWA can integrate such activities and support the implementation of the revised Regional Response Strategy will be key to the Strategy's success.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

Conclusion 1. For FAO to support the food security and nutrition of communities in the Lake Chad region effectively, a regional strategy focused on supporting the resilience of communities is relevant and appropriate. Complementary to FAO's country-based programmes, a regional strategy bears the potential to devise interventions that adapt to the cross-border nature of issues that each country faces and would allow supporting a more cohesive and collaborative way of working.

194. The Regional Response Strategy is particularly useful and relevant in the context of the Lake Chad Basin. Countries in this region indeed face similar challenges and needs deriving from the same crisis, but also their natural environment and their economy are interconnected beyond the national borders. A regional strategy can help generate an outside force to foster common and a more strategic process around complex programmes and bring about learnings across countries. The Regional Response Strategy thus offered an opportunity for FAO to strengthen its strategic positioning
195. Putting the transition between emergency responses to more resilience building activities at the core of the strategy was also extremely relevant: in a context where the underlying factors of the crisis also derive from poor natural resources management and climate change issues, there is a need to focus on how to make populations more resilient to and able to cope with chronic problems and recurrent shocks, beyond the short-term assistance.
196. Furthermore, a Regional Strategy focused on resilience represented an opportunity to bring about a common thinking process around nexus-type interventions to implement cross-border programmes, again very relevant in this region. What's more, this offered a welcome additional capacity to reflect and design such interventions, for country offices that work with extremely limited means.

Conclusion 2. Despite its potential, the Regional Response Strategy did not effectively transform the way in which FAO has operated in the region, and therefore has a limited contribution to improving the coherence and effectiveness of FAO's response to Lake Chad Basin crisis.

197. The Regional Response Strategy was expected to facilitate and promote a more innovative approach by offering a vision that would have enabled country offices to increase the relevance of their operations as well as to bolster FAO's strategic positioning at country level. However, the Strategy fell short of expectations. There has been limited to absent sharing of experiences between the countries, which has translated into four different sets of interventions being implemented in the four countries. Only recently, some of the countries have started developing joint projects as a way to tackle common needs and achieve cross-country benefits and results that could potentially stimulate a more regional approach.
198. The fact that country offices have tended to design simple and short projects, mostly short-term focused, at the expense of a long-term vision and more complex resilience-oriented programmes, in part owes to their limited human and financial resources. And the same lack of capacity represented an obstacle for country offices to mobilize additional resources

that may allow engaging in innovative interventions, which could foster learning, replication and scale-up from a country to another. This limited capacity of FAO offices at country level, was not compensated by an additional support from FAO regional and subregional offices. Although when it was designed the Regional Strategy offered this very opportunity to both attract the interest of partners and foster cross-country learning and synergies between countries, it did not play this role nor generate the provision of the necessary support to country offices to enable a more strategic approach and enhance the effectiveness of FAO interventions.

Conclusion 3. Except for Nigeria, and despite the transitional approach at the heart of the Regional Response Strategy, FAO's work in the field mostly focused on short-term emergency response (e.g. through distributions of agriculture and livestock inputs), and less on longer-term and resilience building activities. This is also due to a certain lack of financial and human capacity, which did not allow country teams to delve into greater research and development at national and transnational/regional level, hindering any possibility of contextualizing or scaling-up effective and innovative interventions. Furthermore, FAO is not engaged on a series of subjects for which it has all the expertise, and the legitimacy to work on, and has therefore missed the opportunity to play a greater role at national and regional level, particularly in the livestock sector.

199. As already mentioned, despite the relevance and appropriateness of its mandate and the technical expertise available internally, FAO has struggled to position itself as an operational leader in the area of agriculture, animal husbandry, preservation and sustainable management of natural resources. FAO interventions mainly focused on emergency interventions (distribution of seeds, fertilizers, fodder), on a large scale and repeated over time. Few innovative initiatives at the junction between research and action have been conducted (destocking and meat flour production in Chad; improved stove production and raising importance of protection issues in Nigeria), but in some cases could not be scaled-up or replicated (by FAO or other actors) due to the lack of prior technical and contextual analyses, standardized monitoring, evaluation and capitalization of lessons learned.
200. Given its capacity to work simultaneously with communities and high-level decision makers, FAO could play an important role in the livestock sector both at national and regional level (of Lake Chad and beyond), for example, by working on improved fodder production, pastoral hydraulic, vaccination, but also by coordinating and facilitating inter-state decisions, for example, with regards to the transhumance route, the facilities to be fitted out, etc. Furthermore, construction and rehabilitation of livestock water points along stock routes, which have been either completely destroyed by the insurgents or fallen into disrepair due to lack of maintenance, could go a long way in alleviating the problems of water shortage especially during the dry season. This would allow FAO to contribute significantly to people's livelihood in pastoral areas and ultimately improve the nutritional status of animals.

Conclusion 4. A number of shortcomings affected the effectiveness and implementation of the Regional Response Strategy; in particular, the limited engagement of the Country Offices and their respective national counterparts and the lack of an operational/implementation plan. These factors are mainly due to a limited ownership and coordination of the Strategy itself. The subregional hub of REOWA based in Dakar, identified as the main owner of the Regional Strategy at the initial stages, did not embraced this leadership role, which would

have been essential to carry through the steps required to operationalize the Strategy and transform FAO's impact in the four countries. This has been a fundamental gap, which emphasizes the need for enhancing the clarity of respective roles and responsibilities related to the Strategy's design and implementation.

201. The Regional Response Strategy did not translate into the effective support that was envisaged, which the evaluation largely attributes to a limited leadership to oversee its implementation. To start with, the Strategy was not even turned into an operational plan that might have clarified concrete steps and accountabilities.
202. With several offices engaged into devising the Strategy at the start, a certain lack of clarity with regard to the roles and responsibilities on the implementation of the Regional Response Strategy (from its design, publication and up until the evaluation) has in fact translated into a lack of ownership and interest on how to make it operational. Leadership is key to pushing a Regional Strategy forward and proactively supporting country offices with inherently complex resilience programming, resource mobilization capacity, cross-country learning and exchanges, coordination etc.
203. Should the Regional Response Strategy be revised and extended in time, it is fundamental to clearly allocate roles and define responsibilities and accountabilities for turning intentions into facts.

Conclusion 5. Many regional strategies exist to frame the actions of humanitarian and development partners of FAO in the region. These represent an important element for FAO to consider when framing its own strategy in the region, and call for FAO to devise its role alongside partners. Based on its mission and experience, FAO can position itself as leader on interventions related to the humanitarian–development nexus, and play a key role in determining directions in this regard. The revision of the Regional Strategy could seize this opportunity to define and affirm this leadership role for FAO in the region.

204. Donor fatigue at the multiplicity of regional strategies and initiatives, be they from one or several international organizations, coupled with lack of communication and complementarity, suggests that FAO should frame its revised Regional Response Strategy within the parameters of existing strategies, specifically the *Regional Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience Strategy for Areas Affected by Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin Region* supported by the African Union, UNDP, the Lake Chad Basin Commission and many other key actors. On the other hand, the formalization of joint programming between UN agencies is generally very much appreciated by partners in all four countries and is an approach that should be pursued consistently in the future, even more so in a context where UN agencies are piloting a "new way of working" (OCHA, 2017).
205. Countries need deep context analysis in addition to the shared experiences of organizations working at this strategic interface of humanitarian, development and peacebuilding efforts, on which to build their activities and interventions. FAO is expected to share its nexus-related lessons learned with the international community, to help with operationalization at country level. However, many stakeholders were disappointed that FAO had not taken a decisive lead in this regard and encouraged it to be proactive on proposing approaches. Only in Chad FAO has initiated a discussion on how to operationalize and translate the discussion on the nexus on indicators and target that could be used by actors, through the Food Security Cluster at the beginning and then expanded outside as to involve other partners. Once again, the revision of the Regional Response

Strategy presents a huge opportunity for FAO to influence sectorial direction, as well as to value its expertise and establish its leadership at regional level.

Conclusion 6. Several deficiencies related to FAO's corporate delivery model have significantly affected FAO's capacity to deliver in the Lake Chad region. These include the burdensome administrative and planning processes and FAO's limited capacity to take stock of its experience, successes or failures, so as to learn and share practices with its development partners. These deficiencies have led to limitations in FAO's effectiveness, sometimes significantly, and to reducing its capacity to position itself as a lead agency, as it could have. This is not specific to this region's interventions and many evaluations have pointed to this problem, including the recent evaluation of FAO's Strategic Results Framework (FAO OED, 2019).

206. FAO's collaboration with national NGOs is much appreciated, but requires monitoring and strengthening of skills in a much more sustained way than usually established. Given its high operational costs and its poorly adapted internal procedures, FAO should not act as if it were an NGO but rather find a more innovative operational positioning, at the crossroads between research and operations, with quality of further analysis of innovative interventions for sharing of experience and thus scaling up by NGOs (e.g. seed still distributed late and significant loss in livestock distribution in Chad).

4.2 Recommendations

Recommendation 1. FAO should build on the identified benefits of having a regional strategy and approach to supporting food security and resilience in the Lake Chad region. Based on the Regional Response Strategy (2017-2019), FAO should revise its strategy and approach incorporating governmental objectives, and translate it into an operational action plan, in coherence with other partners' strategies in the region. In doing so FAO should build on its comparative advantage in respect to resilience programming and the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, and on partnerships already established.

207. Suggested actions include:

- i. Under the coordination of a defined office, FAO should form a multidisciplinary learning task force across the countries and the subregions to further analyse the underlying causes of the crisis and their wide-ranging effects on the agricultural sector and on food security from where to identify in which sectors FAO could make a difference and how.
- ii. Such a team could also be responsible for reviewing and revising the current Regional Response Strategy and make it aligned with existing strategies and regional initiatives, including those established by international conferences and agreements, as well as in complementarity and synergy with the other UN agencies and partners (i.e. it would be useful to do a comparative analysis between FAO's Regional Response Strategy and the UNHCR Regional Strategy).
- iii. The revised strategy should build on strategic partnerships already established and be translated into specific country level action plans matched with a solid M&E framework and established mechanism for regional information sharing and knowledge management.
- iv. REOWA could organize a regional workshop to validate the key elements discussed during the last workshop and in this evaluation, on the revised Regional Response

Strategy, its design, implementation, the allocation of roles and responsibilities, and accountability. For example, countries affected by multiple crises (e.g. Chad and Niger), which require significant investment from the staff in place and given their limited capacity, ask for greater support by the Subregional Office for West Africa (SFW)/REOWA and headquarters in the formulation of a new strategy and in its follow-up.

Recommendation 2. FAO's corporate resilience programme (SP5) should assign the lead responsibility to revise and operationalize the regional strategy to the most logically suited office, whether in the Regional Office for Africa (RAF) or in the resilience team (REOWA) within the Subregional Office. It is fundamental to have one person clearly assigned to take charge for the Regional Strategy's oversight and coordination above the four country offices.

208. Interventions in the Lake Chad region could be more country-driven while having a regional focus under the coordination of a subregional or regional team (for example REOWA) and corporately supported and resourced. More knowledge exchange and lessons learning across countries should be encouraged.
209. For any future Regional Response Strategy, decisions on the roles and responsibilities should be made clear from the outset in the Regional Response Strategy document itself.

Recommendation 3. The Regional Strategy leader should ensure that all relevant actors are engaged into the Strategy revision and could set-up a task force in this regard. Stakeholders should comprise, at least, the four country offices and relevant regional units, as well as the national and regional counterparts that are geographically and thematically concerned.

210. Such participatory process not only would increase the ownership of the regional strategy by all involved actors, but could also contribute to a greater support and capacity building of implementation partners, especially in the case of national NGOs and local authorities.
211. Given its comparative advantage and knowledge, FAO should make use of its role of convener and coordinator to position itself as major contributor to innovative pilot projects with in-depth analysis and follow-up, before dissemination and deployment, by other organizations, on a larger scale.

Recommendation 4. FAO's interventions in the region, and the Regional Strategy overall, should reaffirm an approach that aims at addressing short-, medium- and long-term needs, whenever possible. In addition, the Regional Response Strategy should be reoriented towards a greater focus on themes such as natural resources management, sustaining peace, mainstreaming of protection and support to young people (boys and girls) to develop economic opportunities and promote diversification of livelihoods within agricultural value chains and pastoralism.

212. As already stated by the Evaluation of FAO's Strategic Objective 5, FAO could strengthen its strategic position by deepening its involvement in resilience. The Organization should not limit itself to a declining emergency crisis response portfolio, which in many cases relies on short-term humanitarian funding. FAO should instead pursue long-term goals through short-term funding by combining several projects, (upon discussion with partners) and using the Regional Response Strategy as reference programmatic document.
213. Suggested actions include:

- i. The conflict-sensitive approach that was adopted in Nigeria could be strengthened and expanded to the future Regional Response Strategy, to ensure FAO short- and long-term responses contribute to mainstream sustaining peace in the region and reduce crisis factors.
- ii. Pastoralism is much developed and represents a main source of income for population in the Lake Chad area, but it is affected by insecurity, natural resources degradation and climate change. Stronger support to pastoralism at regional level, implemented alongside selected partners, and based on expertise developed by REOWA in the Sahel would respond to main needs expressed (e.g. pastoral hydraulics; rangelands sowing; livestock products value-chain; farmers and herders conflict management; land-use planning; etc.)
- iii. In light of FAO's northeast Nigeria expertise in protection against gender-based violence, as well as the northeast Nigeria call-to-action roadmap, protection of civilians should be mainstreamed in all operations and should be kept as one of the focus of the Regional Strategy (as it was already) as well as in every country affected.

Recommendation 5. Conduct a communication needs assessment and develop an appropriate communication plan to ensure the revised Regional Response Strategy is disseminated, understood and embraced in full at all levels of the Organization as well as with external partners.

214. Despite being a knowledge organization, FAO very often lacks investment on communication both internally (between decentralized offices, for example) and externally (with resource partners and other stakeholders). However, communication is key to stimulate not only learning and innovation by sharing experience and knowledge on specific activities or approaches, but also to foster resource mobilization. A communication plan would therefore be helpful in systematizing and structuring the way FAO communicates and shares with partners its achieved results and lessons learned, as well as challenges on specific issues (implementation problems, funding gaps, etc.). For example, when present, regular meetings (annual or biannual) and communication material (newsletter, bulletin, etc.) have proved to be much appreciated by stakeholders. This is something for which dedicated resources and capacity should be made available, thus FAO should further invest on.

Recommendation 6. FAO needs to strengthen some of its internal processes, sensitize donors on the need for timely funding and develop a specific operational framework to ensure it is providing clear added value. Recommendations to address similar issues have been formulated by other corporate level evaluations, such as the one on the Strategic Results Framework.

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Appendix 1. People interviewed

Corporate and regional level		
<i>FAO Headquarters</i>		
Surname	Name	Role/Office
Bigi	Alberto	Emergency Preparedness and Response Officer, Emergency and Resilience Division (PSE)
Burgeon	Dominique	Director of the Emergency and Resilience Division (PSE) and leader of Strategic Programme 5
Canulla	Roberta	Emergency and Rehabilitation Officer, Emergency and Resilience Division (PSE)
Donati	Daniele	Chief, Emergency and Resilience Division (PSE)
Jackson	Julius	Technical Officer, Agricultural Development Economics Division (ESA)
Jacqueson	Patrick	Senior Strategic Officer, Strategic Programme (SP) 5
Moncada	Emmanuel	Programme Officer, Emergency and Resilience Division (PSE)
Pietrelli	Rebecca	Economist for Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis (RIMA), Agricultural Development Economics Division (ESA)
Polini	Celine	Resilience Operations Consultant and focal person for Nigeria L3 response, Emergency and Resilience Division (PSE)
Priestley	Phillip	Conflict Analysis Consultant, Agricultural Development Economics Division (ESA)
<i>FAO sub-regional and regional offices</i>		
Surname	Name	Role/Office
Assankpon	Uilrich	Regional Resilience Advisor, FAO Regional Emergency Office for West Africa and the Sahel (REOWA)
Conforti	Jacques	Emergency Programme Officer, FAO Regional Office for Africa (RAF)
Snahoun	Jean	Senior Economist, Resilience team coordinator, FAO Regional Office for Africa (RAF)
Sow	Coumba	Coordinator of the FAO Regional Emergency Office for West Africa and the Sahel (REOWA)
<i>Resource Partners at regional and global level</i>		
Surname	Name	Role/Organization
Burckhart	Benjamin	Social Development Specialist, World Bank (WB)
Perrin	Nicolas	Senior Social Development Specialist, World Bank (WB)
Tinlot	Marianne	Regional Food Security Advisor, Regional Office in Cameroon, European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)
<i>UN Agencies at regional and global level</i>		
Surname	Name	Role/Organization
Affif	William	Senior Programme Advisor, Regional Bureau for West Africa (ODD), WFP
Brown	Denise	Director, Policy & Programme (OSZ)
Carucci	Volli	Lead of resilience team for Western and Central Africa (RBD), WFP
Der Velden	Margot	Director, Emergency Preparedness & Support Response (OSE) former Director of Regional Bureau for West Africa (ODD), WFP
Duffy	Gaby	Evaluation Officer, Office of Evaluation (OEV), WFP

<i>Other stakeholders</i>		
Surname	Name	Role/Office
Agali	Alhassane	Chercheur Prévision saisonnières, Centre Régional Agrhymet
Mamadou	Moussa	Système d'information - Projet Ecoagris, Centre Régional Agrhymet
Mana	Boubakari	Directeur Technique, Lake Chad Basin Commission
Moussa	Mama	Directeur par interim - Departement Information Recherche, Centre Régional Agrhymet
N. Stanley	Emmanuel	Directeur Technique Projet, Lake Chad Basin Commission
Nourou	Mahamane	Secrétaire Général, Lake Chad Basin Commission
Nuhu	Mamman	Executive Secretary, Lake Chad Basin Commission
Country Level Stakeholders		
Nigeria		
<i>FAO Office in Abuja</i>		
Surname	Name	Role/Office
David	Patrick	Deputy Emergency Coordinator, FAO Country Office in Nigeria
Koroma	Suffyan	Country Representative, FAO Country Office in Nigeria
Onwuemeka	Alphonsus	National Consultant - 2030 SDG Agenda, FAO Country Office in Nigeria
<i>FAO Sub-Office at State Level</i>		
Surname	Name	Role/Office
Abelkader	Ibrahim Nabara	Livelihoods and Cash Transfer Programming Expert, Maiduguri Office
Adams	Benjamin Brandford	National Security Advisor, Maiduguri Office
Affizie	Steven Ackumey	Emergency Operations Officer/Head of operations, Maiduguri Office
Ali	Hassen	Project Coordinator, Maiduguri Office
Audu	Abdulrahman	Field Programme Assistant, Maiduguri Office
Bervoets	Jonas	Energy Access expert, Maiduguri Office
Bwala	Deborah	Field Programme Assistant, Damaturu Office
Dandago	Shehu	Agronomy expert, Maiduguri Office
Dawa	Ibrahim	Senior Field Programme Assistant, Maiduguri Office
Goggebe	Alh. Mustapha	State Level Consultant, Yola Office
Hassan	Ngita Mshelia	Irrigation Expert, Maiduguri Office
Isa	Audu	Agronomist, Maiduguri Office
Jonah	Geoffrey	Agribusiness expert, Maiduguri Office
Kakemou	Jordan	Monitoring and Evaluation officer, Maiduguri Office
Kakemu	Jordan	M&E Officer, Maiduguri Office
Katena	Clara	Resilience Expert (Group savings), Maiduguri Office
Kauna	Kyari	Field Programme Assistant, Maiduguri Office
Kihumbu	Kenneth	Emergency Operations Officer, Maiduguri Office
Kinsumba	Anne-Judith Ndombasi	Gender and Gender Based Violence (GBV) Expert, Maiduguri Office
Kudomi	Damilola	National Programme Associate, Maiduguri Office
Mari	Madu	Senior Field Programme Assistant, Maiduguri Office

Surname	Name	Role/Office
Mengesha	Belay	Yobe Sub-Office Coordinator, Damaturu Office
Modu	Goni	Data Officer, Damaturu Office
Mohammed	Abulrahman	Livestock Expert, Maiduguri Office
Olagunju	Opeyemi	Communication and Reporting Officer, Maiduguri Office
Oyat	Michael	Emergency Programme Consultant/Head of Programme in North East Nigeria, Maiduguri Office
Parmaina	Emon Matai	Microgardening Expert, Maiduguri Office
Pink	Patrina	Food Loss and Waste consultant, Maiduguri Office
Pollycarp	Omondoy	Head of office, FAO Sub-office in Yobe state, Damaturu Office
Suleiman	Abubakar	Livestock and fisheries livelihood expert, Maiduguri Office
Tall	Nourou	FAO Deputy Country Representative, Emergency Coordinator and Head of Office
Terkuma	Ligom	Store Keeper, Maiduguri Office
<i>National Institutions</i>		
Surname	Name	Role/Organization
		First Secretary, Ministry Agriculture Borno State
A.	Mallum	Director, Ministry of Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (M3R), Borno State
Abari	Nazisa	Programme Officer, Presidential Committee on the North East Initiative (PCNI), Borno State – Maiduguri Office
Abatcha	Inna	Programme Officer – Protection, Presidential Committee on the North East Initiative (PCNI), Borno State – Maiduguri Office
Abdullahi	Mohammed Amin	Programme Officer - Education and Health, Presidential Committee on the North East Initiative (PCNI), Borno State – Maiduguri Office
Ali	Mohammed	Programme Officer - Food Security, Presidential Committee on the North East Initiative (PCNI), Borno State – Maiduguri Office
Ali	Babu Gana	Deputy Director Planning Research and statistics, Ministry of Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (M3R)
Alkali	Saïd Mohammed	Relief and rehabilitation officer, National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Borno State
Kattungo	Lawana N. L.	Zonal Accountant, National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)
Maibe	Amina	Administrative Manager, Presidential Committee on the North East Initiative (PCNI), Borno State – Maiduguri Office
Mustapha	Bitrus D.	Technical Advisor, Ministry of Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (M3R), Borno State
Shuwa	M.	Programme Officer – Shelter, Presidential Committee on the North East Initiative (PCNI), Borno State – Maiduguri Office

NGOs and CBOs		
Surname	Name	Role/Organization
Mangan	Roisin	Policy Advisor, INGO Forum
Shehu	Ahmed	Executive Director of Network of CSOs in Borno State and Regional Coordinator, CSO Network for the Lake Chad Basin
Shittu	Jubril	Government Engagement and Partnership Manager, INGO Forum
Borno State		
Surname	Name	Role/Organization
Abubakar	Salisu	Extension officer, Samaritan Care and Support Initiative
Adeniji	Segun	Livelihood Officer, Samaritan Care and Support Initiative
Astua	Austin	Programme officer, Christian Aid Nigeria
Bukar	Salisu	M&E Officer, Agricultural Development Programme (ADP)
Bukar	Maha Mahammed	Veterinary Officer, Agricultural Development Programme (ADP)
Etubi	Arome	Extension officer, Social Welfare Network Initiative (SWNI)
Fantami	Modu	Programme Officer, Damnaish Human Capacity Building Initiative (DHCBI)
Fautami	Modu	Field Officer, Damnaish Human Capacity Building Initiative (DHCBI)
Geidam	Admu Nasidi	Field Officer, Maigoje Foundation
Joseph	Thomas	Programme officer, CARITAS/JDPC
Joshua	John	Programme Officer, Samaritan Care and Support Initiative
Mohammed	Mustapha	M&E Officer, Agricultural Development Programme (ADP)
Mustapha	Abubakar	Director, Centre for Social Change and Economic Development in Nigeria
Stella	Olabode	Programme Officer, Adventist Development and Relief Agency International (ADRA)
Waziri	Ibrahim Bukar	Field Officer, Damnaish Human Capacity Building Initiative (DHCBI)
Yobe State		
Surname	Name	Role/Organization
Adamu	Baabba	NIRA Community Development Association
Alhaji		Accountant, ADP Yobe
Aliu	Saidi	NIRA Community Development Association
Aliu	Hawa	Programme Director, North East Youth Initiative for Development (NEYIF)
Alkali	Duala	Programme Officer, Civil Society Coalition for Poverty Eradication (CISCOPE)
Danladi	Ezekiel	M&E officer Civil Society Coalition for Poverty Eradication (CISCOPE)
Esezoberoia	Eddy	Project manager, COOPI
Madaki	Dr. Iddrissa	Director, Yobe Pilot Livestock Development Program (YPLDP)
Mohammed	Lamba	Programme Officer, GESDI
Usman	Ali	Account Officer, GESDI
Waziri	Ibrahim	M&E Officer, Damnaish Human Capacity Building Initiative (DHCBI)

Adamawa State		
Surname	Name	Role/Organization
Danladi	Ezekiel	M&E officer Civil Society Coalition for Poverty Eradication (CISCOPE)
Mohammed	Lamba	Programme Officer, GESDI
Mustapha	Abubakar	Executive Director, GESDI
Nasidi	Adamu	Programme officer, Maigoje Foundation
O.	Rotimi	American University of Nigeria (AUN)
Resource Partners		
Surname	Name	Role/Organization
Blomhammar	Charlotte Tilli	EU Trust Fund for Africa – Sahel and Lake Chad Basin, Delegation of the European Union to the Federal Republic of Nigeria and ECOWAS
Christen	Esther	First Secretary for humanitarian Aid and Development Cooperation, Embassy of Switzerland, Office of Nigeria
Conan	Thomas	Head of Office, Directorate General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), Nigeria Office
Juarez	Michelle L.	Senior Food for Peace Officer - Food for Peace Team Leader, USAID
Oredipe	Adetunji	Senior country Officer, World Bank, Office of Nigeria
Price	Sophie	Team leader for economic growth, High Commission of Canada in Nigeria
Skjolaas	Ingrid	Deputy Head of Mission, Norwegian Embassy, Office of Nigeria
UN Agencies		
Surname	Name	Role/Organization
Abubacar	Maryam	Project Focal Officer, UN Women
Hsu	Michelle	Food Security Cluster Coordinator, FAO/WFP
Rukasha	Crispen	Deputy Head of Office, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Nigeria Office
Unaegbu	Lilian	Programme Coordinator of North East Nigeria operations, UN Women
Wonneh	Lansaneh	Deputy Representative, UN Women
Yokoi	Mizuho	Head of Maiduguri Sub Office, UNDP
Chad		
FAO Offices		
Surname	Name	Role/Office
Bonheur	Ngarndigal Joli	Assistant technique FAO du lac (Bol)
Hassane	Abdhourahmane	Project Manager in Kanem region, FAO Country Office in Chad
Ndiaye	Mansour	Country Representative, FAO Country Office in Chad
Sorto	Mahamat	Assistant FAO Representative Programme, FAO Country Office in Chad
Tedo	Mario	Resilience Coordinator, FAO Country Office in Chad
National Institutions		
Surname	Name	Role/Organization
Abdraman	Mahamat Moussa	Responsable Suivi-Evaluation provincial de l'Élevage du lac (Bol)
Dembelle	Farady Mahamat	Responsable formation-vulgarisation ANADER antenne de l'extrême nord lac (Bol)
Djimita	Vincent Alladoum	Directeur, Centre de contrôle de qualité des denrées alimentaires (CECOQDA)

Appendix 1. People interviewed

Surname	Name	Role/Office
Emmanuel	Riga	Chef Département, Centre de contrôle de qualité des denrées alimentaires (CECOQDA)
Erwan	Guidalta	Chef Département, Centre de contrôle de qualité des denrées alimentaires (CECOQDA)
Gaetan	Chelsoube Pakeuret	Nutritioniste Provincial de la Sante du lac (Bol)
Guindé	Mahamat	Directeur Général, Ministère de l'Elevage et des Productions Animales
Kaila	Abakar Mahamat	Chef d'antenne ANADER antenne de l'extreme nord lac (Bol)
Mahamat	Mr. Garba Issa	Chargé d'études et d'enquêtes, Direction Nationale de la Nutrition et de la Technologie Alimentaire (DNNTA)
Ndilassoum	Lucie Neloum	Directrice adjointe, Centre de contrôle de qualité des denrées alimentaires (CECOQDA)
Ngaradjim	Ndjerasem	Directeur Général, Ministère de la Production, de l'Irrigation et des Equipements Agricoles
Sedick	Djibrine Abakar	Délégué Provincial de la Sante du lac (Bol)
<i>UN Agencies</i>		
Surname	Name	Role/Organization
Barro	Lacina	Specialiste Résilience et Stabilisation, UNDP
Holdsworth	Mme Belinda	Coordinatrice nationale, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Office in Tchad
Keryang	Emmanuel	Programme Analyst, UNDP
Mazzarelli	Francesco	Food Security Cluster Coordinator, FAO/WFP
<i>Resource Partners</i>		
Surname	Name	Role/Organization
Brouant	Olivier	Head of office, European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), Chad Office
Carton	Didier	Premier Conseiller - Chef de section Développement rural et sécurité alimentaire, Délégation de l'Union Européenne au Tchad
<i>NGOs and CBOs</i>		
Surname	Name	Role/Organization
Foudoussia	Idriss Abdelkerim	"Président du Conseil d'administration Expert planification, suivi- évaluation, développement local", ONG nationale "Humanitaire et Développement" (ACHDR)
Lamana	Adoum Ahmat	Chef sous bureau chora (bol)
Mahamat	Ahamat Abdoulaye	Suivi evluation sous bureau chora (bol)

Niger		
<i>FAO staff</i>		
Surname	Name	Role/Office
Adamou	Mahamane	Chef sous bureau FAO in Maradi
Banaou	Djibo	Expert Agronomist, FAO Country Office in Niger
Genot	Luc	Deputy Country Representative, FAO Country Office in Niger
Hamza	Alio Djibril	Chef sous bureau FAO in Diffa
Mahamane	Adamou	Former FAO staff in Diffa
Maiga	Attaher	Country Representative, FAO Country Office in Niger
Maliki	Bachir	Assistant FAO Representative Programmes
Moussa	Dan Malam	M&E Consultant, FAO Country Office in Niger
Saley	Amadou	Assistant FAO Representative Programme, FAO Country Office in Niger
Yaye	Issa Garba	Project Manager - Cash transfer expert in Diffa, FAO Country Office in Niger
<i>National institutions</i>		
Surname	Name	Role/Organization
Abdou	Ousman	Dep. Filières Végétales et Qualité (DPFV/Q), Direction Générale de l'Agriculture (DGA)
Amadou	Abdoul Rahamane	Chef service communal de l'élevage (N'guel beyli)
Ary	Ousmane Boukar	Secrétariat permanent régional, Dispositif National de Prévention et de Gestion des Catastrophes et Crises Alimentaires (DNP-GCA) - Diffa
Charbou	Maman Sani	Chef service communal de l'élevage (Foulatar)i
Chekarou	Mamou	DG par interim de la Direction Générale de l'Agriculture (DGA)
Diakité	Mado	Assistante Technique, Haut Commissariat a l'initiative "les Nigériens nourrissent les Nigériens" (i3N)
Djari	Colonnel	Directeur départemental de l'environnement, de la salubrité urbaine et du développement durable (Goudoumaria)
François	Thomas	Division Contrôle des laboratoires (DCL), Direction Générale de l'Agriculture (DGA)
Halidou	Boureima	Directeur régional de l'élevage (Diffa)
Jamila	Abdou Mahamane	Assistant technique a l'initiative 3n (Diffa)
Keïta	Mme Fanta	Directrice Développement Pastoral, Direction Générale de Production et des Industries Animales (DPGIA)
Kourna	Aboubacar Mamadoi	Dep. Innovation et technologies / Meccanisation et transfert des technologies (DVT), Direction Générale de l'Agriculture (DGA)
Madougana	Lawau	Receveur de la mairie (Maine soroa)
Magagi	Laouan	Ministre, "Ministère de l'Action Humanitaire et de la Gestion des Catastrophes"
Maidai	Mamadou Moustapha Bello	Directeur départemental de l'agriculture (Maine soroa)
Mamadou	Ari	Chef service communal de l'environnement, de la salubrite urbaine et du développement durable (N'guel beyli)
Maman	Yabilan	Coordinateur Cellule Crise Alimentaire (CCA)
Mani	Maman Sinadja	Directeur départemental de l'environnement, de la salubrité urbaine et du développement durable (Maine soroa)

Appendix 1. People interviewed

Surname	Name	Role/Office
Moutari	Sadikou	Sécrétaire permanent régional du dispositif national de prévention et de gestion des crises alimentaires (DNP-GCA) (Diffa)
Naicente	Moussa	Directeur départemental de l'agriculture (Goudoumaria)
Nanzirou	Elh Abdou	Point focal du ministère de l'action humanitaire et de la gestion des catastrophes (Diffa)
Oumarou	Maliki	Direction de Contrôle et de la Certification des Semences (DCCS), Direction Générale de l'Agriculture (DGA)
Oumarou	Youssoufa	Chef service communal de l'élevage (Maine soroa)
Rabiou	Rona Issaka	Chef service communal de l'environnement, de la salubrité urbaine et du développement durable (Foulatari)
Roua	Dc Bello	Directeur Général, Direction Générale de Production et des Industries Animales (DPGIA)
Saidou	Hayatou	Sécrétaire général de la commune (N'guel beyli)
Sidikou	Boubacar	Secrétaire Général, "Ministère de l'Action Humanitaire et de la Gestion des Catastrophes"
Tar	Aboucar	Sécrétaire général du département (Maine soroa)
Toubo	Moussa	Directeur départemental de l'élevage (Goudoumaria)
<i>UN Agencies</i>		
Surname	Name	Role/Organization
Akakpo	Koffi	Chef de Programme, WFP
Awambeng	John Paul Abosi	Peace and Security Unit - Project Officer, UNDP
Batoure	Boubakar	Associate Humanitarian Affairs Officer, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Office in Niger
Cherif	Lawan	Country Programme Officer, IFAD
Confalone	Nicoletta	Emergency Specialist, UNICEF
Eyenga	Olivier	Chef sous bureau OCHA (Diffa)
Konate	Roukayatou	Communication for Development (C4D) Officer, UNICEF
Kourouma	Mamady Fatta	Deputy Representative (Operations), UNHCR
Moreno	Benoit	External Relations Officer, UNHCR
Natatou	Sanoussi Dodo	Coordonnateur du Cluster WASH, UNICEF
Ntumba	Felix	Humanitarian Affairs Officer - Head of coordination Section, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Office in Niger
Samake	Amadou	Chef sous bureau PAM (Diffa)
Sani	Mourtala	Assistant au Programme Environnement Energie, UNDP
Tahirou	Lawan	Analyste sécurité alimentaire et marchés (VAM), WFP
Yacouba	Moustapha Salirou	Project Assistant, UNDP

<i>Resource partners</i>		
Surname	Name	Role/Organization
Abdou	Hamidine	Responsable volet Securite Alimentaire et Moyens d'Existence (SAME), Action contre la Faim (ACF) Niger
Avella	Nicoletta	Charge de programmes en sécurité alimentaire Section Opérations, Délégation de l'Union Européenne au Niger
Bagana	Mamadou	Manager adjoint du camp des réfugiés (Sayam Forage)
Edmond	Soro	Ex chef sous bureau IEDA (Diffa)
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Surname	Name	Role/Organization
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Appendix 2. Project sites visited

Nigeria				
<i>Borno State</i>				
#	Programmatic activities	LGA	Community	Activity
1	Seeds and tools (dry season and rainy season)	Jere	Gongulong Dusman	Rain season and dry season
		Konduga	Mandarari Amrwa	Rain season and dry season
		Monguno	Water board camp Irrigation camp	Rain season and dry season
2	Farmer Field School	Jere	Gongulong Dala Kafanti	Rain season, Dry season and livestock
		konduga	Mashamari Mandarari	Rain season, Dry season and livestock
3	Vegetable gardens/micro-gardening	MMC	Bakasi camp Teacher village	Back yard and micro gardening
4	Accountability to Affected Population	Ngala	International school Camp Ngala	Micro garden and energy (SAFE)
		Jere	Almiskin Camp	Micro garden and energy (SAFE)
5	Livestock Support (goat, bullock restocking; feed, veterinary support)	Konduga	Auno Konduga town	Goat, Feed
			Gubio Camp	Bull, Feed
		Jere	Gongulong Khaddamari	Bull, Goat, Feed
		Konduga	Njimtilo	Veterinary support
<i>Adamawa State</i>				
#	Programmatic activities	LGA	Community	Activity
1	Seeds and tools (dry season and rainy season)	Mubi North	Lokuwa and Hurida	Rain season and dry season
		Michika	Michika I	Rain season and dry season
		Hong	Husara	Rain season and dry season
		Gerei	Damare	Rain season and dry season
2	Farmer Field School	Michika	Laide	Rain season, Dry season and livestock
		Mubi north	Vimtim	Rain season, Dry season and livestock
3	Vegetable gardens/micro-gardening	Fufore	Fufore camp	Rain season and dry season
		Girei	Damare camp	Rain season and dry season
4	Accountability to Affected Population	Girei	Modire and Damare	Micro garden and energy (SAFE)
		Yola south	Malkohi camp	
5	Livestock Support (restocking / vaccination / fodder supply)	Yola North	Jambutu	Goat, Feed
				Bull, Feed
				Bull, Goat, Feed
		Yola South	Malkohi Camp	Veterinary support
				Bull, Feed
6	Livelihoods Support for the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) 2015	Mubi North yola North, Michika and Gombi		Bull, Goat, Feed
7	Rapid Response to Food and Livelihoods Improvement for Internally Displaced Persons and Their Host Families (2016)	Michika	Baza	Veterinary support

<i>Yobe State</i>				
#	Programmatic activities	LGA	Community	Activity
1	Livestock support. Farmer field school	Gujba	Katarko Gujba	Dry and rainy season intervention.
2	Farmer Field School Vegetable Garden/ Micro Gardening	Damaturu	Kukareta	Rainy season intervention Livestock support
3	Livestock support Cash transfer	Bursari	Dapchi Ajiri Bayamari	Dry and rainy season intervention
4	Livestock support	Geidam	Balle Gallaba Malam Ngubdori	Dry season intervention Rainy season intervention
		Gulani	Bumsa Ruhu Dokshi	Dry season Intervention Rainy season intervention
		Fune	Damagum Daura Ngelzarma	Rainy season intervention Livestock support
7	Micro Gardening intervention	Potiskum	Mamudo Garin Maje Garin Abba	Dry season intervention Rainy season intervention
		Fika	Ngalda Gadana Garin Chindo	Dry season intervention Rainy season intervention
9	Livestock intervention	Nangere	Tikau	Rainy Season intervention
10	Farmer Field School	Jakusko	Amshi Gada	Dry Season Intervention Rainy Season invention
		Bade	Lawan Musa Katuzu Zango	Dry Season Intervention Rainy Season Intervention
		Yusufari	Yusufari Kachallari Maimalari	Rainy Season Intervention
		Yunusari	Mazogon Zajibiriri Bukarti	Dry season Intervention Rainy Season Intervention
		Tarmuwa	Jumbam Koromari Mattari	Rainy Season Intervention Dry Season Intervention
		Karasuwa	Wachakal Kasuwa Wachakal Daban Giwa	Rainy Season Intervention Dry Season Intervention
		Nguru	Bulabulin Damsai Nglewa	Rainy Season Intervention Dry Season Intervention
		Machina	Machina Falimaram Dole	Rainy Season Intervention

Cameroon			
#	Programmatic activity	Site	Project code
1	Distribution seeds & tools / Training	Kourgui	OSRO/CMR/701/SWE
2	FFS	Doulo Makary	
3	Destocking	Makary	OSRO/CMR/703/BEL
4	Transformation dry meat		
5	Restocking	Mawa	OSRO/CMR/801/CHA
6	Seeds Distribution		
7	Nutritional education	Ziler	
8	Training agricultural technics		
Chad			
#	Programmatic activity	Site	Project code
1	Seeds and Processing machines distribution	Baga Sola (Center)	OSRO/CHD/601/SWE
2	Capacity building on agri production, preservation, value-chain techniques		
3	Seeds & Tools distributions	Yakoua (Bol)	OSRO/CHD/701/SWE
4	Training on agriculture, livestock techniques and income generating activities	Kaya (Bol) Mpotrafo (Bol) Kodouboule (Bol) Boi Dar Kani 1 & 2 (Bol)	
5	Cash Transfer	Yakoua (Bol)	OSRO/CHD/702/CHA
6	Livestock distribution (goats)		
7	Destocking	Bol (Yakoua) Baga Sola (Woli)	OSRO/CHD/703/BEL
8	Women food processors	Bol (Yakoua)	
9	Livestock support (vaccination, animals kits and feed distribution)	Bol (Kaya) Koudouboul (Bol) Yakoua (Bol)	OSRO/CHD/803/SWE
10	Women food processors (meat drying equipment) and butcher	Bol (Yakoua) Bagasola (Bidi Dar Salam) Liwa (Boudou)	
11	Small ruminants distribution Cash+ transfer	Bagasola (Bidi Dar Salam) Baga Sola (Woli)	
12	Animals feed blocks (5kg)	Kaya (Bol)	OSRO/CHD/802/CAN
13	Cotton seeds cakes distribution	Mpotrafo (Bol) Kodouboule (Bol)	
14	Destocking	Yakoua (Bol)	
15	Dry meat distribution	Bidi Dar Salam (Bagasola) Woli (Bagasola) Liwa	
16	Destocking	Liwa	OSRO/CHD/704/EC
17	Capacity building + inputs for: butchers& processors groups (women)		
18	Dry meat distribution – Nutrition Centre & families		

Niger			
#	Programmatic activity	Site	Project code
1	Livestock support (kits caprins et aliments bétails) & Seeds (niébé, potatoes, maize, veget) & Dimitra	Sayam forage/peulh	
2	Seeds (rainy season + vegetable garden) & Dimitra	Lattuaram	OSRO/NER/701/SWE
		Kill	
		Goudimaria	
		Gario	
		Bessamaram	
3	Seeds (rainy season + vegetable)	Guidan Kadji	OSRO/NER/702/CHA
		Mandawa	
4	Community mobilization: firebreak	Baboulwa	
5	Livestock support	Doumba	
6	Unconditional cash transfer	Karagui Kardji	OSRO/NER/801/CAN
		Guidan Kadji	
		chétimari	
7	Livestock support	Boudouri	
		Guidan Kadji	
		Mandawa	
		Baboulwa	

Annexes

Annex 1. List of projects implemented in the Lake Chad region (2015–2018)

<http://www.fao.org/3/cb2541en/cb2541en.pdf>

Annex 2. Mapping projects to Regional Response Strategy outcomes

<http://www.fao.org/3/cb2542en/cb2542en.pdf>

Annex 3. Reconstructed theory of change of FAO's work in the Lake Chad Basin

<http://www.fao.org/3/cb2543en/cb2543en.pdf>

Annex 4. Methodological note

<http://www.fao.org/3/cb2544en/cb2544en.pdf>

Annex 5. Evaluation matrix

<http://www.fao.org/3/cb2545en/cb2545en.pdf>

Annex 6. Evaluation workshop report, April 2019

<http://www.fao.org/3/cb2546en/cb2546en.pdf>

Annex 7. List of participants to the workshop in Rome, April 2019

<http://www.fao.org/3/cb2547en/cb2547en.pdf>

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