



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

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



March 2017

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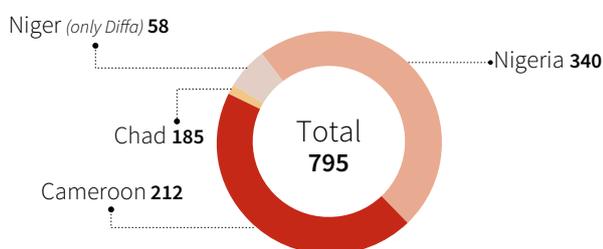
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Context

Boko Haram-related violence in northeastern Nigeria has spilled over to areas of neighbouring Sahelian countries in the Lake Chad Basin – specifically, Cameroon, Chad and the Niger – with devastating effects on food security and livelihoods. The violence has driven millions from their homes and hampered access to agricultural lands and assets, creating massive humanitarian needs in an area already characterized by food insecurity, poverty and environmental degradation.

In 2016, the reinforcing of the Multinational Joint Task Force operations enabled the recapturing of the main towns and many of the villages that were previously under the control of Boko Haram. Increased access to these areas, particularly in Borno State in northeastern Nigeria, has revealed an extensive and expanding humanitarian crisis. Despite the steady reduction in the areas under the control of Boko Haram, the violence has continued, focusing on suicide bombings and targeted attacks aiming at civilians and the security forces, and resulting in loss of lives, destruction of infrastructure, disruption of trade and communications, and potentially destabilizing inter-community relations.

NUMBER OF BOKO HARAM-RELATED INCIDENTS PER COUNTRY IN 2016



The Lake Chad Basin is grappling with a complex humanitarian emergency across northeastern Nigeria, Cameroon’s Far North, western Chad and southeastern Niger. In the most affected areas of these four countries, conflict and displacements are adding to other structural factors that are undermining the livelihoods of the population, increasing food insecurity and poverty, diminishing the access to basic and social services (water, sanitation, health and education).

In numbers

The Lake Chad Basin crisis is currently one of the largest humanitarian crisis in the world:



11 million
people in need of assistance



6.9 million
severely food insecure people



515 000
children suffering from severe acute malnutrition



Under five mortality rates in IDP locations **four times** the emergency threshold



2.5 million
displaced people
(second largest displacement crisis in the world)

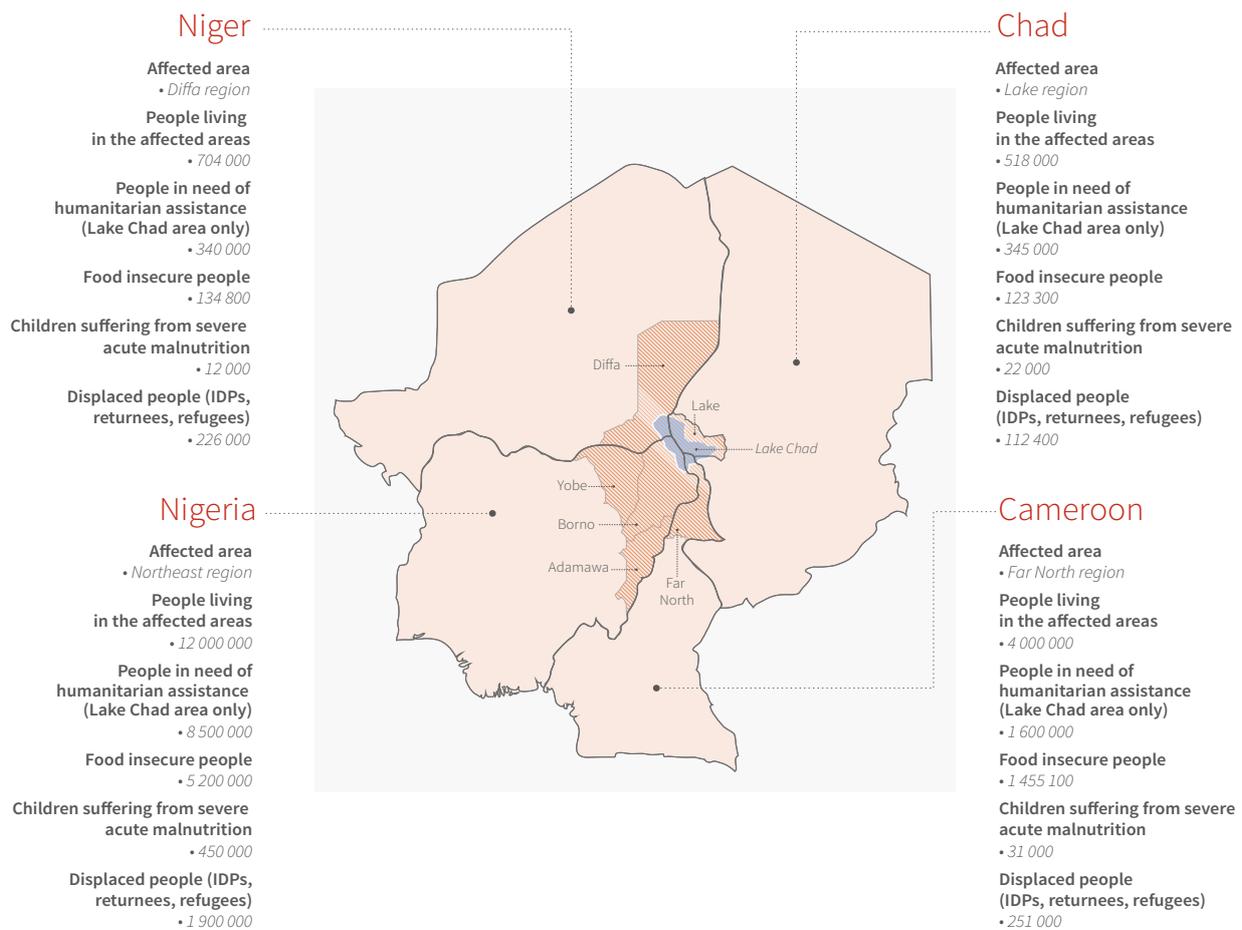


75.7% of IDPs are staying with host communities, increasing their vulnerability



1 million
returnees

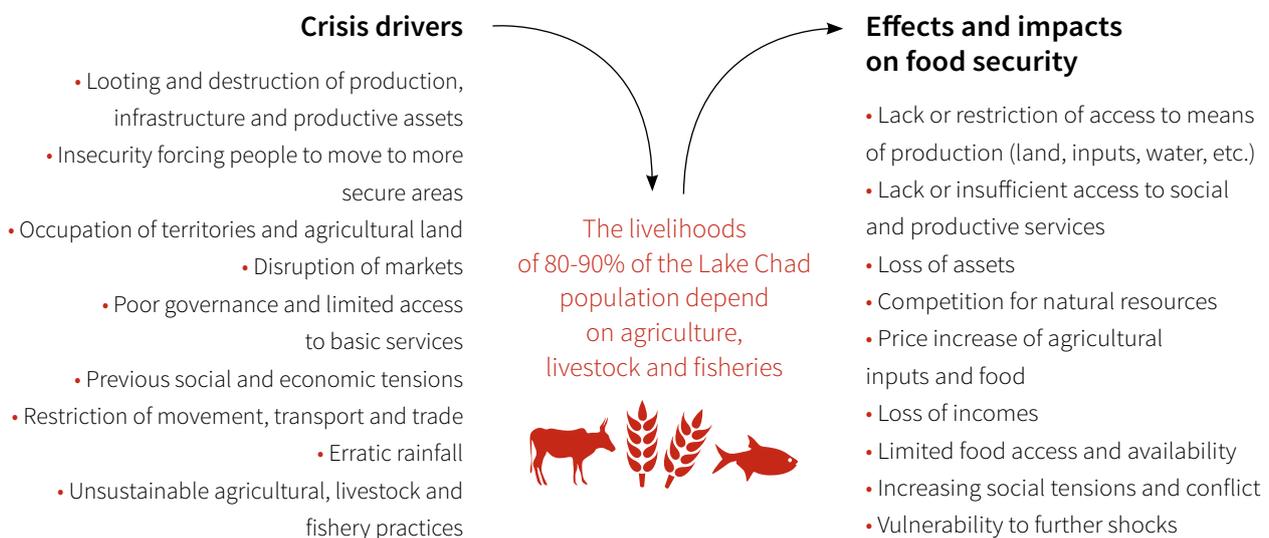
Map of affected areas and needs



Sources: Adapted from Lake Chad Basin Humanitarian Response Plan, January 2017; Emergency food security assessment (EFSA), September 2016; Cadre Harmonisé, March 2017; and International Organization for Migration, March 2017

Impact of the crisis on food security and livelihoods

According to the latest food security assessments (*Cadre Harmonisé*, March 2017, and EFSA, September 2016), the crisis has contributed to the soaring food insecurity, with more than 6.9 million people food insecure in the affected regions of the four countries in the Lake Chad Basin.





Agriculture

Agriculture is the main livelihood for 80 to 90 percent of rural households in the Lake Chad Basin. These communities have repeatedly been targeted by insurgents, with the aim of acquiring resources and forcing these vulnerable populations from their homes. The perception of insecurity and the threat of being kidnapped has prevented farmers from fully engaging in agricultural activities. Over the past few years, the involvement of Boko Haram in looting harvests and cattle and disrupting the fish trade in the region has been widely reported. In the three states of northeastern Nigeria – Adamawa, Borno and Yobe – the insecurity and restriction of movement due to the presence of the armed group has severely constrained agricultural activities. This has exacerbated the challenges already faced by producers (e.g. erratic rainfall and lack of basic social services). The destruction of infrastructure and the disruption of existing limited services have also contributed to the decrease in agricultural production throughout the affected areas. Population displacements as a result of the conflict have increased pressure on host communities and on already limited natural resources (e.g. water and land), reducing food and water availability, while heightening the risk of social tensions. Moreover, arable land has been used for shelters for IDPs, further fragmenting farmlands. The suspected presence of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) on agricultural land is also limiting farming activities.

The prices of staple foods in most markets have risen in comparison with the previous five-year average: by 50–150 percent for maize and by about 76–204 percent for sorghum. Furthermore, the evolution of oil prices and the impact of the Naira depreciation are seriously affecting cereal markets. Prices are expected to further increase during the lean season (June–August 2017). Given the integration of the four countries' economies, the insecurity and military restrictions on transport and trade have limited market functionality, affected food prices and reduced households' coping capacities. In addition, the use of fertilizers for agriculture has been restricted in the most conflict-affected states, as they can be used for the production of IEDs.

Livestock

In the conflict-affected areas, livestock have been deliberately killed by the insurgents or abandoned by herders fleeing violence. The early start to the pastoral lean season – with water points and pastures drying out – has further deteriorated livestock body conditions. The situation is aggravated by the border closure and inaccessibility of some areas due to security constraints. Transhumance flows, including across borders – a common coping strategy in the

face of fodder shortages – are impeded. The resulting concentration of animals is straining the already limited water and pasture resources, which could threaten animal health as well as heightening tensions between herders and farmers, further destabilizing the region. The current border closures and disruption of transhumance flows (e.g. in Diffa, 30 percent of animal were affected) and livestock markets are impacting on food security and livelihoods in the four countries of the Lake Chad Basin, whose economies are strongly integrated and interdependent.

Fisheries

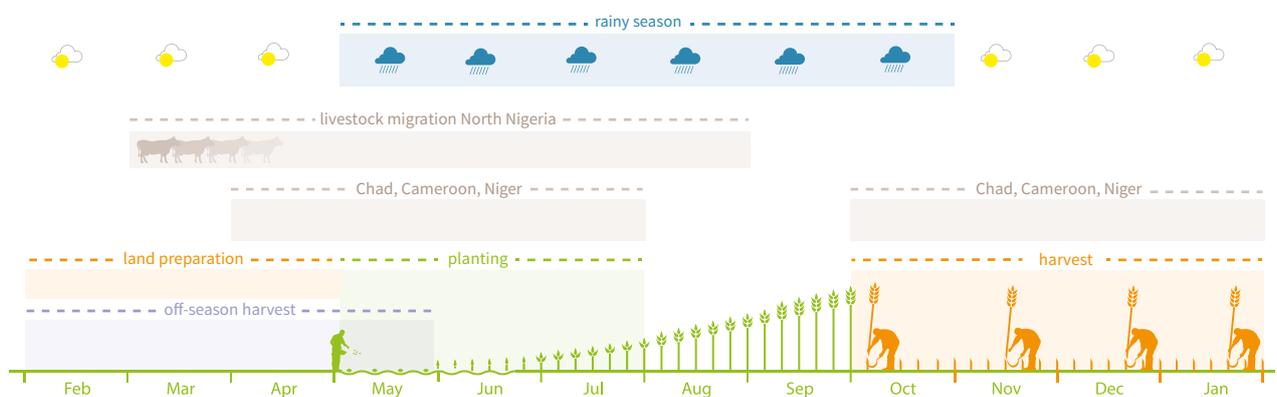
The Nigerian armed forces embargoed fishing activities on the lake in order to reduce the risk of insurgents using the lake as a means to generate revenue (by stealing fisheries products). The presence of the insurgents as well as the embargo have disrupted fishing activities throughout the region, depriving communities of their main livelihood and forcing thousands of families to flee to safer ground, abandoning their boats and fishing equipment.

FAO’s strategic approach

FAO’s approach is to use the response to immediate needs as a starting point for the implementation of longer-term activities that contribute to strengthening the population’s resilience. Focusing solely on the conflict and insecurity as the cause of the crisis oversimplifies the complex, interrelated socio-environmental and ecological issues affecting rural and urban livelihoods in the Lake Chad Basin. Demographic growth, harsh competition over natural and economic resources, lack of income opportunities, the marginalization of vulnerable groups (returnees, youth and women), negative coping strategies and social divisions based on livelihood, ethnic or religious lines, as well as governance issues, have been identified as the main underlying factors of the crisis. Ensuring sustainable and equitable access to resources and services as well as sustainable growth of livelihood opportunities are therefore critical priorities. Strengthening resilience by linking emergency interventions to lasting recovery will facilitate immediate efforts to address food insecurity and reduce negative coping strategies, while mitigating the impact of the root causes of the conflict and instability in the region.

Emergency livelihood support during the lean season is essential to avoid losing the fourth consecutive harvest. Food assistance and livelihood support interventions should be conducted in parallel. Returnees moving back to formerly Boko Haram-controlled areas must be provided with appropriate support to restart agricultural activities, while ensuring adequate access to services and protection. The most critical intervention is the seed and agricultural input provision to be carried out before the planting season (May–July). This is a priority to ensure staple crop harvests, which will have the greatest impact on food security in the region. Nonetheless, other activities to ensure rapid food production in other sectors are equally critical, such as fisheries and livestock during the lean season.

Average agricultural calendar for the Lake Chad area



In addition to input distributions, FAO is promoting the following approaches, which have contributed to improving food security and strengthening resilience in similar contexts:

- **Gender-sensitive approach:** interventions mainly focus on women, youth as well as other vulnerable and marginalized groups, through the implementation of suitable agricultural activities.
- **Cash+:** the provision of cash is combined with productive assets and technical training, allowing affected populations to protect their assets and reinforce their resilience.
- **Caisse de résilience:** a community-managed fund is set up along with the provision of technical training to strengthen social capital, enable income-generating and social activities, and reduce vulnerability to further shocks.
- **Value-chain approach:** the most interesting and promising value-chains are analysed and supported in order to generate employment and income for affected populations.
- **Safe access to fuel and energy (SAFE):** demand and supply of energy is analysed in the most critical hotspots, and sound environmental and natural resource management practices are promoted.
- **Sustainable natural resource management:** local participation to sustainable territorial planning is ensured, as well as the promotion of sustainable agricultural practices.
- **Ecosystem approach to fisheries:** fisheries post-harvest losses are reduced, while value addition as well as marketing and management of fisheries are improved.



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Conflict prevention, sustaining peace and social cohesion

Civil conflict is a major determining factor of the crisis in the region. Conflict is the main reason behind the large-scale displacement, severely disrupts development, significantly affects food security and nutrition, and is extremely costly to both individuals and countries.

Yet, little attention is dedicated to conflict prevention and mitigation, and how interventions supporting agriculture, resilient livelihoods, food security and nutrition, and poverty reduction can contribute to sustaining peace. FAO therefore intends to build the evidence base to demonstrate how improving food security, rehabilitating agriculture, and building resilience can contribute to conflict prevention, sustaining peace and stability.

In crisis contexts, the governance of land and other natural resources is recognized as one of the root causes of conflict. Increasing competition over land and asymmetrical power dynamics within decision-making processes, if not addressed through inclusive and transparent mechanisms, can create a set of perceived injustices and potential conflict. FAO will promote a people-centred approach to building stability. A special focus will be given to understanding and monitoring the tenure systems (formal and informal property rights, existing customary institutions and practices and relations between traditional and formal rights and authorities) to rebuild the broken socio-ecological contract involving the space, the people and the institutions interacting over land and water and re-establishing a process of trust and dialogue among stakeholders.

Security implications for FAO programming

As the security situation remains unpredictable, FAO's strategy is designed with a flexible operational framework and multiscenario planning, facilitating the identification of various options for the coming years. The current strategy is built on the most probable scenario, as follows: stabilization of the security situation, while certain areas remain insecure; back and forth movements to villages without proper resettlement of the displaced populations; civilian government institutions are progressively redeployed in some areas; the level of trade between the Basin and the hinterland is on the rise, facilitating price decreases and better access to food for the population.



Strategic framework

FAO will adopt a twin-track approach to respond to the immediate food production and nutrition needs of the affected populations, while also strengthening their capacities to diversify and accumulate assets to further build their resilience.

 Beneficiaries • 3 million food insecure people (mainly refugees, IDPs, returnees and host communities) with focus on women and youth	 Duration • 2017–2019	 Budget • USD 232 million
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Objective

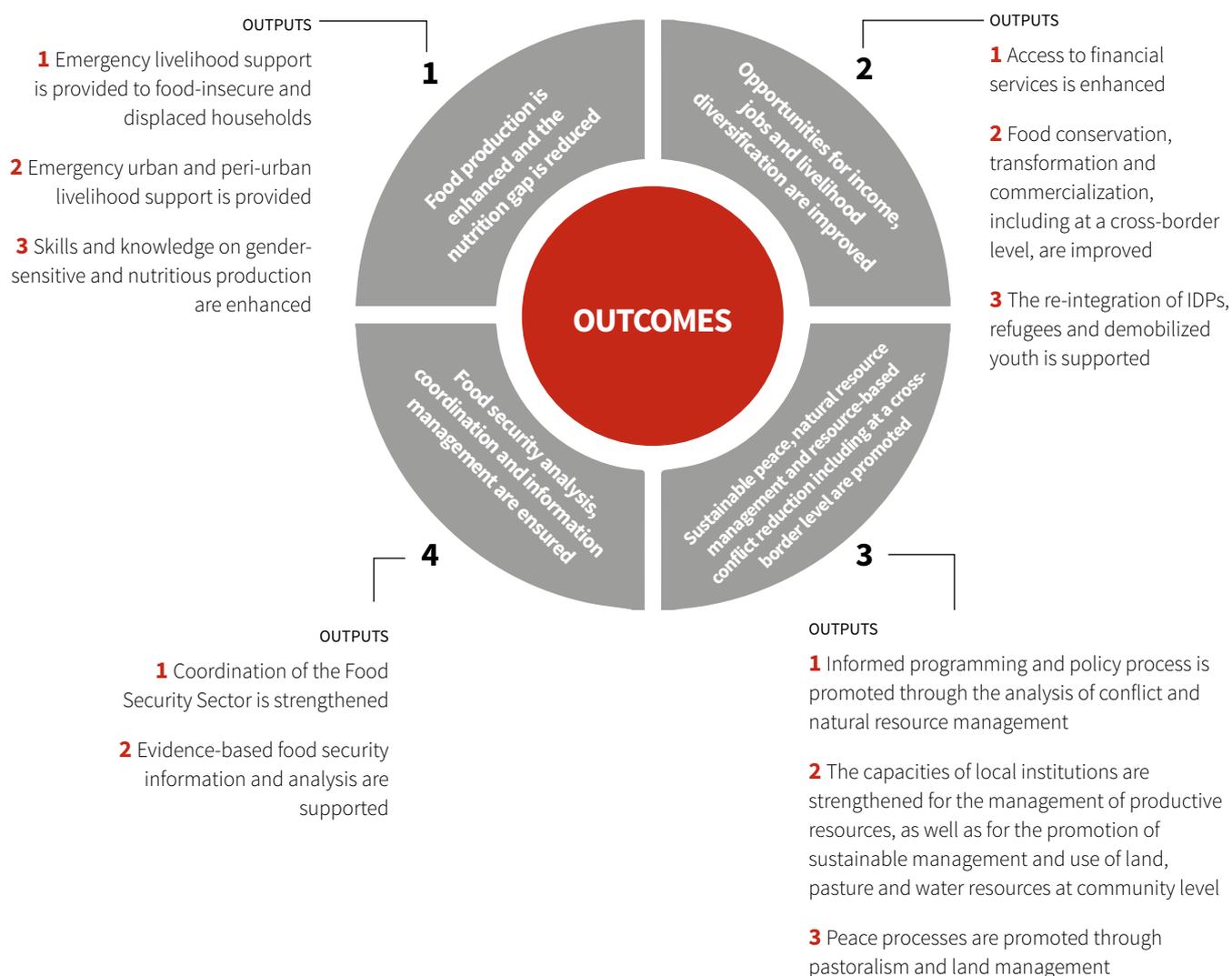
Contribute to improving the food security and nutrition and to strengthening the resilience of vulnerable host communities and displaced populations (IDPs, refugees and returnees) in the crisis-affected areas in Cameroon, Chad, the Niger and Nigeria.

Key partners

Ministries of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries and their decentralized services, United Nations agencies, Food Security Sector partners, national and international NGOs, CILSS and LCBC.

Results

FAO's strategic framework will be implemented through four outcomes and their respective outputs, following a progressive development from Outcome 1 to Outcome 4.



FAO's response (2017–2019)

Niger

field office **Diffa**

 **FAO requires USD 11 million**

 **Targeted beneficiaries 155 000 people**

TARGETED AREAS

Diffa region: departments of Bosso, Diffa, Goudoumaria, Mainé Soroa and N'guigui

ACTIVITIES

- Support agricultural value chains through innovative practices
- Improve and rehabilitate infrastructures along transhumance corridors (vaccination parks and water points)
- Increase and diversify incomes through the sustainable exploitation of forestry resources
- Support community dialogue
- Support transboundary farmers' organization, focusing on dialogue around trade and sustainable natural resources management

Chad

field offices **Bol, Mao**

 **FAO requires USD 12.5 million**

 **Targeted beneficiaries 120 000 people**

TARGETED AREAS

Lake region: departments of Mamdi and Wayi; Bar El Gazal region, the departments of South and West; Kanem region: the department of South and Wadi Bissam; Hadjer-Lamis region: the department of Dagana

ACTIVITIES

- Ensure basic livelihood needs and access to basic services (agricultural production, support to local governance and financial services)
- Provide capacity building for the development of agricultural value chains to provide income and employment opportunities to youth
- Develop and pilot innovative approaches targeting households with malnourished children under five and women to reduce malnutrition

Nigeria

field office **Maiduguri**

 **FAO requires USD 191 million**

 **Targeted beneficiaries 2.5 million people**

TARGETED AREAS

Adamawa, Borno and Yobe States

ACTIVITIES

- Support food crop production (distribute fast-maturing, nutrient-rich cereal and pulse seeds, and fertilizer)
- Provide seed multiplication assistance
- Establish post-harvest storage facilities
- Support vegetable and fruit production
- Rehabilitate food processing and agricultural infrastructure
- Provide livestock emergency support (restocking, vaccination, animal feed)
- Rehabilitate infrastructure (water tanks, post-harvest storage, livestock infrastructure, market facilities, etc.)
- Promote alternative livelihoods (aquaculture, food-processing, etc.)
- Engage in forestation/reforestation and SAFE
- Support food security coordination and analysis

Cameroon

field office **Maroua**

 **FAO requires USD 13.8 million**

 **Targeted beneficiaries 200 000 people**

TARGETED AREAS

Adamawa region: departments of Mbéré, Djérem, Faro-et-Déou and Mayo-Banyo; Far North region: departments of Diamaré, Logone-et-Chari and Mayo-Tsanaga; North region: departments of Benoué, Mayo-Rey and Mayo-Louti

ACTIVITIES

- Support food crop production (maize, rice, sorghum, cowpea and off-season vegetable crops)
- Establish small animal production units
- Establish post-harvest storage facilities
- Set up cereal processing units
- Improve and rehabilitate infrastructure along transhumance corridors (vaccination parks and water points)
- Coordinate food security actions

Regional component

regional offices **Accra, Dakar**

 **FAO requires USD 3.7 million**

ACTIVITIES

- Provide technical and operational support to country-level interventions, leveraging and aligning regional and global initiatives
- Strengthen coordination including at the transboundary level

- Facilitate joint monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment of the strategy
- Ensure research and knowledge sharing
- Disseminate national lessons learned and good practices
- Provide technical support on security issues

www.fao.org/emergencies | www.fao.org/resilience

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