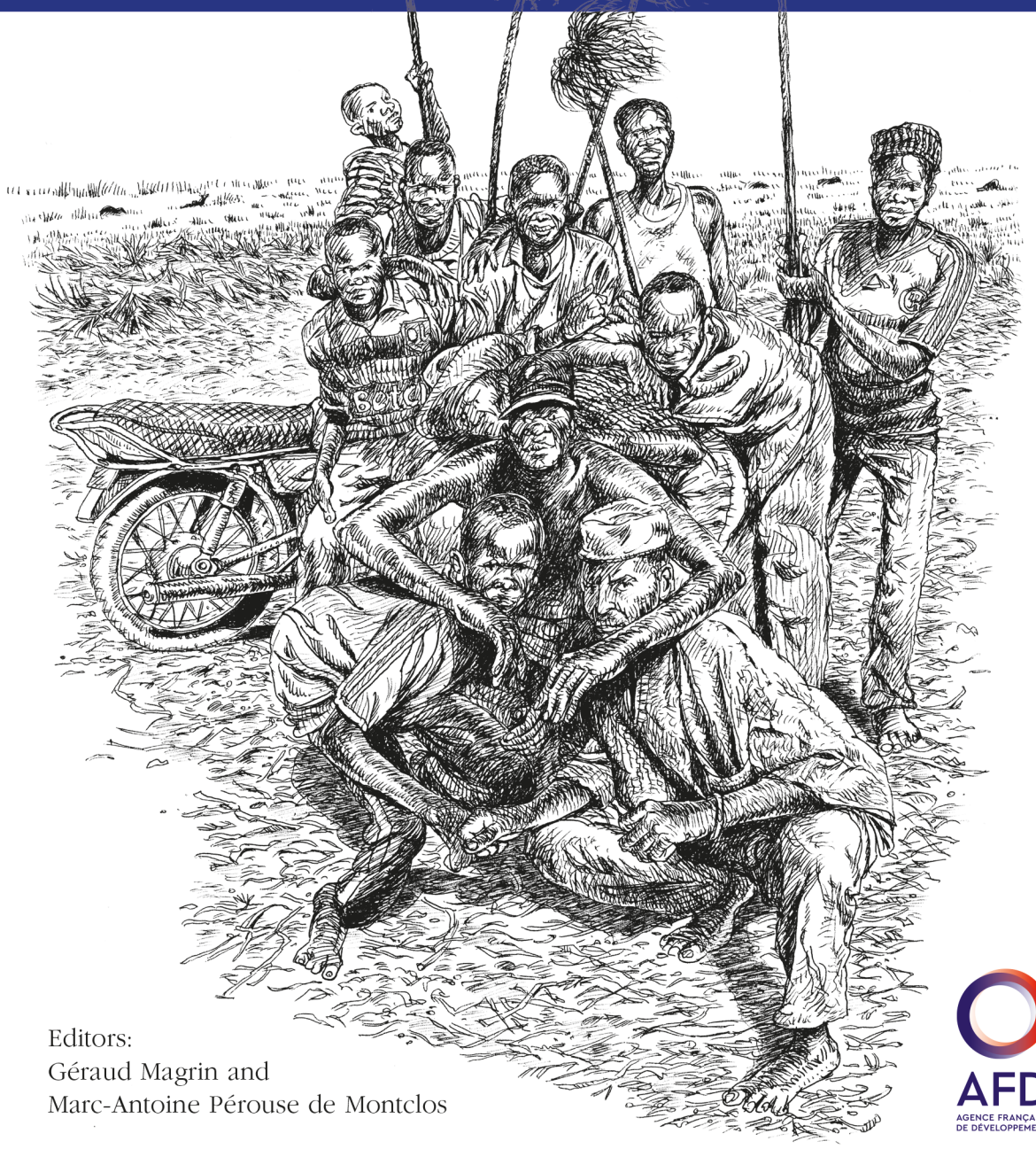
Crisis and Development

The Lake Chad Region and Boko Haram



Editors:
Géraud Magrin and
Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos

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DE DÉVELOPPEMENT

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Table of contents

Foreword

This report covers the benchmarking study on the Lake Chad region drawn up by the Research Institute for Development (IRD) under the terms of reference provided by the French Agency for Development (AFD). The main findings were obtained from workshops and field missions conducted from March to June 2017.

The introduction was written by Géraud Magrin and Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos.

Chapter 1 was written by Emmanuel Chauvin, Charline Rangé, Jacques Lemoalle, Géraud Magrin, Christine Raimond, Sylvain Aoudou Doua, Hadiza Kiari Fougou, Abdourahmani Mahamadou, Ahmadu Abubakar Tafida, and Abdullahi Liman Tukur.

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Chapter 7 was written by Géraud Magrin, Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos, and Jacques Lemoalle.

Appendix 1 was written by Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos.

Appendix 2 was written by the entire team.

The study was reviewed by two IRD researchers, Christian Seignobos and Florence Sylvestre, to whom we are most grateful.

The authors would also like to thank the AFD teams for their support, their keen reading of the draft report, and their constructive feedback, as well as all those who provided input and ideas and facilitated the field surveys in difficult conditions. They also thank the members of AFD's editorial team for their tireless efforts to shape, publish and translate this book. There are too many of them to name here, but we pay a particular tribute to our driver from the University of Maiduguri (Nigeria), Idriss Abubakar Njodi, who was killed soon after our mission in a Boko Haram attack in Magumeri in August 2017.

Executive summary

Even before the Boko Haram crisis, the Lake Chad region was one of the poorest in the world, with high demographic growth and vulnerability to extreme weather and climate change. Its fragility was heightened by its position at a climatic, cultural, and geopolitical intersection between West Africa and Central Africa, dry Africa and wet Africa—effectively dividing the region among a multitude of regional institutions—and the fact that it straddles four countries (Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger, and Chad), whose socio-political histories have been turbulent, to say the least, since independence.

By the late 2000s, however, the Lake Chad region presented a mixed picture. Although monetary poverty rates ran high and basic services remained generally deficient, infrastructure progress had been made since independence (education, health, access to clean water and roads), and the progress had gathered pace in the upbeat macroeconomic environment of the 2000s. Gradual urbanisation—with the two N'Djaména and Maiduguri metropolises, other cities such as Maroua, Garoua, Yola, and Gombe, and a growing number of towns and market towns—powered a buoyant system of generally informal, regional, and even cross-border trade. Urban demand drove agricultural innovation and intensification, which in turn propelled the take-off of small, highly productive regions such as Lake Chad and certain parts of the valleys of Yobe, Logone, Chari, and Benue rivers. These productive rivers were linked with both less advantaged areas supplying manpower (permanent or seasonal) and the regional and extra-regional urban system (especially import and consumer centres in north-eastern and southern Nigeria, respectively Kano and Lagos, and Cameroon). This system of production and informal trade working the urban/rural and border interfaces provided many jobs to the young people born in the demographic boom.

However, insufficient progress was made to really roll back poverty and prevent the emergence of localised socio-political tensions. The political courses taken were both a cause and a consequence of this. The fiscal space recovered by the countries following the decades of structural adjustment made it possible to reform public policies, but national political conditions and the neo-liberal environment prevented any significant improvement in practices profoundly shaped by authoritarianism, clientelism, and corruption. Aside from some apparently substantial national differences between the countries considered, decentralisation moves did nothing to improve governance at local level.

Intra- and inter-community tensions persisted, as did wide social inequalities between "juniors" and "elders", men and women, locals and outsiders.

Boko Haram, an Islamist sect turned armed movement in 2009, first developed in Nigeria with rear bases in neighbouring countries. In 2014–2015, the insurgents expanded their theatre of operations into northern Cameroon and then into Niger and Chad as an anti-terrorist coalition was set up. The highly fragmented group then retreated into the region's most inaccessible areas, mainly along the borders, but has continued to carry out attacks, with no real end in sight. Its capacity for resilience raises questions about the causes of the insurgency. Climate change is hardly a convincing explanation for the conflict, no more than is the theory of Salafist indoctrination, which has played a marginal role in the ongoing hostilities. Nor is it an ethnic liberation front, although the majority of Boko Haram are Kanuri. Given the immense poverty in the area, it is worth looking instead into the social and political conditions behind the group's emergence and radicalisation. Corruption, state dysfunction, and a brutal military crackdown and the suffering it has caused the civilian population—all are key factors behind the insurgency and its perpetuation.

The crisis has seriously disrupted the relations between resources and populations that used to underpin the regional system. Some 2.5 million people have been forcibly displaced to town or country, within or across borders, albeit these are mostly internal displacements. Insecurity and counter-insurgency measures have emptied out entire areas, spaces that were often the most productive rural centres (Lake Chad and Yobe River). At the same time, barriers to trade flows have reconfigured regional trade, and the major route from Lake Chad through Maiduguri to Kano or southern Nigeria has been abandoned for other routes that bypass the study area. Although the crisis has logically hit hardest in the area directly affected by Boko Haram operations (the states of Borno and Adamawa, the border areas of Niger and Cameroon, and Lake Chad), the shockwaves are being felt in surrounding areas. Question marks hang over the repercussions of these impacts on the agricultural system (what is the level of capital loss?) and the political land-use reconfigurations conducted in the most affected zone during the crisis. The crisis has also increased pressure on fauna in protected areas and on wood resources in a relatively stable hydrological environment (no dry years without inflows to Lake Chad's northern pool in the last 25 years). A burning issue concerns the governance of natural resources (croplands, grazing grounds, and fishing areas) in the deserted areas that have been partially reoccupied.

In 2017, the situation was a combination of two crises. The oil price slump of late 2014 (followed by the fall in the naira),[1] coupled with the impacts of the Boko Haram insurgency, plunged the countries bordering Lake Chad (especially

1 The naira (NGN) has been Nigeria's national currency since 1973.

Nigeria and Chad) into severe economic crisis. The situation has had dramatic impacts on employment. As civilian authorities have been overpowered by the military and local militias, the conflict has instilled a climate of suspicion and fear instrumental in stirring ethnic, religious, and land-use antagonism. The humanitarian aid deployed in 2016 has disrupted the zone's political economy. The injection of funds and influx of international operators may well have contained the food crisis, but they have also complicated interventions and stoked corruption. And diversion of relief is not the only challenge facing the aid players. There is a crying lack of political vision and coordination at regional level, when the zone's general state of under-development should make for crisis responses conceived in terms of construction rather than reconstruction. Structurally, the region suffers from an outward-oriented and undersized modern economy, crises in its endogenous informal economy, and political uncertainties that weigh on the future of the countries considered.

Development operators cannot control all the variables that will determine how the situation unfurls in the Lake Chad region. Climate change and world commodity price fluctuations are out of their hands. This is also largely true of demographic growth, which is subject to intense structural inertia.[2] There is, however, the possibility of influencing security responses to the crisis and improving the forms of governance, a crucial point at local level. In economic policy, aid operators could also assist with public policy choices in agriculture, the extractive industries, and cross-border and domestic trade. One of the challenges will be to promote investment and diversify productive activities in rentier state environments. Repatriation and resettlement of displaced populations will also be essential to make the transition from emergency relief to development, as will youth employment and local capacity building.

Development operators will have to make choices. First, they will have to reconsider their position in security policies that prioritise repression over the resilience of populations hit by the anti-terrorist coalition's economic war. Choices will also concern the types of conceivable partnerships with governments, the private sector, local governments, traditional chiefdoms, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Regional planning and agricultural production priorities, preferably socially inclusive, will also have to be established. Obviously, there is nothing to say that the development efforts will have a lasting impact. It is possible that the current situation will continue or that the combination of choices made could produce a positive, or negative, scenario. Given the current state of affairs, a status quo appears probable.

2 This does not invalidate the value of broad-based population policies (e.g. a massive effort in education for girls and jobs for women, health, family planning) to expedite the drop in fertility rates.

Two appendices at the end of this report present a critical and methodological discussion of existing and potential indicators to monitor the regional system's dynamics. These indicators concern security and governance, climatic and environmental dynamics, production systems, mobility, trade and trade traffic, access to services, and inequalities, cultural dynamics, and social relations.

Introduction

Context, challenges and objectives

The Lake Chad region[3] is seen as one of the most fragile areas in the world. It has the structural vulnerability characteristic of the Sahel, with its soaring demographic growth tensions in a situation of massive poverty, political fragility, and climate change. The population's young age structure and socio-political obstructions are behind multifaceted tensions (intergenerational, intra- and inter-community, and religious). Added to this is the impact of what appears to be a contained conflict. The Boko Haram group's armed uprising and repression since 2009 form one of the major crisis hotspots on the African continent today, with its share of victims, hundreds of thousands of displaced persons, and the looming spectre of famine. In Nigeria alone, the country that has borne the brunt of the conflict, the World Bank estimates the damage at billions of dollars.[4] The insurgency's combination of a local agenda with a globalised vision of jihadist fundamentalism (Pérouse de Montclos, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2017) has brought international attention to the region, which previously received a mention on the world scene only at climate conferences discussing the consequences of the supposed drying up of Lake Chad due to climate change (Lemoalle & Magrin, 2014). The Lake Chad region therefore epitomises the many local and global challenges associated with the trajectory of Africa's most fragile spaces and the level of complexity involved in addressing them.

This study is part of the Lake Chad Initiative announced by France in Abuja in May 2016. AFD proposes to raise its commitments to help the region back on its feet. The challenge is twofold. Coordinated actions are needed to assist the emergency–post-conflict–development transition towards a regional approach inclusive of the four countries bordering Lake Chad (Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria, and Chad). This study aims to pave the way for an AFD intervention analysis platform. The other, directly operational strand concerns a group of projects designed to alleviate the sources of conflict and build the population's resilience. Among these, the Regional Economic and Social Inclusive Recovery Project for

3 In this report, this expression will refer to the study area as defined by the authors (see below).

4 The World Bank's calculation in its 2015 *Recovery and Peace Building Assessment* (RPBA) estimates that the fighting has caused output losses of 8.3 billion US dollars (USD) and infrastructure damage of USD 9.2 billion, not counting the impact of an economic crisis brought about by falling oil prices in a country that earns most of its foreign-denominated revenues from oil production.

Lake Chad (RESILAC) supports the autonomy of displaced persons in the four lakeside countries with small-scale agricultural activities.

The study's purpose is to: *(i)* provide a multidisciplinary assessment of the current situation, and *(ii)* explore the way forward. The appendices propose indicators to capture the political, security, economic, demographic, societal, and environmental dynamics of a region that forms a system, to find ways to best adjust aid mechanisms and support public policies. These indicators are qualitative and are midway between macro indicators (national level) and those specifically designed for development project monitoring. The aim is ultimately to outline a blueprint for an analytical platform that can collect and analyse these data, while initiating dialogue between researchers in the countries bordering Lake Chad and between researchers and the humanitarian, diplomatic, and international and national development players.

The study area as a regional system

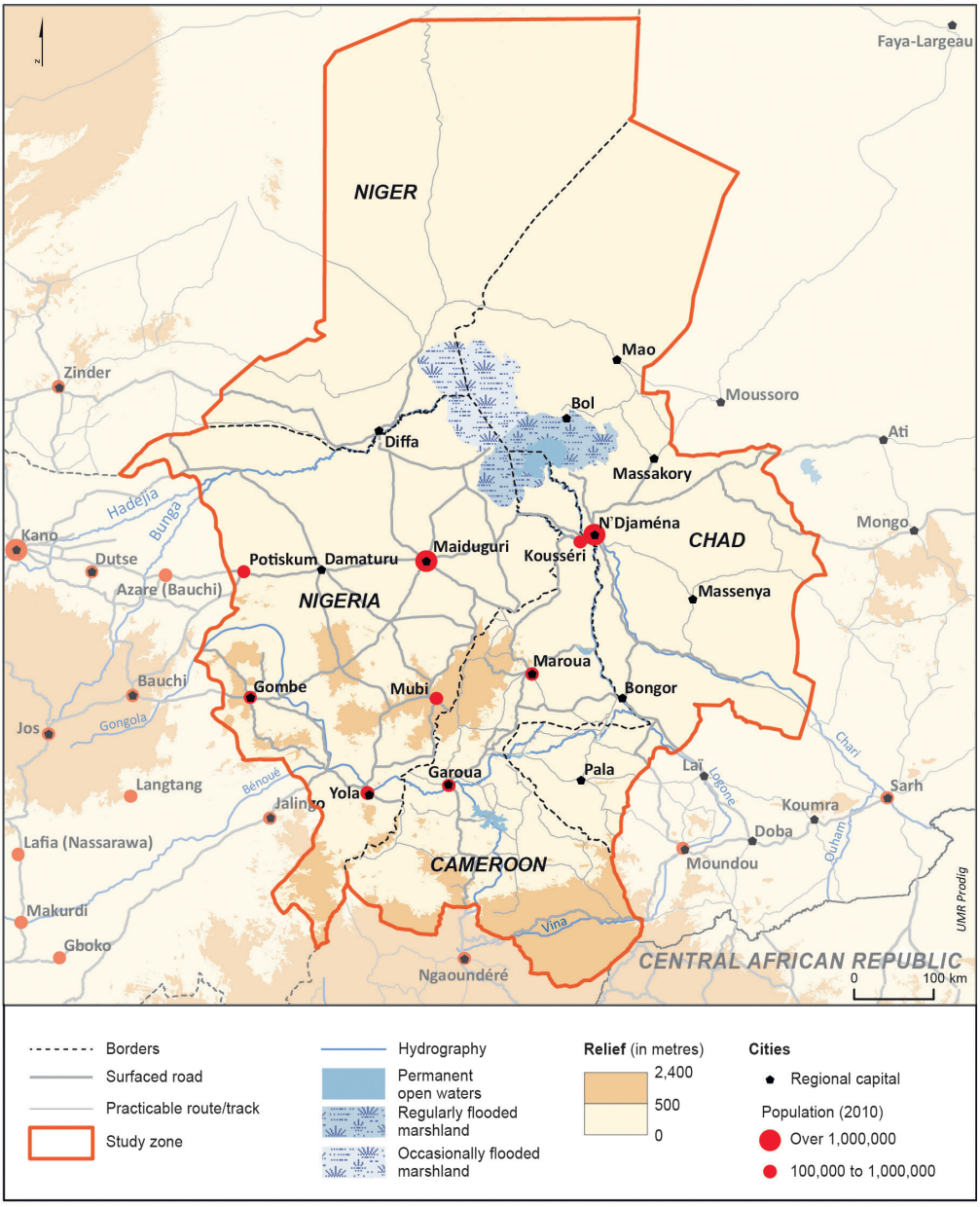
We propose making sense of the region's complexity by studying it as a system. It is in effect a space profoundly structured by mobility and trade. Straddling four countries following colonisation, it features strong cross-border dynamics rooted in history and stimulated by differences in custom duties, speculation on exchange rates, and urban demand found within the study area, and between the study area and external centres (especially the southern regions of Nigeria and Cameroon). Capturing the Lake Chad region's challenges hence calls for a constantly dual national–regional analysis, taking account of the concerns, networks, and movements that transcend the national borders.

The internal diversity of the Lake Chad region's system is fairly high. It is structured today by three main hubs: Lake Chad itself, a wetlands area with some two million inhabitants and high agro-halieutic-pastoral potential; and two metropolises with seven-figure populations—N'Djaména, the Chadian capital, and Maiduguri, capital of the Nigerian State of Borno—which head a network of secondary urban centres and rural markets.

The system's interdependencies are based on flows (trade, migration, mobility, and investment) that transit between, on one side, the cities and the most productive, high-potential rural areas—albeit subject to varying demographic pressure depending on how long farming has been established—and less well-endowed areas on the other. The Lake Chad region consequently considered here covers an elongated area stretching approximately 1,000 kilometres (km) from north to south and 500 km from east to west (see Map 1), representing a surface area comparable to France. Rainfall is higher than 400 mm[5] over only

5 Rainfall threshold usually given for rainfed crops.

Map 1. The Lake Chad region



Sources: PlantadivGIS, OSM, SRTM, Africapolis.

Table 1. Basic geographic data on the study zone

COUNTRY	REGION	Surface area km²	Previous census: Cameroon 1987, Niger 1988, Nigeria 1991, Chad 1993	Latest census: Cameroon 2005, Nigeria 2006, Niger 2012, Chad 2009	% pop. Study region/national total	2012 estimate (3% annual growth)	2017 estimate (3% annual growth)	Density per km² in 2017
Nigeria	Adamawa	30,805	2,102,053	3,178,950	2.26	3,795,833	4,400,410	142.85
	Borno	60,567	2,477,408	4,171,104	2.97	4,980,516	5,773,783	95.33
	Gombe	16,461	1,489,120	2,365,040	1.68	2,823,981	3,273,768	198.88
	Yobe	41,861	1,399,687	2,321,339	1.65	2,771,800	3,213,276	76.76
NIGERIA (study area)		**149,695**	**7,468,268**	**12,036,433**	**8.57**	**14,372,130**	**16,661,238**	**111.30**
NIGERIA total				**140,431,790**				
Chad	Kanem	63,855	379,323	333,387	2.98	364,301	422,325	6.61
	Lac	18,449	308,974	451,359	4.04	493,212	571,768	30.99
	Hadjer-Lamis	28,000	512,642	562,957	5.04	615,158	713,137	25.47
	Chari-Baguirmi	42,023	437,068	621,785	5.56	679,441	787,659	18.74
	Mayo-Kebbi Ouest	11,163		565,087	5.06	617,486	715,835	64.13
	Mayo-Kebbi Est				0.00			
	N'Djaména	361	530,000	993,492	8.89	1,085,616	1,258,526	3 489.20
CHAD (study area)		**163,851**		**3,528,067**	**31.57**	**3,855,214**	**4,469,250**	**27.28**
CHAD total				**11,175,915**				
Cameroon	Far North	31,591	1,855,695	3,481,904	19.94	4,282,303	4,964,363	157.14
	North	59,543		1,687,959	9.67	2,075,977	2,406,626	40.42
CAMEROON (study area)		**91,135**		**5,169,863**	**29.60**	**6,358,279**	**7,370,988**	**80.88**
CAMEROON total				**17,463,836**				
Niger	Diffa	138,149	346,595	591,788	3.45	591,788	627,828	4.54
NIGER (study area)		**138,149**		**591,788**	**3.45**	**591,788**	**627,828**	**4.54**
NIGER total				**17,129,076**				
TOTAL STUDY AREA		Surface area km²		Latest census		2012 estimate	2017 estimate	Density per km² in 2017
		542,829		**21,326,151**		**25,177,412**	**29,129,304**	**53.66**

Sources: Cameroon census: BUCREP/RGPH 1987 & 2005; Nigeria: NBS-Census Data 1991 & 2006; Niger: INS-RGPH 1988 & 2012; Chad: INSEED-RGPH 1993 & 2009.

about half of this surface area. Demographic projections calculated from the most recent national censuses estimate the region's inhabitants at over 29 million in 2017 (see Table 1).

Nature of the crisis and the current situation

The Boko Haram crisis has profoundly shaken this regional system and laid bare many structural fragilities. At central government level, there is dependency on oil revenues (less marked in Cameroon and Niger), corruption, brutal repression, and difficulties in managing conflicts peacefully. At regional level, there are such issues as widespread food vulnerability, localised land tensions, rural banditry, and multifaceted government dysfunctions. However, the size of the area considered (approximately 565,000 km²) and the significance of intra-regional differences (bioclimatic: from the Saharan Desert to the Sudanic savannas; between mountains and plains, sometimes occupied by wetlands; between cities and isolated rural areas; and among countries) are such that we need to consider the diversity of the crisis impacts. The conflict's epicentre is in Borno State, Nigeria. Yet certain border areas have been extremely hard hit, such as Diffa in Niger, Kolofata in Cameroon, and some Lake Chad islands. More outlying regions less directly affected by the crisis have also been hit by its shockwaves, with the interruption of herding movements and trade flows, and the reconfiguration of certain mobilities.

So the regional system's order has been severely disrupted and then reorganised. Its settlement and seasonal mobility patterns have been partially reconfigured. At the same time, urban centres have changed. Maiduguri has become an emergency capital hosting large numbers of internally displaced persons and aid agencies, but it has lost its central place in regional trade. Trade flows are now re-routed further south (via southern Chad and Gombe) through to the Gulf of Guinea's urban markets or otherwise bypass the zone of instability by the west.

In the summer of 2017, the Lake Chad region hence finds itself midway between conflict and post-conflict. Boko Haram has had to retreat and no longer controls the areas it did in 2014. Nonetheless, persistent suicide bombings against civilians and attacks against military targets bear testimony to its resilience. Our hypothesis is that the situation will not return to the way it was, even with a military victory over Boko Haram, but that a new regional system is bound to emerge in the wake of this crisis period. Hence the importance of the policy choices to be made.

Methodology

The assessment is based on existing knowledge: benchmarking studies on portions of the study area in a given country—such as Borno (Cohen, 1967) and the Far North of Cameroon (Seignobos & Iyébi-Mandjek, 2000); cross-cutting studies on Lake Chad (Bouquet 1990); co-authored studies such as LCBC[6]/IRD (Lemoalle & Magrin, 2014), *l'Atlas du Lac Tchad* (Magrin *et al.*, 2015); and studies on Boko Haram (Pérouse de Montclos, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2017) and the Lake Chad Basin (De Zborowski, 1996). We have also drawn on the "grey" literature[7] produced by institutions active in the crisis. The main references used are listed at the end of each chapter. Sources used once for a specific piece of information are given in footnotes only.

This information was rounded out by four field missions conducted by the French researchers in the countries bordering Lake Chad to collect data provided by local partners interviewed on these occasions. Mission length and movements were restricted by available time and resources, the volatile security situation, and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs' continued classification of a large part of the study area as a red zone.

The study began in March 2017. The field missions were conducted in May and June 2017. The draft report was submitted on 22 July 2017. Following editing, the final report was delivered on 2 October 2017.

The mission in Niger (14–25 May 2017) was conducted mainly in Diffa. It coincided with an international conference on the de-radicalisation and reintegration of former Boko Haram members, which provided an opportunity for numerous interviews. In Cameroon, the mission was restricted to Maroua from 2 to 12 June 2017. In Chad (1–11 June 2017), interviews were conducted in N'Djaména and around Lake Chad at Bol, Baga Sola, Guitté, and Karal. In Nigeria, interviews took place in Maiduguri, Gombe, Yola, and Abuja from 7 to 21 May 2017.

The forecasting variables and sentinel data were discussed during workshops held in Paris (23–24 March, 19 June, and 6 July 2017) and in N'Djaména (April 2017). The 17th Mega-Chad Conference (Nice, 14–16 June 2017) provided an opportunity to share and discuss the preliminary conclusions. This report also takes on board feedback from a debriefing at AFD on 26 June 2017.

Data quality is seen today as a key challenge in the development field.[8] The problem concerns first of all the reliability of official statistics, which—produced

6 Lake Chad Basin Commission.

7 Unpublished documents produced by non-scientific structures: NGO reports, development institutions, etc.

8 See Issue 213 of *La Revue Tiers Monde* (2013): "La mesure du développement. Comment science et politique se conjuguent" or Issue 258 of *Afrique Contemporaine* (2016/2) "Gouverner par les nombres en Afrique."

at national level and aggregated by the international organisations—reflect the dysfunctions of the four governments concerned. Data produced by aid and emergency players are often disparate, sparse, and sporadic in time and space, making them difficult to interpret. One of the study's concerns is consequently to identify cross-sectional indicators and relevant data—to be harnessed where they exist and produced if necessary—in order to monitor developments in the regional system. These questions are analysed in more detail in the study's two appendices.

Another problem in a linguistically highly diverse region concerns changing place names and name spellings. To help the reader, we use the contemporary administrative nomenclature, which is French in Niger, Cameroon, and Chad and English in Nigeria. Hence we use the official term "Borno" rather than "Bornu", long used by the colonial power but dropped by certain geographers as soon as the 1820s and contested by some experts because it differs from the Kanuri pronunciation (Cohen, 1967). We write Adamawa for the state in the Nigerian federation, but Adamaoua for the Cameroonian administrative area. Also, for the sake of legibility, we use the name Boko Haram ("Western education is sacrilege") even though the group objects to this derogatory expression and calls itself by other names that have changed over time. Lastly, terms taken from local languages are translated and their vernacular origin noted.

Study structure

The study is structured chronologically.

The first section describes and summarises the regional system before the Boko Haram crisis. It shows first how the study region can be seen as a system with considerable potential and multifaceted vulnerabilities. It addresses the region's environmental challenges, population dynamics, activity and mobility systems, and the trade that links the different elements of the system (Chapter 1). The focus then turns to the historical background, development challenges, governance, and the different political configurations and fragilities (Chapter 2).

The second section considers the repercussions of the Boko Haram crisis on the Lake Chad region, focusing on both disruption to the system and the new balances taking shape in 2017. This section addresses how the Boko Haram movement gradually emerged. It then looks into the spread of the conflict from Nigeria to neighbouring countries before it presents the major controversies over the explanatory factors for the crisis (Chapter 3). The repercussions of the crisis on production systems, mobility, and trade are subsequently analysed (Chapter 4), as are its implications for governance, socio-political balances, and development policies (Chapter 5).

The third and last section explores the way forward. This section considers in turn a certain number of key variables that can be used to monitor development

(Chapter 6). Variables beyond the control of regional players, such as climate change, the international economic context, and demographics, are differentiated from those that can be influenced the most by public policies (security and governance; economic choices; settlement and mobility; inequalities, cultural dynamics, and social relations). Lastly, some of the choices available to national and international development players are analysed. This analysis results in the description of three scenarios, projecting the implications of policy choices for all the system's variables (Chapter 7).

Two appendices round out the study with a discussion of possible sentinel data and indicators for monitoring Lake Chad regional system dynamics. The first introduces methodological challenges regarding the nature of available data, their limitations, and the problems posed by their heterogeneity (Appendix 1). The second discusses a certain number of potential indicators for the main variables studied (Appendix 2).

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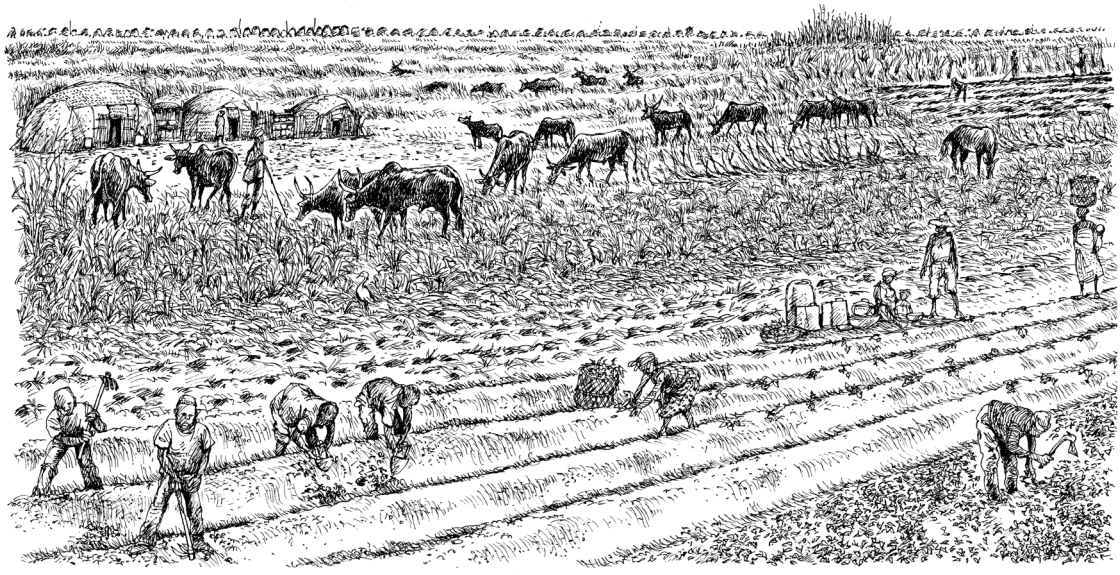
Section 1.
The Lake Chad region before Boko Haram

This section opens with a description of the Lake Chad region's evolution and main dynamics before the Boko Haram crisis. Chapter 2 will show that the crisis erupted on different dates depending on the areas considered in the study region.



South shore of the lake. An example of multi-agricultural activity.

Chapter 1.
The regional system: environment, populations and resources

KEY POINTS

Before the Boko Haram crisis, the Lake Chad region could be defined as a regional system structured by migratory links and trade channels connecting more or less populated zones with high agricultural and economic potential to more fragile areas. Rainfall, presently midway between the precipitation of the wet decades (1950s–1960s) and dry decades (1970s–1980s), remains marked by sharp swings, which impact on the production of agricultural resources. In this environment, the most vulnerable zones—grazing grounds in northern Sahel and other agricultural and agro-pastoral areas (Borno and the Mandara Mountains)—are highly dependent on seasonal mobility to and trade relations with established population centres (Diamare, the Yobe River, and the Mundang and Tupuri lands) and recent migration areas rich in natural resources, such as Lake Chad and the Benue lands in the south of the study zone. The main urban centres are the two cities of Maiduguri and N'Djaména. They are both large consumer centres and hubs for long-distance trade relations. This system is resilient but vulnerable due to demographic growth, natural resource variability, and fragile political environments.

1. Hydrology and the environment

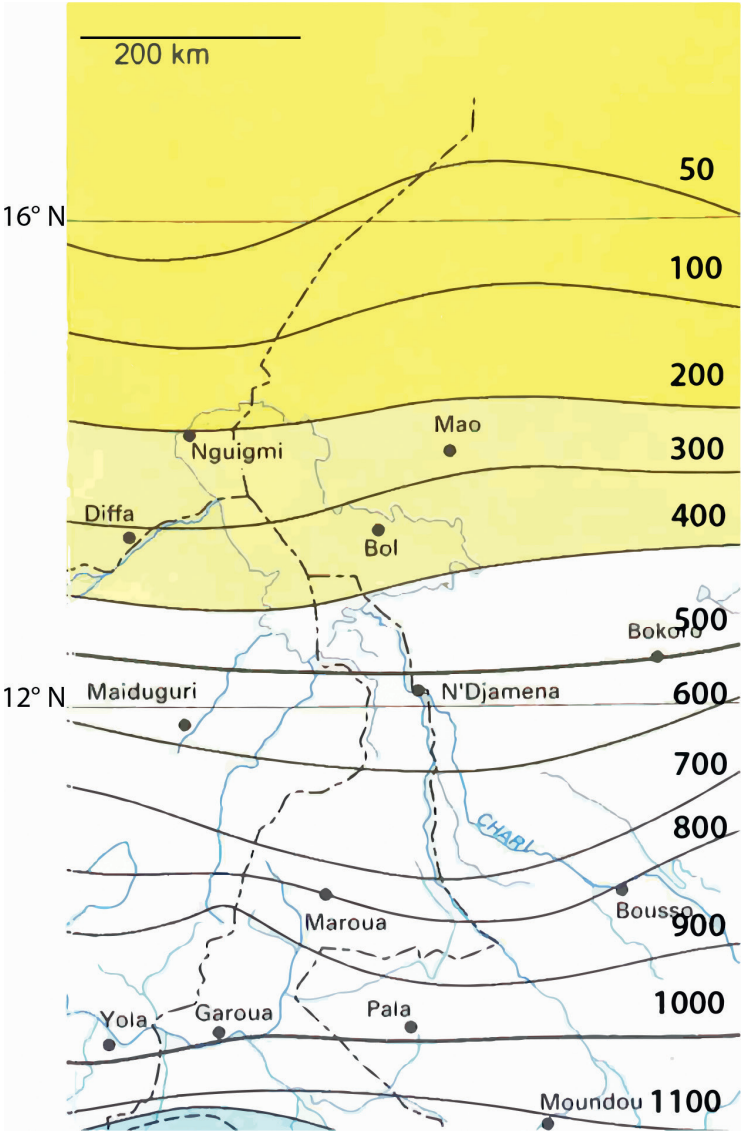
The climate and climate variability form one of the factors that condition the landscapes, ways of life, and societal stability. A good knowledge is required of rainfall and accessibility to the resulting surface water to understand the context behind a zone's socio-economic development. This knowledge is obviously insufficient on its own. Interaction with other environmental and social factors also needs to be taken into account.

1.1. The study zone along the rainfall gradient: Variability in space

The study region covers nearly 10 degrees latitude and presents a tropical climate on the whole, with one variably long and heavy rainy season depending on the latitude. Chart 1 displays the distribution of isohyets across the study zone for the 1951–1989 period: the rainfall gradient in the centre of the zone

is clearly marked, and a slight difference in latitude has strong impacts on the populations' survival on the ground. During the drought phase in the Sahel over the 1970–1989 period, the isohyets graduated south some 120 km from their wet period position (1951–1969).

Chart 1. North–south rainfall gradient in the study area (average 1951–1989, mm/year)



Source: L'Hôte & Mahé, 1996.

The names given to the ecoclimatic zones south of the Sahara vary considerably from one author to the next. The following ecoclimatic zones can be found running from north to south of the study zone, depending on whether the zones are defined by Le Houérou's terminology (1980) or that of the FAO/GIEWS[9] (1998). The latter are presented in italics:

- Saharan with less than 100 mm of annual precipitation in the north of the zone
- Saharo–Sahelian with total annual rainfall ranging from 100 to 200 mm
- Sahelian with 200 to 400 mm of precipitation (*250–500 mm*)
- Sudano–Sahelian with 400 to 600 mm (*500–900 mm*)
- Sudanian with 600 to 900 mm (*900–1,100 mm*)

The Guinean zone starts south of the Sudanian zone. The rainfall duration and quantity decrease from south to north.

This precipitation range, combined with the variety of types of soils and relief, gives rise to an array of natural resources and hence an extremely wide range of types of stockbreeding, fishing, and crop farming. Added to this variability in space is variability in time.

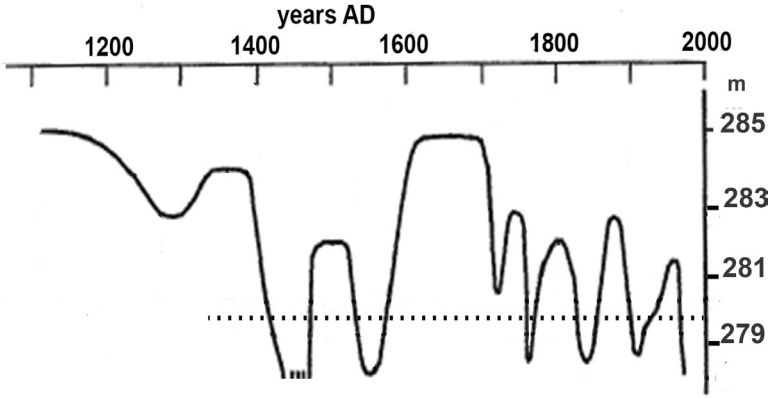
1.2. Rainfall variability by different timescales

The alternation of rainy and dry seasons across the area is dictated by the seasonal migration of the Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ), which brings in moist air from the Atlantic Ocean with the monsoon. It generally rains south of this convergence zone, which moves northwards from approximately 8°N (8th parallel north) in January–February to 17°N in July–August. The volume of seasonal rain depends on the extent of the ITCZ's migration: the region north of the 13th parallel (corresponding to the latitude of the centre of Lake Chad) may receive rainfall for rainfed millet and good fodder growth in wet years, or not have any rainfall at all and consequently drive its inhabitants and their herds further south, as was the case in 1972–1973 and 1984.

This rainfall variability can be analysed by considering different timescales. Maley (1993) reconstructed an approximate historical scale of Lake Chad levels over the last millennium, producing an amplified picture of rainfall variability over its watershed (see Chart 2). There have been well-documented episodes of high lake levels in the past, alternating with phases of more average levels as observed today. Lake Chad's period of low levels in the 1970s and 1980s is not a unique event.

9 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations/Global Information and Early Warning System.

Chart 2. Lake Chad level variations in past centuries



Source: Modified chart based on Maley, 1993

Annual precipitation over the Lake Chad Basin was calculated from data published by the Climate Research Unit (CRU, Harris *et al.,* 2014). The deviations from an average of 992 mm/year for the 1901–2006 period can be substantial. Three periods were identified, beginning with 1950 :

- 1950–1969: Wet period, often mistakenly considered a normal period, with precipitation (1,087 mm/year) higher than average for the century (992 mm/year);
- 1970–1994: Dry period, with an average 905 mm/year;
- 1995–2016: Return to an intermediate rainfall period (988 mm/year) close to the centennial mean. However, the returning rains did not bring an equivalent return in water level to the Chari River (the main tributary flowing into Lake Chad), for reasons as yet unexplained to our knowledge.

The majority (95%) of the rain that falls on Lake Chad's active drainage area is transferred back into the atmosphere by evapotranspiration (ET) (evaporation from wet surfaces and plant transpiration).

Average rainfall over the Chari–Logone Basin stood at 987 mm/year for the 1950–2014 period, representing an average volume of 603 km^3/year. At the same time, the annual discharge of the Chari River at N'Djaména averaged 28.4 km^3/year, just under 5% of the rainfall received. This implies the need for improvements to farming practices adapted to the different local circumstances in order to improve soil water retention and prevent loss through evaporation.

A first approximation finds that when precipitation P over the basin varies by 10% around its average value, the annual inflow Q to the lake from the Chari

River fluctuates by some 30%. The same holds true for the lake's water surface area. Lake Chad, like other closed lakes, is termed an amplifier lake: small variations in rainfall over its watershed generate large variations in lake level and surface area. In this respect, Lake Chad is an excellent indicator of the recent rainfall over its basin and across the entire Sahelian and Sudano–Sahelian area in general.

When considered in detail, however, an in-depth study of the abovementioned precipitation–discharge ratio showed that, for equal rainfall, the annual discharge has been nearly 30% lower since the early 1980s. The Chari–Logone system's hydrological behaviour has changed.

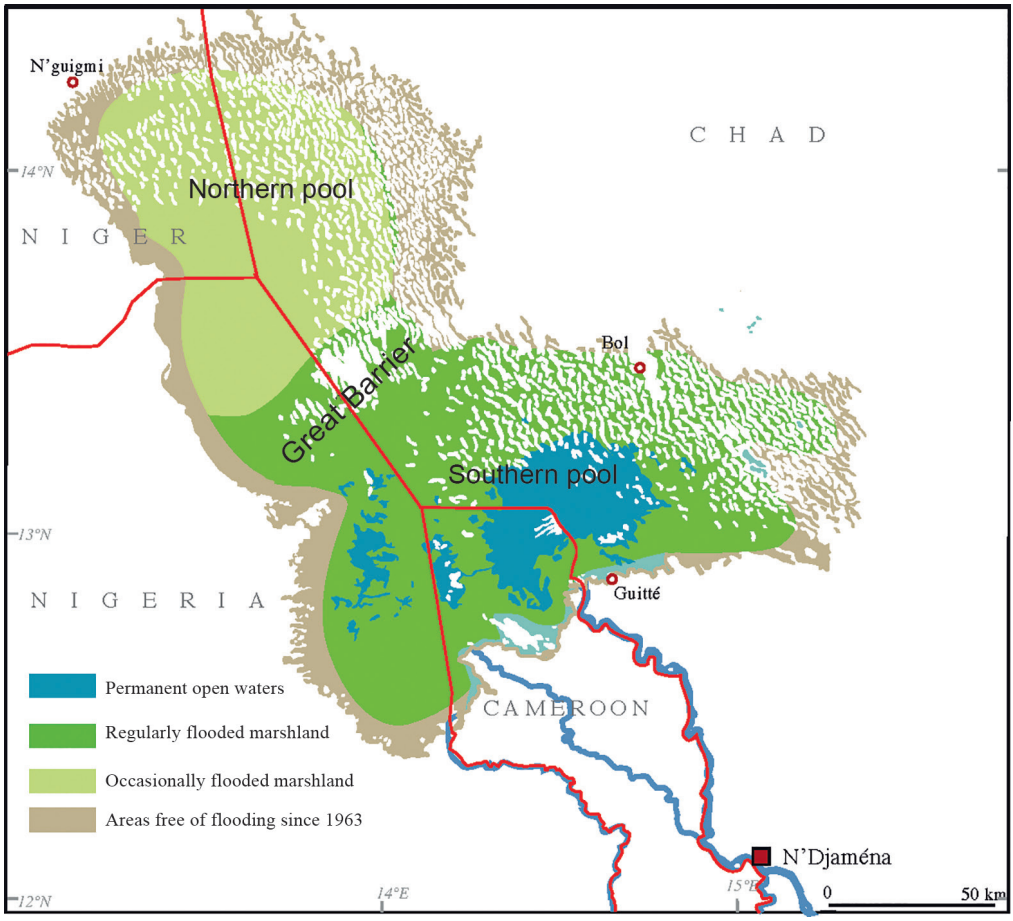
1.3. Lake Chad

Lake Chad's surface area and water level are dictated by the balance of inflows (inflows from the rivers and, secondarily, direct rainfall) and losses (mainly evaporation and infiltration towards the water table). Main inflows are from the Chari River (85% of the total), which in turn are dependent on rainfall over the basin. The other tributaries (Yobe, El Beid, and Yedseram) provide less than 10% of the water, with the remaining inflows being from rainfall over the lake.

Three major periods can be identified since 1950. The first is remembered as a period of content, while the second left its mark as an era of drought and societal disruption in the northern pool (see Map 2):

- 1951–1970: Large and Medium Lake Chad, with a body of water (20,000 to 25,000 km²) stretching from the Chari delta to N'Guigmi. A small indigenous population has been exploiting a moderate but sufficient resource, growing rainfed crops on the islands and surrounding lakeside. In Large Chad periods, water ran off from the lake via its outlet, the Bahr El Ghazai towards the north-east.
- 1971–1994: Small Lake Chad, comprising two pools separated by the emergence of the Great Barrier, with Dry Small Lake Chad episodes (northern pool dry all year) and substantial disruption (particularly to herds), especially in the northern pool and around the lake's periphery. Yet, whereas the lake's northern pool was subject to extremely high inter-annual variations, the southern pool remained relatively stable from one year to the next, with an increase in productive surface areas compared with the Medium Lake Chad. These variations in rainfall and the state of the lake brought immigration from the surrounding region (including herders who worked Lake Chad into their movements) and the internal migration between the southern and northern pools that was characteristic of the unstable Small Lake Chad.

Map 2. Schematic map of the main Small Lake Chad landscapes



Source: Lemoalle & Magrin, 2014.

– 1995–2017: Small Lake Chad, with the northern pool totally or partially inundated every year and therefore no major (water) crisis for this stable Small Lake Chad. Natural resources are abundant all over the lake, which consequently exports food products.

Considering access to the lake's natural resources as an indicator of the living conditions of societies living on the lake and lakeside, the recent period since the 1960s could be summed up by the abovementioned three periods, with a difficult 1971–1994 Small Lake Chad period consisting of partial, irregular flooding of the northern pool and drought years (1972, 1973, and 1984), which had a huge impact on the lake and its basin.

Since around 1995, the three activities (fishing, herding, and cropping) have been practised in the same places (multifunctionality) and often by the same families (occupational multiplicity), depending on the succession of conditions in the area and available resources. Resources are abundant, with a resource-sharing bottleneck due to the large size of the population.

Box 1

Controversies over Lake Chad's shrinkage. Why? Is it reversible? What is the solution?

First controversy: What is the lake's surface area?

Lake Chad is a shallow lake made up of areas of open waters and permanent, seasonal, or more occasionally flooded marshland. Estimates of the lake's surface area differ depending on whether the open waters alone are counted or the marshland areas are included. The illustrations of Lake Chad presented by NASA[10] (*Africa's Disappearing Lake Chad*, 2002, 2009) considered only open waters (approximately 2,000 km²), overlooking thousands of km² of marshland actively used for fishing and most of the lake's agricultural production from its seasonal floodplain crops

Hence this stated 90% shrinkage in the lake's surface area was widely taken as fact and endorsed the call for international aid to save Lake Chad, in particular by reviving an old idea of inter-basin water transfer from the Ubangi Basin to the Chari Basin under the name of Transaqua.

Lake Chad's lowest point occurred in May 1985, when the only areas flooded, covering approximately 2,000 km², were the zone in front of the Chari River delta and a few small areas of water in the southern pool. The annual average flooded surface area has stood at around 10,000 km² since the late 1990s, making the lake's current condition particularly good for lake productivity (fishing, agriculture, and stockbreeding).

Second controversy: Why has the water surface area shrunk?

In 2001, Coe and Foley published an article that attributed half of the decrease in the lake's river inflow to low rainfall and the other half to human action drawing off 10 km³ per year for irrigation. This figure is clearly mistaken, as such a volume of water would irrigate some 500,000 hectares (ha), which would most certainly be noticeable on satellite images and on the ground. More recently, a study for the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC, 2012) estimated the water volume taken for irrigation from the Chari–Logone Basin and the lake at 0.6 km³ per year. The change in the lake's surface area is due to the variations in rainfall over its basin.

…/…

10 National Aeronautics and Space Administration, United States of America. See https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/IOTD/view.php?id=1240

…/…

Third controversy: Long-term drying trend or climatic accident?

Reversible Small Lake episodes have occurred in the past independently of the present global climate change. So it is difficult to say whether global climate change has anything to do with the lake's current state.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) forecasts for the coming century still lack certitude for the region covering the lake and its basin. Yet the highly probable rise in temperatures, and the possibility that rainfall will hold at around its current average, both increase the likelihood of low levels or total drying up in the lake's northern pool. Lake Chad is hence fragile.

Fourth controversy: Should an inter-basin transfer be set up from the Ubangi River?

The LCBC member heads of state tasked the LCBC with studying the possibility of channelling water from the Congo Basin to Lake Chad. Further studies are called for due to the many uncertainties surrounding the project (e.g. geopolitical, societal, environmental, impact on the lake's productivity). Moreover, the sheer scale of the construction work required is such that the project is monopolising attention at the expense of thinking on adaptation to climate change for fast-growing basin populations, who face potential drops in agricultural productivity as temperatures rise.

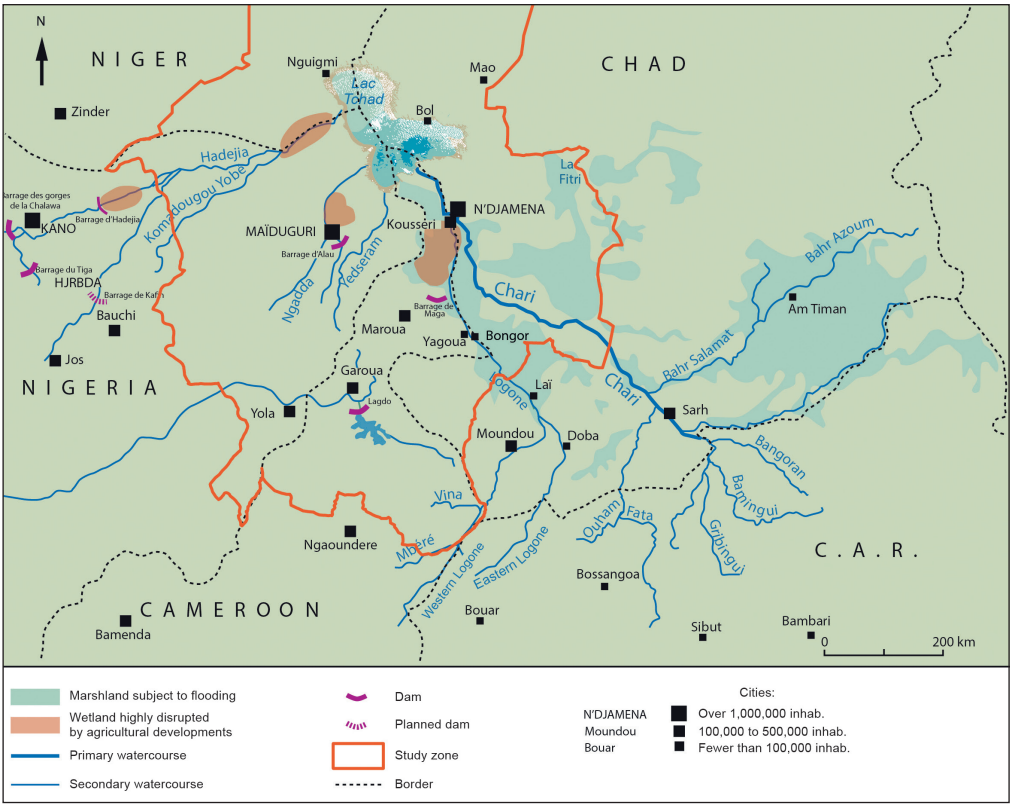
1.4. Other water resources in the study zone

The study zone's other water resources are watercourses: the Chari, Logone, Yobe, upstream Benue (including its tributary Mayo Kebbi), Yedseram, and Ngadda rivers to the south of the lake; intermittent streams in the Mandara Mountains (*mayos* in Fulfulde); floodplains (the Yaere in northern Cameroon, the overflow area from the Logone River to Mayo Kebbi [Olivry, 1986], Ba Illi plain, Massenya plain, and the Hadejia–Nguru wetlands on the Yobe River); and seasonal pools and subsurface water (see Map 3).

These water systems can be divided into a group of lands and sub-basins that can be developed and managed to provide services to the surrounding societies, factoring in potential upstream-to-downstream impacts and the area's intrinsic variability.

The Chari and Logone are two tropical rivers with one large, annual high-water period peaking in late October and a long-lasting low-water period centred around April–May. The current periods of lower low-water levels, longer than in the past, give the impression that the riverbeds are silting up. This needs confirming, since the few measurements available are inconsistent with this idea. With the exception of drought years, the rivers burst their banks during the high-water period and combine with the direct rainfall to flood the floodplains,

Map 3. Lake Chad's active watershed and wetlands



Source: Magrin, 2014a.

including the Yaere (8,000 km²) in Cameroon and the Ba Illi (up to 4,000 km²) in Chad. When the water level drops, the Yaere drains into Lake Chad through its outlet, El Beid, and into the Logone riverbed. In recent years, a huge number of new fishing channels have been dug by the inhabitants on the Cameroonian and Chadian banks between river and floodplain. They have altered the flood cycle calendar and the ecosystem services provided by these environments. Upstream of the Yaere, Maga Lake collects high water from the Logone River and *mayos* running from the Mandara Mountains, to release it into the Semry rice irrigation scheme area. This reservoir is also actively fished. In addition, the plains of Firki (Nigeria) and Diamare (Cameroon) are seasonally flooded and used to grow transplanted sorghum.

The Yobe River, rising on the Jos Plateau in Nigeria to the west of Lake Chad, feeds directly into the northern pool, but its discharge into the lake is small (less

than 1% of total inflows) with a low level of zero for 5 to 7 months. Downstream, it forms the border between Nigeria and Niger, and its water is used in part to irrigate red pepper fields.

The *mayos* run down from the Mandara Mountains and disappear into the Yaere without ever reaching the Logone River itself (Olivry, 1986). From south to north, the main *mayos* are Mayo Boula, Mayo Tsanaga and its tributary the Kalliao (the largest, with an annual flow of around 0.25 km^3), and the *mayos* of Motorsolo and Raneo. These *mayos* contribute to piedmont groundwater recharge.

The seasonal pools, broadly spread across the study zone, are important for livestock: they reduce the need to move herds to water, which helps the fattening process. Some of them have been deepened to improve their use.

In addition to the abovementioned Maga reservoir in Cameroon, there are few other dams in the Lake Chad Basin. In Nigeria, a few reservoirs in the upstream part of the Yobe River Basin are used to supply freshwater and irrigation. The main reservoirs are Tiga (2,000 Mm^3) and Challawa Gorge (900 Mm^3). Their operation has altered the natural high-water levels and calendars, interfering with farming practices and wetland ecosystems in the downstream Hedejia–Nguru wetlands. South of the lake, the Alau Dam (106 Mm^3) on the Ngadda River provides a small proportion of Maiduguri's supply.

In the Benue Basin in Cameroon, the Lagdo impoundment on the Benue River (7,700 Mm^3) is actively fished and used for electricity generation, irrigation in the valley (15,000 ha), and low-flow replenishment for navigation. Following heavy rains in 2012, the dam's floodgates flooded the valley, forcing the evacuation of 120,000 people in Nigeria and causing fatalities.

The Mayo Kebbi, a tributary of the right bank of the Benue, is part of the Niger Basin but is fed mainly by high-water overflow from the Logone River around Léré via the lakes of the Tupuri depression (Fianga, Tikem, and N'Gara), which itself is also fed by the Kabia in Chad. The Mayo Kebbi descends the falls at Gauthiot and joins the Benue River after crossing the Tréné and Léré lakes, where community fishery management projects have been developed by the German cooperation agency.

The Chari Basin's water table is found a few metres to a few dozen metres under the surface in areas where water table levels are low. Recharge is believed to occur under the dunes (Kanem), along the shores of Lake Chad and rivers, and in the lower part of the *mayos* of Cameroon. Despite recent measurements in Chad (LCBC-BGR,[11] 2014), the exploitable resource remains an unknown. Plans for new studies are under discussion.

11 *Bundesanstalt für Geowissenschaften und Rohstoffe* (Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources, German Cooperation Agency).

The Pliocene deep aquifer, at 270 m to 330 m depth with good-quality groundwater, is exploited by boreholes (sometimes artesian) in Nigeria and Niger, with a measurable impact on groundwater levels.

1.5. Other environmental aspects

The study zone is relatively flat. The low point is formed by Lake Chad, whose surface is at approximately 280 m, fed by the Chari River with its particularly low-gradient slope of 85 m for some 800 km between Sarh and Lake Chad. The few high points are situated on the southern edge of the study zone in Adamaoua in Cameroon, and more centrally in the Mandara Mountains, culminating at some 1,500 m between Maroua and the Nigerian border. More to the west of the study zone, the Jos Plateau (1,200 m) is the source of the Yobe River, with its equally very flat lower course.

A certain number of environmental characteristics and risks can be identified for the study zone as a whole, concerning in particular:

- Biodiversity and alien species
- Wooded cover, subject to intense harvesting for rural and urban families' needs
- Surface and subsurface water quality exposed to urban wastewater and an unchecked use of fertilisers and pesticides, especially sensitive since Lake Chad is the end concentration point for all products channelling through the water
- The risk of oil pollution, should operations start approaching Lake Chad and other stretches of water
- Conservation of protected areas and wildlife, despite the existence of national parks and reserves
- Implementation of the LCBC Water Charter.

There is a risk of introduction and spread of invasive plant species. The development of *Prosopis,* when the lake's northern pool dried up, is an example of this. The development of *Mimosa pigra*, a thorny shrub from Central America, is manifest on the banks of all the aquatic environments. However, the spread of *Typha* in the southern pool of Lake Chad and in the Hadejia–Nguru wetlands is not an invasion but a development due to stabilised water levels in an initially more changeable environment.

The Lake Chad Basin is so far one of the rare African river basins spared the water hyacinth. The introduction of this free-floating plant, found in the Congo basin, would be especially disastrous for all the basin's aquatic environments since they are shallow. Regular checks are therefore needed to ensure the plant has not taken hold.

As with all lakes, Lake Chad collects a certain amount of sediment every year from the rivers and wind. A research programme should be set up to evaluate past and present sediment loads and their distribution in the Chari River and the lake. This would usefully steer the LCBC's planned dredging work on the Chari River and lake to ease navigation.

1.5.1. Protected areas

The protected areas are important for a number of reasons: global biodiversity conservation, and earnings for the local populations and the governments (tourism and hunting rights). Good habitats for European migratory waterfowl along their winter migration routes and at their wintering grounds are essential to maintain their numbers.

Lake Chad in its entirety was declared a Ramsar site[12] for waterfowl conservation in 2008, with the Nigerian part designated as a national park.

The Logone River floodplain in Chad and the Tupuri depressions are other Ramsar sites situated in the study zone, which also includes the Mandelia Faunal Reserve (138,000 ha), with a high level of degradation, and the Binder-Léré Faunal Reserve with its manatees (135,000 ha).

In the study zone, protected areas cover a particularly large area in Cameroon. The North Region has three national parks, covering a total surface area of over 700,000 ha (Faro, Benoue, and Bouba Njidda) and the Beka forest reserve (3,500 ha). In these Sudanian savanna landscapes, protected areas, national parks, and hunting areas make up 45% of the region's surface area. There are seven protected areas in the Sudano–Sahelian steppe region of the Far North Region, including three national parks (Waza, Kalamaloué, and Mozogo-Gokoro) and four forest reserves (Laf-Madjam, Kalfou, Mayo Louti, and Mayo Sangué), which cover nearly 20% of the region's surface area.

In Niger, only a small part of the Termit nature reserve (10 million ha) is within the study zone.

In Nigeria, the study zone includes the Baturiya Wetlands Game Reserve on the Hadejia–Nguru floodplain and the Sambisa reserve, important for its connections with the Waza Park elephants.

All of these protected areas are exposed to a number of threats, including poaching, gold panning, encroachment by agriculture, transhumant livestock farming, and

12 The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat, commonly called the Convention on Wetlands, is an international treaty adopted in Ramsar (Iran) on 2 February 1971 for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands. It is designed to halt their degradation and loss by recognising their ecological functions and economic, cultural, scientific, and recreational value. The Convention came into force on 21 December 1975.

insecurity, all of which are due largely to a lack of resources for their protection. This encroachment raises questions regarding the considerable size of these protected areas in a context of sharp population growth and related land needs.

1.5.2. LCBC Water Charter implementation

The LCBC is an advisory body for the management of Lake Chad Basin water resources. It was set up in 1964 by the four countries bordering Lake Chad (Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria, and Chad). Libya and the Central African Republic (CAR) subsequently joined, and the Conventional Basin—the LCBC's operational zone—gradually grew to cover Lake Chad's current entire active watershed. The LCBC's aims seem ambitious given its human and own financial resources, rendering it dependent on external funding. Accordingly, it regularly hosts projects to develop the lake itself or its basin. More recently, the LCBC's mandate was extended to security (Magrin, 2014a).

The Water Charter of the Lake Chad Basin, adopted in 2012, laid down and revised the concerted management rules (LCBC, 2012). In practice, the governments can decide unilaterally on work or policies affecting the basin's water resources, as with the recent example of the embankments built on the two banks along the Logone River, which impaired the floodplains' ecosystem services. In other cases, joint decisions are made, such as the dredging of the Chari River and the project for an inter-basin transfer from the Ubangi River. Some of these initiatives are seen by the scientific community as lacking grounds in view of the available knowledge, but they are nevertheless supported by national and international donors.

2. Population dynamics and activities

2.1. Demographics: An African crossroads

2.1.1. The data

This section draws on the latest censuses for the four study countries conducted in the following years: Cameroon (1987, 2005), Niger (1988, 2012), Nigeria (1991, 2006), and Chad (1993, 2009).

These censuses present limitations specific to the zones studied in that a large share of the population is mobile (herders, fishermen, and even farmers) and therefore barely or not covered. Moreover, geopolitical problems may have distorted local results: insecurity in the Lake Chad area perpetrated by Hissène Habré supporters in the early 1990s prevented the 1993 census operations in the zone. At the same time, the Nigerian occupation of the Cameroonian side of Lake Chad (1987–2004) prevented an accurate count of the population in this area.

The main uncertainty concerns the population of the federated states of Nigeria. Although they definitely form the study area's main demographic centre, any accurate population measurement is complicated by the national political economy. The Nigerian Constitution stipulates an allocation key for oil revenues based on state and local government area (LGA) populations. This has led different censuses to overestimate or underestimate populations owing to rivalries and power struggles between territories and groups. Cameroon, also, has seen repeated controversies concerning the overestimation of population figures for electoral reasons in northern Cameroon (the area reputedly supports the ruling party in Yaoundé).

2.1.2. A highly imbalanced population distribution

The Lake Chad study region presents significant contrasts in population distribution.

The four Nigerian states alone contain over half of the population in the study area, the two North and Far North regions in Cameroon nearly one-quarter, the Chadian regions approximately 17%, and the Diffa Region in Niger a mere 3%.

Conventional wisdom might dictate that the population should generally follow a north–south gradient reflecting rainfall differentials: the Nigerien and Chadian Sahel–Saharan fringes are deserts (4.5 inhabitants per km² in the Diffa Region and 6.6 inhabitants per km² in Chadian Kanem), with settlement concentrated in Nigeria and Cameroon. However, the study area's historically sparsely populated southern edges—North Region in Cameroon—have still-moderate current densities[13] at around 40 inhabitants per km². This combines with a west–east gradient, as high Nigerian and Cameroonian densities (200 inhab/km² in Gombe and 140 inhab/km² in Nigerian Adamawa and Cameroon's Far North) decrease through to the east (60 inhab/km² in Mayo-Kebbi and a third of that in Chari–Baguirmi, both in Chad). On a small scale, therefore, the Lake Chad region looks more like a juncture between the high densities of West Africa and the less populated areas of Central Africa.

However, stark population differences are found at more detailed levels (see maps 4 and 5), reflecting local environmental conditions as they were experienced by the societies in the past and agricultural dynamics in more recent decades (sometimes endogenous and sometimes associated with development policies).

North-east[14] Nigeria is the most populous part of the study zone. The city of Maiduguri (0.9 million inhabitants in 2006, with a potential 1.5 million inhabitants

13 The figure on regional densities for this Cameroonian region does not take account of local pressure on natural resources owing to the large surface area of the protected areas.

14 Nigeria is divided into six geopolitical zones: Middle Belt, North East, North West, South East, South South, and South West. References to zones in the text are capitalised; references to general compass directions (e.g. north-east Nigeria) are lowercased and hyphenated. In historical discussions, former administrative divisions are capitalised.

in 2017)[15] and the Bornoan shores of Lake Chad post high densities, as do Gombe and Adamawa, which form an extension of the high Jos Plateau densities. The reason for this is found in the natural resources available and the Borno Empire's ancient shelter. To the north of Lake Chad, less advantaged in terms of rainfall, the kingdom of Kanem is also behind relatively high demographic densities at this latitude, concentrated between Mao, the wadi area, and the northern shores of Lake Chad.

In a highly populated Cameroonian region of the Far North, the Mandara Mountains have acted historically as mountain hideouts for populations fleeing forays by Fulani slave powers controlling the plains and have concentrated large numbers of people in small areas. Rural densities in this region are among the highest in Africa (at hundreds of inhabitants per km²).

The south of the Diamare plain also presents very high rural densities on both sides of the Chadian–Cameroonian border (Mundang, Tupuri, and Masa populations), as does the Diamare plain around Maroua. The reasons for these densely populated areas are found in their agricultural potential (transplanted sorghum plains, in particular) and strong 19th century political orders.

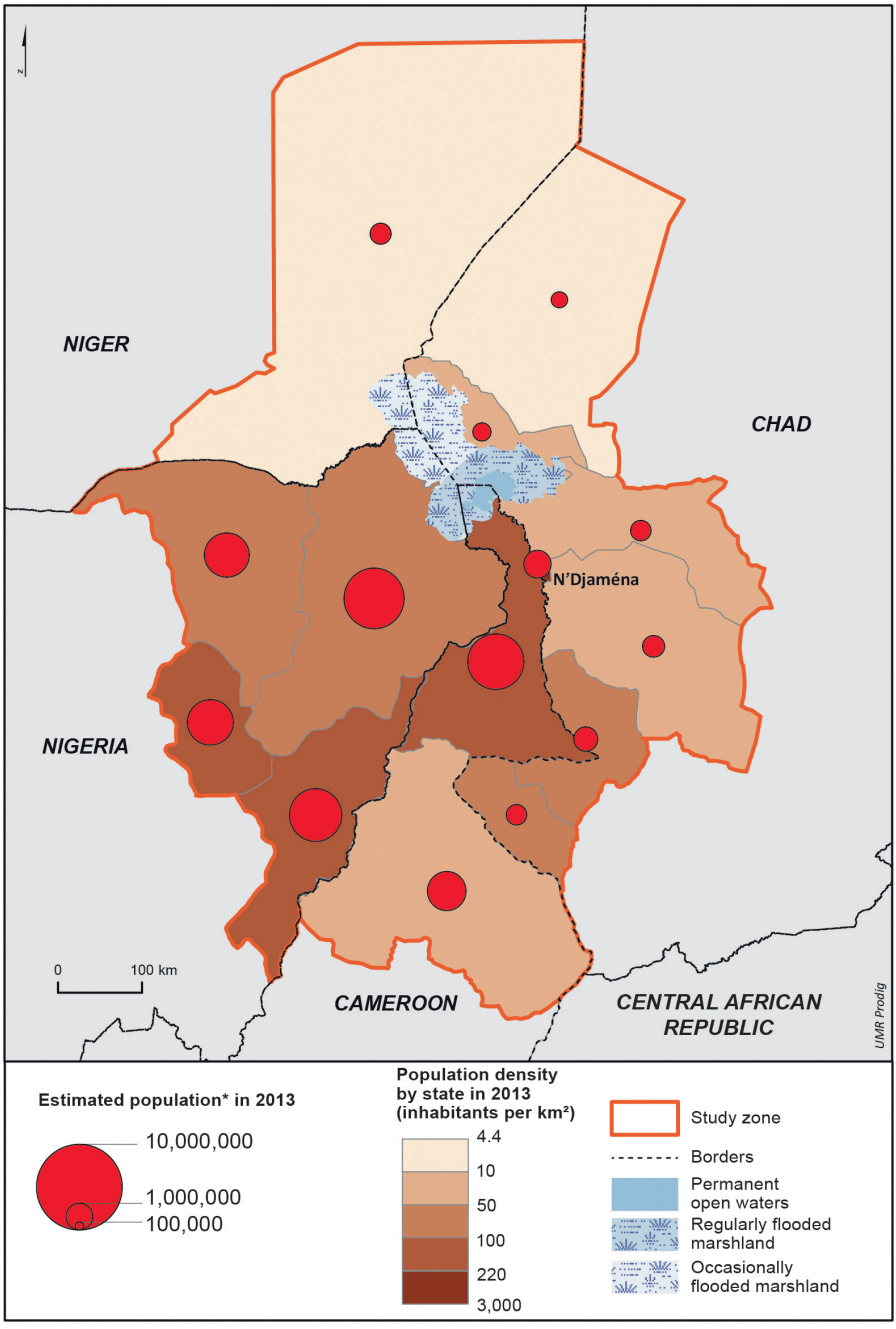
The valleys (Benue and lower valleys of the Logone and Chari) and certain wetlands (Lake Chad and the Yaere) did not historically establish large settlements in the Lake Chad region, with the exception of the polders of Kanem. They served as safe havens rather than centres of agricultural production. Today, they are often the prize in a race for land and water.

Lake Chad, its shores, and its islands today count some 2 million permanent inhabitants. It is a historically sparsely populated area, which long served as a shelter for populations rejecting Islamisation and the domination of Kanem and later Borno (known as Kuri and Buduma in French, and Yedina on the Nigerian side). These lake islanders long spread insecurity on the lake's shores, especially its southern shores, which remained deserted through to the start of the 20th century (Bouquet, 1990). Settlement of Lake Chad came in a number of waves starting in the 1950s (essentially fishing migration) and accelerated with the Sahelian droughts of the 1970s–1980s. The transition to Small Lake Chad freed up vast floodplain areas that could be used for agriculture and herding. The shores of the southern pool (Nigeria, Cameroon, and Chad) saw rapid settlement with the boom in highly productive agricultural systems trading on the urban markets of Maiduguri and N'Djaména.

In Nigeria and Chad, Lake Chad was a territory for major development projects beginning in the 1960s–1970s, but these encountered such problems (if not total

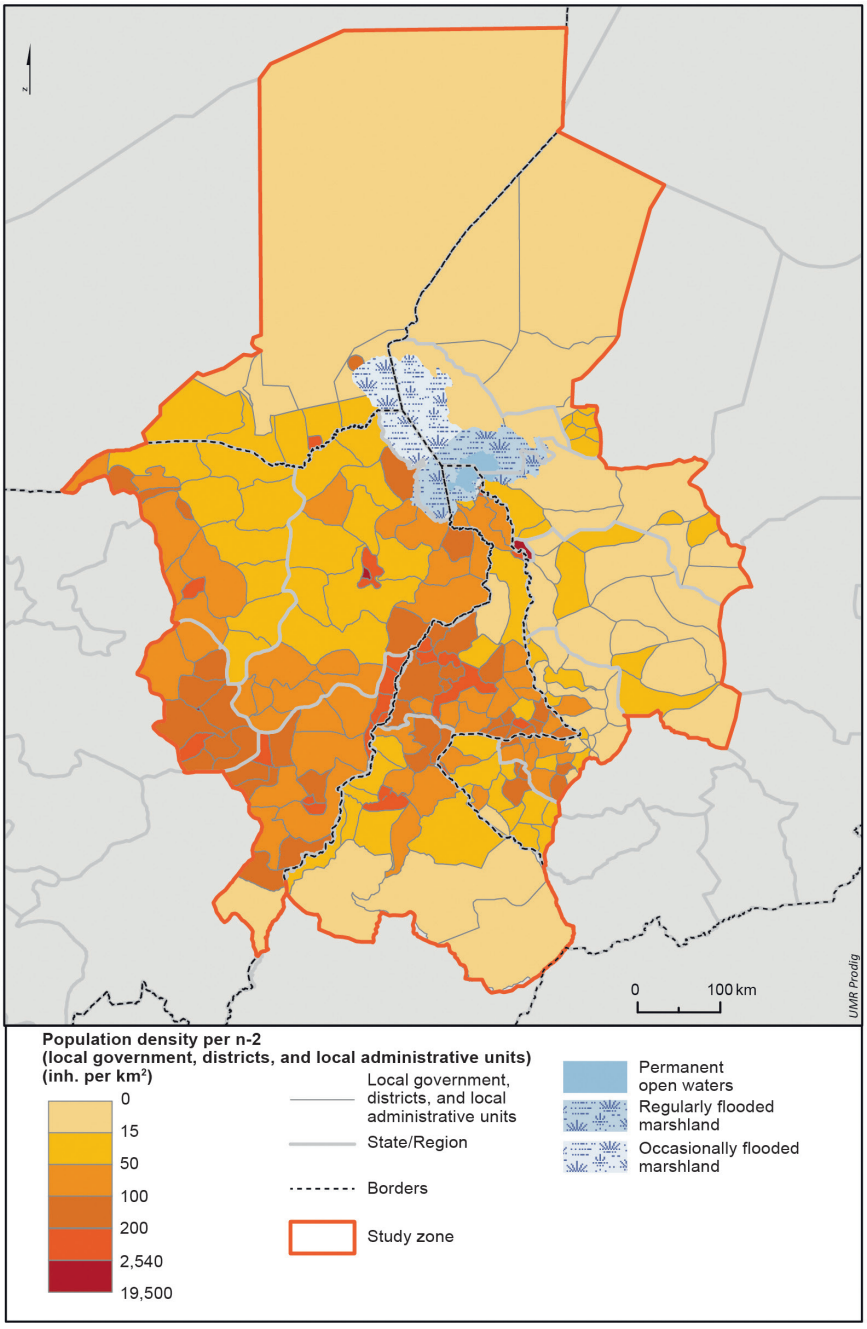
15 Including a number of internally displaced persons in April–May 2017, estimated at between 385,000 by the International Organization for Migration (OIM, 2017) and 640,000 by the United Nations.

Map 4. Population and densities by main administrative bodies



Sources: Estimates based on census data from Cameroon (2005), Niger (2012), Nigeria (2006), and Chad (2009).

Map 5. Demographic densities at the basic administrative level



Sources: Census data from Cameroon (2005), Niger (2012), Nigeria (2006), and Chad (2009).

failure in Nigeria)[16] that they cannot explain a migratory power of attraction associated with spontaneous settlement and agricultural intensification dynamics linked to urban demand. In the Logone middle valleys and the lower Chari valley (downstream of N'Djaména), hydro-agricultural structures—both public (Semry and Casier A rice-growing site) and private—have driven rural population densification that has been more spread out in time and space.

Lastly, in the south of the regional area, the Benue lands, historically sparsely populated Fulani chiefdom marches, have provided an entirely different type of pioneer frontier since the 1970s, based on rainfed cotton farming managed by the Cameroonian government in the form of the cotton development company, Sodecoton.

2.1.3. Strong demographic growth

The region posts very strong demographic growth on the whole, driven by high natural increase rates (around 3% per year). In the Diffa Region, growth is higher (+4.3% per year) than the national rate (3.7% per year) (République du Niger, 2008). In Chad, the average annual growth rate is +3.5% per year. In Cameroon and Nigeria, annual population growth is slightly lower (from +2.5% to +3% per year), but indicators are higher for the northern regions of the study zone.

An analysis of annual growth rates observed between the two most recent censuses reveals some interesting contrasts across the study region. Population growth was negative in Chadian Kanem (-0.8% per year) from 1993 to 2009, reflecting a high rate of emigration associated with the area's structural food and climate vulnerability. The highly populated areas of Nigerian Borno and the Far North of Cameroon hovered slightly above the natural increase rate (+3.2% and +3.8% per year), pointing to balanced, if not positive, net migration. The North Region's rate remained quite definitely positive from 1987 to 2005 (+4% per year) but slowed after the settlement peak of new farmers flooding to the cotton-farming pioneer frontier (+5.1% per year from 1976 to 1987). N'Djaména, the Chadian capital, posted an annual growth rate of 5%.

In 2017, population displacements due to the Boko Haram crisis invalidated any such projections. It is difficult to differentiate the proportion of displacements within an administrative space (e.g. from countryside to nearby regional capital) from those covering a longer distance. In the absence of large-scale extra-regional displacements, the easiest way to evaluate regional population growth is therefore to apply a uniform annual growth rate of +3%. This returns the finding that the regional population rose from 13.5 million inhabitants at the

16 The South Chad Irrigation Project (SCIP) and the Baga Polder Project, which were supposed to pump water from Lake Chad to develop tens of thousands of hectares, were in production only for a few years in the late 1970s: the receding lake waters and various dysfunctions quickly shelved the development (see Bertoncin & Pase, 2015).

previous census dates (on the cusp of the 1990s) to an estimated 23 million inhabitants in 2009 and 29.3 million in 2017. At this rate, the regional population will have doubled again in another 20 years.

2.1.4. A low level of urbanisation, nonetheless key to the regional system's order

The level of urbanisation[17] is low on the whole in the study area and lower than the national averages (except in Chad), reflecting the development situation. The level of urbanisation in the Diffa Region in Niger is 17% (21% national average) (République du Niger, 2008). The Cameroonian North (27%) and Far North (24%) stand at half the national average (51% in 2010). The level of urbanisation in the study area's Chadian regions is 35% (22% national average), but just 8.5% if N'Djaména is removed from the equation (République du Tchad, 2009). It is difficult to calculate the level of urbanisation in the Nigerian states, because the census provides only LGA populations with no subdivision for regional capital populations. Based on data from the Geopolis database, the urban population can be estimated at 51% in Borno, 42% in Adamawa, 34% in Gombe, and 30% in Yobe, making for an average of 41%, which is slightly higher than the national average estimated at between 40% (usual UN estimates) and 30% (Geopolis database, 2008),[18] depending on the sources. All in all, therefore, the urban population represents an estimated 33% of the study area's population.

The region's history reveals some very old but small towns, such as the Kotoko city-states on the Logone River levees (Makari, Mani, Goulfei, and Kousseri), the capital cities of Borno (Njimi, Ngazargamo, and Kukawa), and other ancient cities such as Mao (Kanem), N'Guigmi, and Yerwa (Maiduguri). The current urban network originated mainly in the principle of territorial control established by colonisation. Since then, state recognition of urban status has always coincided with the development of administrative functions, both of which combine to form an important factor for city growth. The post-independence territorial transition brought a densification of the administrative and urban fabric: in Nigeria, the formation of Borno State in 1976 saw the creation of new LGAs, each with a capital with urban status. The creation of the states of Yobe, Gombe, and Adamawa in 1991 saw the birth of new state capitals, even though their demographic weight is not always predominant. Damaturu, the capital of Yobe State, is much smaller than Potiskum to the west with its more

17 Share of the urban population in the total population. The definition of "urban" varies in the four countries considered. In Chad and Niger, the urban population is dictated solely by administrative status: any place established as a sub-prefecture (Chad) or department capital (Niger) is urban. The Cameroonian definition takes either the administrative criterion (district or arrondissement capital) or size (5,000 inhabitants) and facilities (public services and daily market).

18 The Geopolis calculation is based on an analysis of urban areas with over 10,000 inhabitants.

than 200,000 inhabitants (see maps 4 and 5 above). In the other countries, the post-1960 territorial dynamics saw a period of relative stability followed by the creation of new administrative entities, a process that has accelerated since the early 2000s with the further development of decentralisation. The number of cities has grown, but most remain small.

Besides their politico-administrative functions, the main driver of the cities' growth takes the form of their control of trade with their rural surroundings and cross-border trade, which represent the two regional economic powerhouses. Different combinations of these administrative–trade profiles can be identified:

- Maiduguri and N'Djaména indisputably lead the regional urban ranking, each with over one million inhabitants in 2012. Maiduguri is the long-standing north-eastern Nigerian metropolis. It controls and redistributes trade flows between Kano and southern Nigeria on one side, and Lake Chad, north Cameroon, and N'Djaména and Chad on the other. It is a major religious centre. It also has upper tertiary infrastructures (administrations, universities, and hospitals), but its industrial fabric is very limited. N'Djaména, the capital of Chad, concentrates the expected administrative and trade functions along with a few industries. Oil revenue investments rapidly transformed the city in the 2000s (especially after 2008). The city's modern services sector flourished (banks, telephony, and hotels), as did construction and civil engineering, which provided a large pool of employment.
- The second level of the regional urban hierarchy comprises cities with a combination of high-level administrative infrastructures, a large population (around 200,000 inhabitants), and a certain economic centrality (upper tertiary and industries). It includes Cameroonian cities (Garoua and Maroua) and Nigerian cities (Gombe and Yola).
- The third level covers cities with less comprehensive attributes but with at least one important function: Potiskum is a very important trade crossroads between the hubs of Lake Chad, Kano, and central and southern Nigeria; it is also one of the largest livestock markets in West Africa. Mubi, in Adamawa State, is largely comparable. Kousseri (an estimated 140,000 inhabitants in 2013) is a twin city to N'Djaména and the site of intense cross-border trade.
- The fourth level of the urban hierarchy concerns secondary cities with diversified functions (a more or less well-rounded administration, depending on how long the city has had its status, trade, and sometimes NGO headquarters and new universities). These cities centralise vast hinterlands, such as Diffa in Niger (18,000 inhabitants in 2010) and Bol, Mao, and Massakory in Chad (around 30,000 inhabitants each in the 2009 census); and well-populated spaces such as Pala and Bongor (some 45,000 inhabitants) and numerous LGA capitals in the Nigerian states.

– Last in the ranking is a fairly dense network of small towns resembling market towns in highly populated areas or areas with an agricultural economy and active trade.

2.1.5. Young Africa

The study region has one of the highest demographic growth rates and youngest populations in Africa, and therefore in the world. The median age in Niger in 2013 was 14.8 years old (United Nations, 2015), the lowest in the world.

The population's extremely young age structure creates huge needs in terms of access to services, especially education and health, and labour market integration. The "demographic dividend" on so many lips in recent years (Guengant & May, 2011) materialises especially where there is a sharp drop in fertility: to date, there has been no significant observation of such either in the Sahel or the study region. The total fertility rate is over 6 (6.7 in Nigeria's North East in 2011—NESTS, 2014: 155). This is due to a set of well-known causes: a high level of child mortality, a low level of education for girls, early marriage (31% of marriages before 15 years old in Nigeria's North East (NESTS, 2014: 156), and a low rate of modern contraception (93% of adults in Nigeria's North East use no contraception, as opposed to 53% in the South East (NESTS, 2014: 157).

Before Boko Haram, young people's poor employability and living conditions formed a driving factor for rural crime (Saïbou, 2010) and the business of violence, especially in Chad[19] (see Debos, 2013). Similarly, the hostage takings that seriously disrupted the Mbororo societies of Cameroon in the 2000s were partly the expression of a crisis of intergenerational relations (Seignobos, 2011; Chauvin & Seignobos, 2013), as is Boko Haram.

2.2. Spatial complementarities and rural dynamics

2.2.1. Rural dynamics in the Lake Chad region: Diversity and similarities

In the Lake Chad region, the vast majority of the population remains rural. The rural economy is still weakly diversified, mainly based on agriculture, livestock farming, and fishing.[20] Production forms are conditioned by the climate—with a climate gradient ranging from Sudanian in the south to Saharan in the north—the hydrology, the relief, and the soil conditions. The Sahelian wetlands, in

19 The cycles of rebellion observed from 1965 to 2009 were headed by leaders who rallied young people on ethnic bases. For want of success, the movements often ended with the negotiation of a coalition in return for positions in the administration and army for the leaders and their troops. Dissatisfaction in the face of broken promises and inequalities of access to resources drove many returns to rebellion.

20 Other activities using natural resources can be important locally, such as logging, hunting, gold panning, natron harvesting, leatherworking, and the production of spirulina.

particular, offer resources that can be used throughout the long dry season. The history of human settlement and powers also conditions the forms of control and access to land and natural resources—and therefore in part the forms of production. In rural economies now structured by food crops trade,[21] the distance to towns and cities and the quality of transport infrastructures give the region's agricultures an uneven dynamism, between the areas well connected to the regional cities, those relatively well connected to the southern markets, and the most remote areas. Investments in agriculture by urban entrepreneurs widen rural area inequalities and compete with family farming, still largely in the majority, for access to resources. Last but not least, agricultural policies have been implemented differently across the area.

The Lake Chad region also presents great similarities. Everywhere or nearly everywhere, livestock and agriculture—and fisheries in the wetlands—share the same areas. In the Sahelian zones, pastoralists historically rub shoulders with settled farmers who are also herders (or at least livestock owners). In the Sudanian zones, the two activities have really coexisted only since the 1980s. Herd mobility remains the basis of livestock farming. Agricultural land densification, climatic deterioration, and rising insecurity since the 1990s have even increased the need for cattle movements.

Everywhere, also, family farming is diversified (large array of animal and plant species). This diversity is as much a strategy to cope with price and climate risks as it is a way of enhancing complementarities between agro-ecological zones and between work and cash flow calendars. Agricultural produce processing, transport, and trade occupy a large number of men and women[22] and entail a wide range of levels of capital.

At study area level,[23] human and herd mobilities connect distinct types of areas and maintain complementary relations among them. We have identified four main types of areas:

- *(i)* Long-settled, densely populated spaces, which are agricultural product exporters, seasonal worker host areas, and resident sending areas
- *(ii)* Recently settled host spaces, which are agro-halieutic-pastoral product exporters, sometimes still with features of pioneer areas
- *(iii)* Vulnerable agro-pastoral areas, which are sources of migration
- *(iv)* Saharo–Sahelian areas which are used solely by pastoralists.

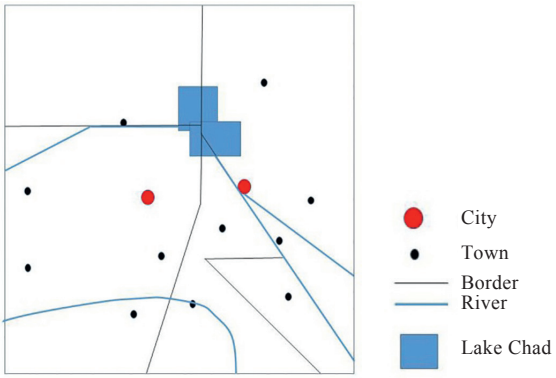
21 This food production is primarily intended for sale on national or regional urban markets but can be used for own consumption.

22 Further research would be useful to improve knowledge of these non-agricultural rural activities.

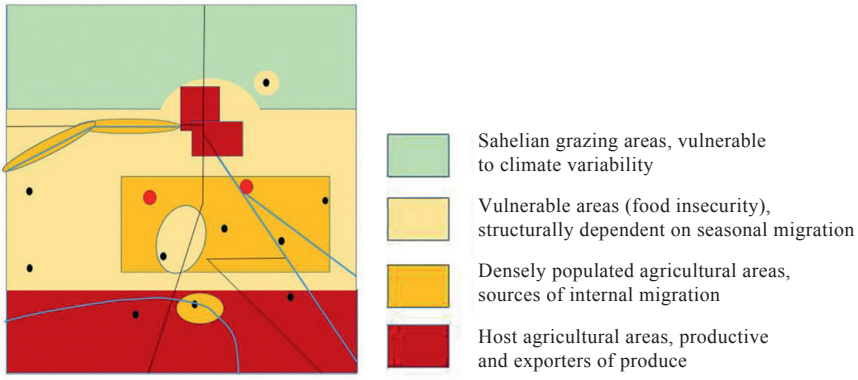
23 Note that the least is known about the situation in the Nigerian part of the study area; scientific literature on the agricultural and rural dynamics of Gombe and Adamawa is particularly thin.

Figure 1. The regional system prior to 2013

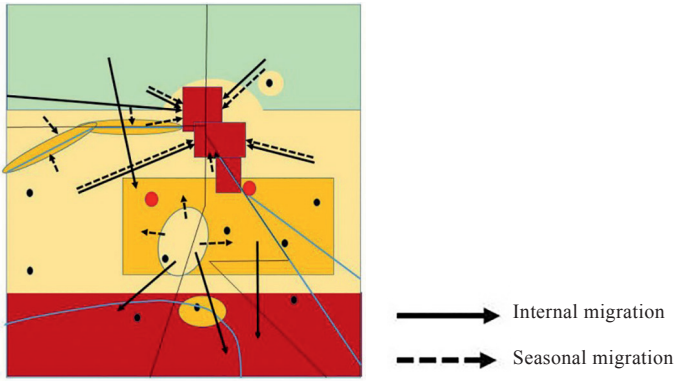
The regional system's centres and boundaries



Types of areas



Rural migration



Source: Authors.

The structure of the regional system is presented in chorem form (Figure 1), a schematic representation that captures the complexity of this territory and outlines the changes induced by the Boko Haram crisis. The chorem is used again in Figure 2 to analyse the system's destabilisation.

The system is based on the three regional centres comprising Lake Chad and the two cities of Maiduguri and N'Djaména and on the distribution of people and water, croplands, and grazing ground resources. In this system, the country's borders do not represent real boundaries, and the classic partitioning into agro-climatic zones is not sufficient to define functional complementarities, which also bear contrasts at more detailed levels. This situation partly explains why a crisis affecting one part of the region can have repercussions on a regional scale.

2.2.2. Densely populated areas exporting agricultural products and hosting seasonal workers

The spectacular development of cereal and market garden exports in response to urban demand in the second half of the 20th century was driven by a move to grow crops in the dry season—coping in part with climate variability—in the form of small-scale irrigation along the banks of the Yobe River (Niger/Nigeria), the Chari River (Cameroon and especially Chad downstream of N'Djaména), and seasonal watercourses (plains of Mora, Kolofata, and Diamare in Cameroon), as well as transplanted sorghum farming[24] on vertisol[25] floodplains (Firki plains in Nigerian Borno, Diamare plains and Benue Basin in Cameroon, the Logone and Chari interfluve and the Massenya plain in Chad). In the 1980s, climatic deterioration and the cotton development companies' financial straits turned these practices into the pillar of the local economy.

Competition on the land market exerted by urban entrepreneurs (traders and public officials) in these long-settled, densely populated spaces makes it difficult for the young generations to access land and encourages them to leave for host areas (Lake Chad and the Benue plains) or the cities. Added to this, in Cameroon, there is the problem of historical inequality and insecurity of land tenure: the traditional Islamo–Fulani chiefs force the Christian and pagan populations into renting land without any lease guarantee or into working highly one-sided sharecropping systems (Seignobos & Teyssier, 1997, 1998).

24 A real "green revolution" (as it needs no fertiliser), off-season transplanted sorghum growing has the dual advantage of *(i)* making use of flood-prone land reputed to be barren without the addition of fertiliser, and *(ii)* providing a certain amount of security from climate instability (because it is indexed to the rain budget). Labour-intensive fallow land gridding, coverage, and seeding techniques have developed less-suitable soils and claimed new land (Raimond, 2005).

25 Soil with a high content of expansive clay that gives it good retention qualities. This land is difficult to farm in the rainy season.

In the absence of fertiliser and input market regulation, the relatively high crop season expenditure involved in irrigation (motor fuel, fertiliser, seeds, and manpower) and in growing transplanted sorghum (hired labour for planting and herbicides) means that farmers have to work as hired labourers, or otherwise rent or sell the land they cannot farm.

Lake Chad Basin's major irrigation schemes—South Chad Irrigation Project and Baga Polder Project (Nigeria), Semry (Cameroon), and Bongor (Chad) schemes and what are termed modern polders on the eastern shores of Lake Chad (Chad)—initially designed with family farming specialisation in mind, came largely to nothing (see below), even though some schemes were integrated by farmers into diversified production systems and offered appreciable security against climate instability in certain years. The allocation of plots has largely benefited merchants, public officials, and other local high-ranking members of society—here too generating land inequalities and insecurity (Roupsard, 2000; Bertoncin & Pase, 2015).

2.2.3. New farmer host areas exporting agro-halieutic-pastoral products

Since the 1980s, Lake Chad and the Benue River plains have seen a steady flow of new migrants to their fertile land and lush grazing grounds. These areas are highly productive (maize, *niébé*,[26] livestock, and smoked fish from the lake; and livestock, maize, groundnut, and cotton from the Benue River plains). The migrants have managed to accumulate large surpluses from farming and fishing, often reinvesting in livestock entrusted to transhumant herders. With sharp demographic growth, land governance dysfunctions trigger recurring conflicts between users. These vary in their levels of severity and foster resource grabs in some areas (fish, grazing ground, and land) by the best-placed individuals in the economic and political circles of power (Seignobos & Teyssier, 1998; Raimond *et al.*, 2010; Rangé & Amadou, 2015). These conflicts are coupled with complex territorial conflicts, which are sometimes connected with political and citizenship issues (see Chapter 2, Section 3).

Lake Chad's catchment area stretches far beyond the study zone. In a post-drought context where the appeal of fishing is growing due to demand from the urban markets, fishers arrive from Senegal, Burkina Faso, Ghana, and Mali. Within the study zone's perimeter, they come from north-western Nigeria, eastern Chad, and western Niger to fish or farm for the season or settle permanently. A dynamic balance has set up in close interaction with the surrounding area between a highly variable environment marching to the beat of the water levels and productive systems based on occupational multiplicity, multifunctionality, and mobility (Raimond *et al.*, 2014b). Disproportionate exposure to water level changes means that Lake Chad's southern pool has seen steady demographic

26 Black-eyed bean.

densification, while the population in the northern pool has been more erratic. Along the southern shores, the growing agro-halieutic-pastoral overlap reflects an intensification of the productive process, generating remarkable economic performances (Rangé, 2016). The remoteness of the east, however, restricts its development possibilities.

The Logone floodplains form another large fishing–herding area that attracts herders in the dry season from Cameroon, Nigeria, and Niger. Fishing here has remained the prerogative of Logone River "natives", who migrate short distances along the river. Agriculture is secondary. The development of fishing channels has seen many recurring conflicts between transhumant herders and fishers, and among fishers themselves. As with Lake Chad, public policies more than water level variability are responsible for the huge uncertainty that hangs over the future of these wetland territories and societies, with thoughts of "refilling" the lake, damming the Logone River, and major agricultural projects (see Section 2 below).

In Cameroon, the Benue plains long remained sparsely populated but under the tight control of powerful Fulani *lamibé*,[27] until a massive wave of government-driven agricultural migration flooded in during the 1970s, followed by spontaneous migration from the saturated Sudano–Sahelian lands of Cameroon and Chad (Raimond *et al.*, 2010; Seignobos, 2010a). Competition to herding from the steady advance of crop fields has been exacerbated by the proliferation of declared game areas and the sheer scale of the conservation areas (covering 45% of the North Region). Conflicts among farmers, transhumant herders, and conservation administration can be extremely violent. Land mediation attempts have been made which, despite their limitations, are worth repeating (Seignobos & Teyssier, 1997, 1998; Raimond *et al.*, 2010). The Benue herding societies, weakened by the land tenure insecurity, experienced large cattle losses due to massive banditry in the decade preceding the Boko Haram crisis (see Chapter 2.3).

2.2.4. Vulnerable agro-pastoral areas, sources of seasonal and permanent migration

In the Sahelian zones, rain-dependent agricultural areas are vulnerable to climate instability, and so mobility is a historical coping strategy. In recent decades, the drop in rainfed crop productivity due to combined demographic growth and climatic deterioration has driven a growing number of young people to settle permanently in host zones or cities. In years of climate crisis, migrant remittances are decisive.

Herds are sent on transhumance to the Kadzell plains (Diffa Region), the Mao Region in Chad, lake hinterland in Chad and Cameroon, and a large part of

27 The traditional chief of a *lamidat* ("chiefdom" in Fulani or the chief's territory of command) is called a *lamido* in the singular and *lamibé* in the plural.

the study region in Nigeria. Men, especially young men, work the dry season on the lake, the Yobe River, or the transplanted sorghum plains. Most work as labourers. Those able to finance a crop season rent land.

In the long-settled Cameroonian Mandara Mountains and their Nigerian extensions, the populations historically developed sophisticated forms of production enabling extremely high population densities (Hallaire, 1991) at the cost, however, of a low return on their work. In the 1950s, the "mountain dwellers" descent to the plains contributed to an agrarian crisis precipitated by the droughts of the 1970s–1980s and climate instability (Boutrais, 1987). With the men migrating to the plains and cities, the women were left alone to manage the agricultural work in the mountains. Without secure land rights, they were no longer able to maintain the terraces (Seignobos & Teyssier, 1997).

2.2.5. Saharo–Sahelian solely used by pastoralists

Further north, in the Saharo–Sahelian zone (northern Kanem and the Diffa Region to the north of the Kadzell plain), agriculture is secondary and localised in natural depressions, or has even become impossible. Only mobile herding (camels, small ruminants, and zebu cattle) can make productive use of these resources that vary so much in time and space. Livestock numbers have shot up since the 1990s and the return of better rainfall conditions. Herding has become highly dependent on access to abundant dry-season grazing grounds in the wetlands (Lake Chad, the Logone plains, the flooded banks of the Yobe River, and basins in the Sahelian zones) and/or access to crop residues.

These herders are extremely exposed to variations in the terms of trade between livestock and cereals, which are particularly sharp and abrupt in climate crisis years. Levels of vulnerability, however, are highly disproportionate, since they depend on livestock endowments and the capacity to secure rights to resources and work. In the Diffa Region, for example, camel herders who travel to Lake Chad in the dry season earn enough for the young people to want to stay in herding. Those, however, whose movements are reduced are subject to high food insecurity and survive only through seasonal migration to the cities, the oil fields, or Lake Chad (Anderson & Monimart, 2009).

Among the impoverished herders, the disappearance of dowries of cows for women, which secured them their own capital, and the higher frequency of divorce has left some women in economic straits: the men's transhumance periods can become longer, forcing women to take on a larger share of the work without being compensated by higher status or more decision-making power (Anderson & Monimart, 2009). Smaller herd sizes have both reduced and deferred father-to-son livestock transfers, which in turn delays a son's independence. This situation fuels intergenerational tensions, which can lead to a break between the youth and elders.

Conflicts over access to grazing grounds and livestock wells, especially when connected with political and citizenship issues, are a major source of vulnerability. And these conflicts have been much aggravated by "modern" well projects blind to the question of resource rights (Thébaud, 2002). On the other hand, well-designed projects where water is seen as a governance instrument, such as the AFD-funded livestock watering projects in Chad over the last 25 years, can help secure new grazing grounds (Jallo *et al.*, 2013). The recurrence of certain agro-pastoral conflicts, around the Yobe River, and on the Borno and Yobe plains in particular, signals the need for a change of land arrangements between farmers and transhumant herders, and/or cattle movements.

2.2.6. Connected areas

Within this regional system, settlement migration connects vulnerable areas to those to which young people are forced to migrate by land constraints. Seasonal migration forms linkages between vulnerable spaces and the areas where farming and fishing offer employment in the dry season (as labourers or farmers).

Cattle are spread throughout the region in the rainy season but are more concentrated around Lake Chad and the Logone and Benue plains in the dry season.[28] Depending on time and place, the shared use of the space by farming and herding alternates between complementarities (herd grazing during flooding and floodplain cropping; and harvesting of crop residues for sale to herders) and competition (for access to rainfed uplands; and crop residue capture by farmers owning livestock).

Migration also connects rural and urban areas. Seasonal migration generally ties in with family economy diversification strategies, whereby young men take advantage of ethnic-lineage networks to find side jobs in the dry season (Iyébi-Mandjek, 2013). Given the very low school enrolment rate and small share of skilled urban jobs (see Chapter 2.1), settlement migration can be a way for young people to emancipate themselves from the authority of elders (control of productive resources, and decision-making power) in a context where their empowerment in the village and camps is compromised by land constraints and shrinking herd sizes.

28 For the sake of simplicity, we have not covered transhumance. Illustrations of part of these transhumance movements can be found in Seignobos, 2000a; Thébaud, 2002; and Réounodji *et al.*, 2015.

2.3. A crisis of agrarian societies?

2.3.1. Evolving agricultural practices that have proved effective

Dominant narratives on the Lake Chad region all too often continue to present farming communities as passive victims of repeated droughts, unsustainable demographic growth, and set "traditional" practices condemning the environment to degradation. Here, the finger points at the climate coupled with demography as the direct cause of the conflicts and supposed massive emigration.[29] Yet this view, which already guided the colonial administrators in the 1950s and continues to serve large-scale specialised cropping projects and agricultural firm projects, does not stand up to examination of the facts.

As we have seen, a few major export areas, in close interdependence with vulnerable agro-pastoral areas, provide a large proportion of the supply to the towns and two regional cities (Maiduguri and N'Djaména). The region also offers some of the most original and spectacular forms of production in Sub-Saharan Africa, allowing for sometimes extremely high population densities: the transplanted sorghum "green revolution"; erosion-control terraces and closely managed agro-biodiversity in the Mandara Mountains; close links between agro-halieutic-pastoral usages on the shores of Lake Chad; and so on. All of these practices represent real agro-ecological intensification, even if they are driven less by environmentalist concerns than a complex combination of know-how, resource rights, and price ratios.

The region's farming communities have also found effective long-term responses to a set of widespread changes occurring thick and fast since the 1970s–1980s (strong demographic growth, climate change, urbanisation, agricultural liberalisation, and privatisation of the cotton companies). New spaces were opened up to agro-pastoral colonisation with support from the cotton companies in Benue and entirely endogenously at Lake Chad. Herders changed their transhumance patterns, steering them to the wetlands and Sudanian savannas, and juggled species and races to rebuild their herds after the droughts of the 1970s–1980s, hence putting tougher grazing grounds to use (Seignobos, 2010a). Farmers adjusted their cropping techniques to develop new lands previously reputedly difficult to work (lowlands in the Sahelian areas, land regeneration using the *zaï* technique,[30] grids of levees to cultivate degraded vertisol, and high-water control systems at Lake Chad). They diversified species and cultivars (Raimond *et al.*, 2014a), combined small-scale irrigation with other water inflow systems, and recycled crop residues for animal feed.

29 This type of argument is found in the appraisals of the Lake Chad water transfer projects and appraisals of large-scale entrepreneurial agriculture projects.

30 *Zaï* is a technique that consists of digging micro-basins with a hoe to catch water and filling them with manure, and then dibble seeding millet or sorghum in the micro-basins.

During the same period, agricultural research stalled in the development of "drought-resistant" cereal cultivars (Seignobos, 2000a), while the large irrigation schemes ended in technical, economic, and social failures. Initially designed for agricultural specialisation, these schemes came up against a whole host of problems, such as soil salinisation, high production costs, marketing problems, land-use tensions, problems collecting on fees, and infrastructure deterioration. A string of "investment–deterioration–rehabilitation" cycles followed without any real success (Bertoncin & Pase, 2015).

2.3.2. Widening inequalities and crisis in rural society

This observation of the Lake Chad region's productive and innovative buoyancy does not, however, rule out the question of crisis in the agrarian societies.

In many regions, resumption of the same land-use conflicts (fishing channels on the Logone River floodplains and agro-pastoral conflicts in Nigeria and Benoue) are creating land insecurity and reflect profound governance dysfunctions. These dysfunctions benefit high-ranking political and business actors, who see them as opportunities to grab resources (Lake Chad fishing masters, major merchants, and public officials on the Benue plains). In certain regions, the land market also causes acute land inequalities, often to the benefit of the city dwellers who invest in agriculture (Diamare in Cameroon; irrigated banks of the Yobe and Chari rivers; and the countryside around Yola, Mubi, and Maiduguri). When land is rented without any guarantee on the lease, as is the case in Diamare, the rental market relegates the "immigrant" populations to land insecurity. Land inequalities and insecurity in the long-settled, densely populated areas confer a decisive role on the host zones (Benue plains and Lake Chad). These are coveted spaces for the traders and public officials, who are sometimes helped out by agricultural policy, as in the case with the agropole projects in Cameroon.[31] Aside from in Niger where the 1993 Rural Code has made for some progress, albeit not enough, land legislation in force in rural areas (Box 2) is inapt and encourages opportunistic behaviour by influential actors.

The value of pastoralism as the main activity for the sustainable development of natural, fragile, and variable Sahelian vegetation is widely recognised today. Yet only Niger has endorsed this in a law (Box 2). In Nigeria, the Acts of 1965 and 1976 establishing grazing reserves in the north of the country were never really enforced: only 113 of the 417 grazing reserves initially provided for were ever set up. Most of them were wiped out by advancing crops, poor upkeep, land speculation, local government negligence, and a proliferation of illegal constructions (Kuna & Jibrin, 2016).

31 Two agropole projects covering hundreds of hectares have recently been set up in Benoue.

In the Middle Belt, to where herders from the north have been expanding their movements since the 1970s, deadly conflicts between farmers and transhumant herders have also mushroomed over the last decade to indifference from political leaders (Higazi & Yusuf, 2017). Although the situation is less dramatic in Cameroon and Chad, there is no pastoralism code to date to give herders security. In the four countries considered, a question mark still hangs over the place of pastoralism in densely cropped areas and land-use priorities (conservation and oil projects).

Lack of regulation of the credit and input markets is also an important factor in socio-economic marginalisation. The lack of food market regulation played a large part in the last decade's food crises in Niger (Olivier de Sardan, 2008). Climate crises and temporary border closures also speed the pace of impoverishment and widening inequalities. Pastoralism is a classic example of these processes, with the transfer—following major droughts—of livestock from herders to city dwellers and wealthier farmers, relegating a large number of herders to the role of hired herder or forcing them to migrate to the city (Thébaud, 2002).

Box 2

Rural land legislation in the countries bordering Lake Chad

Post-independence land-use legislation, inherited from the colonial regime, established the principle of state property in francophone Africa (unregistered land is the property of the state). This legislation tolerates the rural populations' rights of use but denies the traditional authorities any official responsibility, aside from in Niger (recognised role in land-use conflict resolution). This legislation, developed on the private property model with the formal land title as its reference, relegates rural populations to legal uncertainty and illegality. It is inapt and has barely been enforced. Only Niger has reformed its land legislation. In Chad and Cameroon, the legislation in force dates back to 1967 and 1974, respectively. In Nigeria, the Land Use Act of 1978, still in force, assigns the management of rural land to the LGAs and state governors. Moves to reform land use are underway in these three countries.

Niger's Rural Code, adopted in 1993 after an extensive national consultation process, offers legal recognition of customary land tenure rights (Kandine, 2011). The 2010 Pastoralism Act rounded out the code, recognising herders' priority use rights on their "home grazing territories" and establishing pasturing areas. Land commissions comprising government representatives, traditional authorities, elected officials, and producer organisation representatives were set up at local level (villages, communes, and departments). Despite definite legal advances, the Rural Code suffers from enforcement limitations due essentially to the fact that the land commissions, structurally dependent on external funding, do not carry much weight compared with the traditional chiefs. Massive land purchases by elites (politicians and businessmen) and foreign investors also escape these commissions.

…/…

…/…

The draft code on private and state–own land being drawn up in Chad falls short in comparison (Berger & Cotula, 2015). It confirms the principle of the eminent property of the state over all unregistered land and it aims to transform customary rights into private property rights by making full legal protection subject to obtaining a land title. Yet it is now known that this transformation condemns young people, women, migrants, and herders to land insecurity. Land purchases by foreign investors are prohibited in frontier zones, but these zones are not defined. Pastoral matters were addressed by a separate bill passed by parliamentary majority, but withdrawn by the head of state (Idriss Déby) in late 2014 following protests by the opposition and part of civil society.

In Cameroon, the land reform underway is designed explicitly to facilitate land concessions to investors. Land reserves are being created to pave the way for major agro-pastoral projects (MINEPAT,[32] 2009). In addition, Cameroon granted the decentralised authorities natural resource management prerogatives in a 2009 decree, but the actual transfer of powers is a long time coming.

In Nigeria, a presidential technical committee on land reform was set up in 2009. Top of the agenda was the development of a land registry and formal land titles. A systematic assessment of land governance was recently conducted (Adeniyi, 2013). It is based on the Land Governance Assessment Framework (LGAF) developed by the World Bank in response to international demand for land and to promote the transfer of labour force out of the agricultural sector.[33]

Land inequalities and socio-economic marginalisation increase vulnerability to climate and economic change. There is a demand among the rural populations for more than new "technical offers". They need suitable land legislation, more price security, and easier access to credit and inputs, as well as transport infrastructures. This is why they are often in favour of the principle of contract farming (Roupsard, 2000). The cotton companies have in effect played a driving role in the development of the southern part of the Lake Chad region in Cameroon and Chad, mainly in terms of animal draught equipment and mechanisation. In recent years, some agro-industries (brewing and flour) have begun setting up in the region. Government intervention and aid agency support remain key conditions if family farmers are to benefit from the contract schemes (Burnod & Colin, 2013).

32 Ministry of the Economy, Planning and Regional Development.

33 http://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/land-governance-assessment-framework

3. Trade movements as powerhouse of the regional system

The Lake Chad region is structured by regional trade flows,[34] both internal and external. The region stands as an age-old trading space with its central location and position as a crossroads in Africa (Bouquet, 1990). As elsewhere in the Sahel, the economic dynamics of colonisation set in motion a territorial inversion: flows shifted en masse from their main focus of trans-Saharan trade with the Mediterranean to the Gulf of Guinea. This trend persists even though some reshuffling is underway due to the buoyancy of Sudano–Sahelian traffic and the Gulf of Guinea coming into competition with other seaboards (Bennafla, 2000). Within the study region, cross-border trade has grown steadily in density in recent decades, driven by multiple factors. Nigeria forms its mainstay as a location for the production and transit of globalised manufactured goods and a major consumer of agro-pastoral produce from the Lake Chad region.

3.1. Trade determinants

3.1.1. Differentials

Four differentials play a key role in the trade structuring this region.

The first differential is agro-ecological and has to do with the climate gradient between dry (Sahara and Sahel) and wetter lands (Sudanian zone). The importance in the region of age-old market channels making use of these complementarities was identified in the 1960s and described as an intermediate economic sector[35] (Couty & Duran, 1968). These channels prefigure the informal regional agricultural trade that is the economic powerhouse of the Lake Chad region's system today.

The second differential is demographic. It is the result of the existence of low population density spaces conducive to extensive stockbreeding (Niger and Chad), alongside high human density areas such as in Nigeria. Major external demographic and economic centres—Kano and coastal cities—exert predominant drawing power on the study region.

The third differential is monetary, already identified as a major consideration back in the colonial period (Chapelle, 1987). This differential was highly unstable following the period of independence, as the Nigerian currency fluctuated with a changing national economic situation influenced by oil prices—unlike the stable CFA franc (West African in Niger and Central African in Cameroon and Chad) tagged to the French franc and then the euro since 2002.

34 This section on trade movements does not deal with strictly local trade, such as trade in suburban market gardening produce.

35 Midway between a sector producing subsistence food and a modern economy concentrating on exports to the world market.

The fourth regulatory and customs differential exists between countries that are members of different regional organisations and do not always apply the same rules within one and the same organisation (ECOWAS[36] for Nigeria and Niger; and CEMAC[37] and ECCAS[38] for Chad and Cameroon). This gives the Lake Chad region the appearance of a complex hinge pin wherein regional integration hobbles forward (Magrin, 2014b).

3.1.2. "Bottom-up" regional integration

On the other hand, the Lake Chad region appears to be the theatre of real "bottom-up" regional integration (Magrin, 2014b) based on the weight and buoyancy of informal trade driven by market networks transcending the national borders.

The role of the agents in this trade is ambivalent. Different uniformed officers (military, customs, and forest officers) are omnipresent where trade circulates (border points, main routes, and markets), where they levy copious taxes with no legal basis. These taxes represent a large share of transport costs. They stand as a mark of everyday state (dys)functioning. At the same time, by adding to the price differentials, they can encourage smuggling and help make cross-border trade profitable for its operators. Consumers are the main victims of this, because they pay the price.

Among the official levies, customs duties are collected mainly on imported products entering through the ports of Lagos (Nigeria) and Douala (Cameroon), regional agricultural trade being taxed very little or not at all. Taxes levied on the markets on the basis of regional rural production provide decentralised revenues collected mainly by town councils and/or traditional authorities.

3.1.3. Trade scale-up factors

Trade has intensified in recent decades due to an increase in supply stimulated by growth in demand and improvements in communication networks.

As elsewhere in Africa, the boom in the locally marketed food trade has sometimes come in response to the crisis in the former export crops (groundnuts in northern Nigeria and cotton in northern Cameroon and south-west Chad) (Magrin, 2001). In northern Cameroon, for example, Diamare's groundnut, maize, and onion crops developed in this context. Agricultural intensification and wetland farming (transplanted sorghum plains, Lake Chad) have also contributed to meeting urban demand.

36 Economic Community of West African States.

37 Central African Economic and Monetary Community.

38 Economic Community of Central African States.

Growth in demand is the direct consequence of increasing urbanisation and changes to feeding habits in the cities, where the consumption of market garden produce and fresh meat and fish is rising. The upbeat macroeconomic situation of the 2000s also played a role in driving up trade of all the products: consumption was stimulated by the oil fields with the redistribution of their rent, especially in Chad. This commercial intensification dates further back in Nigeria.

3.2. Trade areas, places, and lines

The Lake Chad region's trade map can be read as structured by three hubs (Map 6): Lake Chad, first of all, as a rural hub turning out its large production of agro-halieutic-pastoral produce, but also a space driven by trade flows associated with the border-based differentials; and then the two major regional cities, Maiduguri and N'Djaména, each with over a million inhabitants, as centres of consumption and redistribution, mainly to and from the cities in southern Nigeria.

3.2.1. Output centres

The rural areas posted as net producers of agricultural products (*i.e.* producing more than they consume in a normal year) are often densely populated areas (partially irrigated valleys such as the Yobe River valley, the lower valleys of the Logone and Chari rivers, and the transplanted sorghum plains of Diamare in Cameroon, Massenya in Chad, and Firki in Borno) or are pioneer settlement areas (Lake Chad and Benue River plains).

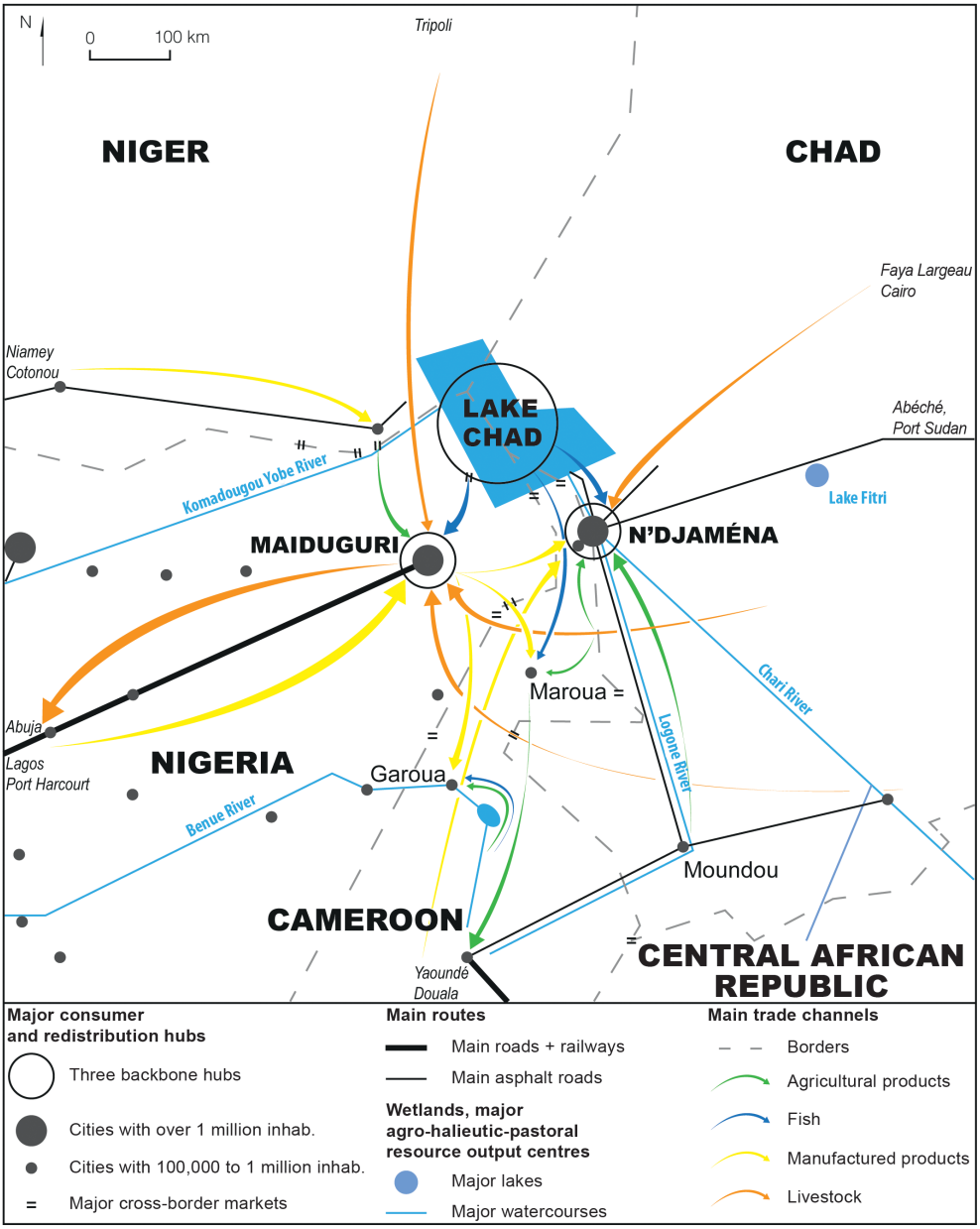
Trade circulating on the Atlantic seaboard–inland route includes manufactured products imported by the Nigerian and Cameroonian ports (mainly from Asia: motorcycles, telecommunications equipment, vehicles, etc.) and Nigerian industry production (smuggled fuel, soap, sugar, oil, brewing products, cement, etc.). Before the Boko Haram crisis, Maiduguri was the major centre for the redistribution of this merchandise to Niger, northern Cameroon, and Chad. Another channel supplies the region with manufactured products from the port of Douala via Ngaoundéré and the road to N'Djaména via Garoua, Maroua, and Kousseri. A third, minor route originates in Niger and the ports of Benin and Togo (second-hand vehicles).

3.2.2. Consumer centres and redistribution points

The large cities provide outlets for food and manufactured products, particularly Maiduguri and N'Djaména, but to a lesser extent also cities such as Mubi, Yola, Gombe, Potiskum, Maroua, and Garoua.

Border towns are important crossing trade points and often work in partnership either side of the border: Kousseri (Cameroon) and N'Djaména (Chad); Banki (Nigeria) and Amchidé (Cameroon); Gambaru (Nigeria) and Fotokol (Cameroon); Yagoua (Cameroon) and Bongor (Chad); and Figuil (Cameroon) and Léré (Chad).

Map 6. Pre-Boko Haram traffic driving a three-hub regional system around Lake Chad



Source: E. Chauvin.

Large urban centres and border towns have large permanent markets and warehouses to store production, hence playing a role in re-exporting to other towns, mainly Nigerian. These are the central points of the transnational market networks and hence the places of residence of the major traders heading the networks.

Alongside these major urban markets are found secondary urban markets and rural markets, generally weekly and often specialised in agricultural, livestock, and fish products. The rural markets play a role in collecting the production from their respective surrounding areas and in supplying the surrounding countryside with agricultural and manufactured products. The network of weekly markets has its own hierarchies and specialisations. Geographical location with respect to production areas, consumer outlets, and especially the main communication routes largely determines the hierarchy between these local agricultural markets. For fish in the Lake Chad area, Doro Léléwa in Niger, Darak in Cameroon, and Baga Kawa in Nigeria used to be nerve centres for smoked fish processing and sale. In livestock, Massakory (Chad) is a major market at the crossroads between Kanem, Lake Chad, and the transplanted sorghum plains to the north of N'Djaména. Mubi (Adamawa) plays an equivalent role in livestock in addition to making the most of a virtually tri-border position facing the Cameroonian border and not far from Chad. A similar position on the Chadian border is enjoyed by Figuil (Cameroon), a major trading centre for groundnuts (bought from northern Cameroon and across south-west Chad and sold depending on demand to southern Cameroon, Gabon, and Nigeria).

3.2.3. Transport

Although transport conditions are slowly improving in the Lake Chad region with the modernisation of infrastructures and the spread of new means of transport, the area remains marked by the poor quality of its network.

A number of appreciable improvements have been made in the passenger and goods transport sector over the last 60 years. In the lakeside area, outboard motor boats were introduced in the 1950s, gaining in speed and payload, without ejecting the less expensive, more manoeuvrable canoes. On land, railway tracks were laid in the 1960s–1970s between Maiduguri and the southern cities of Kaduna, Lagos, and Port Harcourt in Nigeria (1964), and from Ngaoundéré to Douala in Cameroon (1974). At the same time, the road system has improved, slowly, when the oil-producing countries' economic situations have allowed. The Nigerian network was largely surfaced in the late 1970s. The Chadian system has caught up since, tarmacking the N'Djaména–Guitté road in 1994 and the different roads from N'Djaména to Moundou, Ngaoundéré, Sarh, and Abéché in the 2000s. The spread of cheap motorcycles from Asia throughout the region in the 2000s came as a revolution in terms of access to mobility for country dwellers and inhabitants of outlying urban areas (Seignobos, 2014).

The Nigerien and Cameroonian road systems have not been improved to the same extent as in Nigeria and Chad. In Cameroon, Maroua is connected to the nearby towns of Garoua, Mora, Yagoua, and Mokolo by good-quality surfaced roads, but it remains cut off from the more distant towns (Kousseri, N'Djaména, and Ngaoundéré) due to the advanced deterioration of entire road sections (Mora–Kousseri and Garoua–Ngaoundéré). In Niger, the only major road in the study region is between Niamey and Diffa. The China National Petroleum Company (CNPC) started rebuilding the Diffa–N'Guigmi road in 2012, but the growing insecurity stopped work in late 2013. Beyond the town of Kinzayde (60 km east of Diffa), a very poor track leads 70 km to the lake. Some tracks enable traffic to circulate inside the lake's northern pool in the dry season, but only in years when the water level is low.

However, these national network quality differences call for some qualification. Although the Nigerian roads have been largely tarmacked, they are not well maintained and some roads have become quite impracticable, such as the north–south road from Abadan to Dikwa and the tracks around the lake.[39] In Chad, the roads along the northern edge of the lake are in a very poor state of repair between Massakory and Bol, and are even worse from Bol to the Nigerien border.

3.2.4. Merchant networks working the channels

The trade channels are operated mainly by regional and ethnic diaspora networks that have spread throughout the study region's four countries: Hausa, Kanuri, Arab, Fulani, and Fezzanian.

These networks are fairly stable. They already played an important role in pre-colonial trade, in association with the forest zone regions and the trans-Saharan trade channels through to the Mediterranean. Hausa and Kanuri set up in trade outside Nigeria long ago, mainly along the pilgrimage route to Mecca and as the centralised pre-colonial states expanded. In the 19th century, traders arrived in the region from Libya and Sudan, acting as middlemen in trade with Arab countries (kola, skins, etc.) (Igue, 1995). In the same period, Fulani and Kanuri merchants, well established in the *lamidats* of northern Cameroon, extended their networks into neighbouring areas.

In addition to their ethnic identities, the merchant networks are structured by a business rationale of response to changes in production, markets, and outlets. They play on their origins, being quick to claim membership of one community or another as the opportunity arises. These merchant networks have

39 The same situation is found for the Ngaoundéré–Garoua and Maroua–Kousseri roads, which are old, rarely repaired asphalt roads. Repair work has been carried out on the Garoua–Maroua road on a number of occasions, the last time being in 2010.

their connections with the national and local corridors of power in the shape of clientelism and political support.

Other players are involved in regional trade. Networks of female traders specialise, for example, in the sale of fruit to N'Djaména, Bongor, Léré, and Pala (Chad). Some traders have recently migrated to the Lake Chad region, such as the Arab refugees from Ati who fled the repression of Hissène Habré's regime in the 1980s. In a more cross-cutting manner, the development of locally marketed food, off-season crops, and market gardening produce is increasingly encouraging producers to sell their harvests directly on the large permanent markets.

3.3. The main trade channels

3.3.1. Leading agricultural surplus area channels

Many flows are sent to the cities and production deficit areas from the most productive, dense, and migrant host areas, mainly along the shores of Lake Chad and the plains of the Benue and Logone rivers.

At the lake, flows from the southern pool are greater than from the northern pool.

The northern pool suffers from its poor accessibility by road and its remoteness from consumer centres. Products are nonetheless sold *(i)* to N'Djaména by traders and via the sales of the Lake Chad Development Company (SODELAC) to the National Office for Nutrition and Food Security (ONASA); *(ii)* to the north (Kanem, Bahr El Gazal, and Borkou) and Niger, often on camelback; and *(iii)* to Nigeria and Cameroon across the lake by canoe (Magrin, 2015). Larger flows from the southern pool take better transport routes. The vast majority of production from the lake's Nigerian shores goes to Maiduguri, Chad's production to N'Djaména, and Cameroon's to Kousseri and Maroua. Despite its demographic weight, Nigeria does not absorb all the lake's production, as prices are sometimes lower on the country's markets than in Cameroon and Chad, especially for cereals. The Nigerien region of Diffa is nonetheless more clearly oriented towards Nigeria, with flows of black-eyed peas, onions, and peppers.

The Logone River plain produces primarily rice, market garden produce, and dasheen (Kim country), sold mainly to N'Djaména on the Chadian bank, and Maroua and Kousseri on the Cameroonian bank. South-east Chad exports groundnuts, maize, and onions (from Binder) to the Cameroonian cities for the Nigerian and Cameroonian markets. The North Region exports maize and groundnuts to southern Cameroon. Cotton is also exported to the south and the Cameroonian coastal ports.

3.3.2. Heavy livestock channels

Nigeria and its cities form the main outlets in the Lake Chad region for heavy livestock and trade in skins.[40] Maiduguri is the major regional centre for assembling livestock and sending them on by train to Kano, Lagos, and the other cities of Nigeria (Ilorin, Onitsha, Jos, and Ibadan). A string of markets on the Nigerian borders pick up the flows from the neighbouring countries: Geidam, Damasak, and Malam Fatori on the Niger side, and Gambarou, Sigal, Djilbé, Banki, Kerawa, Mubi, and Sorao on the Cameroon side.

Flows are channelled into two or three main routes to Nigeria:

- Livestock from Niger is sent from the north to N'Guigmi. The routes then fork off to markets alongside Lake Chad (Karamga) and those east of Diffa (N'Guiel Kollo).
- Chadian livestock, reputedly by far the largest flows in the region, enter Cameroon by three main routes: *(i)* the northern route via the markets of Massakory, Karmé, Dourbali, and N'Djaména, and through Ngueli to Gambaru; *(ii)* the central route through the markets of Guelendeng, Abba-Liman, Bongor, and Léré to Banki; and *(iii)* the southern route from Pala-Doumrou to Mubi. The animals sometimes come from far-flung areas to feed the Nigerian giant, including from Roro, one of the largest livestock markets in Chad, situated in the Moyen-Chari Region at the juncture of the Sahelian pastoral space, the Salamat Region, and southern Chad.
- Cameroonian livestock, whose numbers are sometimes supplemented by herds from Chad (if not, by extension from CAR), cross the north of Cameroon, with the major livestock markets concentrated around Maroua (between Banki and Guider, with the exception of Adoumri through to Garoua). Bogo and Molvouday play a particularly important role in the north Cameroon trade network, assembling and sending livestock on to Nigeria.[41]

3.3.3. Manufactured product channels

Manufactured product channels take a variety of routes, which change depending on policing activity and the preferences of the drivers ferrying between Nigeria and the other countries in the sub-region.

40 Although trade in skins is much less important economically, it is an age-old sector that was already feeding regional trade in pre-colonial times. This long-standing traffic is particularly well developed in Chad around two hubs, Sarh and Guelendeng, and is sent to Banki and Mubi (Nigeria). The collection of skins reaches into Sudan and the CAR.

41 Livestock exports to the plateaux of Adamaoua in Cameroon and the country's southern markets have long been restricted by a health barrier, set up also to prevent competition between the stockbreeders of Adamaoua and northern Cameroon.

Traffic from Nigeria to Cameroon and Chad is ferried by young people nicknamed "stuntmen" in Cameroon, who are used to the dangerous roads. They know exactly how to skirt around uniformed officers intent on regulating the traffic, not to mention taxing it. The massive influx of motorcycles in the mid-2000s changed the shape of traffic in manufactured products from Nigeria. Prior to this, the main form of transport was by bicycle, with cyclists able to carry up to two or three 50 kg sacks of sugar or 200 litres of petrol per trip. In Cameroon, for example, smuggled petrol, dubbed "*zoua*", sells for half the petrol station prices. Other trade movements are plied by small traders and "wheelers and dealers" in such items as televisions, radios, medicinal drugs, fabric, underwear, and beauty products.

In addition to this dispersed traffic are the more formal transport channels, trucking manufactured products across the region's highways. The main importers here are large traders established in the region's major cities (N'Djaména, Maroua, Garoua, Diffa, etc.).

3.3.4. Fish trade channels

Wharfs and fish markets operate around the main fishing areas of Lake Chad and the fisheries of the Benue and Logone rivers. Production has grown and marketing channels have expanded with the improved means of transport, the spread of a new preservation technique by the Igbo (*banda*, smoking) in the 1950s (Couty & Duran, 1968; Bouquet, 1990, Vol. 2: 294; Jolley *et al.*, 2001), and the adoption of a new fishing technique from Mali (*dumba*)[42] (Krings, 2004).

Around the lake, prior to the Boko Haram violence, the largest fish market was Baga Kawa in Nigeria, which collected the flows of fish before redistributing them to Nigeria's towns and cities. The other main markets are Doro Léléwa and Gadira in Niger; Darak and Blangoa in Cameroon; and Kinasserom, Fitiné, and Guitté in Chad. The flows of fish from Lake Chad are sent predominantly to Maiduguri and secondarily to N'Djaména (mainly fresh fish). Smoked fish goes to the towns and cities in the south of Nigeria, while dried fish is sold primarily in northern Cameroon and CAR.

In the lower Logone fishing zone, Maroua is the hub for the dried fish trade, collecting and redistributing to the nearby towns of Bogo, Mora, Mokolo, Mubi, Garoua, and Yagoua. Dried fish from the Logone River faces competition more to the south from smoked fish from the Benue and Mayo-Kebbi fisheries. These fisheries supply the border market of Badadji and secondarily Pitoa, Guider, and Garoua, which serve to distribute smoked fish through to the south of Cameroon (Yaoundé).

42 A *dumba* is a row of fishing traps strung across side by side. When well positioned across water channels, these traps can capture nearly all the resources in a given area, at the expense of fishers downstream.

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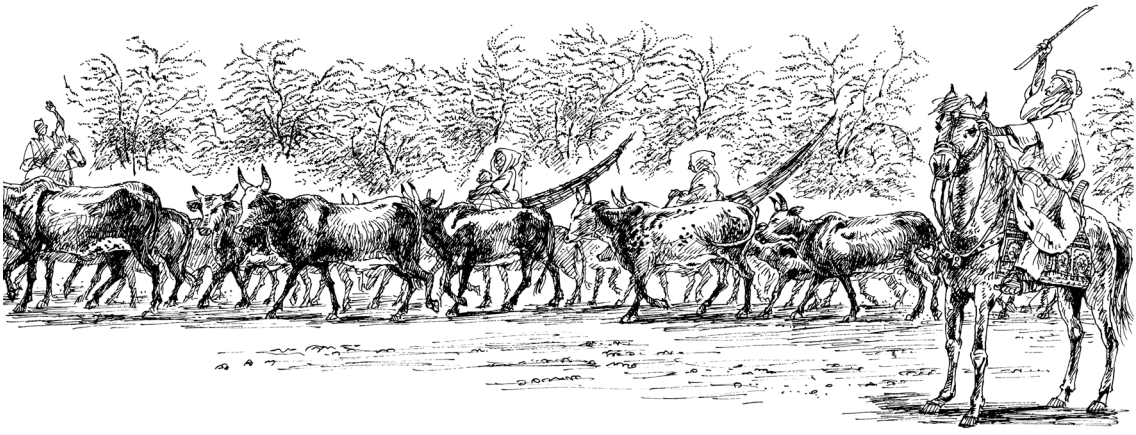


Transhumant Arabs near Lake Chad.

Chapter 2.
Development and governance: A fragile space

KEY POINTS

Central government often appears to have neglected the regions in the study zone, which are all outlying areas with the exception of the city of N'Djaména. In an area already suffering from massive poverty, drought in the 1970s and then economic crisis in the 1980s dealt a fatal blow to the post-independence period development projects and left the informal sector dominant. Efforts to kick-start public policies encouraged by the upbeat macroeconomic climate of the 2000–2014 period have not been enough to really change the populations' access to public goods: the region's rentier states are weak and have little control over development. Governments have had to compromise with the local powers of traditional leaders and religious authorities in order to govern a space with largely porous borders. Despite some differences, due largely to colonial heritage, the history of these regions is beset by troubled politics, countless land conflicts, endemic banditry and corruption, and recurring tensions between and within states. The population's vulnerabilities are hence multifaceted. Considering the complexity of their long-term history, they cannot be reduced to purely ethnic or religious problems, since divides and inequalities in the region's societies are also driven by all-important age brackets, social status, and gender relations.

1. Development in the region before Boko Haram: National outlying areas and their (too) slow integration?

The first step to be able to understand the development situation in the study region before the Boko Haram crisis is to identify different chains of events more or less conducive to development since independence. The study region's spaces can then be considered in terms of where they stand within their respective countries with respect to development projects and access to services.

1.1. Relations with national centres and how they have evolved

1.1.1. Influence of the general economic contexts

Four phases since independence in 1960 can be identified in terms of the promotion of development, whose timing varies by country.

The first phase is situated in a macroeconomic climate on the whole conducive to the implementation of public development projects, despite political unrest far from the study region (Nigerian Civil War from 1967 to 1970 and rebellions by National Liberation Front of Chad starting in October 1965). This phase lasted through to the early 1980s in Nigeria (oil slump in 1984) and Cameroon, but ended in the 1970s in Niger and Chad when they were hit by drought.

The second phase corresponds to a development crisis period: droughts in the Sahel and conflict in Chad came on top of the African economic crisis, marked by a drop in commodity prices and consequently in state rents, the debt crisis, and the introduction of the structural adjustment plans (1980s–1990s). These plans brought downsizing to the civil service and to semi-public corporations running farming operations (e.g. the cotton companies) and placed governments under the virtual economic authority of the Bretton Woods institutions.

The third phase, beginning in the early 2000s, was brighter with the effects of the debt cancellations, an upturn in commodity prices (especially oil, long produced by Nigeria and Cameroon and joined by Chad in 2003 and Niger in 2011),[43] and also growth in globalised investments enabling the resumption of public development policies. Geopolitical rivalry between traditional partners and emerging countries brought a certain amount of competition to the field of aid. Mounting violence in Borno State, starting in 2009, weighed heavily on the development agenda.

A fourth phase took shape with the commodity price drop in autumn 2014. This coincided with the escalation of the violence and its spread from north-eastern Nigeria to the border areas of neighbouring countries. Development has since been crowded out by the humanitarian emergency in the hardest-hit areas. Elsewhere, the public development effort is flagging under the weight of the economic crisis.

1.1.2. National backwaters?

Two main factors explain how the study zone's areas are placed compared with their national territory: their geographic situation and their demographic weight (Map 7). In Chad, these areas account for 29% of the population and form the politico-economic centre of gravity. In the other three countries, they are national backwaters (Igué, 2006), representing respectively 30% of the population of Cameroon, 9% of Nigeria, and just 3% of Niger.

The national backwaters—overlooked by the first post-independence development policies focused on consolidating the nation states from the central regions—are subject to tension between a certain marginality and economic vitality driven by the transnational trade dynamics (Grégoire & Labazée, 1993).

43 Niger's historical rent is provided by Aïr-mined uranium, whose price rose when oil prices shot up in 2008 before plummeting following the Fukushima nuclear disaster in March 2011.

Cameroon

The North and Far North regions of Cameroon are extremely remote from the country's politico-economic centres of gravity that form the Yaoundé, Douala, and Western Highlands triangle: 1,000 km separate Yaoundé from the Cameroonian window of Lake Chad, and the Adamaoua cliff has long stood as a serious barrier to communications between northern Cameroon and the rest of the country. The name given to the country's northernmost region, Far North, a far cry from today's politically correct forms of territorial marketing, speaks volumes about the area's image as seen from Yaoundé.

Yet the North Region was a project space in the 1960s and 1970s. The father of independence, Ahmadou Ahidjo, was from the environs of Garoua, and the North occupied a prominent position on the national development agenda, with investment in transport (the railway arrived in Ngaoundéré in 1974) and the road system, urban infrastructures (especially in Garoua), the Lagdo dam for electricity, a hydro-agricultural project (stopped by the crisis in the 1980s), and tourism to a lesser extent. Rural development was largely assigned to the cotton development company, Sodecoton, set up in 1974, while the Semry rice irrigation schemes on the Logone River were intended to contribute to national food self-sufficiency (Seignobos & Iyébi-Mandjek, 2000) before being pared back to the more modest objectives of regional food security.

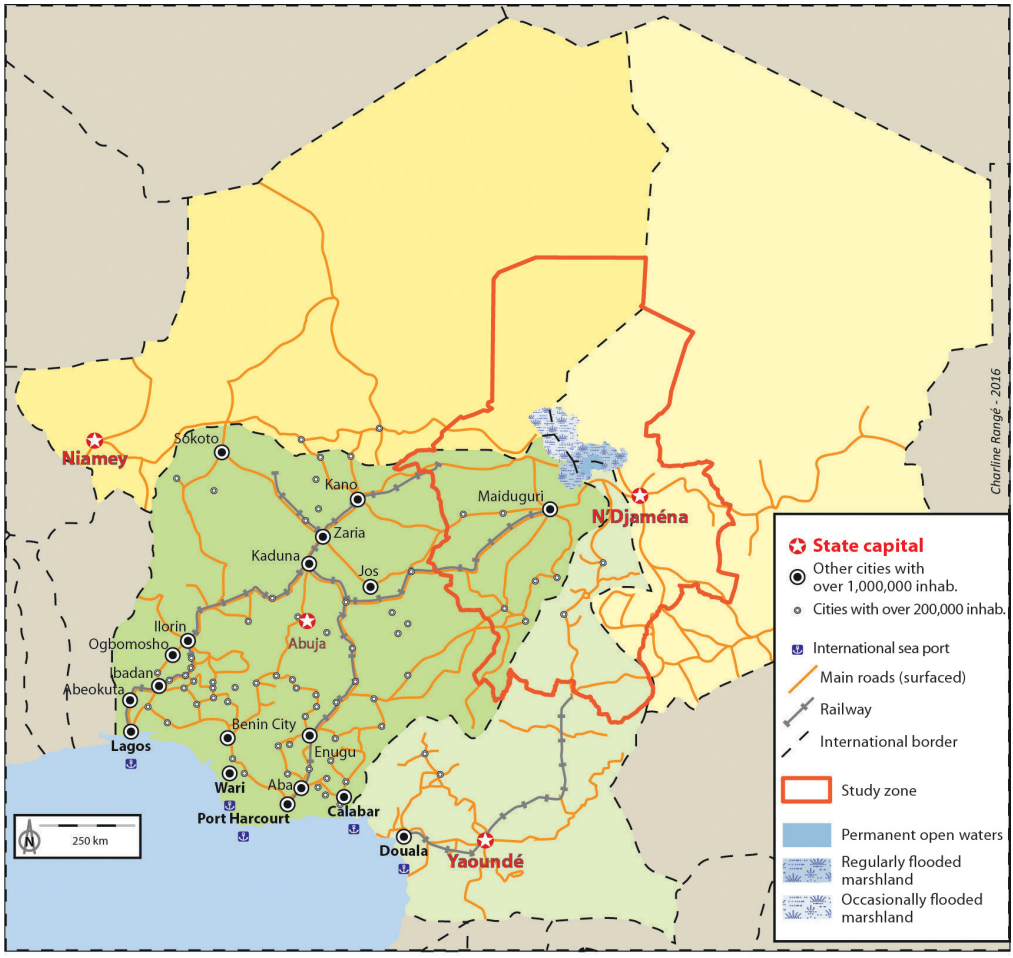
The 1980s marked a turning point with the advent of the economic crisis, a change of regime in Yaoundé, and Paul Biya's arrival in office in 1982. The North Region, at first politically suspect, slid down the agenda of national priorities. Huge contrasts appeared in northern Cameroon between certain more advantaged spaces with better access to services—generally the towns and cities (especially major cities such as Garoua and Maroua)—and marginal spaces such as the Lake Chad area, which was under-administered until Nigeria's occupation of the Darak area from 1987 to 2004.

In the 2000s, the national balance of power—a tacit alliance between President Biya's party and the traditional chiefs and major merchants of the north in the face of rebel forces in the west—maintained a certain economic status quo in the north (Muñoz, 2008). Since the Nigerian withdrawal from the Cameroonian side of Lake Chad, the government's presence has been felt a little more in the region. The cotton sector is seriously struggling on account of fluctuating cotton prices and production sometimes being diverted to Nigeria, as it was in 2011 (Seignobos, 2014).

There is therefore a strong general sense in the North and Far North regions of Cameroon[44] of injustice compared with the southern part of the country: underemployment and an imbalance in access to the civil service, services, and infrastructures (roads, clean water, education, health, and electricity). This is a frequent explanation given locally for the enrolment of young people into Boko Haram.

44 Expressed, for example, in the 2002 Memorandum from the Greater North (see Boxes 4 & 5).

Map 7. The study region and the states bordering Lake Chad



Sources: Atlas du Cameroun (2006) ; Atlas du Nigeria (2003) ; Atlas du Tchad (2006), éditions du Jaguar, Atlas Jeune Afrique.

Niger

The Diffa Region in far-eastern Niger is also a remote backwater, 1,200 km or two days' journey at best from Niamey, with a small demographic weight that makes it even more marginal.

Aside from a tarmac road built to link Zinder, Diffa, and N'Guigmi, reached in 1975, and a livestock well campaign conducted around the same time, the region has received little public investment outside of regular food aid flows

to Manga and Kadzell with their structural deficit in cereals. Ecological crises (droughts) and political crises (repeated coups d'état in the 1990s–2000s followed by a freeze on international aid) have done nothing to help investment in this outlying area.

The Diffa Region found itself included in the national development scene (Box 3) in the 2000–2014 period, when it was a stronghold for President Mamadou Tandja (1999–2010). At the same time, it saw the development of an oil project (2009–2011) and the establishment of a protected area, the national nature reserve of Termit Tin-Touma (Magrin & van Vliet, 2014).

Box 3

Development progress in the Diffa Region (2000–2014)

"The CNPC's oil project (2009–2011) consisted of building oilfields in the commune of Ngourti and an east-north-east/west-south-west pipeline to connect them to a refinery near Zinder, whose production is for the national market (Dittgen, 2012). The project, the infrastructures it built (airfield and roadworks and maintenance), and the social dynamics it triggered—an outcry from the commune authorities joined by environmental NGOs over the activity's impacts and what they saw as inadequate impact studies—helped integrate Niger's eastern fringe more into the national political scene, even though this did not prevent tensions such as the Diffa riots of 27–28 April 2013. In May 2013, as if in response to these protests, the revision of the 2007 Oil Code extended the 15% of oil revenues earmarked for the local authorities in the oil-producing areas to the department and regional authorities, providing N'guigmi and Diffa, in addition to Ngourti, with additional revenues.

"However, the Diffa Region benefited from far more public investment in the 2000s than in the previous decades. Dams were built on the Yobe River basin to develop river oxbows. A large well-based irrigation scheme was established in Ngagam, between N'guigmi and Bosso. The urban centres also benefited from investments. In 2008–2009, Diffa received various urban infrastructures and fixtures (roads, lighting, etc.). A polytechnic teaching oil and electronics techniques was opened in 2012, as was a college of education—Diffa had been the only regional capital without one. Work started in 2013 on surfacing the Diffa–N'guigmi road, which had not been done since it was built in 1975, rendering the road impracticable. In the same period, Dosso, elevated to department status, received a prefect, a doctor for its health centre and law courts, the water supply was extended to the surrounding villages, and the electricity grid was extended to the Nigerian border town of Malam Fatori."

Source: Ngaressem & Magrin, 2014: 229

Nigeria

North-eastern Nigeria is just as much of a backwater in that it is extremely remote from the national economic centres—the megacity of Lagos, the Niger oil-producing Delta, the federal capital of Abuja and, in the north, the metropolitan region of Kano. Although the four north-eastern states are demographic heavyweights in the Lake Chad region, they carry little demographic, and especially economic, weight at federal level.

As the most populous territory in the sub-region, the area gained a good transport system earlier than its francophone neighbours. The railway and road connections are behind the thriving trade in smoked fish from Lake Chad. In the 1970s, in the midst of the oil boom, the Nigerian shores of Lake Chad were the scene of a major hydro-agricultural operation, now cited as one of the most famous white elephants in the history of development: the Baga Polder Project and the South Chad Irrigation Project (SCIP) were supposed to turn the oil rent into cereals (Ngaressem & Magrin, 2014). The drought-driven transition to Small Lake Chad and the Nigerian government crisis, exacerbated by the oil slump, brought about the project's downfall (Bertoncin *et al.*, 2015).

Although locals and local officials still have hopes of re-launching the project (Bertoncin & Pase, 2012), it is barely mentioned by the Nigerian government. The government may well support the efforts made by the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) to take forward the inter-basin transfer project (NESTS, 2014), but it has not produced any detailed arguments as to its possible implications for the development of Lake Chad and north-eastern Nigeria. Hopes for north-eastern development are pinned more on oil exploration, ramped up in the 2000s (at the same time as Niger, Cameroon, and Chad). However, the security agenda has stolen a march on development since 2009.

Chad

The Chadian regions in the study area have a different status due to their proximity with the capital. Lake Chad gave its name to the country and is only a hundred or so kilometres from N'Djaména, the only national capital in the study zone. The fairly densely populated Chari–Logone interfluve forms a bridge between the capital and the country's populated south rich in resources (a historical cotton-growing area turned oil producer since 2000). South-west Chad is both part of the study region, due to its strong migratory and trade relations with Cameroon (and Nigeria beyond), and in southern Chad. It is a cradle of cotton growing and among the areas that used to bring in the best cotton harvests. It is also one of the spaces where cotton growing best endures, despite the sharp decline affecting Cotontchad since the early 2000s.

These Chadian regions are also highly diversified, extending from the Saharan zone (north of Kanem) through the Lake Chad wetlands zone and the capital N'Djaména to the Sudanian zone (Mayo-Kebbi Ouest).

Of note, therefore, from the point of view of development are the following:

- Kanem, a beneficiary of pastoral water management projects, wadi development projects and regular food aid;
- Lake Chad itself, whose southern pool's northern shores around Bol formed a major project space in the 1950s and 1970s based on developing polders. Following a period of stagnation against a backdrop of Chadian civil conflicts, the projects backed by different donors, primarily the African Development Bank (AfDB), took off again in the 2000s (polder rehabilitation with full water control and extension of semi-polders with partial water control) (Ngaressem & Magrin, 2014). The southern Chadian shores, meanwhile, provide an original example of endogenous development (Lemoalle & Magrin, 2014; Rangé, 2016).
- The capital N'Djaména. After being struck by conflict (extensive damage from 1979 to 1982 and sporadic fighting in 2006 and 2008), substantial public investments were made in the capital post-2008 in a climate of high oil revenues. These investments were highly concentrated in the capital's urban road system (Magrin, 2013) and in public buildings (supreme administrative court, museum, maternity and paediatric hospital, secondary schools, etc.). Some of these buildings were financed by new partners, including China (new National Assembly, inaugurated in 2013).
- The Mayo Kebbi Ouest Region has long depended on the cotton economy, while Mayo Kebbi Est depended on agricultural schemes on the Logone River plain and development of the Cameroon Chad–southern Chad–N'Djaména crossroads position, consolidated by the construction of the N'Djaména–Bongor–Moundo surfaced road in 2000. This region also has a dense population of NGOs, due in part to the climate of religious competition between Protestant and Catholic churches.

1.2. A marginal development region

1.2.1. Poor countries

The study region covers four of the world's poorest countries. These countries generally post low development and service access indicators. Two different Human Development Indicator (HDI) situations can be identified: Chad (183rd) and Niger (185th) have long been at the bottom of the world ranking, which covered 186 countries in 2014. Cameroon (150th) and Nigeria (151st) are in the middle of the group of Sub-Saharan African countries, on the whole trailing behind in the world ranking.

In Chad, ten years of oil production—whose revenues are factored into the indicator under per capita gross domestic product (GDP)—have done nothing to improve the situation. This speaks volumes about the weakness of the socio-health indicators and the difficulties in using oil rents for development.[45] In Nigeria, massive long-established oil rents have failed to drive development owing to the sheer size of the population and, more importantly, a multitude of problems with the handling of domestic socio-political tensions and the building of a state that can provide public goods (corruption and various dysfunctions). Per capita income in 2015 ranged from $360 (Niger) to $2,640 (Nigeria), with Chad ($775) and Cameroon ($1,250) in the middle. Life expectancy at birth ranges from 50 to 55 years, and infant mortality stands at between 50 and 100 per thousand live births.

1.2.2. Poor regions

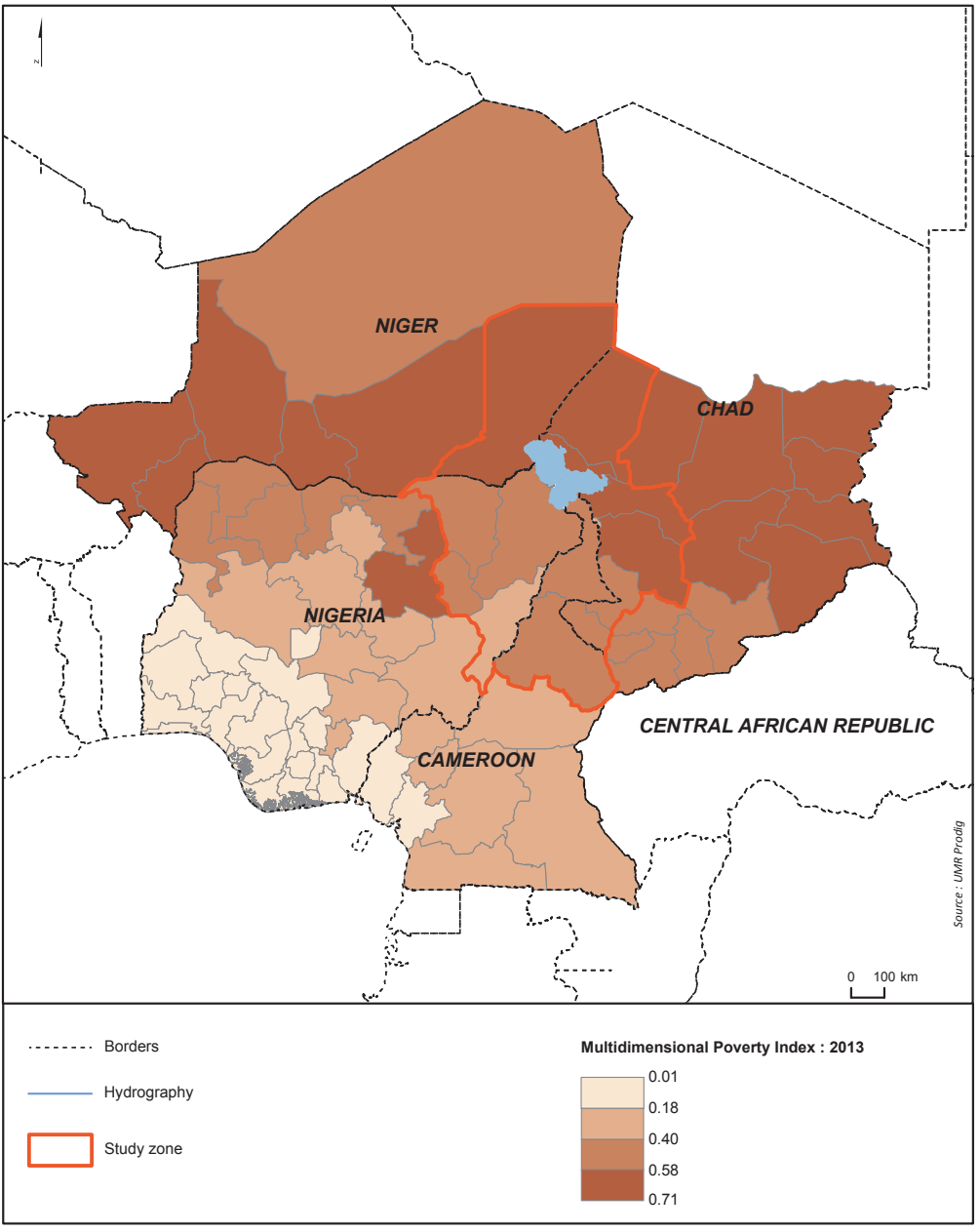
When the study regions are placed in the West Africa/Central Africa bloc (Map 8), the intensity of poverty measured by the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)[46] by and large falls into step with the agro-climatic areas: the Sahelian strip is the poorest (Kanem and Diffa), and poverty decreases towards the Gulf of Guinea. Borno and Adamawa in Nigeria post among the study zone's lowest poverty rates—an angle rarely considered when seeking to explain the Boko Haram phenomenon.

The study region's spaces post generally lower service access indicators than their national averages, and are often in or around the bottom of regional rankings. N'Djaména in Chad is the only exception in terms of regional rankings. However, progress has sometimes been observed due to investment efforts by governments and development partners, especially in the period from the early 2000s to the escalation and spread of the Boko Haram crisis.

45 The HDI is a composite indicator including both the standard of living and education, and health outcomes.

46 The MPI includes a number of indicators on health (infant mortality and nutrition), education (number of years of schooling and child school attendance), access to basic services (clean drinking water, electricity, and sanitation), housing quality, cooking fuel, assets, etc.

Map 8. Regional poverty measured by the Multidimensional Poverty Index



Source: www.ophl.org.uk, University of Oxford, 2013.

1.2.3. Generally low levels of access to services

Access to services remains difficult, in particular for the poorest populations and those living far from the cities and market towns where supply is concentrated. Everywhere, difficulties finding skilled staff for the infrastructures (education and health, in particular) reflect the study area's physical and symbolic distance from the central regions of the countries concerned (with the exception of N'Djaména and Mayo-Kebbi in Chad): civil servants often refuse to post to lands depicted as frightening and remote, especially when there is no incentive system to compensate being so far away; and the local backward education systems go some way to explaining the low number of civil servants originating from these regions. At a detailed level, some places turn out to be particularly unattractive to civil servants, as in the case of the health hazard represented by Lake Chad and the isolation of the Mandara Mountains (Cameroon and Nigeria).

Education

Primary school enrolment ratios and literacy rates are low on the whole.

In Niger, the gross primary enrolment ratio is 57% in the Diffa Region, placing it around the national average. In Cameroon, the rate of literacy for 15–24 year olds in the Far North was 47% in 2007, the lowest rate in the country (posting over 90% in ten of the 14 regions) (Republic of Cameroon, 2010).

In Chad, a long-identified socio-cultural divide can still be observed between Muslim populations—with their more difficult relationship to schooling—and Animist and Christian populations long open to Western schooling (Khayar, 1976). The gross school enrolment ratio around the lake (Hadjer el Hamis, Lac Region) is half the national average (45% as against 91%). Gross primary school access rates[47] are much higher in Mayo-Kebbi (approximately 110%) than in neighbouring Chari–Baguirmi (around 65%). The primary completion rate is 76% in Mayo-Kebbi Ouest compared with just 15% in Chari–Baguirmi.

This north/south divide is found again in Nigeria where, in Muslim areas, the British colonial power banned Christian missionary schools and left the region's children to continue to attend Koranic schools that hardly prepared them for the challenges of modern life at independence.[48] The north, with 54% of Nigeria's population according to the results of the 1963 census, hence accounted for just 3% of the number of pupils in secondary education. The 1970s oil boom failed to

47 This rate expresses total enrolment in a given level of education, expressed as a percentage of the official school-age population for that level. It is over 100% when children older than the normal age are enrolled.

48 In 1937, for example, the 36,838 Koranic schools in Sokoto Province taught 210,285 students as opposed to 2,000 in the government schools (Tibenderana, 1988: 226).

close this gap. In Nigeria's North East,[49] the gross primary enrolment ratio stood at 47.7% in 2013, half that of the southern states and in last place nationally (NESTS, 2014: 158).

Gross secondary enrolment rates are also low in all the regions around Lake Chad, at less than 10% in Chad and Niger, much like the equally low national grades (Ngaressem & Magrin 2014: 238). The secondary completion rate is 6.8% in Chari–Baguirmi (and just 2.8% for girls), as opposed to 33% in Mayo-Kebbi Ouest (10.8% for girls). The secondary enrolment ratio in Nigeria's North East is 30%, ranking bottom of the six national statistical zones.

There are marked differences among girls' education situations. In Niger, for example, the Diffa Region's schools count 48% girls, and 43% in secondary education. In Cameroon, the Far North posts the country's lowest primary education gender parity index (0.2 versus 1 in Douala and Yaoundé, and 0.7 nationally [Republic of Cameroon, 2010: 17]). In Nigeria's North East zone in 2009, girls accounted for 35% of pupils in school in the local government areas (LGAs) around Lake Chad (Ngaressem & Magrin, 2014: 237). The rate of female literacy is reportedly 37%, second to last in the national ranking ahead of the North West (NESTS, 2014: 157). In Chad, the primary completion rate in Chari–Baguirmi is 21% for boys, but a mere 9% for girls. More girls are enrolled in school in Christian-majority regions, such as Mayo-Kebbi, but the gap with Muslim regions narrows over the school years as the female school dropout rate is also very high.

This situation and large observed gaps with the different countries' central regions are a source of great frustration, expressed in particular in Cameroon in a memorandum written by key figures from the northern regions (Box 4).

This somewhat bleak picture needs to be put in perspective as regards the significant progress observed since the 1960s, and especially since the beginning of the 2000s. In Chad, the Lac and Hadjer Lamis regions had just 20 schools in the 1970s. In 2010–2011, they had 571. In 1976, there were just three lower secondary schools around the lake in Bol (Chad), N'Guigmi (Niger), and Makari (Cameroon). By 2011, the Chadian lake regions (Lac and Hadjer Lamis) alone counted 29 lower secondary schools and 14 upper secondary schools; 13 in the Nigerian LGAs of Borno State; and 14 in the Diffa Region in Niger. The pupil–teacher ratio stood at 27 and class size at 29. The schools are relatively well endowed with teachers and classrooms (Ngaressem & Magrin, 2014), even though access to them is sometimes difficult for scattered and mobile populations (herders and fishers).

49 Nigerian statistics often do not distinguish between individual states but consider six major regional zones. The North East covers the four states considered in this study (Borno, Yobe, Bombe, and Adamawa) along with the states of Bauchi and Taraba.

Box 4

Excerpts from the Memorandum from the Greater North (2002)

"Whereas North Province has one secondary school for 94,000 inhabitants, South Province has one secondary school for 17,000 inhabitants. These figures are much aggravated by the fact that there is a very low level of private education in the North due to the populations' extremely low income levels. For example, in 2000–2001, private education numbers stood at 231,771 pupils in Centre Province, 288,455 pupils in Littoral Province and just 47,133 in Far North Province, 27,624 in North Province and 21,866 pupils in Adamaoua.

"[…] It is also of note, regrettably, that these public establishments have a chronic deficiency of teachers: the central government does not hire enough teachers from the North and those from the South refuse to work in the North. Despite this alarming situation well known to the public authorities, the government has not only made no significant effort to reduce this gap using public monies, but refuses to direct to the North foreign aid intended to build school establishments.

"[…] In higher education, the North is entirely absent from the administration of the country's six universities. Not one rector and, of the 23 faculty deans, just one from the North. All of these factors, combined with the impoverishment of the parents, are dangerously jeopardising our children's university education: less than 2% of university students are from the North."

Another important change is the densification of the higher education supply in the region. This is decisive to broaden the horizons of these regions' young people and train the managers they need. Nigeria has long had a dense network of universities, including the leading universities of Maiduguri and Yola in the North East. The largest universities are funded by the federal budget and are therefore dependent on public monies, themselves tied to oil rent fluctuations. In Cameroon, the creation of a university in Maroua in 2008—starting with the Higher Teachers' Training College and the Higher Institute of the Sahel, and then the faculties a few years later—was seen as an important step taken by the government of Yaoundé towards acknowledging the Greater North's problems.

In Chad, the creation of a graduate school for exact and applied sciences in Bongor in 2003, and then a university in Pala in 2014 as part of a widespread move to establish universities throughout the country, reflects this political will to decentralise higher education, as does the creation of a university in Diffa in Niger in 2014. Nevertheless, the irregularity of public funding and the low level of national human resources are hampering the running of these institutions.

Health

It is highly significant that infant mortality rates have hardly fallen since the period of independence: they stood at between 160 and 222 deaths per thousand live births before the Boko Haram insurgency in 2009, compared with 240 in the late 1950s (Cohen, 1967; National Population Commission, 2008). Yobe, for example, counted just 61 doctors, 40 midwives, and 460 health centres for 2.6 million inhabitants in the 2006 census. For want of hospitals and maternity facilities, women had to give birth at home, which largely contributed to infant deaths due to health complications.[50]

Access to services also remains at very low levels, despite apparent healthcare progress. In Cameroon in 2004, under-five mortality stood at 205 per thousand live births in the North Region (the highest level in the country, with the average standing at 144). This was immediately followed by the Far North. Douala posted a rate of 75 per thousand live births. Nigerian Yobe, for example, had one doctor per 37,704 inhabitants (WHO standard: 10,000) and one midwife per 57,500 women of childbearing age (WHO standard: 5,000). The situation in Chad is sometimes worse: the health district of Baga Sola, on the lake, has one doctor per 60,000 inhabitants and one midwife per 19,000 women, while Mayo-Kebbi Est and Chari–Baguirmi have just one doctor per 102,330 inhabitants (Ngaressem & Magrin, 2014). Comparatively, the national average was one doctor per 32,000 inhabitants in 2009 and one midwife per 10,500 women of childbearing age.[51]

The few improvements observed since the 2000s have not managed to make any significant change to the health situation. In Chad, for example, the health district of Bol had 13 health centres and one hospital with 19 beds in 2005. In 2013, the health district divided into two, had 23 health centres, and two hospitals with a total of 49 beds (Yemadji, 2015: 90).

Lastly, interesting regional healthcare initiatives have been conducted to take up the challenges associated with cross-border mobility: since 2001, the LCBI[52] (AfDB/LCBC) has been working to bring AIDS under control, targeting especially those populations made vulnerable by their mobility, especially fishers, herders, traders, migrants, and prostitutes (Yemadji, 2015).

50 As in the North West, nearly half of the births counted in the North East were at home. The 2010 National Living Standards Survey found that only a minority of women (less than 39% and 25% for births of girls and boys, respectively) received skilled birth attendance (NESTS, 2014: 135).

51 http://www.afd.fr/webdav/shared/PUBLICATIONS/THEMATIQUES/savoirscommuns/15-Savoirs-Communs.pdf

52 Project in Support of the Lake Chad Basin Initiative.

Water supply

Niger and Nigeria appear to have better access to improved water sources (modern wells, boreholes, public fountains, and indoor taps) than Chad and especially Cameroon.

In 2004, the Diffa Region in Niger reported 106 mini-water supply systems and 983 modern water supply points providing safe drinking water to 78.5% of the regional population (Ngaressem & Magrin, 2014). In Nigeria, deep groundwater boreholes have long been used, not without problems at times (Ngaressem & Magrin, 2014), and an estimated 60% of households have access to safe drinking water in the North East, ranking it in fourth place of the six national zones (NESTS, 2014: 224).

In Chad, access to clean water varies by region. It stands at just 30% in the Lac and Hadjer Lamis regions, 39% and 45% in Mayo-Kebbi (Ouest and Est), and 62% in Chari–Baguirmi. In Cameroon in 2010, only 23% of the population in the North Region and 29% in the Far North had access to safe drinking water (ranking 13th and 10th of the 14 regions for a national average of 43.9%) (Republic of Cameroon, 2010).

1.2.4. The underemployment threat

Underemployment is an important aspect of poverty in the Lake Chad region, even though its expressions are fairly generic across Africa. The situation can be understood by comparing demand from the demographic structure with the supply of employment. The demographic upsurge has driven a massive influx of young people onto the labour market. In the study region, new-entrant cohorts (young people reaching the age of 15) totalled an estimated 80,000 in Chad, 142,200 in Cameroon, 10,380 in Niger, and 315,000 in Nigeria in 2015![53] An equal number of jobs would need to be created every year for these young people to find their place in society—assuming there are enough jobs for the labour force already on the market, which is far from the case.

A very limited amount of formal employment is available, whether urban or rural. The formal work situation still bears the scars of the 1980s–1990s economic crisis, which rolled back public and private employment everywhere. A freeze on all hiring in the civil service prevailed through to the debt cancellations of the 2000s (INS Niger, 2006). In Cameroon, land tensions have been exacerbated by a "back to the village" phenomenon found among young people who had gone to work in the southern cities and a shift in investment from urban to rural

53 These estimates are based on the new-entrant cohort figures given by the *World Population Prospects 2012* report (United Nations, 2013), taking, for each country, the percentage corresponding to the weight of the population situated in the study area as a percentage of the total population.

areas. Mobility, health, and family instability problems have complicated the youth employment issue even further (Le Bissonnais, 2010).

In Nigeria, the north's unemployment rate is an estimated 31.9%, which represents the highest level in a country with an average of 23.9% unemployment (NESTS, 2014: 27). In Cameroon, the youth underemployment rate is highest in the North and the Far North regions, at 82–84% as opposed to 46–48% in Douala Yaoundé and 60–70% in the other regions (Republic of Cameroon, 2010: 12).

A major socio-economic integration window for young people appears to have opened in the informal economic activities situated at the urban/rural interface, in cross-border trade (trade, transport, handling, catering, butchery, etc.) and in small communication services (mobile telephony). However, these activities are highly volatile and sometimes bordering on the illegal. Casual jobs based around the railway stations and Chinese motorcycle taxis called "clandos" consequently form a sourcing ground for organised gangs of roadblockers and Boko Haram (Seignobos, 2014). The potential of these activities in terms of employment, room for progress, and the positive socio-economic doors they may open remains sketchy to date.

Youth underemployment and retarded socio-economic empowerment (seen from the increasing age of marriage) have become important concerns for donors and policymakers in the south and the north (Filmer & Fox, 2014; World Bank, 2008). They have driven the creation of a multitude of funds, offices, and plans to support youth employment in Cameroon, Chad, and Niger in the last decade. In Cameroon in 2011, a plan to recruit 25,000 young people into the civil service was highly publicised in a mark of the end of structural adjustment and the dawning of a new era.[54] It targeted 17–40 year olds, estimated at 7,258,000 people (INS Cameroun, 2011). The young people were hired but without the operating budgets to enable them to work. In Niger, the Diffa oilfield has created jobs in the region but has also sparked strong social protests (Box 4).

However, as with service access, the employment situation has been changed only superficially by the relatively upbeat economic environment prevailing since 2000. Not only has it reportedly created few jobs—the World Bank acknowledges that growth driven by foreign direct investment in the extractive sector and agriculture has proved insufficiently inclusive—but it has most importantly benefited mainly the southern metropolitan regions and has barely touched the Lake Chad region.

54 The first large-scale civil service hirings since the 1980s–1990s also took place in Niger and Chad—albeit equally in Senegal and the sub-region—in the same period, taking advantage of the bright post-adjustment macroeconomic situation. In Cameroon, the announcement of these job creations also coincided with the presidential campaign.

Box 5

Indigenous youth employment and the Diffa Region oilfields

"In November 2008, 265 young unskilled labourers had already been hired by the oil companies, 57 of whom were from the commune of Ngourti. Their working and wage conditions are controversial: attractive for some, especially the poorest rural young people, but unacceptable if not degrading for other, better-off young herders or young urban jobseekers unaccustomed to heavy work. To give an idea, an unskilled labourer currently earns 60,000 CFAF per month, including food and board, for equipment installation, rising to 100,000 CFAF when operations actually start. Allegations concern wages, food (quantity and quality), work pace, housing and so on. Some authorities condemn 'spoilt brats' who leave the job before they have even really started working, raising the risk that 'the Chinese' will be discouraged and call in foreign manpower. A total of 1,500 job creations, including 500 skilled jobs, are ultimately expected over the next three years. The production phase is expected to employ 400 steady jobs and 800 temporary jobs.

"So is this a real opportunity to be seized or illusion? It is too soon to say, but a huge imbalance can already be observed in access to key information: real benefits, skills required, and how to apply and track progress with applications. The people of Melek still have far from a clear concept of the formalities they have to conduct to secure the oilfield jobs. Here in Melek, there are no motorcycles, no mobile phones (no coverage), no bush taxi line, no community radio station, and no nearby market. The only, very expensive, means of communication to get news from the family is by satellite telephone ('Thuraya'). This isolation does nothing to help adjust to the changes underway and serves as a wake-up call to a growing divide between the Ouled Sliman and other herding communities such as the Mohamid Arabs."

Source: Anderson & Monimart, 2009

2. Weak states with hybrid forms of governance

Anglophone Nigeria and francophone Niger, Chad, and Cameroon are all weak, rentier states with little control over the region's development. Governments have had to compromise with local powers, especially traditional leaders and religious authorities, to govern a space with highly porous borders. The differences found among the four countries are due to their colonial legacy and the post-independence development of political regimes that have remained authoritarian in Chad and Cameroon, but are more open to multi-partyism in Niger and especially in Nigeria, in a decentralised federal framework. Yet the waning authority of the traditional leaders, local dysfunctions, and the absence of

programmatic vision from political parties competing for power have ultimately resulted in the hybrid forms of governance that are to be found everywhere in the region.

2.1. Differences between countries

Despite differences in political culture between anglophone and francophone countries, Nigeria, Niger, Chad, and Cameroon have certain characteristics in common. Together with the Boko Haram insurgency, the governance of their male gerontocracies partly explains the roots and protraction of the crisis because of social injustices, endemic corruption, authoritarianism, security force abuses, anaemic administrations, ballot rigging, etc. Nigeria, Niger, Chad, and Cameroon hence look like *anocracies*, featuring nepotistic institutions, clientelism at the expense of performance, a very weak central government presence in rural areas, the recurrent influence of traditional chiefdoms and religious authorities, persistent ethno-regionalist tensions and, sometimes, insurgencies to protest against governments seen as illegitimate in a context of concentration or absence of separation of legislative, executive, and judicial powers (Pérouse de Montclos, 2009).

Yet there are also sharp differences among the four countries. Unlike Niger, Chad, and Cameroon, Nigeria has never had a one-party rule or president for life. This largely explains the vitality of its party system, which is much more developed than in the neighbouring countries. Despite accusations of electoral fraud, Nigeria and Niger are also more democratic. Their presidents were elected in 2015 and 2011, respectively, and there was a real alteration of power in Abuja, the first through elections since independence. Conversely, the longevity of the presidential regimes in Chad and Cameroon, in place since 1990 and 1982, respectively, reflects a political ossification that does not guarantee stability. N'Djaména, for example, was threatened by armed rebellions in 2006–2008, not to mention its support to guerrilla movements in CAR and Darfur. In Chad, the government remained in power by the force of arms (Debos, 2013). Cameroon, for its part, is neither a democracy nor a dictatorship, but something in between.

Structural factors—mainly geographic, demographic, and historical—also explain the differences in each country. With the exception of N'Djaména, the regions around Lake Chad are extremely remote from the capitals. In Nigeria in colonial times, for example, the Kanuri people of Borno were governed from Kaduna, the capital of the Northern Region, 800 km away. The British relied mainly on the Hausa–Fulani of the Sokoto Caliphate to rule. Colonial officers consequently learnt to speak Hausa, but not Kanuri, a language they often found too complicated. In Maiduguri, they had to communicate through interpreters. While they became acquainted with the Fulani and Hausa emirs, they kept their distance from the Sultan of Borno, especially Umar Ibn Muhammad El-Kanemi, who never learnt English in 30 years in power from 1937 to 1967. Colonial officers hence separated

out the two entities, referring to them as "the Northern provinces of Nigeria and the Independent Kingdom of Bornu" (Sharwood Smith, 1969: 248).

In 1914, the merger with the South distanced the region further from the capital, now in Lagos—1,200 km from Maiduguri and several days' travel—before the two cities were finally connected by railway in 1964. Politically speaking, the leaders of the South and the North did not have the opportunity to meet until a Legislative Council was established in Lagos in 1946. This meant in practice that the Muslims of the northern regions continued to go about their business without getting embroiled in the southern nationalist unrest. At independence in 1960, their leader Ahmadu Bello hence preferred to remain prime minister of the Northern Region rather than become head of government in Lagos. Moreover, it was not until the creation of the North-East State in 1968 that the leaders of Borno and Adamawa were able to circumvent Kaduna and communicate directly with the central government in Lagos and then Abuja, the new capital created *ex nihilo* by the military junta in 1975.

Illiteracy also played a hand in isolating the Lake Chad region, by preventing its inhabitants from being able to compete for national civil service positions. The problem affected the Muslim populations of the north of Cameroon and Chad. In Nigeria, the British had prohibited Christian missions in Islamic areas because they feared their schools would foster nationalistic ideas and destabilise the conservative aristocracy of the Sokoto Caliphate and Borno Sultanate, which had become London's best allies. To save money, they also refrained from investing too much in the education sector: along with Nyasaland (now Malawi), Nigeria was the African colony that cost the British proportionally the least to administer prior to the Second World War (Ellis, 2016: 14).

The curriculum that the British developed in the Northern Region was explicitly focused on preventing a rural exodus of the masses (*talakawa* in Hausa) in search of urban wage jobs, as management positions in the indigenous civil service were reserved by birthright for the aristocracy (*sarauta*). While children in the South learnt English starting in primary school, those in the North were taught in Hausa and Kanuri. For want of English-speaking teachers, it was not until 1956 that the government of Northern Nigeria introduced English at primary school level, limiting teaching in vernacular languages to Hausa and Yoruba. As a result, the region's civil service found it difficult to hire qualified locals: at independence in 1960, for example, 911 of the 3,318 senior posts remained vacant, 71% were held by British staff or Nigerians from the South, and just 2% were assigned to staff from the North (Tibenderana, 2003: 105).

This differential in access to education and the civil service was instrumental in fuelling the regionalist tensions that followed. The "northerners" feared domination by the "southerners" and launched pogroms against them that led to the Nigerian Civil War in 1967. After the first coup d'État in 1966, the Muslims of Northern Nigeria seized power by force, as in Chad following the fall of

President François Tombalbaye, a Christian southerner, in 1975. Aside from a parliamentary interlude in 1979–1983, the military juntas in Lagos and Abuja until 1999 were largely dominated by northerners, since fewer qualifications were required for a military career than for the civil service. In this respect, Nigeria took a very different path from Cameroon, where President Paul Biya, a southerner, sought rather to reduce the influence of the northern Fulani *lamibé* (see Section 3.3).

2.2. Decentralisation dressed as democratisation

Nigeria today is without question the most decentralised of the four countries of the study area. Francophone Niger, Chad, and Cameroon did not follow the British indirect rule model and were organised as united, indivisible republics. Unlike the Nigerian federation, their administrative constituencies have no legal personality and no control whatsoever on the redistribution of resources from the central government . Despite official decentralisation and devolution policies, their local and regional authorities are rarely elected. Deprived of financial autonomy, they rely heavily on subsidies and orders from central government.[55] Niger is divided into regions, departments, and communes organised by laws dating back to 2001 and 2008. Cameroon has been organised since 2004 into regions (formerly provinces), departments, and arrondissements (formerly called districts), respectively under the authority of governors, prefects, and sub-prefects. Chad is organised into administrative regions, which replaced the prefectures in 2002, and these are divided into departments, sub-prefectures, and cantons—the first two levels are headed by governors and prefects.

Much more populous Nigeria, however, is ruled by a "three-tier" government with a presidency in Abuja, 36 states, and 774 LGAs. For reasons of political convenience, this structure is crowned by six large "geopolitical zones" that do not legally exist under the 1999 Constitution. These include the North East with the Borno, Adamawa, Yobe, Gombe, Tarab, and Bauchi states. Unlike Niger, Chad, and Cameroon, the regional countervailing powers are extremely strong administratively and legislatively.[56] The federated states have elected assemblies, elect their governors, and pass their own laws. In the north since the end of the military dictatorship in 1999, some states with a Muslim majority have thus

55 In Niger, mayors were elected for the first time in 2005, but the 2010 coup d'État prevented them from finishing their five-year term. Following local elections in 2012, their terms of office, due to end in 2017, were extended by six-month terms as resources were lacking to hold new elections. The electoral time frame for regional councillors was supposed to be the same as for the mayors, but they did not take up office in Diffa until 2011. In Chad, the first communal elections were held in July 2012 in selected towns and cities, such as in Bol where local councillors were elected for six years with an executive made up of a mayor and two deputies, renewed every three years.

56 The all-party forum of the 36 governors of the federation, headed by a chairman whose term of office is never set in advance, forms an extremely powerful informal lobby.

reinstated Sharia law, in effect during the British era, albeit still not operational for penal enforcement in Borno. States moreover recoup half of the revenues redistributed by central government because their governors effectively keep hold of the funds theoretically earmarked for LGAs.[57] Furthermore, they often rig elections to put in place regional assemblies that serve as rump parliaments, since all their expenditure has to be approved by state governors. In practice, the latter are virtually irremovable until the end of their term, as impeachment actions rarely come to anything, not to mention federal investigations for corruption.[58]

Compared with Niger, Chad, and Cameroon, the strength of regional checks and balances in Nigeria obviously complicates the implementation of consistent national development policies. At the end of the Nigerian Civil War in 1970, the necessity to deter separatist tensions resulted in an extraordinary proliferation of administrative entities, with a federal system that grew from three to 36 states from 1963 to 1996, and from 301 to 774 LGAs from 1976 to 1999. In 1967, for example, the former Northern Region was divided into six states, including the North-East which, centred on Maiduguri, was itself divided again into three—Borno, Bauchi, and Gongola—in 1976. In 1991, Gongola was in turn subdivided into Adamawa and Taraba, while Yobe was amputated from Borno, taking the name of the Yobe River that flows through it. Latterly, in 1996, Bauchi separated from Gombe.

The easy money of the 1970s oil boom hence gave the military juntas the funds to scale up the number of local governments, overturning British measures to merge districts in order to reduce their administrative overheads during the 1930s Depression. Paradoxically, this "centralising federalisation" process watered down the countervailing power of states that were increasingly numerous, small in size and financially dependent on the resources redistributed by central government. The trend is particularly marked in the North East, which generates a mere 5% of its revenues despite weighing in at 30% of the country's surface area and 14% of its population (NESTS, 2014: 3). In practice, Borno, Adamawa, Yobe, and Gombe are highly dependent on subsidies from Abuja. This is also the

57 Constitutionally, 26.72% of the revenues collected by the federal government must be disbursed to the 36 states, and 20.6% to Nigeria's 774 LGAs. Yet the money due to local governments is not handed over directly by Abuja. Officially tasked with overseeing municipal budgets, state governors capture the majority of these funds despite a 2005 Monitoring of Revenue Allocation to Local Government Act that prohibits such practices. Similarly, governors often keep 10% of locally generated revenues that they are supposed to pay to LGAs.

58 There have been exceptions in Plateau State in 2004 and 2006, Bayelsa in 2005, Ekiti, Oyo, and Anambra in 2006, and Adamawa in 2014. However, the Governor of Plateau, Joshua Dariye, for example, managed to win his case against eight of the 24 members of the State House of Assembly who voted for his impeachment in 2006. He therefore returned to office despite pressure from Abuja and the anticorruption agency, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), which was prosecuting him for money laundering. In practice, state governors are more vulnerable to shifting alliances and court prosecution by their local opponents to annul election results.

case with their LGAs.[59] With a surface area of 2,600 km² for 205,000 inhabitants on average, these LGAs do not have any decision-making powers or financial resources. They are also highly criticised by southern politicians, who fault them for not generating revenues and for being concentrated in the northern regions.[60]

LGA councils across Nigeria are in fact rarely elected, despite constitutional provisions that compel state governors to organise their election and set their tenure on a case-by-case basis. In 1976, 1988, 1990, and 1999, local elections played an important role nationally, serving as a democratic test ahead of the general and presidential elections that were to mark the end of military dictatorships and the return to civilian rule. In general, however, local elections record low turnouts. Most of the time, LGA chairmen are chosen and appointed by state governors in breach of the 1991 Amendment Decree No. 3, which is designed precisely to guarantee local council independence. It is alleged that 27 of the 36 states have not held a single local election since the end of the military dictatorship in 1999.[61] Many have preferred to put in place *caretaker committees*, often chaired by the highest-ranking civil servant in the local administration, with a statutory six-month term of office, which also makes it easier for governors to appropriate their budget.

Local authorities are therefore highly unstable. From 1999 to 2015, for example, the chairmen of Borno State's 27 LGAs held office for total lengths of time averaging less than five years, half that estimated during the colonial period by anthropologist Ronald Cohen, based on a sample of 38 district heads.[62] Since the end of the military dictatorship, Borno has held only two local elections, in 2003 and 2008. Each time, the governor's party—that is, the All People's Party (APP) and then the All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP)—has won the chairmanship of all LGAs with the exception in 1999 of Kwaya Kusar, Chibok, Hawul, Jere, and Biu, which voted for the People's Democratic Party (PDP). The governor has since announced his intention to hold local elections, in 2014 and 2017, but they have never taken place due, among other things, to the insecurity. In practice, the governor has merely appointed caretaker committees, which have had to be regularly dissolved for statutory reasons, as happened in March and September 2016, and yet again in March 2017.

59 Yobe's 17 LGAs, for example, have more civil servants than the State government, with 30,000 and 28,000 employees respectively. Yet their annual budget stands at just thirty billion naira, nearly three times less than the Yobe State budget in 2016. Interviews with Yobe officials in Abuja on 14 May 2016.

60 At a national conference in Abuja in 2014, some even called for them to be suppressed. Many northern LGA leaders would in fact prefer to be directly subsidised by central government rather than through the states. In late 2017, a constitutional reform seemed to approve the cancellation of the joint accounts binding LGAs to the states.

61 Interview in Abuja on 14 May 2016.

62 The calculation was made by Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos from registers available from the LGA commission in Maiduguri in 2016. See also Cohen (1964), "Conflict and Change in a Northern Nigerian Emirate", in Zollschan, George & Walter Hirsch (ed.), *Explorations in Social Change*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, p. 503.

Yobe State, Borno's neighbour, is equally significant. From 1999 to 2008, its 17 LGAs were governed by caretaker committees renewed every six months. Following local elections held in 2009 and 2012, the governor considered that elections were too expensive and that the local councillors' terms should be extended from three to four years, as in Lagos.[63] In December 2015, the 17 caretaker committees were again dissolved and their members, all men, reappointed to their offices the very next month. The elections finally held in February 2017 were called "a farce". The incumbent All Progressives Congress (APC) won control of all the LGAs, while the opposition (PDP) failed to present candidates and the voter turnout was minimal. As for Gombe and Adamawa states, they have held local elections in 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011, and 2015. But voters, who were called to the ballot box after the national and regional elections, merely endorsed the results of the winning party's primaries. The chairmanship of the LGAs in Gombe and Adamawa has always been won by the incumbent governor's party, the PDP or the different variants of the current APC.[64]

In this context, Nigeria's democracy is not as dynamic as one might think compared with Niger, Chad, and Cameroon. Political parties in Nigeria do not have any more programmes or ideologies than the incumbent Nigerien Party for Democracy and Socialism (PNDS-Tarayya), Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM), or Patriotic Salvation Movement (MPS) in Chad. More often than not, they are coalitions of regional interests cobbled together to share the oil rent. The difference is that, in Chad, the opposition is made up of small formations that have no influence nationally, while it is concentrated in certain regions in the other countries of the study area, currently Zarmaland in Niger, the anglophone South-West in Cameroon, and Nigeria's South East zone.

These political configurations, combined with corruption at all levels of the administration, have obviously compromised the authorities' credibility and legitimacy. In the four countries of the study zone, the democratic deficit and government failures have driven the population to turn to other forms of politics. In the absence of trade unions and opposition parties, traditional chiefdoms and religious organisations have settled local disputes and voiced social demands, sometimes in a sectarian and violent form. In regions around Lake Chad, where Muslims are a majority, the representatives of official Islam were too divided and compromised to be able to replace the government and assume the democratic role played by the mosques during Egypt's Arab Spring and by the churches to end communism in Poland.

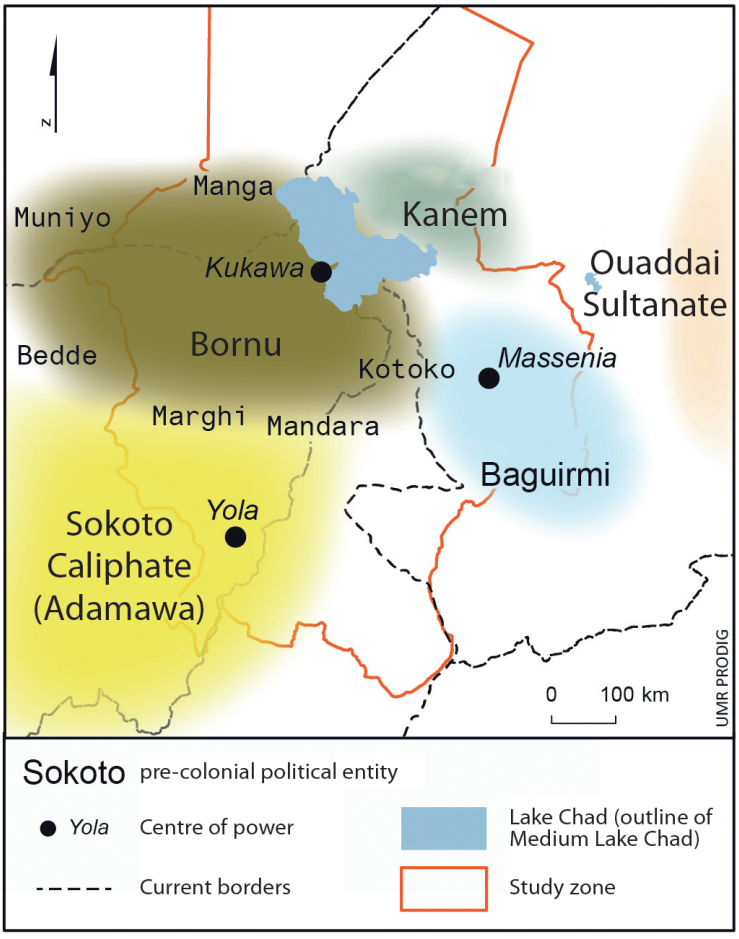
63 Interview with Governor Ibrahim Geidam by Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos in Abuja on 10 May 2016.

64 In Gombe in 2015, votes were cast in the police stations, facilitating electoral fraud. In Adamawa, the state's electoral commission waited until the last minute to select the candidates presented by the two PDP factions, which prevented them from campaigning.

2.3. Importance of the traditional chiefdoms: The Kanem-Borno Empire, Adamawa Emirate, and Sokoto Caliphate

In addition to the Kingdom of Baghirmi in Chad, two politico-religious entities played an important role before colonisation and left their mark on the current situation: the Kanem-Borno Empire, whose reach extended throughout the study zone, including Borno and Yobe, and the Sokoto Caliphate, established by Usman dan Fodio's jihadists in the 19th century, which extended across the Nigerian states of Adamawa and Gombe and branched out into northern Cameroon through to the Diamare plain and the current Region of Adamaoua (Map 9).

Map 9. Ancient kingdoms in the study area circa 1875



Source: Sellier, 2011.

The Kanem-Borno Empire, founded in the 8th century and Islamised from the 11th century, first developed under the Sefuwa—or Sayfawa—dynasty, one of the longest Africa has ever known. Before taking the title of sultan (*Shehu*) under the Kanemi who supplanted the Sefuwa in the 19th century, its king (*Mai*) was already playing a political, spiritual, military. and judicial role. He waged war, levied taxes, blessed the religious ceremonies, settled affairs of divorce, and administered his subjects through governors called *Fuguma* in the capital, *Zarma* in the south, *Yerima* or *Arjinoma* in the northern regions, *Galadima* or *Kaghustemma* in the west, and *Kaigama*, *Mustrema,* or *Kasalma* in the east (Hogben & Kirk-Greene, 1966: 310; Tijani, 2010: 204). The itinerant royal palace was managed by servants (*sugurum* in Kanuri), usually domestic slaves or eunuchs who were highly prized because they could not have any offspring who might try to claim the throne. Under the supervision of the representative (*chima gana*) of a lord (*chima kura*) assigned to the court of the *Mai*, the rural and farming fiefs were governed by chiefs, *bulama* (or *blama*), who were called *mbarma* when new villages were created. Lastly, the encampments of Fulani and Shuwa Arab herders and nomads were placed under the authority of a *chima jilibe* (in Fulfulde).

Following the loss of Kanem in the 14th century, a region in today's Chad, the Borno Sultanate relocated to south of the lake and further centralised, as the Sefuwa dynasty no longer needed to share power with clans from the north. The kingdom reached its height in the 15th and 16th centuries when it stretched towards Zinder in Niger, conquered Hausa emirates as far as Kano, took control of the caravan routes to Libya, and broke the resistance of pagan groups such as the So along the Yobe River. During this period, famous *Mai* such as Ali Gaji Dunomami Zainammi and then Idris Alauma also consolidated their power by assigning command of their army to slaves (*kachalla*), who were easier to control than the noblemen (*kaigamawa*) with their inherited titles and privileges (Tijani, 2010: 158). However, Borno eventually declined due to internal rivalries, incessant attacks by the Tuareg to the north, the steady advance of Fulani from the west, and pressure from European abolitionists, who dried up the slave trade markets. In 1808, the *Mai* lost his legitimacy and reputation for invincibility when his capital Birnin Ngazargamu was sacked by Usman dan Fodio's Fulani jihadists.

The Sefuwa dynasty was then supplanted by a religious figure, Muhammed al-Amin al-Kanemi, who established his new capital in Kukawa and reorganised the kingdom on a military basis, grounding his rule in his Islamic ideology. Under the leadership of the sultan (*Shehu*), the court was thus reduced to a small number of councillors generally in the form of nine Muslim clerics who met in conclave (*majlis*) to nominate the dauphins and handle the highest affairs of the state. Muhammed al-Amin al-Kanemi also set about breaking up the Kanuri nobility's privileges by allowing his descendants to appoint and

dismiss leaders (*chima*) themselves, even going so far as to confiscate their goods in the event of disobedience. The hereditary succession rules were dropped, and the former fiefs were handed over alternatively to princes (*abba*), captains of servile descent (*kachalla*), and courtiers (*koguna*). Some nobles (*maina*) no longer held administrative posts and could not collect taxes in their own fiefs, while others were compensated with honorary titles such as "Lord of the North-West" (*Galadima*) and "Commander of the Janissaries" (*Kaigama*) (Cohen, 1967: 28).

In the south of the Borno Sultanate, the Adamawa Emirate (or *lamidat*) appeared later, in the 19th century. As an extension of the Fulani jihad from Sokoto to Adamaoua in today's Cameroon, it was founded by one of Usman dan Fodio's commanders, Modibbo Adama, who gave it his name when he conquered Fombina (the "southern lands" in Fulfulde) and who established its capital in Yola on the Benue River, a tributary of the Niger River, in 1841 (Abubakar, 1977). Like the Borno Sultanate, the Adamawa Emirate drew its legitimacy from Islam and developed as a military aristocracy with a predatory economy based on slavery. Yet it referred to a revolutionary jihad and remained the vassal of the Sokoto Caliphate. While the Borno Empire's revenues were recognised as the personal property of the sultan, those of Adamawa were supposed to be paid into a public treasury (*bait al-mal*). Whereas it was forbidden for the *Shehu* to be seen in public, and he spoke to his people only through a curtain, the *Lamido* was more accessible and accountable to his Muslim subjects, in keeping with the example of Usman dan Fodio who considered the isolation of leaders as a form of oppression (Hodgkin, 1975: 249; Nigerian Administration Research Project, 2008: 65–80). Another important difference was that the Borno Empire collapsed before the arrival of colonial rule, submitting to the control of Rabih, a warlord from Mahdist Sudan, in 1893 (Mohammed, 2006).

2.4. The particularities of British indirect rule

Paradoxically, it was the system of British indirect rule that modernised, secularised, and consolidated the region's emirates, using their traditional authorities to raise taxes and keep order at little cost. In Borno, where they arrived later on from Bauchi, the British even went so far as to restore the office of *Shehu* in 1902, by literally kidnapping a great grandson of Muhammed al-Amin al-Kanemi, Bukar Garbai; the latter had been placed under house arrest to pay an exorbitant war indemnity to the French who had defeated Rabih from their military base in Chad, Fort-Lamy (Dusgate, 1985: 152)! For strategic reasons, the British also supported the irredentist claims of the Sultan of Borno and the Emir of Adamawa to lay their hands on the German territories in the north of Cameroon in 1916 and to annex the regions of Dikwa and Mubi, which were administrated by Nigeria under a League of Nations and then UN mandate from 1922 to 1961 (Hiribarren, 2016: 135, 178).

Despite a more direct rule in their colonies, the French in Niger, Chad, and (after the Germans) Cameroon also sought the support of traditional Muslim chiefs. Yet it was in northern Nigeria that indirect rule reached its height with the establishment of Native Authorities tasked with justice, land management, and policing responsibilities. To save money, the British purpose was to have emirs and district heads collect taxes for them. The traditional authorities hence became like farmers-general, paid in the form of a percentage of the tax proceeds and then a fixed wage when tax revenues increased and the colonial power wanted to save even more money (Tukur, 2016: 150, 284). At the end of the day, the British decided to pay the emirs 5% of the revenues of their native authorities, a rate that happens to be the same today as the proportion allocated to traditional leaders in their local governments.

In Borno, the territory's reorganisation also consisted of establishing and urbanising the sultan's power in a new capital built in 1907, Maiduguri. The old fiefs were merged into 21 districts and placed under the responsibility of subalterns (*ajia*), who were appointed by the *Shehu* and had to live in the city to remain under the control of the British (Cohen, 1971). In the countryside, the canton chiefs (*bulama*) and village chiefs (*lawan*) remained and are still there today, called *lawane* on the Cameroonian side. In Maiduguri, the *Shehu*'s council became a cabinet made up of administrative departments headed by a vizier, the *waziri*. The sultan, however, lost his political autonomy (Cohen, 1970: 196). His tax administration was scrapped in 1914 and his courtiers were replaced by district heads collecting taxation, especially the cattle tax (*jangali*), which provided some two-thirds of the native authority's revenues. Seasonal tributes due to the *Shehu* and the winter harvest tax were merged into a single, annual poll tax (*haraji*) to avoid a tax on land, which might have encouraged farmers to reduce the size of the land they farmed (Lugard, 1922: 246, 250).

The Adamawa Emirate experienced a similar fate. The British whittled down the Fulani *Lamido*'s prerogatives while the majority of Fombina came under the control of the French in Cameroon, with the exception of Yola. Meanwhile, the colonial power sought to take advantage of the advanced political development of the emirate's Islamic institutions to administer "pagan" populations who were less structured and where it was more difficult to identify reliable intermediaries. As in the Borno Sultanate, traditional chiefs were mobilised to collect taxes and facilitate the recruitment of "native" police officers, an occupation that raised particularly little enthusiasm (Rotimi, 2005: 77–161). In the name of Sharia law, which was codified and even developed by the colonial power, the emirs retained substantial justice and land management powers.[65]

65 Before colonisation, these powers reached as far as renting or selling land (*waqf*), which was theoretically the Sokoto Caliphate's domain (Chafe, 1999: 79).

Pursuant to the 1910 Land and Native Rights Proclamation, amended in 1916, the granting of land-use rights was placed under the British governors' control. Under indirect rule, the purpose of this was to protect the indigenous peoples by prohibiting land purchases by foreigners, especially European companies that had done so much harm in plantation economies such as that of the Belgian Congo. In practice, this measure discouraged large land investments by food industry multinationals, and it goes a long way to explaining why the region's traditional stockbreeding did not develop into cooperatives, unlike the ranches in East Africa's settlement colonies. In northern Nigeria, the traditional chiefs therefore continued to manage the redistribution of vacant land in exchange for a tribute. In Borno, the *bulama* retained their control over the allocation of farmed and fallow land to household heads, their heirs, and newcomers (Cohen, 1967: 80).

2.5. Decline of the traditional authorities in the face of independence

Nigeria at independence was probably the country in the region that had left the most powers to traditional chiefs compared with the French style of direct colonial rule in Chad, Niger, and Cameroon. However, the military and Jacobin coups d'état that ensued, concerned with safeguarding national unity and containing separatism urges, overcame the regionalist conservatism of the colonial period. At the height of the Nigerian Civil War in 1968, the junta abolished the system of Native Authorities, nationalised the "native police force", took control of the prison services, and assigned the management of the traditional justice courts to the states. In the north, in particular, the emirs lost their right of veto. The oil boom finished off the process. In 1976, a major reform, which created the LGAs, stripped the traditional chiefs of their last justice and tax collection prerogatives, while the 1978 Land Use Decree deprived them of a good part of their land rights by nationalising arable lands and assigning their management to state governors and LGAs. Whereas the Constitution of 1979 still referred to the consultative power of the traditional authorities, the 1999 Constitution no longer even mentioned their existence.

As a result, Nigeria narrowed its differences with Chad, Niger, and Cameroon. Following independence in Niger, traditional chiefs had actually continued to collect taxation and dispense justice in rural areas that did not have courts. Recognised as an institution of the Republic by a 1993 ordinance and the 1999 Constitution, they still play an official role in the management of sultanates, provinces, cantons, groupings, villages, tribes, and quarters whose boundaries are superimposed on administrative constituencies. In the early 2000s, however, their customary rights were cut back by a decentralisation process that transferred some of their prerogatives to local councils.

In Chad, some traditional chiefs were suspended or dismissed following the proclamation of a republic in 1958. Reinstated in 1969, they subsequently became

representatives of the administration recognised by the 1996 Constitution and a 2008 Act. The assignments of the sultans and heads of cantons, tribes, groupings, villages (*hille*), and nomadic encampments (*ferik*) now include maintaining order, supervising the keeping of civil registration data, taking part in population censuses, facilitating tax collection, promoting education in public schools, arresting criminals on the run, proposing mediation, settling minor disputes, and monitoring the activities of the NGOs working in their area.

Lastly, in Cameroon, the post-independence authorities initially confirmed the traditional chiefs' prerogatives. In 1969, for example, a decree gave their records a legal value that could only be disputed before the sub-prefect or modern courts. This gave the traditional chiefs the authority to celebrate weddings, ensure that civil registration data were kept, and rule in civil and land cases, including successions. In 1977, however, another decree was to transfer some of their powers to the mayors and restrict their influence to departments for the sultans (*lamibé*); groupings, cantons, and arrondissements for what were known as the second-level chiefdoms (the *lawane* or *blama* in the north); and villages or quarters for the third-level chiefs (the *djaworo*). The administration also interfered in the choice of chiefs and imposed its own men on the pretext of overseeing the moral standing of candidates and democratising successions by introducing a principle of deliberation. This process of bureaucratisation and integration into the state-party was completed by the 1999 constitutional Act, guaranteeing that traditional authorities were represented on the hitherto inoperative regional councils, and by a 2013 order providing for third-level chiefs to be included in the salary scale of their colleagues and be paid like civil servants, but on a case-by-case basis.

As in Nigeria, this process made Cameroon's traditional chiefs part of the bureaucracy. Some took advantage of their new status to consolidate their position as intermediaries. Yet there were also many who lost credibility and influence as they became associated with political manipulation and were no longer authorised to collect a tribute.[66] Also, their subjects moved to cities and no longer needed them to register available urban land. Cameroon's traditional chiefs faced the same challenges as the paramount rulers of Nigeria's North East, now on the local government's payroll to the tune of 5% of the appropriations paid to the LGAs, and who had to obtain approval from the state governors to appoint and install vassals at district level. In both cases, the politicisation of the chieftaincy weakened customary institutions, with the proliferation of honorary titles and a large turnover rate due to interference from local governments, in particular in Nigeria following each election.

66 For example, the *lamibé* of Ngaoundéré and Banyo compromised their position by supporting the presidential party, which went on to lose the local elections in the region in 1992 and 1997 (Adama, 2014: 188–189).

3. Societies, conflicts and insecurities

Aside from differences in governance practices and structures, the societies around Lake Chad all feature a very high level of political—and not just economic or food—insecurity. Their vulnerabilities are multifaceted and rooted in history. A purely ethnic or religious interpretation of the region's problems would be over-simplistic (Box 6). In contexts of male domination and endemic corruption, social inequalities also bring to light the importance of age class and gender status. Moreover, there are tensions at a number of international, national, and local levels. Last but not least, agro-pastoral resources fuel many land conflicts and endemic banditry.

Box 6

Ethnic group, a fluid notion

The notion of ethnic group can be misleading when trying to understand conflicts and relationships of domination in the study zone. Anthropologists themselves do not always agree on the definitions. In addition, what are known as ethnic identities are far too fluid and shifting to be able to be pinned to a territory and properly mapped. In Borno, for example, Kanuriland is supposed to include Maiduguri. Yet the extremely cosmopolitan urban centre is a melting pot of all sorts of populations, and Kanuri appears to have become a minority language in the city. Far from being monolithic, ethnic conglomerations are moreover shaped from within by social status, age, and/or gender divides. Lastly, community identities are often manipulated for political ends that prevent any rigid, essentialist interpretation of ethnicity. In the study zone, the Mandara Mountains region, bordering Cameroon and Nigeria, stands out as probably the most linguistically diverse.

3.1. Beyond ethnic group: A turbulent history

Historically, the region's populations lived with the constant threat of raids, conquests in the name of Islam, and food crises that obviously cut across current international borders, as they do today.[67] Slavery, in particular, had a huge impact on both the great kingdoms that lived off its trade—such as Borno, Fombina, and Baghirmi—and the small pre-colonial entities that had to reform their polities to escape the raids, as in Biu and the Mandara Mountains (MacEachern, 2001). Dominant groups hence appeared such as the Kanuri, in the majority in the

67 The population of Northern Nigeria probably even shrank in the 19th century due to the combined effects of food crisis, slavery and Sokoto Caliphate wars. In 1914, for example, famine claimed nearly 85,000 lives in Borno and drove 25,000 Nigerians to seek food and shelter in neighbouring countries, while 50,000 people perished in Kano Province alone, including 30,000 from French Niger (Tukur, 2016; Mansell Prothero, 1956).

current states of Borno and (probably) Yobe, and the Fulani who remained in the minority in Adamawa and Gombe. There were nonetheless considerable differences between them. Whereas the Kanuri claimed to be descended from a Yemeni migrant from the east said to have founded the Sefuwa dynasty in the 8th century, the Fulani of Fombina arrived later in north-east Nigeria, in the 19th century. Unlike Usman dan Fodio, who first fought the Muslim Hausas of Gober on the Niger border, Modibo Adama set out to conquer "pagan" populations whom he barely attempted to convert so as to keep them in slavery (Azarya, 1978: 25, 35). Whereas the Fulani melted into the Hausa masses in Sokoto and Kano, they remained a visible minority in Adamawa and Gombe, where they continued to speak their language, retained their monopoly over knowledge of the Koran, and claimed the privileges of a chosen people with an exclusive access to God.

From this point of view, it is important to note that the region's societies are certainly not as homogeneous as we are sometimes inclined to believe. Historically, for example, the Fulani of Adamawa (known as Fulbe in Cameroon) both captured slaves in attacks on the Mandara Mountains in the east and took in populations from the west who were fleeing raids by the Sokoto jihadists in Gombe and Bauchi. The Kanuri—called Kanowri or Yerwa in Nigeria, Sirata in the canton of Kolofata in Cameroon, Kanembu in Chad, and Beri-Beri, Mober, or Manga in Niger—expanded by absorbing "pagan" communities such as the Gamergu of Dikwa. The ethnonym "Gamergu" incidentally suggests a people possibly descended from the So aborigines, customarily called Malgwe or Malguwa, who are thought to be the ancestors of the Kotoko and the Mandara, or Wandala, an extremely mixed group found essentially in Cameroon (Cyffer *et al.*, 1996: 49–66; Seignobos & Iyébi-Mandjek, 2000). The so-called dominant groups were themselves shaped by strong divisions from within. Among the Kanuri, the Sefuwa dynasty's *Mai* came from the Magumi clan, and the nobility (*maina*) exploited the peasants (*tala*). Among the Fulani, divisions grew between rural cattle herders, the *Bororoji*, and the urban aristocracy, the *Fulani Gida*.

Some populations also continued to resist. On the islands of Lake Chad, for example, the Buduma managed to escape the authority of the Borno and Kanem sultans and refused to gather in villages, essentially to avoid colonial taxation. Resistance was also strong in the Mandara Mountains, Cameroonian Adamaoua, and Gombe, which have much more of an ethnic mix than the northern parts of the current Nigerian states of Borno and Yobe. Social differentiation therein took a religious turn as the descendants of slaves often converted to Christianity to escape the religion of the oppressor. For example, populations from pagan groups considered as "infidels" (*kirdi*) exhibited no class solidarity with the Kanuri peasantry of free men (*tala*) to oppose the Borno nobility (*kantuoma*) (Cohen, 1964). Likewise, politically, the minorities in the British territories of the Northern Cameroons feared Kanuri and Fulani domination so much that

they voted 60% against the prospect of annexation by an independent Nigeria in November 1959. To reassure them, London had to grant them the creation of five Native Authorities theoretically free of oversight by the Sultan of Borno and the Emir of Adamawa. It was only on these conditions that they agreed to vote in favour of Nigeria in a second referendum held in February 1961, which endorsed their separation from Cameroon (Hare, 2013).

Yet ethnic, linguistic, and religious divides cannot alone explain the conflict dynamics of the area. There is also antagonism between socio-economic groups, themselves far from homogeneous. Herders, especially, are involved in many land issues because their cattle devastate crop fields during the southbound transhumance seasons from October to February, and then the northbound return from May to June. Pastoral people such as the Fulani are themselves affected by internal conflicts. The complexity of the region therefore points to the need to temper representations based on ethnic identities which are often seen in a religious light. In practice, divisions shape ethno-linguistic communities from within and reveal other types of vulnerability based more on age, gender, and income. Economic growth in the study area is not inclusive in a context of male domination and endemic corruption, where embezzlement deprives the poor of access to basic public services. The observation applies as much to Nigerian-style federalism as to Nigerien, Chadian, and Cameroonian centralism.

3.2. Tensions between countries

Political upheavals have also fed the insecurity of the Lake Chad region. Nigeria has generally maintained good diplomatic relations with Niger, but the story with Chad and Cameroon is entirely different. In 1978, Nigeria interfered in the civil war in Chad, supposedly to enforce peace, even going so far as to attempt to support one armed faction against another. In 1983, it also stepped in to contest the sovereignty of a number of lake islands in Chad and send its army to take control of them under the command of the current head of state, Muhammadu Buhari, who commanded the 3rd Armoured Division of Jos at the time. In 1994–1996, Nigeria was involved in armed clashes with Cameroon over a border dispute about the oil-rich Bakassi peninsula in the south. It was not until an International Court of Justice ruling and the signature of the Greentree peace agreement in June 2006 that the two countries resolved their dispute, which also concerned changes to the border near Gwoza and the repatriation of Nigerian soldiers who had occupied some islands on the Cameroonian side of Lake Chad since 1987.

As is usually the case in Africa, these inter-state conflicts have claimed relatively few lives compared with the civil wars that have torn apart the region, not to mention the lives lost as a consequence of the Boko Haram insurgency. Yet they have hampered the possibilities for cooperation between four countries on the dividing line between the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

and the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC), with Nigeria and Niger on one side and Chad and Cameroon on the other. The only project capable of uniting the region's nations, proposed by the President of CAR in 1994, was itself unworkable due to its environmental impact, its astronomical cost, and the lack of trade flows in the area. Policymakers have as yet been unable to finance the construction of a 300-km canal to transfer water from the Ubangi River to the Chari River and Lake Chad (Magrin & Lemoalle, 2015; Magrin, 2016). The LCBC has therefore remained an empty shell to all intents and purposes and has roused only to extend its mandate to fighting terrorism and Boko Haram under a Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) created in 2015.[68]

3.3. At national level: Feeling of marginalisation in the outlying areas

At national level, the populations around the lake have also suffered from political upheavals. Various rebellions took advantage of the outlying position of regions far from the control of government forces. As early as 1964, guerrillas from the Sawaba liberation movement briefly seized Bosso in Niger (Pérouse de Montclos, 2015). In 1978, the lake also served as a refuge for the "Third Liberation Army" of the National Liberation Front of Chad (FROLINAT). A few years later, the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Chad (MPLT) set up rear bases on the Nigerian side of the area and recruited fighters around the lake and in Kanem. In 1990, with the fall of the Hissène Habré dictatorship, the former president's supporters also regrouped in the area under the Movement for the Defence of Democracy (MDD). The lake has since served as a safe haven for Tubu rebels, Chadian army deserters, and smugglers of all kinds.[69]

The remoteness of the regions bordering Lake Chad has also fuelled a feeling of marginalisation and isolation. Their lack of attractiveness was undeniably a major factor behind the neglect of the colonial and then post-independence states. Economic potential was found more in the south towards the sea, while the local population survived on subsistence farming highly dependent on

68 The LCBC, established in 1964 with its headquarters in N'Djaména, was supposed to coordinate the management of the four countries' water resources. Yet it had to cease operations from 1979 to 1987 because of the civil war in Chad. Moreover, it failed to overcome funding difficulties. Its resources depend on the economic health and good will of the four governments. Funding (53% from Nigeria, 27% from Cameroon, 12% from Chad, and 8% from Niger) is irregular and does not correspond to the share of each country, as over one-half of the surface area of the lake belongs to Chad, over one-quarter to Nigeria, one-sixth to Niger, and one-twelfth to Cameroon.

69 In comparison with Boko Haram, the Movement for Justice and Rehabilitation of Niger (MJRN) and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of the Sahara (FARS) have kept a low profile in the north of Diffa Region. Yet in September 2016, Adam Tcheke Koudigan reportedly took over the leadership of the FARS, presenting himself as heir to the leader of the first Tubu rebellion in the 1990s, Barka Wardougou, who had died two months previously.

climate change.[70] With Yola founded in 1841, Fort-Lamy (N'Djaména) in 1900, and Yerwa (Maiduguri) in 1907,[71] the region's cities were relatively recent and hardly able to compete with the huge metropolises on the coast. Following Borno's loss of control over trans-Saharan trade, which shifted to Kano in the 18th century, the introduction of a colonial market economy highlighted the role of seaports as the essential channel for export crops such as groundnuts.

Unlike in Niger and Chad, which are landlocked, majority-Muslim countries, the divide is quite obvious in Nigeria and Cameroon because their economic and political resources are concentrated in dominantly Christian regions on the Atlantic coast. In the south, stereotypes abounded on backward and uneducated Sahelian Muslims who were said to be incapable of facing up to development challenges and modernity in a global world. Cameroon had to allow northerners with lower secondary rather than upper secondary qualifications to receive positions in the civil service, as required everywhere else, and this is still seen as unfair by southerners. Likewise in Nigeria, southerners accused Sahelian Muslims of being "social parasites" who monopolised military power and siphoned off the country's oil resources on the coast. Exacerbated by the Nigerian Civil War, resentment ran so high that in 1990, the instigators of an attempted coup d'État led by Major Gideon Gwarzo Orkar and funded by Christian fundamentalists from the Niger Delta asked for the states of Borno, Bauchi, Katsina, Kano, and Sokoto to be excised from the Nigerian federation.

In the case of both Nigeria and Cameroon, however, there was no deliberate discrimination against the populations around Lake Chad. Northern Cameroon clearly suffered from the conflicts of the early 1990s. The civil wars in Chad spread many illegal weapons, and their consequences are still felt today.[72] Following rumours of a "northern" conspiracy in 1983, President Paul Biya decided to break up Fulani fiefdoms and split the North into three provinces, while he promoted a Kirdi prime minister, Luc Ayang, to head the country. Yet the 1984 attempted coup d'État, which was also suspected of being organised by "Northerners", led the government to change its strategy and depend on the power of the *lamibé* and the Shuwa Arabs. In 1992, the introduction of a multi-party system hence reshuffled the cards. At independence, President Ahmadou Ahidjo had relied on the Kotoko and left the Shuwa Arabs in the opposition—like the French did because of their support for Rabih's revolt in Borno in 1900. Nevertheless, his successor, Paul Biya, supported the Shuwa Arabs, who

70 At independence, food still represented an average 60% of the budget of rural Borno households, whose income came from crafts rather than from the sale of agricultural produce (Cohen, 1967: 77–82).

71 Little trace remained of the former capitals of the sultanates of Borno in Kukawa or Kanem in Njimi.

72 In 2015, for example, the Kotoko and the Masa of Kousseri fought over a piece of land that the Cameroonian government had granted the UNHCR for Chadian refugees in 1979.

massively backed the ruling party (the RDPC), while the Kotoko subscribed to a small opposition formation, the National Union for Democracy and Progress (Gwoda & Zélao, 2012; Issa, 2012).

Constitutional safeguards were also introduced to uphold the country's major political balances. In 1982, quotas were put in place to reserve positions in the administration for the most educationally challenged northern provinces. In 1992, a post of President of the National Assembly was then assigned to Northerners. As for Nigeria, the federal system redistributes the central government's resources according to a complicated formula that weights each state's fiscal contribution by its population, surface area, development needs, and various other criteria. The country's turbulent history does not exhibit a systematic exclusion of "Bornoans", but rather fluctuating political relations with the government from generally good from 1960 to 1979, through a tenser period during the Second Republic up to 1983, to renewed calm until the end of the military dictatorship in 1999.

At independence, north-east Nigeria was well represented in the corridors of power in Lagos. Adamawa had its federal minister with Muhammadu Ribadu (1909–1965), who held the Land, Mines and Power portfolio from 1954 to 1959, followed by Defence from 1960 to 1965. Bauchi, which included Gombe at the time, even provided the head of government, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa (1912–1966), who became prime minister in 1957. Borno, for its part, had several Kanuri ministers in Lagos, such as Zanna Bukar Dipcharima (1917–1969) for Works, 1957–1958, Commerce and Industry, 1959–1963, and then Transport, 1964–1966; and Waziri Ibrahim (1926–1992) for Health, 1959–1963, and then Economic Development, 1964–1966. Neither was the Sultanate hierarchy absent: its wali, Muhammad Isa Ngileruma (1908–1968), was the Minister of Natural Resources; and its vizier, Sir Kashim Ibrahim (1910–1990), was the first "native" to become governor of Northern Nigeria in 1962.[73]

Following the first coup d'État in 1966, the successive military regimes were also careful not to leave out the north-east. The juntas of Yakubu Gowon (1966–1975), Olusegun Obasanjo (1976–1979), Muhammadu Buhari (1984–1985), Ibrahim Babangida (1985–1993), and Sani Abacha (1993–1998) were all headed by or associated with Muslims from the Sahelian zones. Briefly detained in 1966, Sir Kashim Ibrahim became, for example, personal aide to General Hassan Katsina, his successor at the head of the Northern Region. It was elections and the return to a parliamentary regime that laid bare certain tensions with Lagos and then Abuja during the second, third, and fourth republics, respectively in 1979–1983, 1992–1993, and since 1999. In 1979, for example, the Great Nigeria People's

73 Among the founders of the ruling Northern People's Congress (NPC), he was elected to the assembly in 1952 and was one of four northerners chosen to take up ministerial offices in Lagos, first at the head of Social Services and then Education, before returning to Kaduna as Minister of Land and Development for the Northern Region in 1955.

Party (GNPP), led by Waziri Ibrahim, a presidential candidate, won the states of Borno and Gongola against the country's then ruling National Party of Nigeria (NPN). In 1993, things appeared to look up for the north-east, as the only two parties authorised to stand in the presidential election were represented by Kanuri Muslims: the candidate of the National Republican Convention (NRC), Bashir Tofa, was from Kano, and the leader of the Social Democratic Party (SDP), Babagana Kingibe, was from Borno. Yet the regional vote was divided, with an SDP victory in Borno and the NRC winning in Bauchi. In any case, Ibrahim Babangida's junta annulled the election result, and General Sani Abacha, himself a Kanuri from Kano, seized power in a coup d'État in late 1993.

By the end of the military dictatorship in 1999, north-eastern states were once again divided between the opposition (APP) and the ruling party (PDP). Unlike Adamawa, Borno and Yobe seemed to resist democratic change after the return to power of a Christian elect-president from the south, Olusegun Obasanjo. They were strongholds of the APP, a party dubbed the "Abacha People's Party" in reference to the dictator Sani Abacha. In presidential elections, Borno and Yobe voted massively for the opposition, especially for Muhammadu Buhari, a Muslim from the north-west and a former military dictator in office in 1984–1985, before running on an ANPP ticket in 2003 and 2007 and then under the banner of the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) in 2011.

3.4. Local political conflicts

The lakeside populations have also seen many local political conflicts. Notwithstanding the civil wars in Chad and the Tuareg and Tubu rebellions in Niger, which would logically have affected the lakeside regions, Cameroon was the scene of serious clashes between Shuwa Arabs and Kotoko in the department of Logone-et-Chari, when the first multi-party general election was held in 1992. The clashes also exposed land-use tensions, sparing the Fulani, who had no encroachment problems with the Shuwa Arabs, but not the Kotoko. The disputes on this occasion also affected the traditional chiefs from the point of view of the role they continued to play in the allocation of land-use rights.[74] In fact, the hybrid forms of governance in place under Nigerian federalism and Nigerien, Chadian, and Cameroonian centralism have rapidly shown their limitations when it comes to settling local political conflicts.

In Nigeria, for example, the system known as "consociationalism" is supposed to protect minorities by means of quotas and ensure a fair distribution of positions and resources, using a regional rotation principle known as "zoning". Yet in practice, it does more to guarantee the rights of indigenous peoples at the expense of migrants from other national regions and immigrants from Niger,

74 In January 2007, in the district of Zina, for example, clashes between Musgum and Kotoko over a disputed succession in the Lahaye chiefdom claimed more than a dozen lives.

Chad, and Cameroon. In each of the federation's states, locals hence benefit from privileged access to education, health, civil service positions, and land use, pursuant to the 1978 Land Use Act. Around Lake Chad, for example, Hausa migrants came up against a host of obstacles when they set out to settle and farm the spaces made available by the receding waters.[75] In practice, the traditional chiefs continued to oversee customary land-use rights in the area, and the LGAs in a way relinquished their own land prerogatives. In a country without a land registry, rural land management was therefore based on oral memory, which sometimes left the door open for strong-arming.

In general, the fragmentation of Nigeria's administrative structure, from three to 36 federated entities since independence, has failed to put an end to the domination of certain groups. When North-East State was created in May 1967, the Kanuri of Borno negotiated that the administrative capital would be Maiduguri, rather than Bauchi, in order to keep control over a new set-up in which they were the minority. When the State of Yobe was established in August 1991, the choice of its capital fell to Damaturu in Kanuri country, rather than to Potiskum, a more populous and ethnically multi-ethnic city. The authorities argued that Damaturu was better placed, like Dutse, which had become the capital of the State of Jigawa around the same time, at the expense of a larger city such as Hadejia.[76] In reality, neither Damaturu nor Dutse were more central than Potiskum or Hadejia. The choice of Damaturu was designed primarily to compensate the Kanuri for the loss of Yobe, which had been amputated from Borno for the benefit of the Fulani, the Hausa, and the Ngizim, Bole, and Karekare minorities.

In predominantly Muslim regions, Nigerian-style federalism has failed to protect the indigenous Christian converts, who have sometimes been victims of riots or pogroms, as have the Sayawas of the Tafawa Balewa LGA in the southern part of Bauchi State (Caron, 2015: 27–44). In many northern states, the zoning principle consists of assigning the post of deputy governor to Christians, a rule not written into the constitution, but one that is intended to reassure the religious minorities. This has been the case, for example, in Gombe since the end of the military dictatorship in 1999. Conversely, states with larger numbers of Christians, towards the south and the Middle Belt, often have Christian governors and Muslim deputy governors, as in Taraba and, to a lesser extent, Adamawa where the Christian deputy governor, Boni Haruna (1999–2007, APP), replaced his Muslim colleague, Abubakar Atiku, when he was appointed vice president to Olusegun Obasanjo in Abuja.

75 They had to argue that, in addition to being Nigerian nationals, they were pioneers and that the indigenous inhabitants could not claim a right of priority over land that had never been farmed because it was underwater. As Muslims, the Hausa also maintained that the Kanuri's ethnic privileges contravened the teachings of God, before Whom all the faithful stood on equal terms (Krings, 2004).

76 Interview by Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos with the Governor of Yobe, Abuja, May 2016.

Borno and Yobe, however, are among the states where all elected governors and deputy governors have been Muslim, as in the case of Bauchi since the election of Abubakar Tatari Ali in 1979. Disinclination to level the playing field is just as patent from an ethnic point of view. Since 1979, all governors elected in Borno have come from the north, with one Mober (Mohammed Goni, GNPP) and one Shuwa Arab (Asheikh Jarma, NPP) during the Second Republic and then three Kanuri during the Fourth Republic: two from Maiduguri (Mala Kachalla for the APP and Kashim Shettima for the APC) and one from Ngala (Ali Modu Sheriff, ANPP). To save face, deputy governors are often chosen from among the Babur and Bura Muslims from the Biu Emirate in the southern part of Borno. In Yobe, Kanuri have also provided all the governors of the Fourth Republic, with Bukar Abba Ibrahim and Ibrahim Geidam, who represented respectively the senatorial districts of the east and west of the state. The only exception has been Mamman Bello Ali, a Karekare from Potiskum, who was elected by default in 2007 and died from leukaemia in 2009 before the end of his term of office.

Borno and Yobe differ from Gombe and Adamawa, both of which clearly have a more balanced political representation due also to a more ethnically and religiously mixed population. Since 1999, for example, the south of Gombe, less Muslim than the north, has managed to send two Christian senators to Abuja. By comparison, southern Borno, where Christians are supposed to be in the majority in certain LGAs, has only ever elected Muslim senators. Political tensions with indigenous Christian converts were already more marked in this area, even before the start of the Boko Haram crisis (Box 7).

Box 7

Borno State: A clear case of political tensions centred on ethnic and religious issues

According to the rules of "consociationalism", Christian natives of southern Borno theoretically have rights that Christian migrants from other regions of Nigeria cannot claim. Yet they have long complained of restrictions in such areas as building churches, upkeep of cemeteries, appointing their traditional leaders, and a voice in the local media. For instance, their Christian missions schools, which were nationalised after the Nigerian Civil War and then privatised in some cases, are taxed more than Koranic schools, which benefit from total exemption out of respect for the region's traditional practices.[77] Restrictions also concern regional civil service recruitment and promotion.

.../...

77 Historically, the Sultan of Borno granted certificates (*mahram*) which relieved the "marabouts" (*mallamai*) from paying taxes, a provision theoretically extended to the poor in the event of a famine or epidemic.

…/…

Historically, the Christian minorities and natives of southern Borno had access to the missionary schools that the British had prohibited in the Muslim areas and tolerated among the "pagans". Given that the colonial power had invested very little in public education, 60% of primary schools in the Northern Region were run by Christian missions at independence in 1960. Similarly, 60% of primary pupils and 66% of secondary pupils were Christian.[78] The 1970s oil boom, which financed the expansion of public education, was not enough to fill the gap. Still today, there is a large gap between southern and northern Borno in terms of numbers of pupils, teachers, and primary and secondary schools.

Indigenous Christians thus argue that their higher level of qualifications should open the door to higher-ranking positions in the regional administration. In principle, "consociationalist" quotas guarantee each LGA a certain number of commissioners, permanent secretaries, and ministerial secretaries in the civil service from each of the federation's states. However, these rules do not apply to regional administration secretaries, who are supposed to be recruited on merit and generally number a half a dozen per ministry. In practice, Borno's indigenous Christian minorities consequently complain of seeing their career advancement blocked at middle management level by Muslim and Kanuri executives with better connections to the local political class.

The debate has taken both a religious and political turn. Some Kanuri from the north of Borno argue that they now have higher qualifications because they go on to university, whereas the Christians minorities from the south are in more of a hurry to find a job and do not take their studies any further than the level of polytechnics or colleges of education. It is difficult to know precisely what the facts are without information on the geographic origin of the students at the (federal) University of Maiduguri or in the country's other public and private establishments. Feeling excluded as they do from the corridors of power, the southern Borno Christian minorities have good reason to want to go on to study at university to find a better job. Under the British system of indirect rule, the Kanuri aristocracy of the north long enjoyed privileged access to local administration executive positions, which gave them less of an incentive to pursue their education.[79]

78 In 1965, a mere 8% of children attended school in the Sahelian areas compared with 40% in more southern and Christianised provinces such as Ilorin, Benue, and Plateau (Tibenderana, 2003: 145, 191, 219).

79 In 1982, it was estimated that the Kanuri of the north held 14% of the local civil service positions, whereas just 6% of their children had attended a government school or university. The private education sector was negligible (Gubio, 1983: 125).

3.5. Agro-pastoral resources as motives for crime and land conflicts

In addition to political differences taking an ethnic and religious turn, the populations around Lake Chad also face insecurity from highway robbery, cattle rustling, and land disputes over the control and management of agro-pastoral resources. In the absence of judicial and police data, it is difficult to speculate about growth in crime rates in the region's four countries. The Boko Haram crisis aside, local populations often voice the impression that there has been an increase in cattle rustling and conflicts between farmers and herders. The Sahelian drought of the 1970s drove herds towards the southern farmlands. However, the gradual settling of the pastoral populations and development of transhumance corridors have sometimes helped reduce antagonism, as in certain areas of Cameroon. The NigeriaWatch database records fewer agro-pastoral conflicts in the north-eastern Nigerian states than in the more southern regions, possibly because the former have the country's lowest population densities, with an average of 90 inhabitants per km^2 (Pérouse de Montclos, 2016, Chapter 3).

3.5.1. Roadblockers: Resurgence in the 2000s

Rural and cross-border banditry is nothing new in the Lake Chad region. It is part of the region's long history of raids (Seignobos, 2013). Yet the phenomenon saw a resurgence in the 2000s (Issa, 2010).

Banditry has developed in different ways in the Lake Chad region. Basically, the shores of Lake Chad, south-east Niger, and north-east Nigeria have been relatively spared these "roadblockers", unlike the North and Far North regions of Cameroon and the south of Chad. In the first zone, roads to markets have regularly been the scene of ambushes by *konta konta* (roadblockers in Hausa), as seen in Karamga, Gadira, Koita Mota, and Kouklea in the Nigerien part of the lake. Cattle rustling is a constant in Niger, for example, along a meridian line crossing the valley of Dilia, but has actually grown on the Nigerian side in the far south of Gombe, beyond the study area (Taraba, Nassarawa, Plateau, and Benue) (Olayoku, 2014). Yet the scale of armed attacks around the lake in Nigeria and Niger has remained negligible compared with the phenomenon of *zaraguina* (roadblockers in Fulfulde) in the north of Cameroon and south of Chad, an area that has become, with CAR, a major socio-political stake (Chauvin & Seignobos, 2013). In this second zone, gangs of highwaymen proliferated between the south of Chad and north-west CAR from the start of the 1980s, before extending their range of action, principally to North and Far North Cameroon, after 1995 (Seignobos, 2011). In the 2000s, the rural cross-border crime rate soared. The *zaraguina* have become a nightmare for travellers, who are regularly held up, and they feed the fears of herders, who fall victim to cattle rustling and kidnappings where hostages are ransomed for livestock.

It is impossible to put a figure on these attacks, but scattered veterinary department reports provide a rough estimate of the scale of the phenomenon. In the North Region of Cameroon from 2006 to mid-2007 alone, hundreds of people were killed or held hostage, herders along with hundreds of thousands of cattle were forced to flee the region, and the ransoms paid ran into billions of CFA francs (Djalla, 2007). From a technical point of view, the bandits are skilled in terms of weapons, communications (mobile and satellite telephones and Internet), and transport (motorcycles). Their gangs are made up of professionals in arms (rebels, soldiers, etc.) and herders forming the bulk of the rank and file, who collaborate with traders and local politicians, canton heads, or camp leaders to sell on stolen cattle on the markets.

Although the roadblockers have waned in the 2010s, without disappearing altogether, the *zaraguina* have made their mark. They have been met with armed responses, such as the herders' anti-*zaraguina* militia—while other responses continue, such as the Rapid Intervention Unit (BIR), an elite Cameroonian army unit formed against the *zaraguina*, which also serves to consolidate the authority of the central government. They have thrived on the contradictions of herding societies, especially of the Mbororo Fulani, who are marked by sharp social and intergenerational inequalities—and young people have seen taking up arms with roadblocker gangs as a way to revolt, gain their freedom, and make quick money.

3.5.2. Land conflicts: Poor regulation and politicisation

The Lake Chad region is also the scene of many conflicts over land and natural resources which, without necessarily leading to violence, can be a source of land insecurity and can block development when the regulatory system does not work. The use of violence places a question mark over the legitimacy and effectiveness of the different conflict resolution institutions. It is often a way of forcing the administration to play its role as referee in the land conflicts, as in the Cameroonian cotton zone (Seignobos & Teyssier, 1998). For the Fulani herders on the Benue plains plagued by land insecurity and large-scale banditry, the use of armed violence to defend their access to protected areas needs to be viewed in terms of the absence of an arena in which to debate the space's usage priorities, and in terms of how extremely remote central government is for certain groups that have fled insecurity in neighbouring countries.

Land conflicts over territorial control issues can drive a localised outbreak of violence, sometimes ending in the loss of human life. In Cameroon's Far North, chiefdom successions or creations and local election campaigns tend to trigger this type of violent conflict (Mbarkoutou, 2016). All around Lake Chad, uncertainty over water movements fuels land-use and territorial conflicts, whose stakes are raised by decentralisation (in Niger and Cameroon) and redrawn politico-administrative boundaries (in Chad) (Rangé & Amadou, 2015). The

Buduma communities are often among the protagonists in these violent conflicts, whether fighting among themselves or with Assalé Arabs and Kanembu in Chad or Mober (Kanuri) in Niger. For these islanders, marginalised in the local and/or national power structures, land and natural resources agendas combine with citizenship agendas.

When land conflicts overlap with other social divides (e.g. political, religious) and find a politicisation arena, they can become a key ingredient for socio-political crises. They were a decisive element in the spread of Kousseri clashes between Arabs and Kotoko to the Logone-et-Chari countryside and their protraction from 1992 to 1995–1996 (Issa, 2012). Nigeria has seen repeated fatal conflicts between farmers and herders in Adamawa and the Middle Belt over the last ten years, driven by a complex causal chain in which urban inter-ethnic and inter-religious conflicts play an important role (Higazi & Yusuf, 2017).

In another example in the Diffa Region of Niger, water conflicts between Mohamid Arabs and Fulani-Tubu were subsequently politicised as native claims. In the 1990s, following the massive influx of Mohamid Arab herders fleeing the persecution of the Hissène Habré regime in Chad, armed clashes broke out over the control of wells. Serious conflicts erupted again in 2006 (e.g. forced displacements, dispossession of real estate) out of jealousy over the rapid economic and political rise of city-dwelling Mohamid Arabs. Traditional leaders and Fulani and Tubu political figures then seized on the well conflicts to challenge the citizenship of the Mohamid Arabs. The Nigerien government decided to deport them, before backtracking following lobbying by the Arab diaspora through associations and in the press (Anderson & Monimart, 2009).

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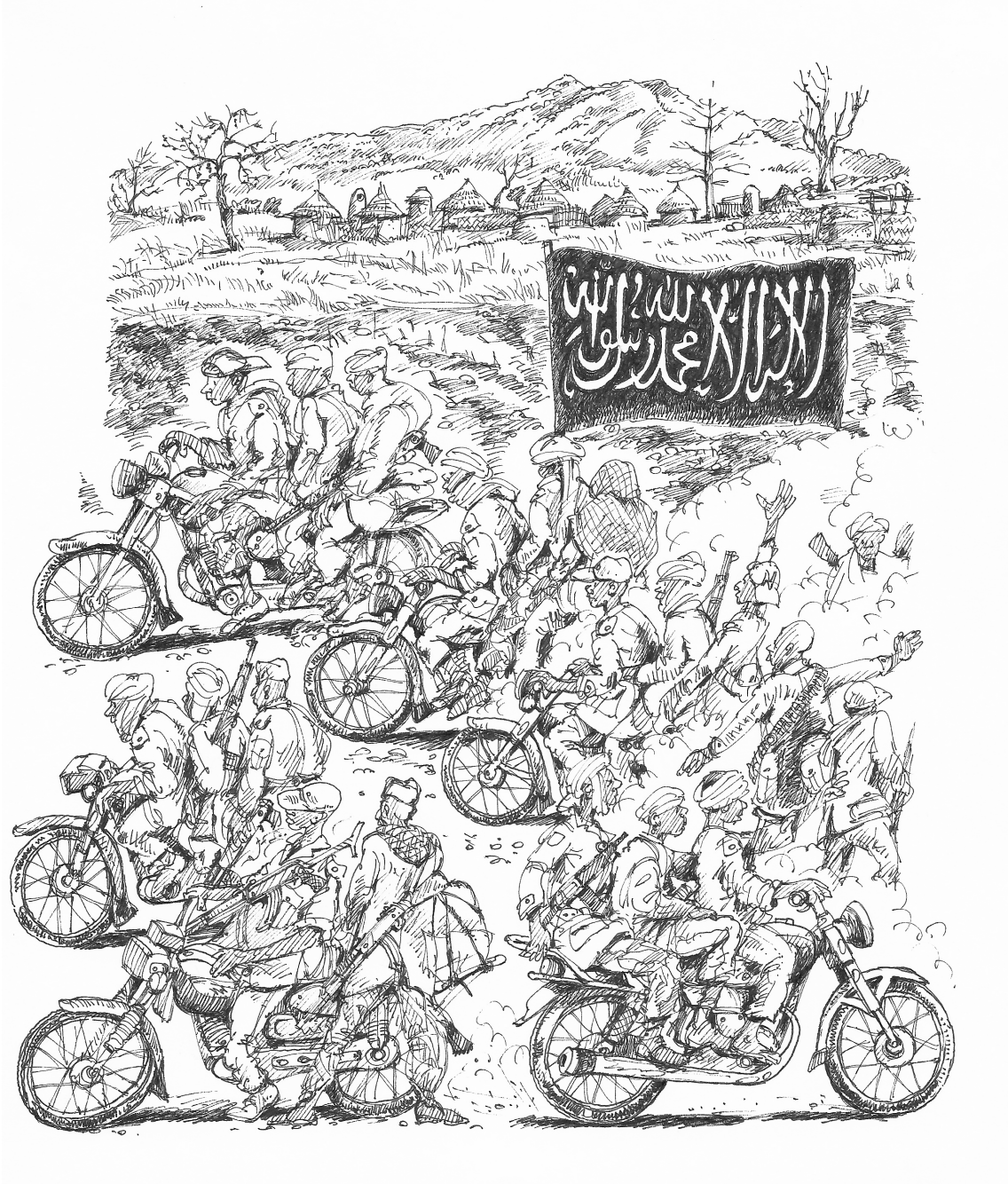
Section 2.
Boko Haram and the situation in 2017



Boko Haram fighters on motorbike in the Mandara Mountains.

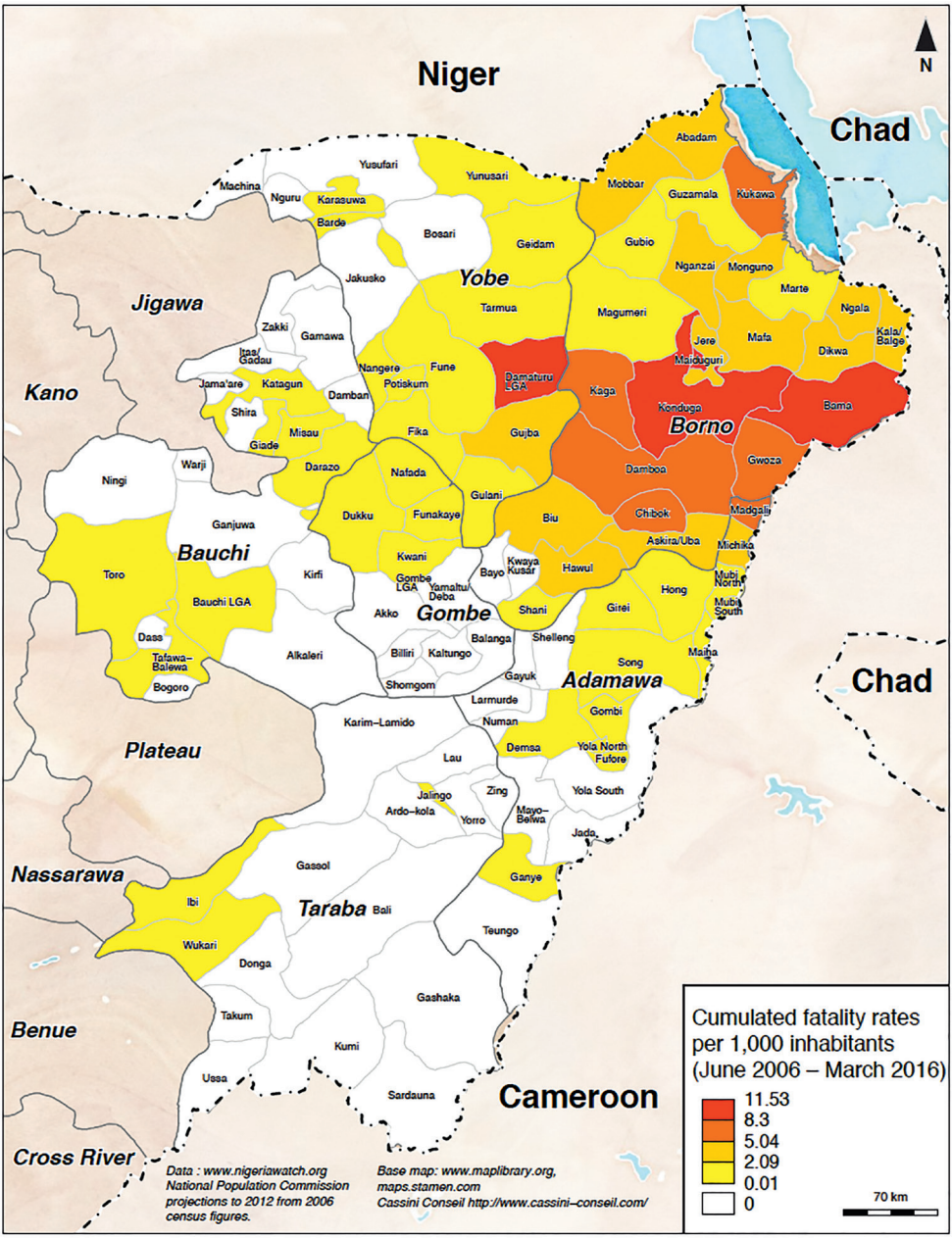
Chapter 3.
Emergence of Boko Haram and gradual spread of the conflict

KEY POINTS

Boko Haram, an Islamist sect turned armed movement, first developed in Nigeria with rear bases in neighbouring countries. In 2014–2015, the insurgents expanded their theatre of operations into Cameroon, and then into Niger and Chad, as an anti-terrorist coalition was set up. The highly fragmented group then retreated into the region's bush but continued to carry out attacks, particularly suicide bombings. Its capacity for resilience raises questions about the causes of the insurgency. Climate change is hardly a convincing explanation for the conflict, no more than is the theory of Salafist indoctrination, which has played a very marginal role in the ongoing hostilities. Nor is it an ethnic liberation front, although the majority of Boko Haram are Kanuri speakers. Given the immense poverty in the area, it is worth looking instead into the social and political conditions behind the group's emergence and radicalisation. Corruption, state dysfunctions, a brutal military crackdown, and the suffering it has caused to the civilian population are key factors behind the insurgency and its continuation.

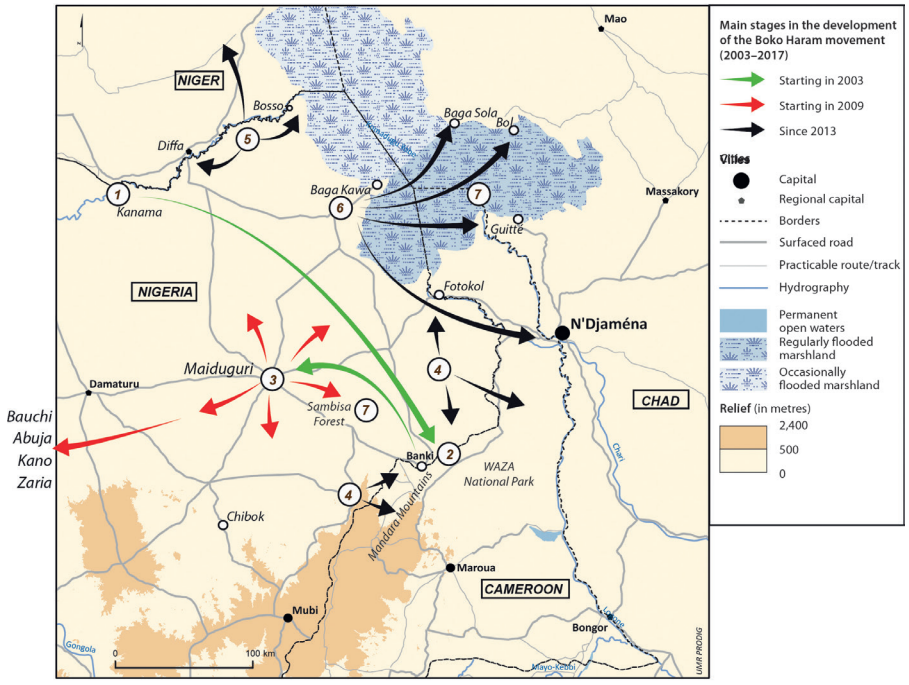
In an already highly vulnerable region, the insurgency waged by Boko Haram since 2009 has revealed the weakness of the governments of the four countries bordering the lake. It has not evolved in a linear manner and really started to spread from Nigeria to Cameroon and then Niger and Chad in 2014–2015. The conflict has had disastrous impacts on the population and economic activities. It has also fuelled major controversies over the causes of the insurgency, with debates that have sometimes had a major influence on the international community's military and humanitarian response agendas.

Map 10. Cumulative fatality rates per 1,000 inhabitants resulting directly from clashes between Boko Haram and security forces in Nigeria's North East (2006–2016)



Sources: M.-A. Pérouse de Montclos, IRD, http://www.nigeriawatch.org

Map 11. Main stages in the development of the Boko Haram movement (2003–2017)



Sources: M.-A. Pérouse de Montclos, IRD, http://www.nigeriawatch.org

The main military stages in the development of the Boko Haram movement (2003–2017)

① 2003: Based in Kanama on the Niger border, the 'Nigerian Taliban' attack police stations and then flee from the army toward the Mandara Mountains in Cameroon.

② 2004: Pursued by the army, the 'Nigerian Taliban' join the most radical preacher in Maiduguri, Mohammed Yusuf, and form the most extremist core of a sect that does not yet have a name and will come to be mocked by the disparaging title of Boko Haram ('Western education is sacrilege').

③ 2009: Following skirmishes with the police, Mohammed Yusuf calls for jihad and is summarily executed by the police. The army intervenes and the crackdown leaves a thousand dead in Maiduguri, mostly civilians. Under its new leader, Abubakar Shekau, the group goes underground and extends its sphere of action to Nigeria with terrorist attacks and spectacular strikes in Bauchi in 2010, Abuja in 2011, Kano in 2012, and Zaria in 2014.

④ As of 2013: As the declaration of a state of emergency exacerbates the violence in the countryside in Nigeria's Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa states, the mutual non-aggression pact that held on the border with Cameroon is broken when a French family is kidnapped on the Waza nature reserve. The hostages are exchanged for Boko Haram commanders held by the Cameroonian forces. The insurgents soon scale up their attacks in the Mandara Mountains.

⑤ As of 2015: With the formation of an antiterrorist coalition, the situation deteriorates in Niger where Boko Haram targets mainly Diffa, Bosso, and small villages along the Yobe River.

⑥ As of 2015: Chad is in turn hit by the sect. Already operational on the lake's islands, Boko Haram fighters mount suicide bombings in N'Djaména, Guitté, Bol, and Baga Sola.

⑦ In 2017: The sect continues to fragment. Its two main factions operate from Sambisa Forest and the marshlands of Lake Chad.

1. Development and spread of the conflict: 2003–2017

The Boko Haram jihadist conflict has had various impacts in time and space. Borno in north-east Nigeria has clearly been the state the hardest hit by the violence (Map 10). Chad is the least affected of the four countries bordering the lake, hit two years after Cameroon and then Niger. Box 8 sums up some of the characteristics of the Boko Haram sect since it went underground and morphed into a terrorist group.

Boko Haram's history began in 2003–2004, in Kanama along the border with Niger and then in the Mandara Mountains in Cameroon with jihadists called the "Nigerian Taliban" (Map 11). Pursued by the Nigerian army, the group joined a radical Maiduguri-based preacher, Mohammed Yusuf. This native of Yobe subsequently developed the movement known today by the name of Boko Haram, a nickname coined by the indigenous people in 2006 and taken up by local journalists reporting on the first major clash with Nigerian security forces in 2009. The violence then escalated into a form of civil war with the declaration of a state of emergency in the BYA states (Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa) in 2013, followed by the deployment of Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) coalition troops in 2015.

Note, however, that Boko Haram had some followers in Niger, Chad, and Cameroon right from the group's beginnings. Nigeria's neighbouring countries were spared the fighting until 2014, since they served as a rear base for the insurgents, who had made a sort of mutual non-aggression pact with the local governments. Hence in 2015, Boko Haram extended its reach of military operations but not the influence of the sect itself. This extremely important point suggests that the group managed very early on to infiltrate the lake's bordering countries' populations and conflicts to recruit followers. Behind the media stories of the sect's fragmentation over ideological divisions, it would therefore seem that there is not one Boko Haram, but at least four, corresponding to the different local dynamics that have determined the development of the insurgency in Nigeria, Niger, Chad, and Cameroon.

Box 8

Boko Haram, from sect to terrorist movement

Born in Kanuri country in the border region of Borno in the north-eastern tip of Nigeria bordering the Republic of Niger, Lake Chad, and northern Cameroon, Boko Haram started out as a nameless sect intolerant of other Muslims. Located in the Nigerian city of Maiduguri, the group's founder and spiritual leader, Mohammed Yusuf, called for the establishment of an Islamic state to properly enforce his fundamentalist version of Sharia law. The young preacher had initially followed the teachings of a seemingly Wahhabi movement, which appeared in the region in 1978 and was sometimes called the *Izala* "eradicator" after its official name: the "Society for the Eradication of Evil Innovations and the Re-establishment of the Sunnah" (*Jama'at Izalat al-Bida wa Iqamat al-Sunna*). Around 2005, Mohammed Yusuf broke with the group, accusing them of collaborating with the corrupt Nigerian government leaders. The Izala in turn rejected Boko Haram's leader for not having the qualifications required by Saudi Arabia to teach Islam.

The sect then went underground and switched to terrorism following the extra-judicial execution of Mohammed Yusuf by Nigerian police in 2009. Under the subsequent leadership of self-proclaimed Imam Abubakar Shekau, the "Group of people committed to the propagation of the Prophet's teachings and jihad" (*Jama'atu Ahlis-Sunnah Lidda'awati Wal Jihad*) is now known more by the name of Boko Haram ("Western education is sacrilege"), a nickname to which it objects. With the declaration of a state of emergency and setting up of quasi-government militia in 2013, the group set about massacring civilians to dissuade them from cooperating with the security forces. At the same time, it turned to crime and robbery, attacking banks, holding traders to ransom, and kidnapping high-ranking figures and the rare expatriates still to be found in the area. Deprived of its charismatic leader since the demise of Mohammed Yusuf, the group also fragmented, as some elements challenged Abubakar Shekau's brutality, accusing him of killing mainly Muslims. In 2012, a splinter group appeared called *Ansaru* or, to give its full name, the "Community of the Defenders of the Muslims in the Land of the Blacks" (*Jama'at Ansar Al Muslimin Fi Bilad al-Sudan*). As an international anti-terrorist coalition was being set up in early 2015 with the armed forces of Nigeria, Chad, Niger, and Cameroon, a faction of Boko Haram fighters pledged allegiance to the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS, often referred to by its Arabic acronym of Daesh), henceforth calling itself "Province of the Islamic State in West Africa" (*Wilayat Gharb Ifriqiyah*).

1.1. From preaching to state of emergency: 2003–2013

Mohammed Yusuf's influence was not restricted to Maiduguri and the hinterland in a region with porous borders. Traces of his influence could be found in the form of sermons, leaflets, and armed forays in Cameroon and Niger well before the extrajudicial execution of the sect's founder in 2009. In 2003, jihadists known as "the Nigerian Taliban" appeared in Kanama on the Niger border before being pursued by the army, taking refuge in the Mandara Mountains in Cameroon, and then melting into the landscape and joining the most vehement preacher of Maiduguri, Mohammed Yusuf, to whom they pledged allegiance. Mohammed Yusuf had the hardest time controlling them and was arrested by the authorities on a number of occasions. The Nigerian Taliban in effect had pan-Islamic ambitions that extended far beyond the confines of Borno State. For example, they went to attack police stations in Kano shortly before the 2007 general election.

At the time, Mohammed Yusuf was not at all an underground figure. A prominent preacher, he acted openly and under the influence of a Salafi/Wahhabi movement that appeared in Nigeria in 1978 and was sometimes referred to as the "eradicator" after its official name: the "Society for the Eradication of Evil Innovations and the Re-establishment of Orthodoxy" (*Jama'at Izalat al-Bida wa Iqamat al-Sunna*). Yet Mohammed Yusuf was more radical and virulent. Whereas the Izala accepted voting and supporting candidates in elections, he completely rejected the model of a parliamentary democracy as being inherited from colonisation, imported from the West, and accused of perverting Muslims' souls because it promoted government by and for the people, rather than a caliphate.[80] The leader of Boko Haram hence gained his popularity from his condemnation of corruption among the Nigerian elites. Hostile to the Sufi brotherhoods dominant in the region, he also underpinned his religious legitimacy by claiming to have international standing and making reference to the doctrine of foreign Salafists, such as the Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia, Abd al-Aziz bin Baz, who accepted the principle of elections only to topple secular regimes or to consolidate a government which already obeyed Sharia law.

Around 2005, Mohammed Yusuf broke with the Izala, which he accused of collaboration with the Nigerian leaders. The Izala in turn rejected Boko Haram's leader because he did not have the qualifications required by Saudi Arabia to teach Islam. Throughout its preaching period (*Da'wah*) through to 2009, the

80 Nothing could sum up the two movements' opposing views better than comparing the personalities of their founders. Mohammed Yusuf (1970–2009) was a young preacher from the Yobe countryside with no experience of power. Ismaila Idris Ibn Zakariyya (1937–2000) was, on the other hand, a seasoned sheikh when he founded the Izala movement in Jos in 1978. A native of Goskorom, a small village in Plateau State, he began his official career preaching in Kakurdi Prison in Kaduna and as an army chaplain first in Ibadan in 1974 and then in Kontagora and Jos, before being relieved of his position in 1978 due to his inflammatory stance against the traditional Sufi brotherhoods (Ben Amara 2014: 129–130).

sect had its own mosques, preached in the markets, attempted to re-Islamise the entire region, and sought to keep rear bases in Nigeria's neighbouring countries. The Amchide–Banki complex on the edge of Cameroon was typical of these smuggling points that attracted Boko Haram followers to do trade, stock up on supplies, revile "bad" Muslims, and preach Sharia law in a place renowned for its bars and prostitutes.

However, Nigeria's neighbouring countries acquired a new strategic depth following the extrajudicial execution of Mohammed Yusuf in 2009, when the group declared jihad, went underground, mounted its first terrorist operations, and extended its attacks to Abuja, Kano, and Zaria in 2011–2012. Under its new leader, Abubakar Shekau, Boko Haram's shift to brutality went hand in hand with its turning to crime. As the sect could no longer collect funds in its mosques, which had been destroyed, it attacked banks, extorted taxes, and racketeered local traders by kidnapping their children for ransom. In rural areas, it was also joined by armed bandits and cattle rustlers, who took advantage of the chaos to get their share of the spoils. President Goodluck Jonathan, a Christian from the Niger Delta in southern Nigeria, seemed incapable of halting the progress of the movement, which controlled a number of local administrative areas in Borno and Yobe in 2012. Attempts at negotiating amnesty failed, deliberately sabotaged by a government indifferent to the suffering of mainly Muslim populations. Corrupt and dispirited, the army soon lost control of everything but the sub-region's cities.

The conflict escalated further with the declaration of a state of emergency in the BYA states in 2013. The Nigerian army left the cities and set about bombing the countryside, wreaking human damage which was in no way "collateral". Driven out of Maiduguri, Boko Haram took to the bush, setting up camp mainly in Sambisa Forest on the edge of Cameroon, a nature reserve that initially served as a training ground for the police and then the national guard under Ibrahim Babangida's regime in the 1980s. Another factor that exacerbated the conflict was that the Nigerian army decided to make up for its lack of knowledge of the area by supporting local militia, in the form of CJTFs, to flush out the insurgents hidden among the population. Cameroon soon followed with the appearance of village vigilante committees on the border, whose main purpose, for want of stopping Boko Haram incursions, was to alert the authorities to the presence of suspicious individuals.

The insurgents consequently sought to dissuade villagers from joining the militia by launching a terror campaign and scaling up their atrocities, even if it meant cutting themselves off from their social base. For their part, the Nigerian CJTFs and Cameroonian village vigilante committees were guilty of abuses, theft, poaching, and human rights violations. They used the backing they had from the authorities to settle personal scores, racketeer the population, and harass the women. Initially appreciated by Cameroonian displaced persons and Nigerian refugees, the village vigilante committees were soon suspected of being in

league with Boko Haram, and their popularity plummeted. Certain members of the Maiduguri CJTFs went the same way.

In Nigeria, the difference is that the militia also play a highly political role. They are in effect the distant heirs of the security services of the parties that fought for power at independence, notably in Kano with the opposition's *Yan Banga* ("Youth Vanguard" in Hausa) versus the NPC's *Mahaukata* ("Madmen"). For example, the Maiduguri CJTFs took on members from the "Ecomog" gang, instrumental in the Governor of Borno's victory in the regional elections of April 2003 and 2007. They also provided protection to his successor, who, as a member of the opposition, sought a solution to the shortcomings of a police force that had remained under the control of Goodluck Jonathan's government in Abuja. In northern Cameroon, however, the village vigilante committees were not involved in the RDPC (*Rassemblement démocratique du peuple camerounais*) primaries or municipal elections of September 2013.

1.2. Internationalisation of the conflict: 2014–2015

The conflict's internationalisation has played out on two levels. First, there was the media coverage with the Chibok schoolgirls kidnapping in April 2014. Driven by the social networks and the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) lobby, the story quickly became world famous and became the symbol of a conflict that had remained largely unknown to the general public up to that point. Yet the media spotlight on the Chibok girls kidnapping speaks volumes about the lack of knowledge of the area. The international mobilisation in support of the schoolgirls, who were not actually all Christian, gives the impression of differentiated treatment based on religion in a predominantly Muslim region. For example, the media had not mentioned the 50 Muslim schoolboys burnt alive in a dormitory fire in a secondary school in Buni Yade, attacked by Boko Haram in Yobe State in February 2014. In the same vein, it took five months to spread the news of the kidnapping of three hundred Muslim children in Damasek in Borno State in December 2015.

Paradoxically, the media sensation created by the Chibok affair gave Boko Haram an international profile that the sect did not previously have. Among other things, there was speculation by imaginative journalists about supposed links with Latin American drug cartels and human trafficking networks in Italy. In reality, it is mainly Igbo migrants from the south who command Borno trade in counterfeit drugs and Tramadol, a painkiller used by the Boko Haram fighters.[81] In both

81 Tramadol can cause dependency phenomena similar to morphine addiction. In France, this drug is sold on prescription. Its molecules have the particularity of being found in natural form in a shrub in Borno, the African peach (*Sarcocephalus latifolius*). See also Bärbel Freyer (2004), "The Pains of Temporary Sojourning - Igbo Migrants at Lake Chad", *in* Krings, Matthias & Platte, Editha (ed.), *Living with the Lake. Perspectives on History, Culture and Economy of Lake Chad*, Köln, Rüdiger Köppe, pp. 227–43.

Nigeria and Cameroon, trafficking in hard drugs and amphetamine laboratories are concentrated in the ports on the Atlantic coast and historically originate in trade and military circles.[82] Official statistics,[83] however, indicate that the North East is the least affected by the problem, with 8% of the total drug addicts counted in Nigeria. As regards the Chibok schoolgirls, there is no evidence that any of them were sold or forced into prostitution abroad. In Nigeria, the international prostitution networks extend from the predominantly Christian Edo region in the south and do not pass through Borno, where local prostitution is very different (Box 9).

Box 9

Prostitution in Borno, a local affair

Prostitution in Borno is organised around "women's houses" (*zoworti* in Kanuri or *gidan mata* in Hausa), which also house single, female self-employed workers. The sex industry is run locally by female syndicate "presidents" (*maira* or *shugaba* in Kanuri, *kaltam* in Shuwa Arabic, *magajiya* in Hausa, and *makira* or *mra saba* in Kotoko), generally widows or divorcees (*kamba* or *zowor* in Kanuri) (Platte, 2000: 197–211; 2004: 244–267). It does not involve procurers and makes little use of transsexual or transvestite intermediaries (*yan daudu* in Hausa) to tout for customers. The region's Muslim prostitutes are rarely unmarried, single women and are never young virgins (*budurwa* in Kanuri). The Christian prostitutes are not natives of Borno, Chibok included, but are rather Idoma, Tiv, and Igbo women from the south of Nigeria, the *akwatu;* these women are paid in advance, like the Hausa *halangnoma* (literally "skirt lifters") and unlike the tradition of the local courtesans (*karwa* in Kanuri and *karuwai* in Hausa), who live off gifts, choose their partners, and do not ask set prices.

Whatever the rash speculations about Boko Haram's connections with international prostitution and drug trafficking networks, the mobilisation to free the Chibok schoolgirls reveals most importantly the impotence of the Nigerian authorities, which initially denied the kidnapping. The affair became an electoral campaign argument in the 2015 presidential election. Combined with the kidnapping of a handful of Westerners in Nigeria and Cameroon starting in 2014, it forced Goodluck Jonathan's government to change attitude and call on its immediate and more distant neighbours—essentially the United States, France, and the United Kingdom—to take action against "global terrorism". Up until 2013, the authorities

82 Accounts describe trade in Tramadol organised by members of the Rapid Intervention Unit from Maroua. In Nigeria, trafficking in heroin was started by naval officers in training in India in 1975 (Pérouse de Montclos, 1998: 6).

83 NESTS (2014: 166), National Drug Law Enforcement Agency statistics published in 2008.

had maintained that the insurgency was a simple matter of domestic unrest, in an attempt to guard against outside interference that risked exposing the abuses committed by the army and the poor handling of the crisis. After this point, however, the authorities presented Boko Haram as an extension of Al-Qaida or ISIS to justify the failure of a deeply corrupt and demoralised Nigerian army.

At the same time, Goodluck Jonathan's government tried to win votes by distributing some relief through the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and its local branches, the State Emergency Management Agencies (SEMAs). Yet projects for the region's economic recovery under the Presidential Initiative for the North East (PINE), launched in Maiduguri in November 2014, existed only on paper. Their main purpose was to put a figure on the cost of reconstruction. They did not deal with governance issues and focused on the purely technical aspects of infrastructure development (PINE, 2014). The Victims Support Fund (VSF), set up in Abuja in July 2014, was tasked with raising funds to assist displaced persons through NEMA and local governments. It was not operational, took over a year to take up its office, targeted communities rather than individuals, and did nothing more than fund maternity clinics, psychological support programmes, and the distribution of school supplies and uniforms for 21,300 schoolchildren in Borno and Adamawa … a mere drop in the ocean compared with reported needs.[84]

1.3. The 2015 election of Muhammadu Buhari

It was against this backdrop that Goodluck Jonathan lost the presidential election in March 2015. For the first time since Nigeria's independence, a change of power came from the ballot box rather than political assassination or a military coup d'État. Paradoxically, this democratic changeover was driven largely by fear of a jihadist group hostile to the principle of a government by and for the people. Boko Haram's attacks, the army's retreats, the corruption scandals, and the Chibok affair had in effect triggered such a feeling of national humiliation that they had pushed voters, Christian and Muslim alike, to vote for a former military man whom they saw as being in a better position to meet the terrorist challenge: Muhammadu Buhari. Likewise, the jihadist threat had prompted the opposition to rise above its divisions for the first time since the end of the military dictatorship in 1999 to form a common platform—the APC—uniting breakaway factions from the PDP, the ANPP, the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), and the CPC, Muhammadu Buhari's ephemeral formation for the 2011 presidential election.

Another paradox was that the APC's democratic victory effectively established a virtually one-party situation in the predominantly Muslim north of Nigeria. This outcome was all the more unfortunate in that Borno has a cruel lack of experience of multi-partyism in local politics. At independence, for example, the

84 Interviews with VSF officials in Abuja in May 2016.

emirs manipulated the Native Authorities' police to crush their opponents, forcing the leaders of a short-lived Bornu Youth Movement to flee to Chad following clashes in Maiduguri in 1958 (Cohen, 1971: 567). In 1999, the end of the military regime also failed to put an end to political violence. Mala Kachalla (APP) was first elected in Borno State thanks to the financial support of Senator Ali Modu Sheriff, who had made his fortune doing business with General Sani Abacha's dictatorship. In 2003, the incumbent governor then stood in vain on an Alliance for Democracy (AD) ticket. But he had to hand over to his "sponsor", who kept his grip on power for two terms until 2011. A highly controversial figure, Ali Modu Sheriff (ANPP) was accused of arming a private militia, called Ecomog, manipulating the issue of Sharia law, fuelling religious tensions, financing Boko Haram, and approving the extrajudicial execution of Mohammed Yusuf in order to eliminate a witness who might have exposed his fraudulent activities.

Kashim Shettima, Ali Modu Sheriff's former finance commissioner and successor, left no room for the local opposition either and was suspected of numerous conflicts of interest. A graduate in agricultural economics from the University of Maiduguri and former regional manager of Zenith Bank, he was quick to appoint his bank colleagues to key positions in 2011, with Yunus Marami in Finance and Adamu Lawan in Works and Housing. Zenith Bank also continued to manage Borno State's budget, even though it was a private group established by business tycoon Jim Ovia in 1990 and particularly well connected with the corridors of power since the appointment of its former CEO, Godwin Emefiele, to Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria in 2014. Last but not least, Kashim Shettima was suspected of real estate transactions in Maiduguri for his own profit, as allegedly evidenced by expropriations for unfinished social housing projects. These housing units were then partially occupied by displaced persons in Shettima Ali Monguno Teachers Village (300 houses intended for teachers along Pompomari Bypass), Legacy Garden (90 three-room flats in the district of Bulumkuttu on the road to Damaturu), New Trailer Park (300 family homes near the university campus), Bakassi Housing Estate (1,000 houses in the suburbs along the Biu road), and the Damboa Road and Gubio Road housing estates (some 500 houses each).[85]

In 2015, Muhammadu Buhari's presidential election victory effectively tightened Kashim Shettima's hold over Borno, but it also won the other North East states, which, with the exception of two of them, came under the control of the APC.[86]

85 Kashim Shettima's opponents pointed out that his predecessor had at least managed to finish the work on the Gamboru Road housing estates. See also the *Daily Trust*, 14 September 2013.

86 Held by the APP for a brief period from 1999 to 2003, Gombe re-elected its PDP Governor Ibrahim Dankwambo. Taraba, with its larger Christian population, had consistently voted PDP since the end of the military dictatorship. In Adamawa, however, Governor Murtala Nyako left the PDP and joined the APC in November 2013, before being impeached and removed from office in July 2014. In Bauchi, the ANPP Governor, Isa Yuguda, had joined the PDP in April 2009 and was re-elected in April 2011, before yielding power to Barrister Mohammad Abdullahi Abubakar elected on an APC ticket in May 2015.

In practice, the PDP does not play the role of an opposition party. Confined to its Niger Delta and south-east Nigeria strongholds, it is a mere shadow of its former self. In 2016, leadership of the PDP went to former Governor of Borno, Ali Modu Sheriff, who had left the APC in late 2014 and who, controversial as ever, largely contributed to the multi-faction implosion of Goodluck Jonathan's former presidential formation. In the BYA states, in particular, the PDP networks serve mainly to justify the party's national presence, which is a vital criterion to be legally authorised to run for the 2019 presidential election. Its local representatives, paid by their executive bodies, have a purely honorary function and did not even bother to present candidates for the local elections in Yobe in 2017.

However, President Muhammadu Buhari's victory did score some points against Boko Haram. It immediately boosted the troops' morale. Even more importantly, it gave new hope to the people of Borno, who had felt abandoned by Goodluck Jonathan's government and who were now more willing to cooperate with the security forces, a vital prerequisite to fight an "invisible" enemy. Muhammadu Buhari, a Muslim from north-east Nigeria and former military Governor of Borno in 1975–1976, gave the impression of being more sensitive to the region's problems. Goodluck Jonathan's relationship with the governors of the BYA states had been disastrous, further complicating the ability to put in place a joint strategy against Boko Haram. Muhammadu Buhari, however, is on the same wavelength as the local authorities. On his election, he immediately had Kashim Shettima accompany him on his official visits to neighbouring countries.

1.4. Boko Haram's fragmentation: 2015–2017

Abroad, the new president was anxious to improve the coordination of the anti-terrorist coalition (the MNJTF) with Niger, Chad, and Cameroon. His reputation for integrity reassured the international community and, with crude oil prices plummeting, the drop in government revenues forced him to sign agreements with the World Bank and open the way for the arrival of more consistent humanitarian aid in north-east Nigeria. Paradoxically, the internationalisation of the response to the jihadist threat also drove Boko Haram to seek foreign allies. In early 2015, a faction of the group pledged allegiance to ISIS. Yet its alliance hardly went any further than the actual recorded statement. On the military and financial front, it did not make the insurgents' operations more professional, there were no imports of more sophisticated weapons, and no exchanges of fighters with other jihadist groups in the Sahel or Libya.

Instead, Boko Haram continued to operate like a low-cost insurgency, with very few resources. Despite what President Muhammadu Buhari said in December 2015, the group was not "technically defeated". It did not stop attacking military positions, nor did it target civilians only (Pérouse de Montclos, 2017a). Yet its suicide bombings, a weapon of the poor, proved particularly ineffectual

compared with other known cases in the world.[87] Nearly one-third of the group's bombings missed their targets, claimed no fatalities, or killed only their perpetrator (Warner & Matfess, 2017). These failures were rarely due to technical problems. Most of them were due to the frisking of militiamen or insurgents abandoning the attack in a last-minute refusal to sacrifice their lives or otherwise taking advantage of the opportunity to escape Boko Haram's clutches and turn themselves over to the authorities, a phenomenon that raises questions about the sect's indoctrination capabilities.

In practical terms, the group consequently lost ground and had to retreat to the Sambisa Forest and the marshlands of Lake Chad. At the same time, it continued to fragment into multiple factions. In 2018, Boko Haram was still not "technically defeated", and the insurgents' attacks, sporadic as they may be, continued to destabilise the entire region.

2. Controversies over the causes of the conflict

In a less directly visible repercussion of the conflict, the insurgency has sparked numerous controversies that have revealed the fragility of the region's states, the power of the "conspiracy" theories, and the virulence of the ethnic and religious stereotypes. The debates on the underlying causes of the rebellion have revolved around environmental issues, poverty, Islam, community allegiance, poor governance, and corruption. Although they have failed to reach shared conclusions, they have largely inspired the civilian and military authorities' responses—including at international community level, where anti-terrorist experts have opted for a religious interpretation of the conflict by promoting a "deradicalisation" strategy to get Muslims back into mainstream Islam.

2.1. The disputed role of the environment

Some commentators believe that the Boko Haram conflict is a consequence of environmental degradation, since the drought of the 1970s brought poverty to the countryside and drove unemployed youngsters into the cities, supposedly ready to fall into the clutches of the Salafist and/or terrorist networks. Climate change concerns have effectively fuelled a Malthusian vision, which posits an explosion of violence due to demographic pressure and scarcity of resources. Lake Chad, which has become a world symbol of environmental degradation, is said to be a clear case in point. Researchers take sparse, irregular, heterogeneous, and unmatched data to claim, for example, an increase in water management conflicts in the 1980s and 1990s (Okpara *et al.*, 2015: 308–325). Yet their demonstration is

87 In general, suicide bombings claim ten to fifteen times more lives than classic attacks (Pape, 2006).

inconclusive because they eliminate non-drought years from their study, ruling out any possible comparison with so-called "normal" periods.

Aside from the fact that the Sahel was definitely more devastated by civil wars in the 1970s, it is extremely difficult to prove any direct, and even indirect, causal link between climate change and Boko Haram's use of violence, which has a lot to do with Nigeria's poor governance and the errors of the military crackdown. First of all, the lake was no longer shrinking when the sect emerged (Magrin *et al.*, 2015). Secondly, studies show that natural disasters can also trigger a surge of national solidarity and reduce the risk of civil war.[88] The causes of the conflict are not one-directional. For example, the receding lake waters exposed new lands over which there was competition and triggered an influx of migrants from other Nigerian regions and from as far afield as Mali in the 1970s and 1980s. Yet the lake's rising waters also drove tensions back up when they flooded entire villages (Platte, 2001: 71–81).

Most importantly, land-use conflicts in the Sahel have as much to do with climate variations as with corruption, speculation, predatory behaviour by the authorities, and encroachment by farmers and herders (Benjaminsen *et al.*, 2012: 97–111). They are clearly human-driven, especially considering the part played by the development of irrigation projects and more water-intensive crops in the tensions observed around Lake Chad since the 1970s. Given the many social, economic, and political causes for the violence, it is not really plausible to blame the emergence of Boko Haram on climate change, and it would be even more imprudent to think that raising the level of the lake would put an end to the activities of the sect's fighters, who actually take advantage of the area's marshlands to hide and escape the international coalition forces.

2.2. Poverty in the background

Many observers focus more on the role of poverty to explain the conflict and its development. They are correct in part, depending on the time frame to which their analysis applies. Poverty as such was not behind the Nigerian Taliban in 2003 or the first version of Boko Haram before the extrajudicial execution of its founder in 2009. Yet it did subsequently drive young people into the militant ranks, and the hostilities exacerbated the impoverishment of Borno's populations in a sort of vicious cycle of mutually reinforcing poverty and insurgency. However, it is not worth speculating too much about whether development aid and more resources could help demobilise the fighters, prevent future conflicts, or defuse

88 For example, the countries hit the most by what are called natural disasters are not those that post the highest number of civil wars (Slettebak, 2012: 163–176). See Devitt and Tol (2012: 129–145) for a study in the same academic journal that endeavours to demonstrate a positive relationship between drought and the tendency toward civil war.

other sectarian rebellions (Pérouse de Montclos, 2005: 135–149). It is well known that economic growth periods can also generate social tensions.

A number of elements suggest that the role of poverty is not quite as straightforward as it may seem. First of all, Boko Haram did not develop in the region's poorest areas or among the poorest segments of the population. Its initiators were Maiduguri city dwellers, and Borno was not the poorest state in the Nigerian federation before the 2009 insurgency (Pérouse de Montclos, 2012). If poverty had been the main driver of the insurgency, the sect should have been born in Diffa, Niger, or Maroua, Cameroon's poorest region with the lowest school enrolment rate, where three-quarters of the population were living below the poverty line in 2014 (Map 12). Moreover, the first elements of the Nigerian Taliban and then Boko Haram were not destitute; some of them were children of the elite. In the same vein, the Izala fundamentalists recruited rather from the urban merchant educated middle-class than from the illiterate rural masses, who were more inclined to follow the teachings of the traditional Sufi brotherhoods because they refused to keep their women at home and lose manpower for agricultural work. The Salafist model refers to the Prophet's beginnings in the city of Medina, to the extent that some Islamologists even talk about incompatibility with the rural world, especially the Bedouin and pastoral populations' nomadic life, which rules out gathering in a group to pray at a mosque (Planhol, 1968: 24).

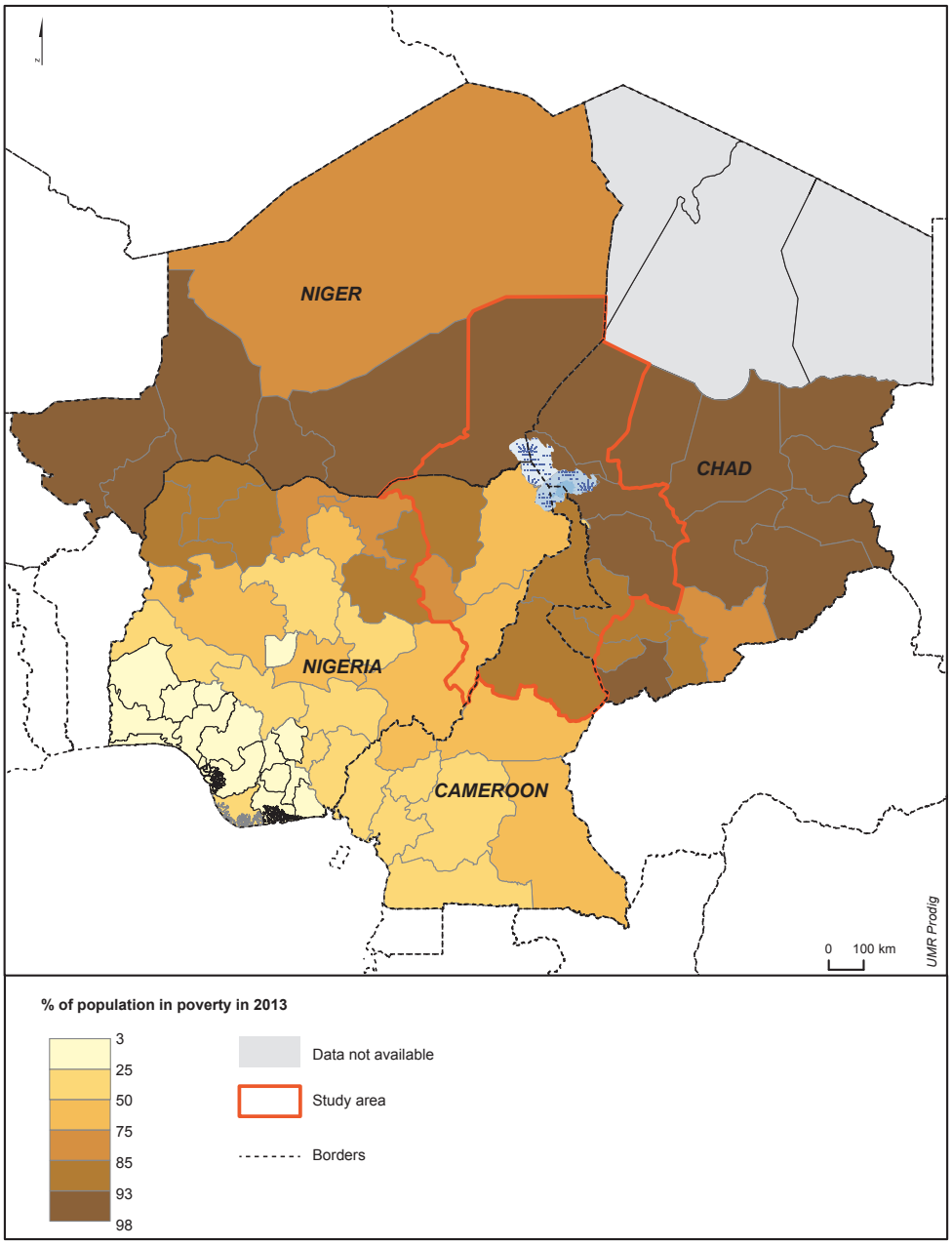
It was only later that Boko Haram's preachers attracted the poor of Maiduguri and the countryside. Mohammed Yusuf, in his sermons against the exploitation and corruption of the Muslim ruling class, answered to the frustration of unemployed youth who had no access to basic public services and who felt abandoned by the government in a region historically lacking in infrastructures. From his sanctuary (*markaz*) in Maiduguri, he made such offers as funding micro-businesses with loans. This enabled him to both recruit followers in debt and show up the shortcomings of government and the private sector in a non-Islamic society.[89]

The authorities also pushed some street vendors and motorcycle taxi operators into the arms of the militants. Thus the government ordered the police to impose mandatory wearing of a helmet and to ban the motorcycles used by the followers of Mohammed Yusuf to demonstrate against Ali Modu Sheriff in the streets of Maiduguri. The upshot of this so-called "Operation Flush" was that many motorcycle taxis (*okada* or *abacha*) were no longer able to operate. Many did not have the means to buy a helmet and took to wearing turbans in protest.[90]

89 Access to credit is notoriously difficult. For example, a survey conducted by the World Bank in 2011 found that just 20–30% of households in north-east Nigeria had a bank account and barely 0.1% had obtained a loan to start up or develop a business (NESTS, 2014: 33, 102; Mustafa, 2016: 11).

90 The chain of events that was to provoke Boko Haram's insurgency in 2009 is reminiscent in this respect of Usman dan Fodio's jihad, which started in 1804 as a tax-related uprising against the oppression of an emir who had just banned turbans, wearing veils … and carrying arms.

Map 12. Poverty in the Lake Chad region



Source: www.orpbi.org.uk, University of Oxford, 2013; based on census data from 2011 (Nigeria), 2010 (Chad), 2004 (Cameroon), and 2006 (Niger).

It is claimed that 40% of them consequently joined the group. Following the extrajudicial execution of Mohammed Yusuf in July 2009, a decree dated 7 July 2011 then confiscated as many as 34,000 *abacha* in Maiduguri and in the Jere suburbs (Anyadike, 2015, p.9). The 5,000 tricycles (*keke na pep*) that the government provided in their place benefited Ali Modu Sheriff's supporters and were hardly any use to the motorcycle taxi operators as a means of finding work again.

Following the declaration of a state of emergency in 2013, the escalation in hostilities, the *de facto* closure of the borders, the hardening of economic sanctions against the insurgents, and the development of the anti-terrorist coalition from 2015 in turn exacerbated the unemployment of young people liable to go over to the rebellion to provide for their needs and get their share of the spoils of war. The region's impoverishment went hand in hand with the group's criminalisation, as Boko Haram was not backed by Al-Qaida or Daesh and had to get funding through bank attacks, kidnappings, and racketeering. During this period, the economic crisis and social downgrading of entire segments of the population effectively became a key driving force behind the rebellion, which recruited growing numbers of young people motivated by the pillaging, especially in rural areas.

2.3. Controversies about Islam

Other observers, rather than stressing the role of the environment or poverty, focus on the question of religious indoctrination. Their line of reasoning, which overshadows political issues, is based on two main types of explanation: a clash of civilisations against the Christians and/or the corruption of an African Islam radicalised through Izala Salafism and Saudi Wahhabism. They therefore posit that the development of the Boko Haram sect was based on an opposition between "black", Sufi, traditional, syncretic, tolerant, and supposedly peaceful Islam, and an exogenous, fundamentalist, "radical", bellicose Arab Islam.

However, Africans from the Sahel did not need to wait for Wahhabi preaching and Saudi funding during the 1970s oil boom to wage holy wars. From Sokoto to Massina, the great jihads of the 19th century were driven by Sufi brotherhoods, which subsequently collaborated with the Europeans and are now criticised by young imams because of their links to secular, corrupt post-colonial regimes (Pérouse de Montclos, 2017b). It is historical nonsense to think that "radical" Islam would not have come into being without foreign Wahhabi influences. Some authors even see in this a form of contempt for the religious practices of black Africans, which are associated with fetishism even if Arab Muslims also believe in jinn spirits and the "evil eye" (Amselle, 2017: 19).

In any case, the little we know about the circumstances and social profile of the Boko Haram combatants recruited after 2009 does nothing to bear out the importance of Islamist indoctrination. There has been a lot of speculation in the

press about the role played by Koranic pupils, who are despised and treated like beggars, called *talibés* in Senegal (from the Arabic root *talib*, meaning a student) and *almajirai* in Nigeria (a Hausa word derived from *almuhajirun,* migrant in Arabic). Yet these itinerant Koranic schools (*tsangaya* in Hausa and *djanguirdé* in Fulfulde) teach traditional education and are usually run by Sufi marabouts (*mallam*) who oppose Salafism. In fact, the Boko Haram insurgency could well be attributed equally to the failure of government schools.

In Nigeria, for example, just one in ten insurgents say they joined the group out of religious convictions after attending a mosque or Koranic school (Botha & Abdile, 2016; Pérouse de Montclos, 2016). Nor does the sect appear in Cameroon to have reached the fundamentalist circles of the so-called *Mahabous* ("dissenters", a Musgum nickname) who live in closed districts such as Madagascar and Hillé Haoussa in Kousséri, Logone-et-Chari (Noray, 2002: 122). In Mayo-Sava, jihadist indoctrination concerned mainly the Mandara of Kerawa, who considered themselves better Muslims than their Mora and Mémé rivals. In the neighbouring department of Mayo Tsanaga, recruitment was conducted on a community basis based on the smuggling trade with Nigeria, especially in the towns of Tourou, Mabas, Zelevet, Mozogo, and Achighachia, where the insurgents handed out a little money to attract unemployed young people.

The local, majority-Muslim populations moreover had no illusions about the motives of the combatants. Although they criticised Boko Haram's doctrinal deviance and its ignorance of the texts supposed to justify a jihad, they do not appear to have attributed the development of the conflict to a problem of religious radicalisation. Going by the polls conducted in Cameroon, for example, they put forward reasons that had more to do with the lure of money and with feelings of frustration and revenge (Dynamique Mondiale des Jeunes, 2015).[91] Local perceptions differ indeed from the analysis proposed at macro level. Internationally, the theory of the clash of civilisations rather places the emphasis on the conflicts between Christians and Muslims along a frontline between the north and south, in Nigeria's Middle Belt but not in Borno.

In the absence of data on confessional allegiances since the 1953 census, it is actually difficult to know how many Christians and Muslims there are in Nigeria. A 2006 Afrobarometer poll, for example, reports that 44% of 2,198 adults interviewed said they were Muslim and 54% said they were Christian. Yet a demographic and health survey of 9,966 people in 2003 gives percentages of 50% and 48%, respectively (Odumosu *et al.*, 2009: 13). Reckoning on a population of 160 million inhabitants in 2010, the World Christian Database found similar proportions for Christians and Muslims, at 46%, with a larger percentage of

91 Socio-economic and political factors, rather than religious radicalisation, are also the main factors mentioned by the populations living in the border areas of eight Sahelian countries, according to polls never published and disputed for their lack of representativeness.

animists at nearly 8%.[92] Last but not least, the Pew Research Center analysts estimated the percentages of Christians and Muslims at 46% and 52% in 2008 (Lugo *et al.*, 2010: 147).

Actually, northern Nigeria has seen an extraordinary increase in Christians since the colonial period.[93] It is therefore possible that the resurgence of jihadism through Boko Haram reflects the rejection of a global modernity based on a Christian democratic and economic development model. In a majority-Muslim region, the fact nevertheless remains that the sect has killed mainly more Muslim than Christian civilians. Likewise, Boko Haram's rhetoric has essentially targeted "bad" Muslims. Conventional wisdom and stereotypes about the Islamisation of Africa, wars of religions, and the "radicalisation" of Islam should not obscure the fact that other factors undeniably contributed to the insurgency.

2.4. A youth revolt or an ethnic problem?

Indeed, Boko Haram can be understood as a youth revolt against the power of the elders: the politicians, the rich, the Muslim establishment, official Islam clerics, and so on. Easier access to women may also have attracted single men unable to afford the expense of a wedding, given that the Salafists condemn the exorbitant cost of African dowries inherited from pre-Islamic traditions (see Box 10). Yet generation divides and gender relations do not explain everything. Generally speaking, the insurgency above all revealed the region's social tensions, as Islam was used to justify the settlement of personal scores or resolve community disputes. Boko Haram is made up essentially of Kanuri, because it was born in Borno and Yobe. Some observers have therefore seen this as the expression of an ethnic agenda. In the region, jihadist movements have often been equated with one group in particular. In the 19th century, the Sokoto Caliphate was regarded as a Fulani Empire. In Kano in 1980, the Maitatsine sect was also interpreted as a Gwari revolt against Hausa domination.[94]

Yet Boko Haram is not an ethnic liberation front. Anthropologists, for that matter, encounter some difficulty when it comes to defining a Kanuri identity, formed historically by combining different types of populations under the rule of the Sultan of Borno. Rather than Kanuri royalism or nationalism, it was primarily the British who supported Borno's irredentist claims, to carry the referendum held under UN supervision in Northern Cameroons in 1961. The Nigerian government then took up the argument as its own to assert its sovereignty over some Lake

92 http://www.worldchristiandatabase.org/wcd

93 The region counts an estimated one-third of Christians today. A century ago, two-thirds of its nine million inhabitants were Muslims, going by a British survey of the Northern Nigeria Protectorate in 1911. Yet the remaining third were not Christian (Ostien, 2012; Pérouse de Montclos, 2013: 53–63; Smith, 1965: 117, 149).

94 "Maitatsine" is hence thought to come from the Gwari language, rather than Hausa, to mean "the one who damns" (Hiskett, 1994: 130).

Chad islands at the International Court of Justice in 2002. However, Boko Haram has never called for the restoration of the Borno Empire. Instead, its leaders have identified with Usman dan Fodio's victorious jihad rather than Muhammed al-Kanemi, the Muslim cleric who refused to pledge allegiance to Sokoto and saved the Sayfawa dynasty from the Fulani invasion of Borno in 1808.

Box 10

Boko Haram and women

In its early stages, Boko Haram set out to follow Salafist precepts and confine women to the roles of housewife and mother. Yet circumstances decided otherwise when the group went underground and turned to terrorist violence. The kidnappings and sexual slavery practices started in 2012 when Abubakar Shekau announced reprisals against the ill treatment that the sect's wives had suffered in prison (Apard, 2015: 146). As the conflict evolved, the women hence became victims, messengers, logisticians, spies, and combatants at the same time. They represented a tactical advantage, since soldiers were culturally reluctant to search them and they could therefore pass military checkpoints more easily, to the extent that Boko Haram also used men disguised as women to approach its targets. In addition, women served to replenish a group that had lost mainly male fighters. Last but not least, the international mobilisation to free the Chibok schoolgirls opened the jihadists' eyes to the girls' market and strategic value as bargaining chips and a media platform.

The first case of a suicide bombing by a woman was reported in Gombe in June 2014.[95] The phenomenon went on to attain proportions beyond compare with other terrorist organisations known for their use of women, including the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka. Boko Haram women perpetrated over 56% of the 434 suicide bombings reported from April 2011 to June 2017 (Warner & Matfess, 2017). Their attacks made a huge impression, enabling the insurgents to ramp up their reputation for cruelty, determination, audacity, and resilience to the military coalition of the four lake countries.

Hence the members of Boko Haram rejected the religious authority of the *Shehu* of Borno, seen as a lackey of imperialism and of the corrupt elites of post-independence Nigeria. Following Rabih az-Zubayr's Mahdist revolt, crushed by the French from Fort-Lamy in 1900, the *Shehu* was initially returned to his throne by the colonial power in 1902. Yet the conditions of his restoration marred his legitimacy. In fact, both the Germans in Douala and the English from Bauchi had supported different candidates from the al-Kanemi dynasty: the former with

95 In June 2014, another suicide bombing was committed by a woman in Lagos' Apapa port district. Abubakar Shekau claimed responsibility for the attack, but Boko Haram's involvement was contested by the security services.

Sanda Mandara, a sultan installed by the French just before their departure from Dikwa and Northern Cameroons; the latter with Abubakar Garbai, a man they had extricated from the influence of the French (Dusgate, 1985: 152). In other words, Borno under the colonial yoke found itself with two *Shehus*!

A century later, interference and political manipulation by the Governor of Borno State, Ali Modu Sheriff, also contributed to undermining the credibility of the sultan's traditional and religious authority. Thus the death of Mustafa Ibn Umar El-Kanemi in February 2009 had its part to play in the uprising of Boko Haram, because his successor, Umar Garbai Abba Kyari, was perceived as the governor's stooge and had neither the political will nor the standing required to mediate with the insurgents (Pérouse de Montclos, 2012). Ali Modu Sheriff then aggravated the problem when he asked the emirs to spy for and collaborate with an "occupying army". He also continued to interfere in the appointment of traditional leaders—for example, in March 2010 when he split the old Dikwa Emirate into two new entities, Bama and Dikwa, each with its own *Shehu*.

In this context, it could be speculated that Boko Haram expressed the frustration of the Kanuri, who had lost the past glory of the Borno Empire. The Kanuri were never discriminated against at the national level (see Chapter 2, Section 3.3), and their situation cannot be compared to that of the Fulani minority of Gombe and Adamawa, who had to obey the majority electoral rule since the end of the military dictatorship in 1999. But the Kanuri now suffer from the competition of successful Hausa merchants. In Maiduguri, for example, Kanuri became the minority language as the city turned cosmopolitan with the arrival of the victims of the drought in the Sahel, refugees from the civil wars in Chad, and migrants attracted by the oil boom of the 1970s.[96]

For its part, Boko Haram has always maintained a pan-Islamic stance. Its leaders have insisted on the defence of the *Ummah* ("community of believers"), rather than one ethnic group in particular. To "free" the Muslims from the oppression of the traditional and modern authorities of Borno, the movement was therefore careful to appoint non-Kanuri emirs in the areas it controlled in Dikwa and Gwoza.[97] In the district of Goulfey in Cameroon, for example, their emir, Mahamat Abacar Saley, was a Kotoko who started spreading Mohammed Yusuf's word in 2011 after taking Islamic instruction in Sudan, Chad, and Nigeria.

Boko Haram effectively expanded well beyond the Kanuri homeland, planting secret cells in Kano, Kogi, and Bauchi. The sect included Fulani of various

96 It is estimated that barely one-third of the inhabitants of Maiduguri still speak Kanuri, Shuwa Arabic, or the region's Chadic languages. Two-thirds have Hausa as their native language. Even the Kanuri admit that they prefer to teach Hausa to their children so they will succeed in life. Hausa is also attractive to the region's minorities because it is not associated with the domination of Borno's Kanuri nobility (Ross, 2002).

97 Interviews by Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos in Borno and Adamawa in 2016 and 2017.

origins, Gwoza butchers from southern Borno, Tiv from Benue, and Shuwa Arabs from northern Nigeria and Cameroon, a population that some historians associate with the Baggara Arabs ("cattle herders") of Sudan and the Barma of Baghirmi. In late 2014, the group then started recruiting Buduma fishermen from the islands of Lake Chad. In 2012, a Boko Haram splinter group called Ansaru[98] also emerged in north-west Nigeria. In this regard, the theory of an ethnic revolt seems far too simplistic to explain what is behind the conflict.

2.5. Poor governance and dysfunctions of the state

Poor crisis management, blind crackdown, and the disputed legitimacy of the elites in power were all drivers behind the insurgency (Box 12). Initially, Boko Haram's call for the strict enforcement of Sharia law became popular because it condemned social injustice, the debauchery of the rich, and the corruption of Governor Ali Modu Sheriff. This rhetoric was not without its ambiguities. Even though Mohammed Yusuf criticised the wrongdoings of a "secular" State, he had followers in the government of Borno, especially the Minister for Religious Affairs, and he had himself been paid by the authorities to participate in an official Sharia committee. Another contradiction was that he blamed parliamentary democracy for the corruption of the ruling class since the return of civilians to power in 1999. Yet the roots of clientelism are very old, before the colonial era. Called *takwara* in Hausa or *juwuna* in Kanuri and Shuwa Arab, vassalage bonds consist, among others, in naming one's children after one's superior. They are used to settle disputes informally rather than going through costly, corrupt courts. Yet they also create reciprocal obligations of protection and mutual support that fuel the clientelistic networks of power (Krings, 2004: 283).

So corruption in Nigeria predates the oil boom of the 1970s with its massive and sudden influx of foreign currency. In Borno in the colonial era, it was quite frequent to pay kickbacks to secure a civil service position (Cohen, 1967: 107; Tignor, 1993: 175–202). The British sometimes deposed chiefs accused of embezzlement and, three years before independence in 1960, they set about dismissing or imprisoning numerous officials accused of corrupt practices (Cohen, 1970: 198).[99] These affairs were so common that they explain the high rate of civil servant turnover in the Borno administration: Ronald Cohen (1964: 503) shows, for example, that in a sample of 38 district heads covering a period of 60 years, 14 were dismissed and 16 transferred to other posts.

The problem also came from the move to put a stop to practices that were not seen as bribes in the old days but as tributes or religious obligations associated with alms-giving (*zakat*). Before the introduction of legal costs, for example,

98 The full name is the "Community of the Defenders of Black Muslims" (*Jama'at Ansar Al Muslimin Fi Bilad al-Sudan*).

99 See also the recollections of British Governor Sharwood Smith, Bryan (1969: 256).

plaintiffs used to offer gifts to judges (*alkali*) in Customary and Islamic courts. To save money, the British subsequently allowed judges and court clerks to continue taking a cut from the fines and sentences they handed down, amounting to around 10% in the case of debt collection or compensation to a victim's family. This practice contributed to inflating sentences and drove the colonial administration to put judicial staff on salaries at the end of the First World War. Nonetheless, the practices of paying gifts have persisted through to the present day.

After independence, elections then contributed to re-forging patron–client networks to secure a maximum of votes. The party in power in Nigeria's Northern Region had no hesitation in tampering with the results of the 1963 census to ask for a larger share of the federation's revenues in Gombe and Taraba—for example, on the Mambilla Plateau where it claimed to have 143,000 male voters when only 88,500 had been counted (Hare, 2013: 38, 143–145, 187). The stakes were especially high given that, in a first count in 1962, it had lost the demographic majority that conditioned the number of seats to which it could aspire nationally (see Box 11). The first coup d'État in 1966 and the Biafran War then militarised clientelism. On the pretext of protecting the interests of the least educated and least developed northern regions, Nigeria's federalisation process and the introduction of recruitment quotas also furthered promotions based on cronyism rather than competence or professional experience.

Box 11

Corruption by statistics: the early example of the censuses in Nigeria

The 1962 and 1963 censuses are the first known example of statistical tampering for fraudulent ends in post-independence Nigeria. The 1962 results, prematurely announced after a record lead-time of eight weeks, were initially revised upwards from a total of 42 to 52 million inhabitants and were then cancelled following protests by the southerners who found themselves in the minority.[100] In 1963, the authorities therefore had to scale up the number of census takers from 45,000 to

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100 The results, as it happens, did not reflect the transfer of territories in southern Nigeria to Cameroon in 1961. Moreover, the demographic growth rate, at 6% per year, was abnormally high probably due to inflated figures rather than an undercount by the last census organised by the British in 1953. There were also numerous irregularities: women secluded in Muslim homes in the north were underestimated; a "village" of 20,000 souls was miraculously "discovered" in Eket in the south-east; census takers had to be suspended for having counted the same people twice; and politicians had put pressure on their electorate by claiming that participation was a condition for improvements to basic services in rural areas (Mansell Prothero, 1956: 166–183; Udo, 1968: 97–105; Yesufu, 1968: 106–116).

…/…

180,000 and employ more literate women from the south to improve the count of illiterate Muslim households in the north.[1016] Enumeration units, however, were announced in advance, which could well have facilitated tampering. In addition, the operations lasted just four days as opposed to two weeks as had been the case previously. The northerners took advantage of the situation to pull back ahead with nearly 54% of a total now hovering around 56 million inhabitants. This percentage would even rise to 64% of a population of 80 million inhabitants in the 1973 census, whose results were just as controversial and were officially cancelled in 1975.

The return of civilian rule with the Second Republic in 1979 did not put an end to the problem. Instead, the elections exacerbated clientelism by encouraging the ruling class to buy votes and overcharge public procurement contracts to pay for its support. Borno and Gongola states, for example, gave their votes to a Kanuri businessman, Waziri Ibrahim, who had been implicated in a kickback scandal with American aircraft constructor Lockheed in 1975 (Panter-Brick, 1978: 166–197). As for the large-scale agricultural development programmes, they were quickly bankrupted and dismantled because of corruption and the liberalisation agenda of the structural adjustment programme of the 1980s. Supported by a 21 million US dollar loan from the World Bank in 1976, the National Livestock Development Project, for instance, was designed to promote stockbreeding by creating transhumance corridors and grazing areas over 115,000 ha of land. Yet the infrastructures provided for in the north-east were either not maintained or were simply never delivered.[102]

In 1983, the leaders of Muhammadu Buhari's coup d'État intended to fight corruption as Nigeria foundered in economic crisis. The Second Republic's most implicated politicians were imprisoned … and then released by General Ibrahim Babangida, who overthrew Muhammadu Buhari in 1985 (Ellis, 2016: 138). Some were even given positions in the government, which returned their confiscated goods to them. The regime became so corrupt that it had to put its own house in order by dismissing a military governor of Borno, Mohammed Lawan Maina, who had chalked up astronomical spending on an official visit by Prince Charles and General Ibrahim Babangida to Maiduguri in 1990 (Siollun, 2013: 182). When the junta led

101 At independence, Muslim rulers in the north did not bother counting women because the number of parliamentary seats allocated to them was set by region rather than by inhabitant. Northern Muslim women were authorised to vote for the first time by a military decree in 1976, a right that was then written into the 1979 Constitution, which established direct universal suffrage for presidential elections.

102 Symbolically, even the oldest forest reserve in the country (known as Gidan Jaja and created in 1919 before being turned into a transhumance area in Zamfara in 1957) folded despite funding from the European Union and USAID up until 1997 (Kuna & Ibrahim, 2016: 207).

by Sani Abacha, a Kanuri, took power in another coup d'État in 1993, it finished off emptying the state coffers, transferring the embezzled funds to offshore accounts.

In this context, the return of civilian rule in 1999 brought a glimmer of hope for a renewal and clean-up of the political establishment. The Fourth Republic, however, quickly dashed these hopes. Electoral competition, combined with greater democratic transparency, exposed corrupt vote buying and cronyism practices. By calling for a stricter enforcement of Sharia law, Mohammed Yusuf's sermons managed to capitalise on the demand for social justice, the poor's resentment of the rich, and the frustration of the Kanuri, who felt excluded from power since the election of a Yoruba Christian and a former general, Olusegun Obasanjo, to the presidency of Nigeria in 1999.

In 2009, the extrajudicial execution of the sect's leader and the brutality of the military repression also legitimated the jihad and pushed young people to join the rebels to escape arbitrary arrest and slow death by torture in prison (see Box 12). The author's interviews with Boko Haram fighters in 2015, confirmed by other sources in early 2016, found that just a small minority had joined the group to earn money, or out of religious conviction when the sect still had the opportunity to preach in mosques. The vast majority had taken up arms rather to protect themselves or avenge family killed by the security forces, reasons that are at odds with the usual narratives of a global jihadist conspiracy (Botha & Mahdi, 2016; Pérouse de Montclos, 2016: 878–895; UNDP, 2017). In practice, the embezzlement of the funds supposed to equip the army also enabled Boko Haram to score points off demoralised, underpaid soldiers whose wages had been appropriated by crooked officers. The corruption in the security forces meant that the insurgents could buy or seize weapons abandoned by retreating troops. Within the Nigerian army, embezzlement fuelled the soldiers' resentment of their hierarchy and encouraged mutiny and desertion.

Box 12

When crackdown and economic sanctions fuel insurgency and humanitarian crisis

Counter-terrorism abuses have proved counterproductive. It was following police brutality against members of the sect who refused to wear motorcycle helmets that Mohammed Yusuf initially called for jihad in 2009. His extrajudicial execution then drove the group underground to seek revenge. In 2013, the declaration of a state of emergency and the extension of the army's operations from the cities to the countryside triggered an upsurge in the number of victims in Nigeria. Then with the MNJTF in early 2015, the establishment of an anti-terrorist international coalition broadened the battlefield and was accompanied by a sharp increase in suicide bombings by Boko Haram in the four countries of the region, particularly against civilians (Warner & Matfess, 2017: 9).

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It is worth pointing out in this regard that the insurgents are not the only perpetrators of atrocities. Following a massacre by the Nigerian army in Baga next to Lake Chad in June 2013, the National Human Rights Commission warned against the "humanitarian crisis" that the excessive use of force and anti-terrorist abuses would trigger (National Human Rights Commission, 2013). Subsequent events proved it correct. In ten years of conflict, from 2006 to 2016, the Nigerian security forces killed at least half of the 33,000 civilian and military casualties, as reported by the University of Ibadan's NigeriaWatch database compiled from local press articles and reports from human rights defence organisations.[103]

Such a finding is hardly surprising since the police and army are known nationwide for being trigger-happy, shooting without warning and with impunity. The NigeriaWatch research group showed that the Nigerian security forces shoot and kill in over half of the fatal incidents (riots, community clashes, assassinations, etc.) in which they are involved—a proportion that can climb to up to 80% in the case of the military (Pérouse de Montclos, 2016: 112–140). In other words, events take an even bloodier turn when the security forces arrive to restore order and, in principle, save lives. While combating Boko Haram, the development of a scorched earth strategy, closure of the borders, and evacuation of buffer zones have also fuelled the food crisis by preventing farmers, cattle breeders, fishermen, and merchants from going about their business. The anti-terrorist coalition's economic sanctions, designed to deprive the insurgents of their supply sources, have considerably hampered the population's capacity for resilience.

2.6. A conflict exacerbated by corruption and suspicion

Counter-terrorism, military secrecy, and impunity have exacerbated corruption in Nigeria's North East. In 2013, the declaration of a state of emergency contributed to obscuring the management of public resources. Under the auspices of Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, a finance minister previously with the World Bank, Abuja undertook to publish the sums disbursed to the federation's 36 states in the press every month. But the central government's transparency pledges were very limited at the local level. At best, the states' assemblies published budget plans at the beginning of the fiscal year. As the Fiscal Responsibility Act applied only to the federal level, the Debt Management Office barely had the means to hold in check the borrowings by state and local governments, which have often sidestepped all the rules of prudence to secure loans at prohibitive rates and become almost bankrupted.

The government of Borno was the only one in Nigeria that did not publish its budget, whether in terms of revenue, debt stock, recurrent expenditure, or

103 http://www.nigeriawatch.org/index.php?html=7

capital investment.[104] As with other states, it relied much on the "security vote", an official slush fund that is meant to act as a source of discretionary spending to respond quickly to threats to peace. This special line item exists at all local government levels in Nigeria and generally serves, on various security pretexts, to co-opt competitors, pay off allies, or get rid of opponents by hiring henchmen to eliminate them (Albin-Lackey 2007; Egbo, 2012: 597–614). Its disbursements total an estimated 5% of national government expenditure (Andersen & Matthew, 2017: 8).

In the case of Borno, the "security vote" has allegedly been used by Governor Kashim Shettima (ANPP) to fund his political machine and buy land, petrol stations, and housing in Maiduguri. It also financed army operations and CJTF patrols to compensate for the lack of police and the degeneration of the situation in Nigeria's North East, the opposition's stronghold under President Goodluck Jonathan (PDP). Some militia have been put on the payroll of justice minister and prospective successor to Kashim Shettima, the lawyer Kaka Shehu Lawan.[105]

Another adverse effect of military repression is that the crackdown triggered resentment against the authorities accused of massacring the population, abandoning civilians, doing secret deals with the insurgents, and seeking to prolong the conflict to settle scores and line their pockets. Suspicions have taken different forms around Lake Chad. In Maiduguri in July 2009, Governor Ali Modu Sheriff was first suspected of having ordered the extrajudicial execution of Mohammed Yusuf to prevent any hearing that might reveal the deals he had done with the Boko Haram militants to win the regional elections in April 2003 and 2007. In N'Djaména in August 2015, the population then suspected the authorities of hurriedly executing the June suicide bombings' mastermind, Bana Faye (alias Mahamat Moustapha), the very day after he was sentenced to death in order to cover up his collusion with the Chadian military to procure weapons and sell them cars stolen in Nigeria.

In their version of "conspiracy theory", the people from southern Nigeria and Cameroon also suspected the opposition party northerners of supporting Boko Haram to destabilise, if not topple, the governments of presidents Goodluck Jonathan and Paul Biya, both Christians. In Abuja, during the electoral campaign in 2014, the authorities insinuated that Muhammadu Buhari was a Muslim Brother in favour of Sharia law, and Boko Haram was perceived as the vengeful expression of the northerners frustrated at having lost power since the end of the military dictatorship in 1999. In the south, in particular, the CAN lobby stirred up

104 See, for example, the data on the 35 other states online on yourbudgit.com

105 In neighbouring Yobe State, security vote payments to the army and police have apparently been less regular, paid out on an *ad hoc* basis, and reported to have stopped following the 2015 election, when President Muhammadu Buhari came to power and committed to directly supporting the military effort. Interview by Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos with the Governor of Yobe, Ibrahim Geidam, in Abuja in May 2016.

old fears of a jihadi push towards the sea, as with Usman dan Fodio's Fulani in the 19th century. Suspicions were also aired about a fifth column within ruling parties. In Yaoundé, Kanuri Deputy Prime Minister Amadou Ali was accused of complicity with Boko Haram even though his house in Kolofata had been attacked by the insurgents in July 2014.[106] In northern Cameroun and Nigeria, local councillors and traditional leaders were also targeted. Caught between a rock and a hard place, they had to compensate for the lack of protection by the security forces, even if it meant supplying the rebels to avoid being attacked. The Mayor of Fotokol in Cameroon and the Chairman of the Mafa LGA in Nigeria were, for example, arrested in September 2014 and January 2017, accused of harbouring members of Boko Haram.

Last but not least, the authorities were suspected of seeking to prolong the conflict for their own profit. In Nigeria, the army benefited handsomely from the increase in arms expenditure, with overcharged contracts. In Niger, the population moreover suspected the government of ordering the evacuation of the Yobe River banks and then the Lake Chad islands in May 2015 to free up agricultural land for a Saudi company, Al Horaish, which had signed an operating agreement with the regional council of Diffa in November 2014.[107] The conspiracy theories hence gave rise to a significant paradox: on the one hand, they revealed an immense distrust of the political authority; on the other, they reflected a demand for protection by the state, while nationalism sometimes transcended ethnic and religious divisions, as in Nigeria during the 2015 presidential election.

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106 Suspicion also fell on Marafa Hamidou Yaya, an opposition member from the north imprisoned since 2012 (Bertolt, 2017: 430).

107 The project signed under a public–private partnership contract was all the more criticised in that it left it up to the municipality to compensate the farmers and conduct an environmental impact study in an area that was beyond its remit. With the region's food production already failing to cover the population's needs, local Al Horaish subsidiary, *Fleuve Niger*, was set up to develop agriculture for export to Nigeria (Diori & Tchangari, 2016: 8, 31).

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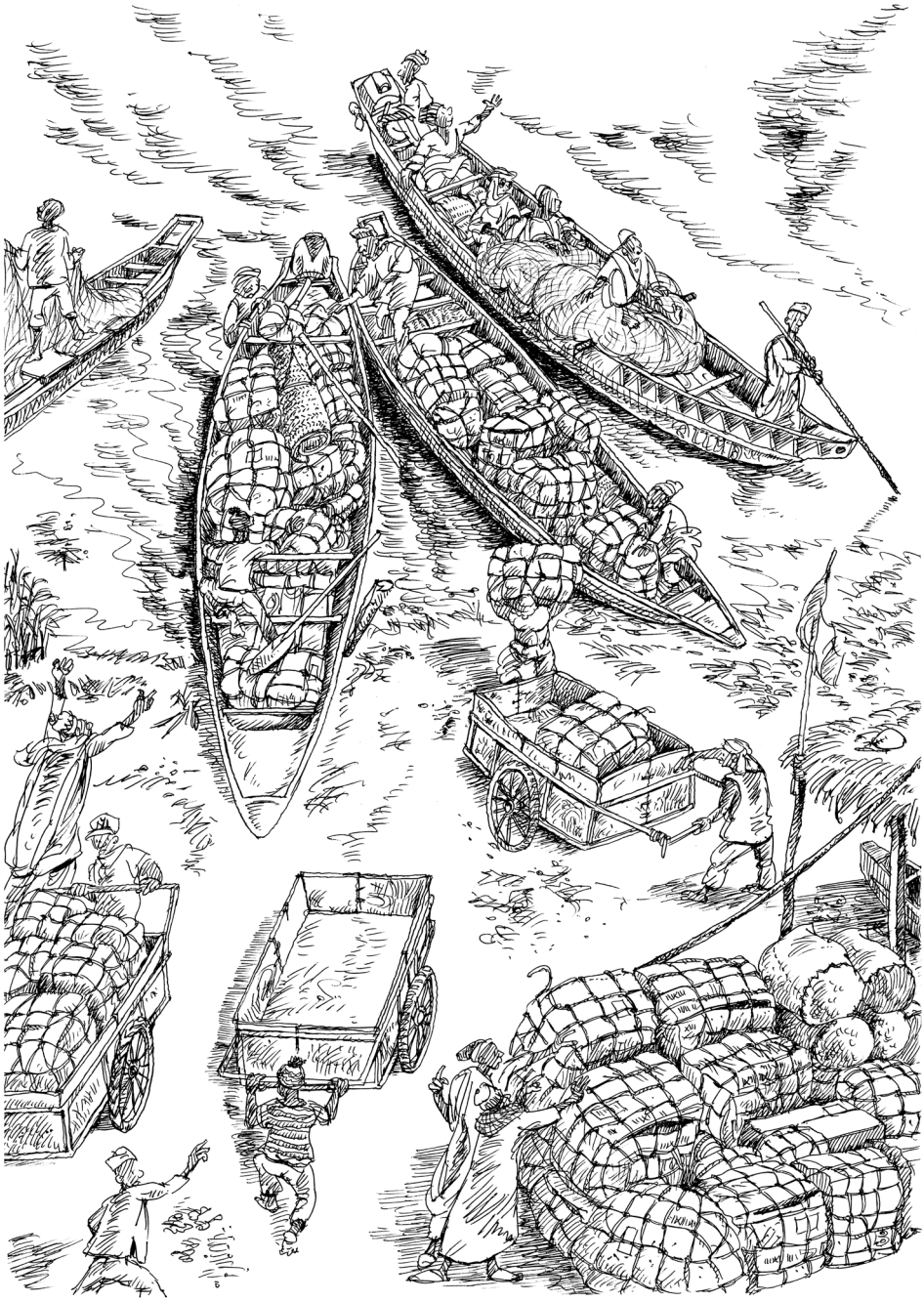


Transport of smoked fish (Darak, 2007). Production and regional trade have been deeply disrupted by the crisis.

Chapter 4.
Reconfiguration of the regional system

KEY POINTS

The Boko Haram crisis has seriously disrupted the relations between resources and populations that used to underpin the regional system. Some 2.4 million people have been forcibly displaced to town or country, within or across borders, albeit mostly internal displacements. Insecurity and counter-insurgency measures by the national armies have emptied out entire areas, spaces that were often the most productive rural centres (Lake Chad and Yobe River). At the same time, barriers to trade flows have reconfigured the regional trade, and the major route from Lake Chad through Maiduguri to Kano or southern Nigeria has been abandoned for other routes that bypass the study area. Although the crisis has logically hit hardest in the area directly affected by Boko Haram operations (Borno, Adamawa, the border areas of Niger and Cameroon, and Lake Chad), question marks hang over the repercussions of these impacts on the agricultural system (what is the level of capital loss?) and the political land tenure reconfigurations which took place during the crisis. The crisis has also increased pressure on the fauna in protected areas and wood resources in a relatively hydrologically stable environment (no dry years without inflows to Lake Chad's northern pool in the last 25 years). A burning issue concerns the governance of natural resources (croplands, grazing grounds, and fishing areas) in the deserted areas that have been partially reoccupied.

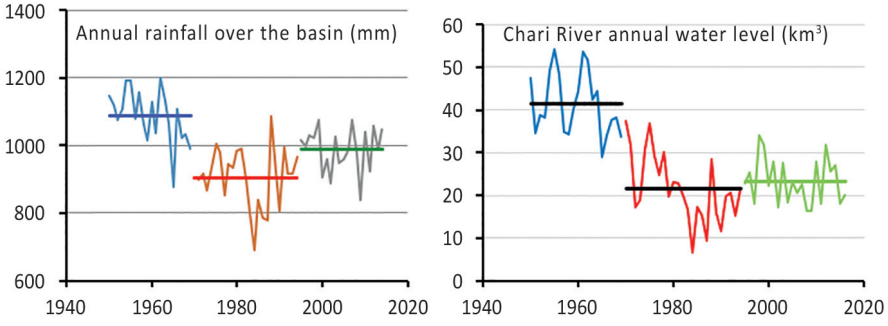
1. Hydrology and the environment

1.1. Hydrology and rainfall

Rainfall over the Lake Chad Basin has been relatively stable since the late 1990s, without any year of severe drought (Chart 3). It has stayed very close to the average estimated for the 20th century. In other words, it has not recovered the values observed during the wet period of the 1950s–1960s, when crops and grazing grounds extended up to 14°N. Contrary to popular belief, especially among political leaders, the 1950s and 1960s were not normal, but were surplus years.

Despite a return to average precipitation values, the discharge of the Chari River remains relatively low (Chart 4). The watershed's runoff coefficient (ratio of river discharge to quantity of rainfall over the basin) has not recovered its former values. Consequently, for equal rainfall, the Chari supplies less water to Lake Chad. The inflow difference is approximately 30% for average rainfall values.

Chart 3. Recent trends in rainfall over the basin and the Chari River's annual water level



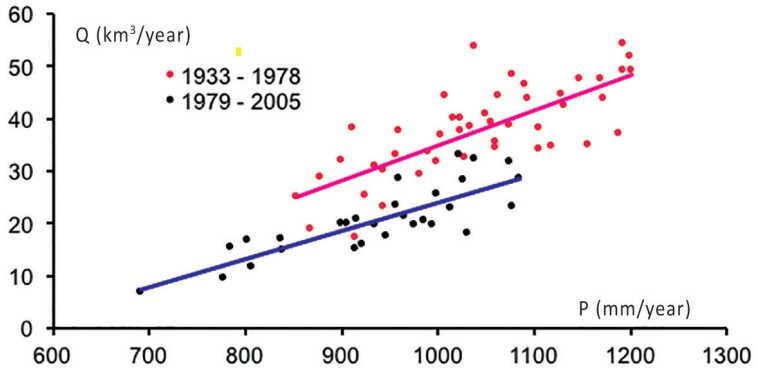
Source: Authors' calculations (based on CRU and Chad Water Resources and Meteorology Directorate).

A wet period (in blue) was followed by a dry period (in red), with approximately 17% less rainfall on average and a 48% lower water level for the Chari River, which failed to increase by the same proportion in the following average rainfall period (in green).

It is the Chari River's discharge, rather than the state of Lake Chad, that remains the best indicator of rainfall over the basin, but with a new rainfall-water level spread (Chart 4).

Chart 4. Ratio of the Chari's annual discharge (Q) to annual rainfall (P) over its basin

The ratio changed over the course of the dry period.



Source: Authors' calculations (based on CRU and Chad Water Resources and Meteorology Directorate).

Satellite images show that Lake Chad's northern pool has been partially flooded every year since the end of the 1990s, without drying up at low water. This positive situation would have allowed for a good level of fishing, cropping, and stockbreeding if the insecurity had not seriously disrupted these activities.

1.2. The lake's current landscapes

The Small Lake Chad's current landscapes are the result of past and recent variations in the lake's water level, which have driven alternate plant growth and mass mortality in the lake's northern and southern pools. These landscapes are a decisive factor for groups seeking to settle in safety in the area and take advantage of the local natural resources.

Across the lake as a whole, the lakeside aquatic vegetation (*Phragmites*, *Typha*, *C. papyrus*, *Echinochloa*, and *Vossia*) completely disappeared when the lake became Small Lake Chad following the sharp drop in level in 1973. The new plant cover developed across all the emerged sediments in the southern pool with the first rains in 1973 and the lake's following high-water level in late 1973.

In the southern pool, marshland extension exceeded the open waters. This situation, which still persists in 2018, makes it very difficult to navigate and get around between the islands. The main form of transport is by canoe, often motorised, in narrow channels roughly hewn through the dense vegetation that reduces visibility.

A similar landscape can be found in the southern part of the northern pool bordering the Great Barrier. Further north, a dense forest of *Prosopis juliflora*—a fast-growing thorny tree that can grow up to heights of 10 m with 60-cm-diameter trunks—developed throughout the centre of the basin when it was dry, covering some 3,000 km². This tree is a major nuisance to herds, fishers, and all traffic. However, it is not flood resistant and quickly dies of root asphyxiation. In 2017, the central part of the pool was generally flooded and covered with dead trees, while the island shores, like the lake shores, bore a dense belt of *Prosopis* along with other plants. This vegetation, and the sharp seasonal variations in water level that obstruct or open up passages between the many islands, form a good biotope for hiding small groups of men.

With its wetlands covering some 10,000 km², islands numbering over a thousand, and navigation complicated by large fluctuations in water level (seasonal in the southern pool and inter-annual in the northern pool), Lake Chad basically forms a potential refuge for groups of men seeking to escape the regular armed forces. This set of conditions is similar to those found in the late 19th century, when the Buduma used to raid the lake's surrounding villages and make off to hide on the islands or, more recently, when armed rebel groups from Chad found shelter in the middle of the northern pool in the 1990s.

The natural resources associated with these landscapes and in the lake and its surrounding area (fish, livestock, cereals, beans, natron, and recently wood) are exploited by the populations using efficient home-grown techniques (see below).

Fuelwood needs have driven a marked spread of deforestation, visible mainly around the towns and cities but poorly documented for the area as a whole. In Chad, coercive measures to reduce logging were introduced in 2008, with varying levels of success across the territory (Mugélé, 2013) and, in certain areas, a shift in felling to the neighbouring Cameroon, where enforcement measures are less violent. This is the case, in particular, along the Chari River, where an astounding contrast can be seen between the Chadian borassus palm stands and the now extremely degraded Cameroonian borassus palm stands. In Lake Chad's northern pool, *Prosopis* forest harvesting is expected to continue for fish smoking and charcoal making, which has intensified with the arrival of refugees and displaced persons.

Logging has generally scaled up since the crisis, with massive felling and stumping to meet the new needs created by the refugees and displaced persons and also as a substitute economic activity.

The crisis has seriously (irreversibly?) affected fauna in certain nature reserves. In the Waza Park nature reserve, in particular, there are reports of massive poaching by village vigilante committee members.[108] The Sambisa reserve, an

108 Paper from M.H. Mbarkoutou and Wove Crépin at "*La défense populaire dans le BLT*" conference held in Maroua on 27 & 28 February 2017.

encampment for Boko Haram elements and a corridor for Waza Park elephants, has suffered similar damage. In the North Region, the concentration of livestock essentially backed up against the Nigerian border has prompted a massive influx of herders into the protected areas.

However, the state-of-emergency ban on water traffic (see below) and the more or less forced departure of Lake Chad residents reduced fishing and rested fishery resources. As the activity gradually picks up again, fishers are catching what had become rare sizes of fish before the Boko Haram crisis.

2. Residential and mobility constraints

The United Nations estimates that the Boko Haram insurgency has forced 2.5 million people out of their homes, mainly in internal displacements.[109] The distribution of these migrants (dispersion/concentration—urban/rural) differs considerably between Nigeria and the other countries. At the same time, in a move to economically choke Boko Haram, all the governments have placed restrictions on access to productive areas and barriers to trade movements at Lake Chad and the rest of the region. The combination of these factors is partially reshaping the population and the geography of the agro-pastoral resources.

2.1. Forced migration

The vast majority of forced migrants have been displaced a short distance away to different shelter facilities, which tend to be urban in Nigeria and rural in Chad, Niger, and Cameroon.

Nigeria, the conflict's epicentre, is the source of the largest number of forced migrants: the United Nations estimates that 2 million people have been forced to leave their homes by Boko Haram attacks and the violence of counter-insurgency action by the army and civilian vigilante self-defence groups (CJTF). Most displaced persons have headed for nearby towns and cities from non-government-controlled rural areas and theatres of conflict, particularly in Borno, northern Adamawa (Madagali and Michika), and Yobe (Damaturu, Gujba, Potiskum, Bade, and Nugru). Maiduguri, attacked but never taken by Boko Haram, serves as the country's main city of refuge. The United Nations estimates that the city may count as many as 800,000 internally displaced persons (Map 13). Most of the displaced persons are dispersed in host communities (80%), while others are in informal or government-managed camps, generally under the control of the army and the CJTF (ICG, 2016).

In 2013–2014, the expansion of Boko Haram's combat zone and counter-insurgency regionalisation (MNJTF) brought forced migration from Nigeria to neighbouring

109 All the figures quoted and produced by UN agencies are to be taken as rough estimates.

countries. Boko Haram attacks over Nigeria's borders and population abuses and evacuations by followers then caused internal displacements in Niger, Cameroon, and Chad. In these countries, forced migrants, internally displaced persons (130,000 in Niger; 180,000 in Cameroon; and 95,000 in Chad) and Nigerian refugees (80,000 in Niger; 70,000 in Cameroon; and 10,000 in Chad[110]) have found shelter mainly in rural areas. Displaced persons are spread out along the Nigerian borders: between Mokolo and Fotokol in Cameroon, Bol and Daboua in Chad (70 camps and villages), and Maine Soroa and Koulgouliram Gana in Niger (140 camps and villages).

A minority have used their family connections to relocate to urban areas, such as Kousseri in Cameroon (20,000 displaced persons). Camps have been opened for refugees in the three countries (Sayam Forage and Kablewa in Niger; Minawaou in Cameroon; and Dar Es-Salam in Chad). Yet many refugees in Niger and Cameroon have not moved to these structures (due to such problems as access to water and military control), preferring instead camps or villages near displaced persons.

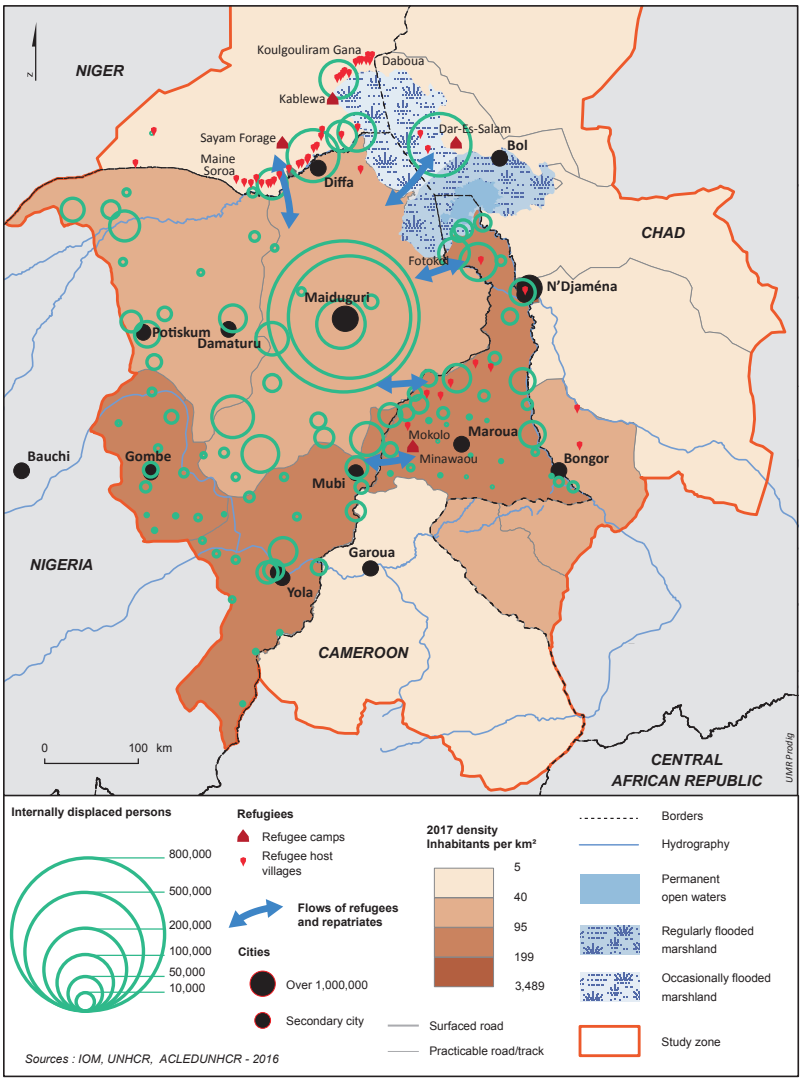
The term "returnees" is used to refer to persons displaced by force and returned to their place of origin (former refugees and displaced persons) and persons of Cameroonian, Nigerien, and Chadian nationality residing in Nigeria year round before the crisis (traders, herders, etc.) and forcibly migrated to the country of their original nationality. Among these "returnees" are 160,000 (in 2017) Nigerian refugees repatriated by force.[111] Cameroon is reluctant to take these refugees, who are suspected of being infiltrated by Boko Haram and are unwilling to join Minawaou Camp. Nigeria has grown accustomed to the premature, forced return of its nationals in its recent history, and the Nigerian authorities are trying to instil the idea of a normalisation of the security situation since 2015. However, the persistent insecurity in the country is causing waves of forced migration and returns, followed by new displacements.

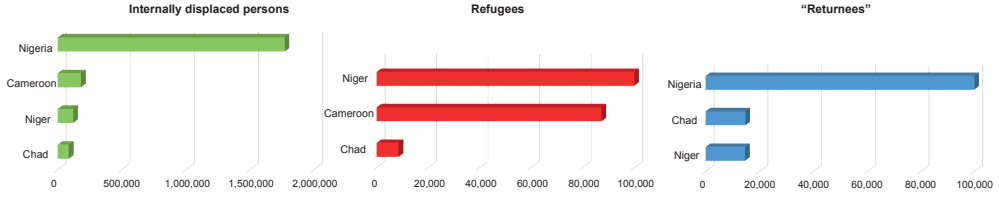
Basically, rural north-east Nigeria has been emptying out into refuge cities and over the borders. In Cameroon and Niger, the lake's islands and shores are deserted. In Chad, only the islands are deserted. Local rural population patterns along the Nigerian borders in Niger, Chad, and Cameroon have been disrupted by the arrival of the Nigerian refugees and local changes of residence by internally displaced persons.

110 IOM (2016), "Lake Chad Basin Crisis: IOM Response, April 2016", International Organization for Migration. http://reliefweb.int/map/nigeria/lake-chad-basin-crisis-iom-response-april-2016, 18 April 2016, consulted in June 2017.

111 An estimated 12,000 forced returns of Nigerian refugees from Cameroon in 2015; 75,000 in 2016; and thousands in 2017 (Source: https://data2.unhcr.org/fr/documents/download/57377).

Map 13. Distribution of displaced persons and refugees in the Lake Chad region (June 2016)





2.2. Control of production and trade movements, a pillar of the military strategies

Given that Boko Haram finds funding sources in raids and taxing primary production traffic, the governments have set about drying up its supply sources.

Two types of production are often cited as the jihadist group's favourite targets: fish and livestock. There are also reports of other high value-added primary production being stolen in part, such as onions and cotton in Mayo-Sanava (Cameroon). Just as the roadblockers did before them (Seignobos, 2011; Chauvin & Seignobos, 2013), the raided produce is then sold through receiver traders in cahoots with the insurgency. The group puts pressure on transporters and traders who refuse to collaborate by committing acts of carnage, as they did against the Hausa quarter in Maroua on 22 July 2015 (Seignobos, 2016).

The armed movement also imposes taxes on products circulating in the (often rural) areas under its control, such as smoked fish produced at the lake and sold in the towns and cities of north-east Nigeria. It is therefore not in the group's direct interest to do too much to disrupt the regional system of trade from which it benefits. For example, trade in smoked fish and red peppers produced in Niger and transported to Nigeria continued, despite Boko Haram raids and taxation, through to 2015 (Sissons & Lappartient, 2016).

In these circumstances, the Lake Chad region's governments have taken radical measures to separate Boko Haram from the population with states of emergency declared in Nigeria in May 2013 (Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa); and in Diffa Region in Niger (February), northern Cameroon (July), and the Chadian part of the lake (November) in 2015. A few months later, the commander of the MNJTF in charge of combating the Islamist group told a journalist that the Boko Haram fighters were "like fish out of water".[112] For those *au fait* with military speak, the statement referred to more than just the fish-rich waters of Lake Chad: whereas Maoist doctrine advises insurgents to "move among the people as a fish swims in water", counter-insurgency tenets hold that combating insurgents entails "taking the little fish out of the water" (Thompson, 1966: 123–124). In the case in hand, the armies have proceeded to evacuate the lake's islands to physically separate the insurgent populations and have taken a series of measures in the form of barriers to movement to restrict the insurgency's supplies.

112 Interview with Nigerian Major General, Lamidi Adeosun, commander of the MNJTF, at Radio France Internationale, published on 6 March 2016 and consulted in July 2017. http://www.rfi.fr/afrique/20160306-nigeria-boko-haram-g5-sahel-lamidi-adeosun-poissons-hors-eau

2.3. The inaccessible oasis: Lake Chad residence and access restrictions

The states of emergency have introduced a series of measures felt essentially at Lake Chad, a major resource now inaccessible.

Firstly, the armies evacuated the Lake Chad islands in 2015 following the arrival of Boko Haram (Seignobos, 2015). In Chad, for example, there were two waves of evacuation: a first wave from the southern pool in July 2015 and a second wave from the northern pool in November 2015 (50,000 people displaced each time). The army gave islanders one week to leave before labelling them accomplices of Boko Haram.

Secondly, the authorities closed the fish markets—Baga Sola in 2013, followed by Darak in Cameroon, and so on—and prohibited fishing and traffic on Lake Chad. The lake's closure triggered large waves of migration by fishers in search of safe waters to Lake Maga (Cameroon) and the Chari River (Chad) and, further afield, to Lake Fitri (Chad),[113] the Lom Pangar Dam (Cameroon), and the Atlantic (Manoka, Cameroon). Fishing bans were also found placed on the Yobe and Logone rivers.

Thirdly, administrative bans (and Boko Haram) restricted herders' movements to the grazing grounds of Lake Chad's central islands. Herds are therefore concentrated on the islands near the lakeside: the Buduma herders have left their Kuri cattle there, and the other groups try to drive their herds there seasonally (Fulani, Arabs, Kanembu, etc.).[114]

Nevertheless, it is very difficult to paint a full picture of these state-of-emergency measures at the present time, since their enforcement is highly volatile and variable from one local situation to the next. The local authorities adjust them to threat levels. For example, it is possible to fish without a motor boat on the Chadian shores, and more in the southern than in the northern pool, even though it is theoretically prohibited (by a governor's decree dated 18 February 2016 and the state of emergency declared—albeit as yet unconfirmed for renewal by parliament—in November 2016). In some cases, there is also the possibility of using various forms of corruption (fish, money, motor fuel, etc.) to come to lake access arrangements with security and defence forces (and Boko Haram elements).

Other administrative bans associated with the states of emergency have also had an impact on trade movements, especially regionally.

113 Following the migration of fishers from Lake Chad to Lake Fitri, the Governor of Batha placed a two-month ban on fishing at Lake Fitri (November 2015 to January 2016) to take stock of the non-local Chadian fishers (1,016 counted) and foreigners (415) and to arrest people suspected of having connections with Boko Haram (eight in Galo and one Boko Haram member arrested on the island of Kessi). Interview by E. Chauvin with the Prefect of Yao (Chad) in February 2016.

114 The Governor of the Far North of Cameroon has also prohibited access to cattle less than 50 km from the Nigerian border, although this measure tends to be ignored.

2.4. Barriers to regional trade movements

Three main measures have been introduced to restrict movement in Boko Haram's area of operations: border closures, market closures, and transport restrictions, with more or less effective local enforcement. Increased numbers of checkpoints on the roads in the Lake Chad region form another obstacle to traffic.

A number of temporary border closures have been seen since the early 2010s, as was the case between Nigeria and south-east Niger in 2012. In late 2013, Nigeria ordered the closure of Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa state borders with Cameroon and Chad. In Cameroon, Boko Haram attacks dictated border closures and reopening prior to the state of emergency, until the border between the Far North Region and Nigeria was closed in July 2015. In Chad, motorcycles were banned from crossing the border between Kousseri and N'Djaména (Ngueli bridge) in June 2014, and the Lac Region's border with Nigeria was closed in August 2014. All of the region's borders are porous, but military violence—shooting without warning—against offenders caught crossing closed borders limits the number of attempts.

At the same time, a number of major markets around the lake suspected of harbouring Boko Harem have been closed, particularly in the Far North of Cameroon, Borno, and south-east Niger: large border markets on the Nigeria/Niger and Nigeria/Cameroon borders, such as Fotokol and Banki-Amchide; large cattle markets, mainly in Nigeria on the border with south-east Niger and with the Far North of Cameroon, such as Gamboru, Dusuman, Ngom, and Shuwari; the markets selling fish from the lake's islands; and regularly held markets such as Maltam, Molié, Bodo, Kidam, Zimado, Balgaram, and Dabanga in northern Cameroon. These closures vary in their levels of effective enforcement, depending on the areas. In Niger, for example, a number of markets have been shut down by authorities but continue to operate outside the official weekly trading days (Gaga Mari and Kindjandi).

Other measures restrict everyday transport. First and foremost here are the bans on certain widely used means of transport, especially in rural areas (outboard motor boats on the lake and motorcycles on the roads), and waterway traffic restrictions (inner reaches of Lake Chad and the Logone and Yobe rivers). Second come the curfews imposed all around the lake (often prohibiting car travel after 6 p.m. and pedestrians after 9 p.m.). Third, the markets (as places of prayer and food distribution) are tightly controlled, with systematic entry searches. This screening of people and goods is conducted by the village vigilante committees, with the support of a few armed forces.

Checkpoints have been stepped up across the board, but their number is known only in a few specific cases such as on the N'Djaména–Bongor road (13 checkpoints in 2016) and between Diffa and Maiduguri (also 13 checkpoints in 2017, not counting those at the entry to Maiduguri). Checkpoints are

particularly dense on the roads to the main cities, especially around Maiduguri, N'Djaména, Diffa, and Maroua. Cameroon has seen a controversial scale-up of identity checks on streets and roads. Any person unable to present their identity card is suspected of belonging to Boko Haram and liable to be arrested or locked up, if not beaten or deported . Yet it is virtually impossible to obtain an identity card in the Far North Region. The situation is made all the worse for the population by the fact that many forged national ID cards were distributed just before the 2007 local and general elections.

These state-of-emergency measures, enacted as part of a counter-insurgency strategy to quash Boko Haram, have had a huge impact on the economic lives of civilians and have changed the face of the Lake Chad region, more or less temporarily, by changing its production and movements.

3. Rural mobilities and activities: Constraints and uncertainty

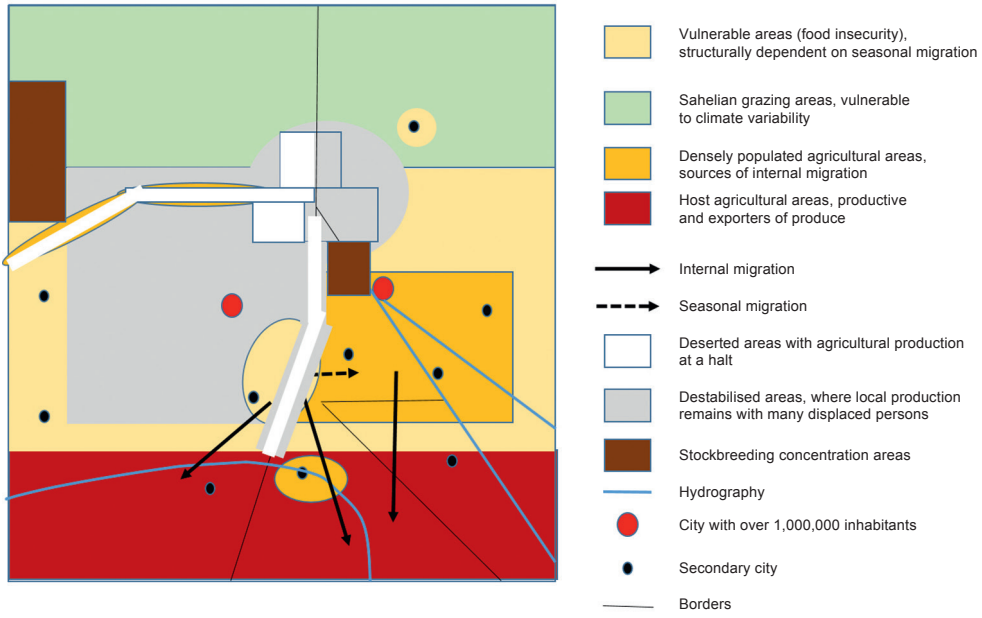
The regional system that prevailed before the rise of the Boko Haram phenomenon (see Chapter 1, Section 2.2) is in crisis. Like Lake Chad, large agro-halieutic-pastoral exporting zones have been emptied of their population. Many seasonal migrant flows have been suspended, due as much to the insecurity as administrative measures restricting movement. The falling naira and economic crisis in Chad have combined with the effects of insecurity to bring agricultural prices tumbling down. And forced population displacements have put unprecedented pressure on resources in places. Nevertheless, manifestations of the crisis differ enormously among areas still virtually deserted (Lake Chad and the north of Borno); areas destabilised by the suspension of seasonal migration, an influx of forced migrants, and/or the drop in agricultural produce prices; and areas left untouched or barely affected by the crisis (the southern part of the region and Lake Chad hinterland).

3.1. Break in regional complementarities and localised crises

The repercussions of the crisis on the regional system are closely aligned with the abovementioned forced mobilities. The entire north-east of Nigeria is highly destabilised, marked in rural areas by massive population departures causing a sharp drop in agricultural production and consequently a halt to seasonal migration. Nevertheless, where agricultural production has come to a complete standstill is not in the crisis epicentre in the heart of Borno, but in the border areas that populations have been forced to leave between Nigeria and Cameroon and Lake Chad (see Figure 2). These sectors were among the most productive zones prior to 2013, exporting food to the two main cities and generating a large seasonal, if not permanent labour demand. These deserted spaces also form obstacles to the movement of herds, severely reducing their access to the off-season grazing resources that are so vital in a tight climate context. Today, west of Diffa Region in Niger and the Yaere in Cameroon count

huge concentrations of herders who are not viable, even in the short term. The effects of the crisis lessen with distance from the Nigerian borders, but the regional complementarities and mobilities typical of a buoyant, productive regional system have been blocked. If a positive growth path is to be resumed, the deserted areas need to be reoccupied, the return of usage regulation by customary and administrative authorities is needed, and new employment and production opportunities need to be found for part of the population.

Figure 2. The regional system destabilised



Source: Authors.

3.1.1. "Deserted" areas

Acts of violence by Boko Haram, Nigerian army abuses, and the administrative measures taken continue to compromise productive activities in rural areas in the north of Borno, on the islands and western shores of Lake Chad (from Niger to Darak Island in Cameroon), and on a 15–30 km strip along Nigeria's borders (Yobe River valley in Niger and Mandara Mountains in Fotokol, Cameroon). These areas remain largely "deserted", aside from the few rare zones secured by the Nigerien army for irrigated crops along the Yobe River. Some fishers and herders choose to brave the insecurity and bans to access Lake Chad, bribing Boko Haram elements in control of these areas and/or security and defence forces, and at the risk of deadly retribution by Boko Haram.

Chad is seeing some preliminary returns in the lake's southern pool, where displaced persons evacuated by the government have started to return to the islands on a partial basis: at least half of the households are reported to have dual residency.[115]

Administrative bans are still in force in the Nigerien part of the Lake. The government-imposed population movements have sparked a serious inter-community conflict between Fulani and Buduma herders (cattle rustling, kidnappings, and murders), with the Fulani defying the bans to occupy rangelands over which the Buduma consider they have a historical right.

3.1.2. Vulnerable areas in crisis

The rural populations of the Mandara Mountains and the Sudano–Sahelian agro-pastoral zone are highly dependent on seasonal migration to employment areas. The impossibility of gaining access to the islands and western shores of Lake Chad, the Yobe River, and Firki plains (Borno) has seriously destabilised these subsistence systems, which sustained high population densities on the land for decades. In Cameroon, Diamare's transplanted sorghum plains, although not directly exposed to the insecurity, are no longer accessible to seasonal migrants: anyone coming from the districts on the border with Nigeria is now viewed with suspicion and liable to face serious obstacles to their mobility.

In Niger, Nigeria (southern Borno and northern Adamawa, Gombe, and Yobe), and Cameroon, it is these same areas already weakened by the suspension of seasonal migration that have taken in the forced migrants, placing huge pressure on resources in vulnerable areas. In these circumstances, the forced migrants find it difficult to access land, and humanitarian aid remains the main resource. When this runs short, the forced migrants (primarily returnees) weigh heavily on the resident households' economy, as seen in the communes of Foulatari and Ngourti in Niger.

The situation is further exacerbated by the obstacles to trade movements (border and rural market closures, bans on motorcycle traffic, etc.) and access to fuel and fertilisers. Since the beginning of 2017, the situation has been improved somewhat by the reopening of the border at Fotokol (Cameroon), the resumption of certain markets, and the lifting of motorcycle bans, although things have not fundamentally changed. The insecurity persists, restricting movements to the fields and thereby hampering crop upkeep and harvests. In places, there is still the risk of receiving a visit from members of Boko Haram at harvest time.

115 An unpublished humanitarian report estimates that 40,000 people have returned to the islands south of Bol and Baga Sola (interview by E. Chauvin, June 2017). Displaced persons in and around Baga Sola estimate that some 50% of migrants have returned to the islands more or less definitively (interviews by E. Chauvin with displaced persons, Baga Sola and surrounding area, June 2017).

3.1.3. Still productive, but destabilised areas

Along the shores of Lake Chad, past Darak (Cameroon), towards the east, the residents have carried on with their activities, but the economy has slowed. Prices for the smoked fish and *niébé* sold in the past to Nigeria have collapsed. Other food prices have been depressed by marketing problems in Cameroon and the economic crisis in Chad. Fishing is constrained by the insecurity that reigns in the waters beyond the shores. On the Cameroonian side, seasonal farming migrants no longer make the journey.

In Chad, displaced persons are concentrated in the archipelago, in the polder region between Bol and Baga Sola. Finding it difficult to access land and seeds, they have fallen back on work as casual labourers, jobs previously filled by seasonal migrants from Bahr el Gazal. The land chiefs and "landowners" are concerned that plot allocations could be interpreted as a ownership right rather than a short-term land-use right, especially since displaced persons receive support from NGOs—and sometimes government officials—for land access. Nevertheless, no major land conflict has been observed and, here as elsewhere, humanitarian aid partially offsets the land constraints.

3.1.4. Shifting herd movements and pastoralism crisis

In Nigerian Borno and its environs, Boko Haram elements have literally raided cattle, taken huge numbers of hostages, and murdered herders to the extent that the rangelands have been abandoned. Nigerien herders have shifted their movements to the north of the Diffa Region and to the west, in the Zinder Region. Nigerian herders have moved theirs to the Yobe, Gombe, Adamawa, and Bauchi states and even, often, further south. Others have turned en masse to the Logone floodplains, from where they reach the Diamare plains in the rainy season. In the Cameroonian and Chadian parts of Lake Chad, herders now keep their herds on the shores and avoid the islands within. In Diffa Region, the concentration of herds has sparked serious tensions over cereal straw (used as animal feed in crisis periods) and "*bourgoutières*" (wetland herbs) despite the risks of access to the Yobe River and has heightened tensions over wells.

Herders everywhere are victims of the deterioration in the terms of trade (livestock/cereals): livestock prices have halved with the closure of the Nigerian market, forcing herders to sell more animals to support their families. In Cameroon, the Nigerian refugee herders are not legal (they are supposed to join Minawaou Camp), and only a few well-placed individuals can afford to go to the livestock markets. In areas where security is low, veterinary services have been unable to vaccinate. Elsewhere, the quality of services that refugee herders can expect is highly criticised by herder support associations.[116]

116 Interview with the president of the Pastoralism Research Support Centre (CARPA) in Maroua on 6 June 2016.

3.1.5. Areas barely affected or untouched

Some regions have been barely affected, if not left untouched by the Boko Haram insecurity and its repercussions on mobility and trade. These are all Boko Haram attack-free zones, which have taken in but a small number of forced migrants in view of their land availability and which do not depend, or depend less, on the markets of northern Nigeria to sell their products. The areas in this situation are Mayo Kebbi and, to a lesser extent, Chari–Baguirmi in Chad (Chari–Baguirmi livestock used to transit through northern Nigeria), the region of Ngourti in Niger, the North Region and the Diamare plains in Cameroon, the southern part of Adamawa and Yobe states, and Gombe and Bauchi states.

3.2. New trajectories for rural development?

Many uncertainties surround the future of rural territories and societies in the Lake Chad region today, especially in areas that, like Lake Chad, have been destabilised the most. These uncertainties concern the effectiveness and speed of return of displaced persons and refugees to their places of origin; the timeframe for lifting administrative restrictions on movements; the gravity of capital loss in herding, fishing, agriculture, trade, and transport; the political–land reconfigurations; and the rural development policy choices to be made.

3.2.1. Settlement uncertainty: What role for humanitarian operations?

The situation with forced migrant departures will depend on how the security situation evolves, but also on international aid and the governments' settlement policies. As observed in Chad today, displaced persons will probably return to their homes in stages to assess and minimise the risks. The first stage is productive mobility: partial returns to exploit the agro-pastoral resources without taking up residence. The second stage is dual residency: the men return to live in their home villages, leaving the women behind to obtain humanitarian aid. The last stage is complete return. For all those who did not have "son of the soil" status in the places whence they had to flee Boko Haram and who feel they have lost too much or are no longer sure of recovering their land rights, other options are to settle in host areas or leave for the cities or would-be rural pioneer areas (Lake Chad before the crisis and the Benue plains), or even join gold rushes.[117]

A vast humanitarian operation is underway in the Lake Chad region, concentrated mainly in Borno (Nigeria), the Diffa Region (Niger), the Far North of Cameroon, and, to a lesser extent, in Chad (Lac Region) and Yobe and Adamawa (Nigeria). Nigeria poses specific problems: some areas are inaccessible (far north of Borno), while others are restricted (armed escorts required to move around northern Yobe

117 The Sahel–Saharan area (especially Niger and Chad) has seen an entire string of gold rushes since 2012; see Gagnol & Grégoire, 2017.

and the rest of Borno) and huge quantities of aid are diverted. This altogether implies that there is little effective humanitarian aid in rural areas. Elsewhere, the humanitarian system is seen to have its classic interests and pitfalls. It is effective at helping vulnerable populations in the short term, especially refugees and displaced persons. Yet it is dissipated and the aid distributed is often unsuited to local socio-economic situations (particularly to fishers and herders).

In addition, questions could be asked as to the NGOs' capacities to fit in with more or less authoritarian government development strategies. In Chad, for example, authorities consider island evacuations and interventions against Boko Haram first as an opportunity to bring the government back into an outlying area, and second as a means of controlling the Buduma populations whose engagement in Boko Haram they see as a reaction to their abandonment by central government. For instance, local authorities are saying, off the record, that central government is planning a fairly precise returns schedule (in three phases: empowerment of displaced persons on the shores, creation of public services on the islands, and authorisation of returns), which is more or less adaptable to NGO capacities to align with government practices and take action far from the shores … and their bases. In the Diffa Region in Niger, on the other hand, it is the humanitarian organisations that are pushing the government to take action with hydro-agricultural projects to help settle the refugee populations, whose return to Lake Chad is still highly hypothetical. The production of market garden produce and cereals in irrigated areas along the main road is the only viable solution for local agricultural production when the wetlands are still inaccessible.

3.2.2. Extent and effects of capital loss in the countryside

The break in seasonal migration and its underlying regional complementarities is largely sustained, if not imposed, by the administrative restrictions (ban on access to certain zones in Niger and Chad, and intensity and brutality of administrative controls in Cameroon, forcing many Cameroonians to become sedentary). The length of the current recession in areas structurally dependent on migration will depend on when these restrictions are lifted.

There have been massive capital losses in herding. A large number of herders have retreated to the Nigerian cities after losing all their livestock. Severe deterioration in the terms of trade (livestock/cereals) has no doubt pushed many herders to the brink of pastoralism viability. As in the droughts of the 1970s and 1980s, the crisis will probably accelerate impoverishment and widening inequalities among herders and expedite the transfer of livestock from herders to urban populations. The extent of these phenomena will depend in part on pastoralism support policies, which may or may not be put in place. In all the regions where capital was needed for fishing and agriculture (outboard motors, large canoes and ring nets, motor-driven pumps, wells, ploughs, husking machines, etc.) and where non-owners accessed it by renting and

sharecropping, the local economy's recovery will depend on the scale of capital loss. It will also depend to a large extent on the ability of the former trade networks to get back on their feet.

3.2.3. Political–land reconfigurations

Everywhere where land tensions already ran high, the crisis has no doubt created an opportunity for some to attempt to reshuffle the cards of control over and access to land and natural resources. The conflict between Buduma and Fulani herders in the Nigerien part of the lake raises the immediate question of control over the lake resources. Again in Niger, an alliance is already taking shape between the *bulama* (village heads) of the deserted villages around Lake Chad to agree on terms for the return of former residents and stop authorising land access to new migrants unless they take out short-term loans or rent (meeting of 76 village heads with the Bosso canton head, April 2016). In Cameroon, there are those who may use the stigma now attached to the populations of Nigerian origin to attempt to oust them from the land competition, particularly at Lake Chad.

More generally, the flight of Nigeria's traditional leaders and abuses by government representatives and armed forces in state-of-emergency areas risk further undermining the land regulation actors' legitimacy, already seriously dented before the crisis (see Chapter 2, Section 2.5). In Blangoua and Maga (Cameroon), for example, young fishers recently burnt down military posts, the sub-prefecture, and the military and sub-prefect's boats in protest at the handling of public affairs, particularly access to fishery resources. Further north, at Lake Chad, fishers may have seen taking up arms to join Boko Haram as a way of escaping the hold over resources maintained by the land regulation actors (traditional leaders, local politicians, and government officials).[118]

3.2.4. Where do herding and family farming fit into public policy?

Herders in Nigeria are caught up in an extremely adverse political situation, with mounting numbers of deadly conflicts between farmers and herders in the states in the Middle Belt and a climate of stigmatisation surrounding Fulani suspected of supporting Boko Haram (see Chapter 5, Section 1.3) (Higazi & Yusuf, 2017). "Anti-open grazing" laws have recently been enacted in certain states (Ekiti, Taraba, and Benue). More broadly, the Agricultural Promotion Policy (2016–2020) produced by the Buhari administration identifies pastoralism as a factor of insecurity, advocates replacing it with ranching, and stipulates that the government will actively support ranching investments. Yet many studies have shown the economic limitations of such livestock systems and their exclusive effects in terms of access to pastoral resources (Lavigne Delville & Hochet, 2005).

118 Interview with Mbarkoutou Mahamat Henri, senior lecturer in history at Maroua University, Maroua on 9 June 2016.

In general, in a context of severe regional economic crisis, the risk is that the prevailing vision for agricultural policy (broadly speaking) will be to make a clean sweep in favour of private, large-scale projects. There is a particularly great risk of this in high-potential spaces partly emptied of their populations by the security crisis, such as the Nigerien part of Lake Chad where private Saudi company Al Horaish plans to develop vast irrigation schemes (Tchangari & Diori, 2016). Already before the Boko Harm crisis, three of the four lakeside countries (Niger, Nigeria, and Cameroon) had active agropole promotion policies designed to combine large-scale capitalist agriculture with contract farming for family farmers, with their well-known risks for family farming (Dagorn *et al.*, 2017). Capitalist agriculture projects, with their unproven economic effectiveness, are based on the largely refuted assumption that family farming is incapable of satisfying food needs and creating jobs (Anseeuw *et al.,* 2012). Our analysis shows that the regional system's current crisis is actually due first and foremost to the break in movements of people and goods and that this has done more to add to than to cancel out the multifaceted insecurity already weighing on the rural societies before the Boko Haram phenomenon.

4. Trade movements: The new hierarchy of regional centres

The Boko Haram insurgency and counter-insurgency action have changed the face of cross-border trade and contributed to reconfiguration of Lake Chad's regional system (Map 14). These events have driven a sharp downturn in regional trade flows, "deregionalising" an age-old trading space. Yet this process has not brought about total regional disintegration. Centres and central transport routes have lost their influence (Maiduguri, in particular), while outlying areas and roads have risen high up the traffic ladder. The multi-channel regional system has become a system structured by a small number of trade routes, reduced to virtually one in border areas. Among the actors driving these reconfigurations, trade players (traders and transporters) have often lost a great deal in economic terms, unlike the *corps habillés* (members of security forces) controlling trade flows, who have taken advantage of the conflict situation to assert their powers and amass new resources.

4.1. The decline of a major cross-border trade area revolving around Maiduguri

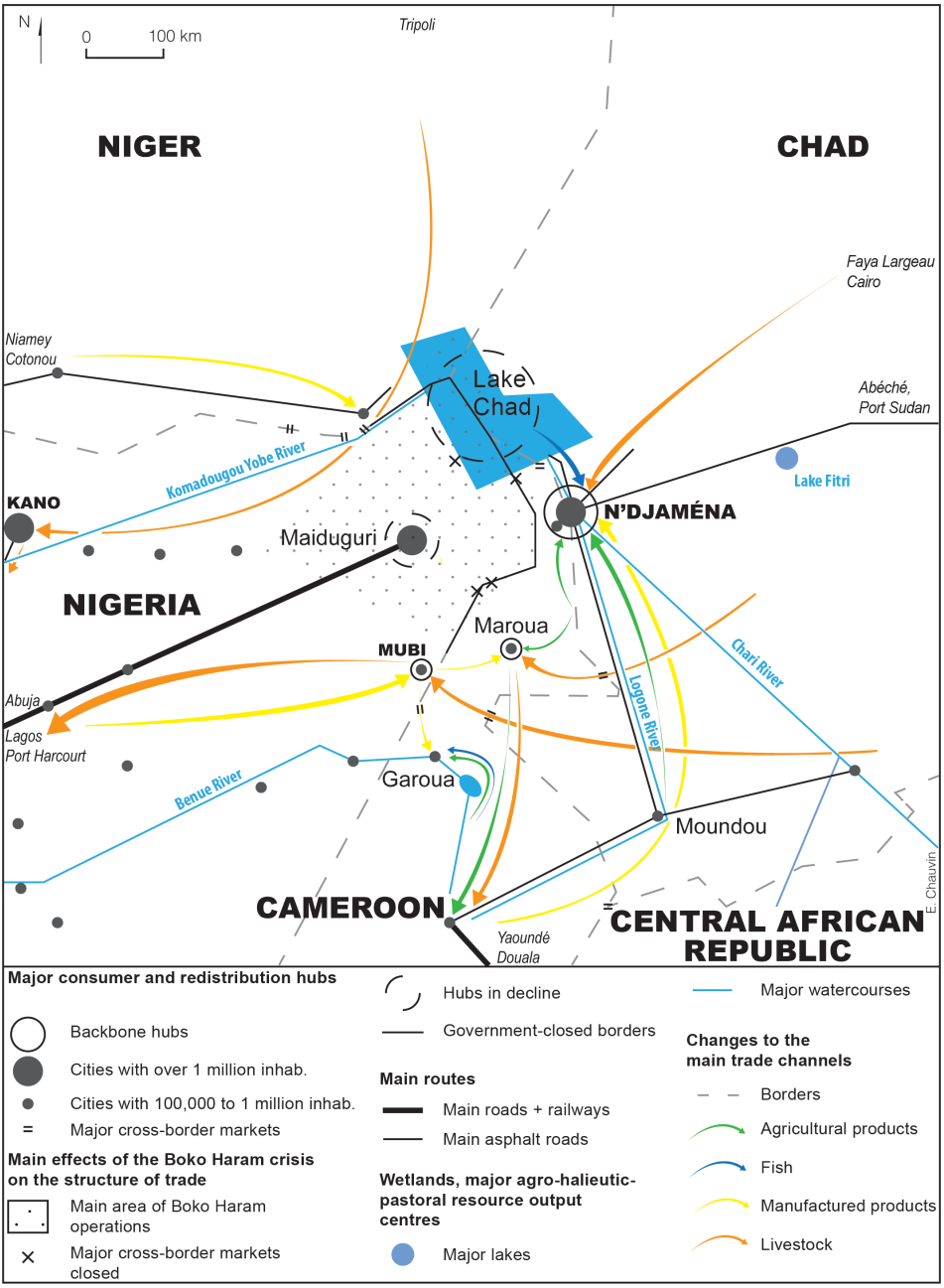
The Boko Haram attacks and counter-insurgency measures have resulted in the decline of a major trade area revolving around Maiduguri, bounded in the south by a Diffa (Niger)–Kolofata (Cameroon) line and in the north by the northern shores of Lake Chad. The capital of Borno used to be the outlet for a large share of agro-pastoral production and an important centre for the distribution of manufactured products throughout the region. It ran on cross-border secondary

markets, which are now closed or much diminished. On the Cameroon/Nigeria border, the major markets of Banki–Amchidé and Gambaru–Fotokol have been closed. On the Chad/Nigeria border, the huge Lake Chad fish market of Baga was closed in 2013–2014. On the Niger/Nigeria border, the crossing points of Damasak and those close to the lake (Bosso and Malam Fatori) are also blocked. Maiduguri has consequently lost its regional influence but has acquired new hub-like attributes as a nodal point for international aid and a very fast-growing refuge city.

N'Djaména, one of the centres of the Lake Chad region (with Maiduguri and the lake), has been less directly affected by the conflict's restrictions on movements. Supplies to the capital provisioned by Lake Chad produce, especially fresh fish from Guitté, have fallen off owing to restricted production and the proliferation of checkpoints where people are searched and taxed. The ban on motorcycles on Ngueli bridge since 2014 has considerably restricted flows with Kousseri.

Traffic on the main road crossing the zone of violence has also decreased considerably. The only precise figures, provided by the Cameroonian land haulage management office, are available for the road crossing from northern Cameroon through to N'Djaména in the north and Ngaoundéré in the south. The number of trucks arriving in Kousseri by the Ngaoundéré–Maroua trunk road, carrying mainly cement, iron, wood, and flour, is estimated to have fallen from some 4,500 in 2013 to less than 500 per year since 2015. Trucks registered on their arrival in Kousseri from other roads also reportedly decreased from some 12,000 in 2013 to less than 1,000 in 2015.

Map 14. Traffic and the Boko Haram crisis around Lake Chad: regional system reconfiguration



Source: E. Chauvin.

4.2. Detours: alternatives in outlying areas

Several detours have been taken around the crisis zone. These routes—already there, but previously peripheral—now concentrate flows that used to be spread across a number of trade routes.

Along the Nigeria/Cameroon border, the main detour around the zone of insecurity passes through Mubi. Following the closure of the Banki and Gamboru markets, and mines laid on part of the Banki–Maiduguri road, Mubi has become the main trade outlet for Cameroonian and Chadian livestock, with a more southern than usual access route: Boko–Maroua–Guider. Trade in skins from Chad has also shifted almost exclusively to Mubi, via Bongor–Fianga–Guider in the dry season and Bongor–Kélo–Pala–Léré–Figuil–Binder in the rainy season. In the other direction (Nigeria to Cameroon–Chad), a large part of the traffic in manufactured products has also become concentrated around Mubi. Following the attack on Gamboru on 5 May 2014 and the motorcycle ban on the Ngueli bridge, Mubi rose in importance as a way of supplying the Chadian towns and cities, including N'Djaména, via a deep southern route through Bongor and Guelendeng. Yet Boko Haram attacked and occupied Mubi in late 2014 and early 2015, wreaking looting and destruction havoc, especially in food shops and banks. The city, recaptured by the army, managed nonetheless to quickly resume its role as the main point of trade between Nigeria and Cameroon. Along this same border, a more southern route has also developed via Garoua–Gashiga to Maiduguri and Yola (*niébé* and fish from the lake and the Logone River). In Nigeria, with this southern shift in flows, the south of Adamawa and Gombe are reportedly experiencing an economic upturn at the expense of Borno.

A second detour passes through Niger to Nigeria. It channels a much lower volume of traffic, mainly from north of the lake, which used to take the lakeside routes to Baga Sola to reach Maiduguri. This itinerary starts north of the lake and travels through Daboua, N'Guigmi (Niger), Geidam (Nigeria), and Damaturu (Nigeria) to Kano to the west and Maiduguri to the east. This route is used for exporting smoked fish and small livestock from Chad to Nigeria, with imports of manufactured products in the opposite direction. Some cattle herders have also tried relatively unsuccessfully to bypass the lake via Niger to reach Kano in Nigeria: animals arrive emaciated after the journey of 45 days to two months.

Some of the cattle flows have diverted more directly away from the Nigerian hub to other countries in the sub-region. Given the high levels of insecurity also found on the route from Brazzaville through the CAR due to Anti-balaka pressure (Betabelet *et al.*, 2015), cattle are transported by truck from Maroua to Ngaoundéré and then by train through to Yaoundé, before being taken on to Gabon, Congo, and Equatorial Guinea.

As the supply route to N'Djaména through northern Cameroon was also highly disrupted in 2014–2015, there has been a sharp rise in flows on the Ngaoundéré–Touboro–Moundou road surfaced by oil proceeds in the 2000s.

4.3. Chad, Cameroon, and Niger market saturation

With a large part of the Nigerian market disrupted, produce is saturating the Chad, Cameroon, and Niger markets. Secondarily, insecurity in rural areas is restricting transactions on the weekly rural markets, posing outlet problems to producers.

Nigeria's inaccessibility is a major problem for herders and farmers from the region's francophone countries as they watch livestock and cereals build up on their domestic markets. This accumulation drives down selling prices. In northern Cameroon, the average price for meat is estimated to have fallen from around 2,000 CFAF per kilo to 1,300 CFAF. Cereal prices have likewise tumbled owing to the impossibility of exporting to Nigeria and accumulation on the domestic markets. The phenomenon has hit the markets of Pont-Carol and Léré in Chad, for example, where maize prices dropped from 18,000 CFAF to 14,000 CFAF per 100 kg from 2016 to 2017.

Small rural markets nearest the zone of insecurity have also been hard hit by the absence of outlets. In Mayo Tsanaga (Cameroon), for example, forced migration of Mandara Mountain inhabitants who would normally sell produce to the towns and cities has put a stop to the activity. Wholesale traders are too scared to go to the fields and the small local producer markets (Talakatchi, Salasari, Nguetchewe, Mawa, Mozogo, Gokora, Gaboua, etc.). The ban on motorcycle traffic has also hit sales of produce hard in this remote area (Atouba Belinga & Elazemboe, 2016).

The conflict has therefore transformed the structure of the regional system from a myriad of itineraries to the main consumer markets of Maiduguri and N'Djaména into a concentration of flows along a few routes. The reconfigured regional system has also been put on hold by the more general downturn in cross-border trade and consequent accumulation of produce on the domestic markets, causing producers, transporters, and traders huge economic problems despite the adjustments they have made.

4.4. Regional system reconfiguration gains and losses

A simple equation would be to consider that trade players—traders and transporters—are the conflict's losers, while those who control the flows, the *corps habillés*, are the winners with their appropriation of part of the trade and proliferation of taxation at checkpoints. The detailed picture, however, presents much greater contrasts.

4.4.1. Traders and transporters

Traders and transporters cover an extremely wide range of economic fortunes depending on whether they have been affected by the violence, their geographic location, and their ability to adjust to the situations of insecurity.

Large numbers of traders have left the zone of high insecurity. Those who have lost everything, victims of Boko Haram or brutality by the armed forces labelling them Boko Haram (cattle traders in particular), have often moved to Chad and the towns and cities in southern Cameroon and Nigeria. Some have lost just part of their capital when their vehicles have been attacked, robbed, or burnt, or when debtors have fled or have themselves been victims of raids.

Other trade players have shifted their activities to more secure zones in the Lake Chad region. Such is the case, for example, with the Nigerian traders who sold Lake Chad smoked fish and moved *en masse* to the Logone River five to six years ago. They supply fishers with equipment on credit, process the fish in Tékélé, and export it via Maroua and then Garoua, before selling it in Nigeria.

Some traders and transporters have stayed in the areas of insecurity, taking advantage of the sharp drop in producer prices and increase in consumer prices to bump up their profits. They often take considerable risks to cross borders despite the closures. Such is the case with fuel smugglers who travel by night to avoid the checkpoints, using scouts signalling checkpoint positions to them by flashlight.

Others, regular and occasional traders and transporters, have profited more directly from the insecurity situation by working for Boko Haram, in particular supplying markets selling stolen goods. A dozen kilometres from N'Guigmi (Niger), for example, a market held by Boko Haram is provisioned by Arab and Fulani herders and traders. No one enters the market without a pass from the armed group. The police, paramilitary police, military, and chieftaincy all appear to know about it, but no reaction has as yet been forthcoming.

The Boko Haram attacks have given some the opportunity to earn easy money by looting and extorting protection money. When Boko Haram took Mubi (November 2014 to August 2015), youths stole nearly 3,000 motorcycles, presumably with the complicity of the Islamist group. The motorcycles were hidden in the Mandara Mountains and sold in trickles on the Cameroonian and Chadian markets. Some have even been known to offer large traders shelter in their home mountains nearby in return for 10,000 naira per person.

4.4.2. Armed officers

Armed officers—military, police, and customs—are the big winners of the current regional trade block. Everywhere, they take advantage of the proliferation of bans and checkpoints to directly engage in selling produce and charging illegal taxes to line their own pockets.

In many cases, armed personnel have taken over prohibited cross-border trade for themselves. This is the case with the local Nigerian army commanders who ferry fish from Baga Sola (Lake Chad) to Maiduguri. Likewise, part of the Chadian livestock owned by the political and military elite is sold in Nigeria under army escort, taking routes that are theoretically closed or impracticable due to the insecurity. On Ngueli bridge, customs and police officers act as carriers for traders who pay them to pick up their merchandise on one side and leave it on the other.

The *corps habillés* are also taking advantage of the proliferation of checkpoints on the roads to levy illegal taxes, dramatically increasing transport costs. In Chad, for example, officers on the N'Djaména–Bongor road make vehicles pay the same "formalities" on the outward journey as on the return, whereas they are supposed to be paid only when the vehicle is loaded. They ignore the 48-hour tax exemptions attached to the purchase of a daily card. There have even been cases of drivers becoming victims of brutality for refusing to pay illegal taxes. Similar conduct can be found in the other countries of the region.

4.4.3. Local governments

The economic downturn has cost local government bodies dearly, as trade flows are an important sources of tax revenues.

Closure of the borders with Nigeria has sent registered customs revenues plummeting. At the regional treasury office in Maroua, for example, customs duties are reported to have fallen one-third from 4,844,000,000 CFAF in 2013 to 1,554,000,000 CFAF in 2015. This drop is partially offset by resources allocated by central government. Customs revenues have also posted a downturn at the Bongor crossing point in Chad. To offset their losses, customs officers have ramped up the number of checkpoints, going so far as to buy telephones for the village heads along the Logone River to inform them of any illegal cattle crossings. The strategy has been counterproductive, as herders now pass increasingly through Guelendeng.

The communes have also lost certain revenues from the drop in production (especially at Lake Chad) and in transactions, particularly taxes on markets, cereal outflows, and livestock sales. Other players, however, in locations where the trade movements are concentrated, have benefited from the security crisis. In Cameroon, for example, some municipalities, traditional leaders, and administrators have responded to the arrival of new herders by drastically increasing their tax on pasture degradation from 10,000 CFAF to 50,000 CFAF per herd.

Although the conflict has by and large had a negative impact on the regional and local economy, some have tried to adjust to the situation by switching to other markets away from the insecurity or taking advantage of the instability

to create new resources. Protraction of the conflict could see an increase in local protest against central governments by populations exposed to uniformed brigade racketeering on top of daily insecurity. Such protests could potentially be taken up by local government bodies, often reeling from the loss of large sums of tax revenues.

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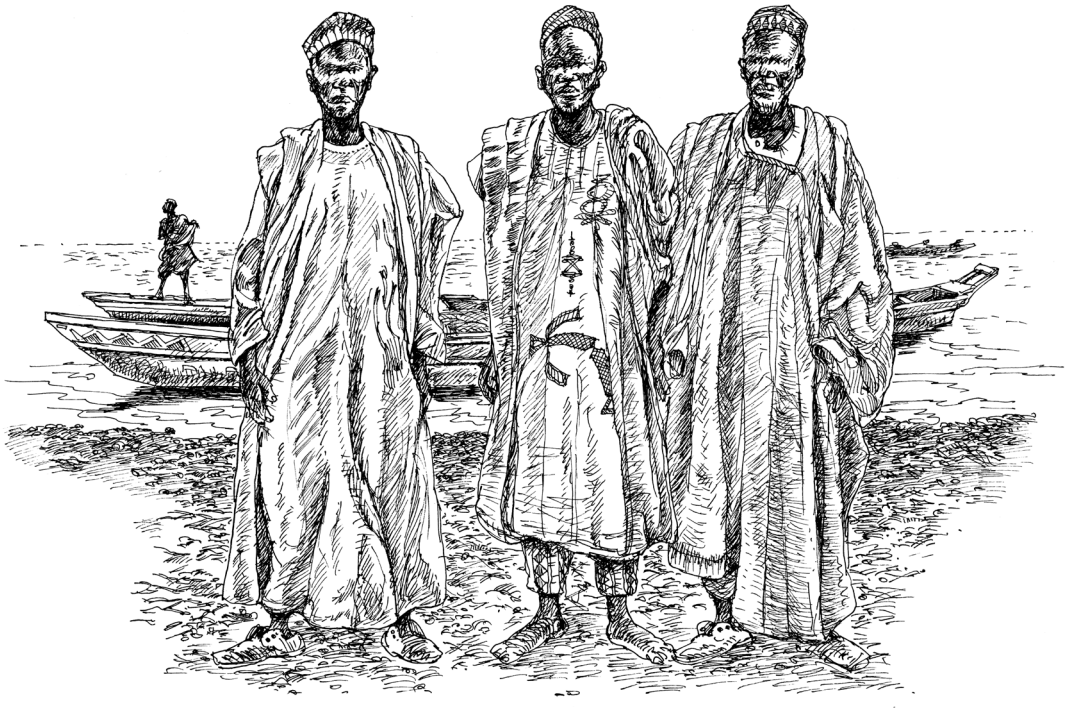

Fishermen and traders in Lake Chad.

Chapter 5. Humanitarian operations, social tensions, and development challenges

KEY POINTS

In 2017, the situation is a combination of two crises. One is military and humanitarian as the fight continues against Boko Haram. The other is economic due to the deterioration in public finances caused by the oil price slump since late 2014, which has more especially hit Nigeria and Chad. This situation has had dramatic impacts on employment. While the military and local militias overpowered civilian authorities, the conflict has instilled a climate of suspicion and fear that has been instrumental in stirring ethnic, religious, and land tenure antagonisms. The humanitarian operations deployed in 2016 have disrupted the political economy in the study zone. The injection of funds and influx of international operators may well have contained the food crisis, but they have also complicated interventions and exacerbated corruption. Diversion of relief items is not the only challenge facing the aid players. There is a crying lack of political vision and coordination at regional level, when the zone's structural under-development should call for crisis responses conceived in terms of construction rather than reconstruction.

1. The observation in summer 2017: A combination of crises

Development challenges had not fundamentally changed in 2017. The situation could be described as a combination of two crises. The first is associated with the violence of the Boko Haram group and its repression, especially in Borno, the Yobe River, Lake Chad, and along the borders between Nigeria and Cameroon. The second crisis, associated with the drop in oil prices since late 2014, is economic and less spectacular. Yet its effects are very visible across the study area, since the funding requirement for action against Boko Haram has hastened the deterioration of public finances and slowed the development machine.

The conflict has also had substantial social repercussions and a strong impact on employment because it hit economic activities and suspended development projects. As the military and local militias overpowered civilian authorities, the crisis has instilled a climate of suspicion and fear that has been instrumental in stirring ethnic, religious, and land-use antagonism. The fight against jihadist

terrorism has done much to stigmatise the Kanuri, Buduma, and Fulani, along with certain social categories such as Koranic pupils and beggars. Although community solidarity has generally transcended religious allegiances, the conflict has also exacerbated religious tensions—for example, in Michika between Highi Christians and Hausa and Fulani Muslims of southern Borno over control of the municipality and land. Families have been torn apart by forced displacements and armed struggle, with family members fighting on the side of the insurgents while their siblings were mobilised by the government in militia. At the same time, tensions have sometimes developed between locals, internally displaced persons, and refugees. In Nigeria as in Cameroon, Niger, and Chad, these have given way to fears of infiltration by Boko Haram combatants in the camps sheltering populations fleeing the conflict.

1.1. Repercussions on employment

In Chad, the public finance crisis, first felt in 2015, effectively delayed and then shut down a certain number of projects funded from oil resources, such as the National Food Security Programme (PNSA). In Niger, the 2012–2016 National Development Plan was also far from achieving its objectives, especially in terms of reducing fertility (Ministère du Plan, 2017). Likewise in Cameroon, MINEPAT's Three-Year Emergency Plan to Accelerate Economic Growth (PLANUT) launched nationwide in 2014 has failed to implement development projects planned for Adamaoua, the Far North, and the North—for instance, the construction of large food markets and the development of 120,000 ha of hydro-agricultural schemes (MINEPAT, 2016).

In Nigeria, the crisis and various dysfunctions have also aborted the North East development plan adopted in October 2014 on the initiative of the six governors (NESTS, 2014). The plan took the form of a classic planning exercise defining short-, medium-, and long-term measures. In agriculture, for instance, it called for less public support, together with private investment and the modernisation of farms. A few months later, a Presidential Initiative for the North East (PINE, 2015) was presented, which—following the 2015 elections—took the name of the Presidential Committee for the North East Initiative (PCNI) and proposed a new document entitled the Buhari Plan (PCNI, 2016). These efforts to kick-start development are analysed in more detail in the second part of this chapter.

Note that the combination of these two crises, the Boko Haram crisis and the public finance crisis, has caused a deterioration in the employment situation. The informal sector, which represented a vital part of the regional economy, has been hard hit. Traffic restrictions and bans, designed to dry up Boko Haram's resources and tending to confuse the *zoua zoua* of Cameroon and the *abacha* of Nigeria with group recruits, have hit the youth who had livelihoods in transport (urban motorcycle taxis, different means of urban–village transport, and cross-border movements), trade (agricultural produce, fuel, and manufactured

products), and all associated services (handling, processing, repairs, food stalls, craft trades on the markets, etc.).

The economic crisis associated with the oil price slump has also had a knock-on effect on public sector employment. In Nigeria, a number of North East states have delayed the payment of civil servants. As for Chad, it lost jobs axed in construction and civil engineering and layoffs in the oil sector when Exxon Mobil's oil fields in Doba started becoming depleted and falling oil prices held up the oil exploration conducted by other operators such as the CNPC and Glencore. In N'Djaména, work stopped on some major public construction sites, including a luxury hotel, the Toumaï Palace, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and African Integration, and the Ministry of Economy and Finance. In late 2016, civil servants and students went on strike to protest against the freeze on civil service recruitment, promotion, wages, and arrears.

The situation is not that different in northern Cameroon, where many planning, development, and cooperation projects have been halted, causing a profound feeling of abandonment among the population (Gonné, 2014). In the zones most threatened by insecurity—such as Makari, Darak, Fotokol, Hile Alifa, and Kolofata—the departure of teachers and health workers has not been offset by the arrival of humanitarian organisations. Yet the administration has continued to levy taxes despite the deterioration in public services, even moving its tolls to "the bush" as the Mora–Kousseri road has become impracticable!

Granted, all is not negative. The conflict has attracted the world's attention to long-neglected regions. The deployment of humanitarian organisations has improved access to basic services in certain places. Despite, or owing to, the diversion of international aid, the crisis has moreover offered new opportunities for small local subcontractors and leading Hausa businessmen in the region, such as Aliko Dangote in Nigeria and Issa Balarabé in Cameroon.[119]

1.2. States of emergency and militia

In the four lakeside countries, the conflict has empowered security forces. Different from martial law, states of emergency have differed in time and space. North-east Nigeria was the first to declare emergency rule, initially in a few LGAs in 2012 and then extended to Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa states in May 2013. Cameroon, Niger, and Chad followed suit. It has not always being clear whether

119 Number one fortune in Africa, ranked 23rd worldwide, Aliko Dangote built his industrial empire in food and subsequently telecommunications and cement. In 2014, he announced his intention to create 180,000 jobs and invest 12 billion US dollars in sugar and rice production in Adamawa State. Issa Balarabé, RDPC baron, father-in-law of a nephew of President Paul Biya and leader of the national truckers' union, has invested in real estate, food, and intra- and inter-urban transport from Maroua. He took advantage of the crisis to control Maroua's motor-cycle taxis.

states of emergency were extended tacitly or officially. In principle, they have not been renewed in north-east Nigeria since April 2015 and in the Lac Region in Chad since November 2016. Yet in practice, civil authorities had to yield to security imperatives, as in northern Cameroon. In Chad, the government has created new sub-prefectures run by the military in the Department of Kaya, Lac Region. In Niger, the army also took charge of the Governorate of Diffa in 2015.

In all four countries, civil authorities—modern and traditional—have lost ground in rural areas due, in particular, to the departure of local councillors, traditional chiefs, and religious leaders. Some have fled the fighting. Others have been deliberately killed by the insurgents to destroy the structures and symbols of the state, punish informers who collaborated with the government, or retaliate against chiefs who refused to provide Boko Haram with food and recruits. Official Nigerian government figures estimate that the rebels destroyed 161 of the 190 historical monuments in the BYA states from 2010 to 2015, essentially royal palaces, mosques, and churches. Traditional chiefs have also lost their prestige because they fled to the city and proved incapable of protecting their people. Consequently, many of them can no longer assume the role of informal mediator to solve local disputes about marriages or land allocation.

Also, the elders were sometimes challenged by the youth who formed militias backed by the governments, mainly in Nigeria and Cameroon. In Maiduguri in 2012, the Governor of Borno began supporting and financing vigilantes that took the name of CJTF in 2013. In northern Cameroon, the idea was first put in 2014 for a Christian self-defence coalition in Matal, Zoulgo, Podoko, and Mouktélé in the Arrondissement of Mora. The authorities then pushed for the formation of vigilante committees with more of a religious mix, mainly in Kodro, Amchidé, Fotokol, and Kolofata. Armed with traditional weapons, these militiamen were able to fight on the frontline, patrol the area, and monitor cross-border movements like the military.

Although very different in nature, the governments of Chad and Niger have been more reluctant to support the formation of vigilantes seen by their army as a sign of weakness and a threat to their monopoly over the use of legitimate violence. In 2015, N'Djaména permitted the canton and community leaders of the Lac Region to set up neighbourhood watch committees with volunteers who were sometimes paid by mayors or traders to secure markets. Yet their powers were restricted to intelligence, searches, and surveillance of foreigners in a country whose long history of civil war gives good cause to hand out weapons with care. Niger, on the other hand, wanted to avoid the re-formation of the ethnic militias that had helped the government to fight Tubu rebellions in the 1990s. It refused, for example, to approve the initiative put forward by Fulani herders who, on the pretext of combating Boko Haram, had proposed securing the lake so that they could seize the cattle left there by the Buduma and the Kanuri evacuated by force in 2015.

1.3. Effects of ethnic stigmatisation

The use of militias has also brought to light ethnic stereotypes. In Chad and Niger, the lake's Buduma fishermen have been accused of supporting Boko Haram. All along the Yobe River to the Nigerian border, Kanuri farmers of Chetimari and Mallam Fatori have come under suspicion of collusion with the jihadists, because they refused to leave when the army ordered them to evacuate in 2015. The tensions have sometimes erupted into deadly clashes. In Niger in May, June, and July 2016, Fulani of the N'Guigmi Region attacked the Buduma whom they accused of stealing their cattle to supply Boko Haram.[120] The Buduma maintained that their attackers' real motive was to recover their herds, which they had to abandon because their cows were used to the lake's swamps and could not follow them in the desert. The same problem appeared in Kiskra in the Liwa Department of Chad to the north-west of Lake Chad in December 2014, when Arab herders refused to share their grazing ground with Buduma who they accused of stealing cattle for Boko Haram.[121] Suspected by the Zaghawa of supporting the insurgents, some Buduma were also excluded from the national guard following clashes in Mossouro barracks in May 2017.

In Nigeria and Cameroon, it is rather the Fulani and the Kanuri who have been suspected of supporting the insurgents. The accusations against them have also served as a mouthpiece for opposition to President Muhammadu Buhari, himself a member of the Hausa–Fulani aristocracy. At the national level, the southern Nigerian press had always deemed Fulani herders responsible for all the attacks against farmers throughout the country. The controversy has become nationwide, opposing lobbies such as the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN) and the Apex Farmers Association of Nigeria (AFAN).[122] On the international scene, neo-conservative institutions have even found a way to class Fulani herders as a "terrorist group" (IEP, 2016)! The bias has been extremely strong. Yet the Fulani are only one of the stakeholders in the issue. Agro-pastoral conflicts have also erupted between farmers, as many Hausa, Kanuri, and Buduma peasants also raise cattle. Moreover, the Fulani are themselves victims of cattle rustling. Field studies show that the perpetrators of

120 The clashes left a death toll of 24 Buduma in Féféwa in May 2016, 17 in Ngorea in June, and 12 in Maraa Kiari in July. Interviews by Hadiza Kiari Fougou in N'Guigmi, 4 July 2017.

121 At the time, the clashes claimed the lives of three Arabs and nine Budumas. To prevent vendetta, the authorities had to dissuade the Arabs from mounting their own militia against Boko Haram and force them to pay blood money (*diya*) to the families of the Buduma victims. Interview by Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos with Dimouya Souapebe, Prefect of Kaya in Baga Sola, 7 June 2017.

122 Operational since 1979 and inaugurated in 1987 by the Sultan of Sokoto and the Emir of Kano, the first lobby is perceived as an exclusively Fulani and Muslim organisation. The second represents the interests of the food industry rather than small producers. This lobby is the product of a merger of the All Farmers Association of Nigeria (ALFA) with the National Farmers Association of Nigeria (NAFAN) in 2004.

the attacks are usually recruited from local communities rather than a mysterious fifth column financed by jihadists from abroad (Kuna & Jibrin, 2016).

The Kanuri of Nigeria and Cameroon and the Mober clan in Niger have also been the target of a great deal of suspicion, because they form the bulk of the Boko Haram combatants (Abani, 2017). There are reports of some individuals seeking to avoid stigmatisation by trying to hide their ethnic identity. Others have rewritten the story of Boko Haram. Many stories circulate, for example, about the founder of the sect, Mohammed Yusuf. He is presented as a Bade from Yobe, rather than a Kanuri, and his mother is said to be from Kelakam in Niger, while his father is supposedly still alive in Maiduguri, where he allegedly settled to escape conflicts with Damagu Fulani in the 1970s. In the same vein, Abubakar Shekau is described not as a Kanuri, but as the son of a Bura from Gashua in Yobe.[123]

1.4. Conflicts surrounding the forced displacements

In general, the displacements caused by the conflict have exacerbated identity markers. First, the crisis has often shattered multicultural dynamics and encouraged community-based clustering. For example, the highly diverse floating population of Lake Chad was evacuated by military force from the "lowlands", which they had come to farm when the waters receded and which were called *bariki* in Hausa, in reference to the cosmopolitan nature of the military "barracks" (Krings, 2004). Once in exile, some communities have refused to cohabit in the same space. In refugee and displaced persons "camps", they have preferred to be grouped on a religious or ethnic basis, often a combination of the two.

In Nigeria, Borno's rural populations are crammed around Maiduguri in accordance with their LGA of origin. Their treatment is unequal, as evidenced by Fertilizer Camp on the road to Gamburu and Dikwa. In 2016, displaced persons from Jere were able to receive a little food because their local administration was still running. Yet this was not the case of their unfortunate neighbours from the LGAs of Mafa, Dikwa, and Konduga, whose civil servants had dispersed and were therefore no longer in a position to send government relief. Another example concerns the occupants of Malkohi camp in the outer suburbs of Yola: they have grouped together according to religious allegiance, with the Muslims in unfinished schools and the Christians around the church in a nearby village. Some displaced Christians from Adamawa who had moved into the city of Yola were also expelled on suspicion of voting against the Muslims and in favour of outgoing president, Goodluck Jonathan in 2015.

123 Thus it is argued that he speaks Bura, a language he used in a video in September 2016 to insult the Nigerian Chief of Army Staff, Tukur Yusuf Buratai, himself a Bura from southern Borno.

Along the same lines, Shuwa Arab refugees who fled Nigeria for Cameroon set themselves apart from the Kanuri in makeshift camps between Kousseri and Maroua (Henri, 2014). As for the Christian refugees of Madagali, Gwoza, Pulka, Ngoshe, and Banki, they have gone to Minawaou, the official UNHCR camp, where they make up 90% of the occupants. Meanwhile, old issues have re-emerged among the displaced Muslims of the Mandara Mountains, between the inhabitants of Mora and Kerawa, rival capitals of the Wandala Kingdom. The two populations have refused to pray or share meat together.

Yet the displacements provoked by the conflict have also mixed people along roads and around cities. In most cases, community solidarity prevailed. In Chad, for example, no tensions have been observed in the region of Bol between displaced persons, refugees, and locals despite greater pressure on access to water. Unlike Niger, there have been no reports of conflicts between Buduma and Fulani, possibly due to less Fulani pressure and because the cattle that remained in the lake's pool were stolen rather by Buduma Boko Haram fighters.

To prevent tensions, international aid players have moreover been careful to target recipients based on their vulnerability rather than migrant status. Locals have indeed often been as poor as displaced victims of the conflict. Excluding them from distributions of supplies would have been a source of trouble and was, in any case, inconceivable given the difficulty of differentiating host populations from Nigerian refugees, internally displaced persons, and "returnees" (*i.e.* Chadian, Nigerien, and Cameroonian nationals repatriated to their country of origin).

2. Responses to the crisis

Responses to the crisis have taken two tracks: military and humanitarian. Aside from a few emergency organisations which arrived when Nigeria declared a state of emergency in 2013, international aid players began to be operational in the lakeside countries after an anti-terrorist coalition was put together in 2015. The area then saw massive deployment of relief organisations, particularly in north-east Nigeria, the hardest-hit region in the study area. The influx has been huge, with 120 local, national, and international NGOs in Borno State alone in 2017.

The humanitarian operations deployed in 2016 have disrupted the zone's political economy. The injection of funds and influx of international operators may well have contained the food crisis, but they have also complicated interventions and exacerbated corruption. Furthermore, diversion of relief is not the only challenge facing the aid players. There is a crying lack of political vision and coordination at regional level, when the zone's general state of structural under-development should make for crisis responses conceived in terms of construction rather than reconstruction.

2.1. The emergence of a humanitarian system

International aid has not been deployed in the same way in the zone's four countries. In Cameroon, Chad, and Niger, donors have funded emergency actions and promoted employment-intensive projects. With the support of the EU Emergency Trust Fund, the French Agency for Development (AFD) has targeted youth employment. In Cameroon, for example, the aim is to "employ marginalised populations—young people and women—on essential projects (digging wells and laying rural roads). They receive one-third of their wages paid into a savings account in a micro-finance establishment so that they can rebuild part of the capital they have lost during the crisis". [124]

Nigeria, not used to receiving development aid, has taken a different path from Cameroon, Niger, and Chad. The country has comparatively few local and international NGOs (Pérouse de Montclos, 2005). Since the Nigerian Civil War, which saw the birth of the humanitarian concept of intervention in 1968, Nigeria has been wary of relief organisations as potential violators of its national sovereignty. It basically sees itself as a regional leader, a demographic giant and the leading economic and oil power in Africa. It does not take kindly to the idea of depending on foreign aid. The highly nationalistic President Muhammadu Buhari himself refused to sign a structural adjustment agreement with the World Bank when he was in office at the head of a military junta in 1984. More than in Cameroon, Niger, and Chad, relief players have had to come to terms with local institutions such as the NEMA at federal level and the SEMAs in each state.

Today, gatekeepers are blocking aid at all levels, from customs for imports of humanitarian equipment to immigration services for visas and the army for authorisations to circulate from one state or LGA to another (e.g. to the port of Baga Kawa, whose road was officially reopened in 2017). In addition, international NGOs have been severely criticised and sometimes accused of supporting the insurgents and having an interest in the conflict's perpetuation to secure contracts. In Maiduguri, the authorities have complained that distributions of free foodstuffs competed with local agriculture, created a syndrome of dependence, and dissuaded displaced persons from returning home despite the overcrowding in the city. They also regretted that local civil servants, especially health workers, were tempted to leave their jobs to go and work for international NGOs where they are much better paid. In August 2017, displaced persons at Gubio Camp attacked the staff of an NGO, International Medical Corps, accusing it of disrespecting local traditions and not employing enough locals. The incident forced the World Food Programme to temporarily suspend its food distributions.

Although the challenges to humanitarian aid seem to be less severe in Cameroon, Niger, and Chad, the four lakeside countries also share the same concern to

124 https://cm.ambafrance.org/La-France-et-le-Cameroun-en-premiere-ligne-pour-appuyer-le-redressement-local

combine security with development. Their comprehensive, integrated approach to reconstruction does not necessarily imply more regional coordination. Yet the priority is very clearly placed on anti-terrorist and military imperatives, even if economic sanctions against Boko Haram impede resilience by closing borders, banning fishing, and stopping agricultural production along the Yobe River. In Cameroon, for example, an order of 21 April 2015 created an Ad-Hoc Inter-ministerial Committee of Donations for the Populations and the Defence Forces. Chaired by the Minister of Territorial Administration and Decentralization, the committee is to identify needs and supervise food distributions in close liaison with the military hierarchy. In other words, it is mandated to coordinate national and international humanitarian aid under the supervision of the defence forces. It gives priority to the military, and civilians are supposed to benefit only from 40% of the funds collected.[125]

Similar rationales are found in Nigeria. Contrary to countries such as Colombia, which chose to promote peace and reconciliation by helping victims of all sides, the Victims Support Fund (VSF) is not intended to compensate for government abuses. Its official title, the Nigeria Foundation for the Victims of Terrorism, clearly says so. Instead, the VSF sponsors infrastructures for the security forces. In May 2016, it started building a police station to protect 72,000 displaced persons to whom it had provided shelters in Dikwa. It also undertook to support military hospitals at Dalori I Camp and the 7th Division's barracks in Maiduguri.[126] These initiatives are supposed to complement the subsidies of some 20 million naira each that it has distributed to civilian hospitals to finance their maternity wards and attend births free of charge, with two establishments in Maiduguri, two in Yola, two in Gombe, two in Wukari, one in Damaturu, one in Abuja, two in Kano, and two in Jos.

In general, security imperatives and political considerations largely condition the deployment of aid and the identification of needs. Since the election of President Muhammadu Buhari in 2015, the authorities have indeed sought to prove the success of their peacemaking enterprise on the basis that it expedites the return of refugees and the resettlement of internally displaced persons in their original LGAs. Sometimes conducted by military force and in violation of international humanitarian law, as in the case of the expulsions from Cameroon, these operations consist in Nigeria of closing camps, stopping distributions of food, and evicting squatters—for example, evacuating Maiduguri's schools occupied by conflict victims and due to be renovated by the British Safe School project. In April 2017, for instance, the Governor of Borno ordered the occupants of the Nursing Village site to be transferred to the outskirts of Dalori II in the Maiduguri suburbs. At the beginning of the year, he also announced the closure of all the

125 See statements by the Minister of Territorial Administration, René Emmanuel Sadi, in April 2016. http://www.cameroon-info.net/article/cameroun-effort-de-guerre-ce-que-fera-le-gouvernement-des-25-milliards-de-f-260229.html

126 Interviews with VSF officials in Abuja in May 2016.

camps in the region, before backtracking in May 2017 because his decision was impossible to enforce without planning. In most cases, the authorities had nothing arranged to resettle displaced persons and eviction fed suspicions of land speculation more than anything.

2.2. Aid diversion practices

International aid is effectively seen as a new rent to replace oil money when barrel prices drop, particularly in lakeside regions that produce little or no commodities. Admittedly, governments are not the only guilty parties in this regard. Victims of the conflict have sold aid on the black market when it did not meet their needs. And insurgents have attacked and ransacked displaced persons camps just after food distributions have been made, as in Bosso in Niger. The Boko Haram combatants particularly need these provisions because they are not self-sufficient and receive no funding from jihadist groups abroad. Unlike Somalia's al-Shabaab, they have therefore not sought to drive away the aid agencies by kidnapping humanitarian workers for ransom. In 2016 and 2017, there were reports of just three serious attacks on food convoys, all of them in Nigeria. One was essentially a food grab, in Jere in the greater Maiduguri area in December 2017. The other two targeted rather the food convoys' military escorts, regardless of speeches from the leader of the faction that pledged allegiance to Islamic State, Abu Musab al-Barnawi, about alleged attempts by Christian NGOs to convert Muslim children.[127]

Actually, government authorities were the main parties accused of diverting international aid in the four lakeside countries. In Cameroon, for example, suspicion has fallen on the emergency plan announced in 2015 to build schools and hospitals in the Far North. According to eyewitnesses, the schools and infrastructures supposed to accommodate displaced persons have never been finished, while the displaced persons themselves remained in makeshift shelters.[128] In Nigeria in June 2017, Vice President Yemi Osinbajo officially acknowledged that 50% of food aid did not reach the victims.[129] The Senate consequently launched an investigation into corruption, lack of transparency, and fraudulent contracts on the committee in charge of reconstructing the North East, the PCNI, focusing on the disappearance of 2.5 billion naira and the alleged renovation of Yobe schools left in ruins.[130] In 2017, Borno State House of Assembly members

127 See his interview in August 2016 in *Al-Naba*, one of the Islamic State's propaganda magazines.

128 Interview by Charline Rangé with a security manager for an international organisation, Maroua, May 2017.

129 BBC (19 June 2017), "'Half' Nigeria Food Aid for Boko Haram Victims not Delivered". http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-40325043

130 This sum was confirmed by a report from the UNDP and the National Human Rights Commission in November 2017. http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/more-news/217352-presidential-committee-rebuild-north-east-unable-account-n2-5-billion.html
https://www.vanguardngr.com/2017/11/diversion-idp-funds-undp-nhrc-report-indicts-presidency-ex-sgf/

also launched an investigation into the embezzlement of funds intended for conflict victims. In Maiduguri, displaced persons themselves demonstrated in the streets and blocked some roads in protest at the authorities' greed. For the time being, however, only a few stooges have been arrested for taking sacks of rice.[131] In 2016, a Borno SEMA director was dismissed for complaining that he had not received the volumes of aid he had been promised.[132]

In practice, aid diversion has not stopped. It is very difficult to put an end to a system involving senior officials. Humanitarian workers and local traders do not speak openly about it for fear of losing their contracts. Displaced persons are also wary of discussing it as they are afraid of reprisals, such as being accused of being Boko Haram accomplices.[133] The possibilities for independent oversight are especially slim in Nigeria where the sites that host IDPs are under army, NEMA, and SEMA supervision—especially the camps of southern Borno, apparently the most militarised in the region in 2017. In practice, the authorities try to get their hands on foreign aid and retain control over food distributions by preventing surprise inspections. Most of the time, the humanitarian agencies and international financial institutions can do no more than check compliance with procedures based on lists of "recipients" drawn up by local officials, which have been deliberately inflated and contain many duplicates due to naming practices in Kanuri country.[134] Efforts to rectify the situation are not helped by the fact that there is no coordination or centralisation of data. The United States, for example, has supported development projects led by officials involved in financial scandals.[135]

Yet Nigeria is known for its high levels of corruption. Its past record should cause players to tread particularly carefully. Corruption has ruined agricultural development projects launched since independence, such as Operation Feed the Nation in 1976, sarcastically redubbed Operation Fool the Nation, and the South Chad Irrigation Project, sunk by lack of maintenance, among other things.[136]

131 http://www.reuters.com/article/us-nigeria-security-idUSKBN1802K1

132 Interviews in Maiduguri, May 2016.

133 https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2016/sep/13/nigerians-facing-desperate-hunger-accuse-officials-of-stealing-food-un-brink-famine
https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/news/feature/borno-idp-camps-rising-hunger-as-officials-divert-food/155675.html

134 Children are often named in honour of prominent figures. Humanitarian organisations should seek to overcome this name duplication by more accurately identifying recipients based on both the father and mother's names.

135 In 2014, USAID inaugurated the Miya rice-growing project in Makurdi, Benue State. Miya was owned by former justice minister Michael Aondoakaa, accused of corruption and barred from entering the United States since 2010.

136 The project, which planned to irrigate 67,000 ha of land claimed from the receding waters, managed to develop just 10,227 ha of paddy and wheat fields in 1983, its best year, before collapsing in 1993 and leaving local farmers to go back to their subsistence farming, growing sorghum. Meanwhile, the Baga Kawa polders never came to anything (Bertoncin & Pase, 2012).

The Green Revolution, financed by the 1970s oil boom under the Fourth National Development Plan, was to promote smallholder producers, streamline semi-public corporations, and encourage partnerships with the private sector by allowing foreign investors to own up to 60% of a joint venture. Yet it went ahead without first consulting the farmers, had little impact on the poor and, more importantly, benefited the ruling military's cronies, who took advantage to acquire tracts of land by expropriation (ActionAid, 2015). In Kano State, a study showed that members of the aristocracy (*sarauta*) diverted as much as 20% of the agricultural inputs earmarked for development programmes (Matlon, 1981).

These problems have concerned more than just the north of Nigeria. In the south, development assistance programmes have also seen nepotism in job assignment, embezzlement of funds, overcharged contracts, underpaying local staff, and a per diem culture that did not make projects sustainable when the funding stopped.[137] Neither did the return of civilian rule in 1999 put an end to the corruption. Embezzlement continued to eat into welfare and development aid. For example, the YouWiN (Youth Enterprise With Innovation) programme set up by President Goodluck Jonathan in 2011 to support employment for young people and women benefited the spouses, children, and friends of the programme's senior officials, who were investigated by a Ministry of Finance internal probe in 2017.[138]

North-east Nigeria's particularities have more to do with the declaration of an emergency rule and a humanitarian crisis, which have opened the way to many fraudulent practices because they circumvented the 2007 Public Procurement Act procedures on account of the latter being too slow. Following the 2017 Oslo Humanitarian Conference, donor pressure for prompt disbursement has also played a role, resulting in diversions of aid that have perpetuated malnutrition. This also explains why only a small proportion of the displaced persons in Nigeria, possibly 10%, have agreed (or have been forced) to go and live in official camps that are poorly supplied, as shown by a Doctors Without Borders (MSF) survey in Bama in 2016.

In this context, it is worth detailing the different aid diversion techniques. Sale of humanitarian supplies on the black market and racketeering of displaced persons are different from petty corruption by low-ranking officials who "incite" relief organisations to pay kickbacks to release merchandise held up in customs, or renew short-stay visas to make expatriates pay to extend the length of their stay. Regarding trafficking, it concerns as much medicinal drugs as food aid. In Maiduguri in 2017, diversion forced displaced persons in UNICEF camps to turn

137 On AIDS programmes and the development of the Niger Delta, see for instance Smith (2003: 703–715) and Pérouse de Montclos (2012: 113–130). For an equivalent example in forest conservation in Senegal, see Blundo (2011: 427–452).

138 http://punchng.com/probe-uncovers-massive-fraud-in-youwin-programme/

to the less-pilfered MSF clinic. In terms of food aid, witnesses report that three in four truckloads, sometimes nine in ten, are sold on the black market. What has become systematic theft has given rise to the development of a repacking industry to sell the merchandise more discreetly. The army is said to be involved and is suspected by the population of artificially maintaining curfews so that its convoys can travel by night under cover to transport stolen food from IDP camps or Boko Haram livestock to other regions of Nigeria.

The capture of the humanitarian rent is also practised by bogus local NGOs, which have proliferated in a region with very few associations, unlike Christian missions in Chad.[139] The collapse of the local currency has also provided an opportunity to manipulate exchange rates by forcing humanitarian institutions to buy the naira at the official rate of 1 US dollar for 199 naira instead of the 250 to 340 naira on the black market in 2015. This differential represented an average loss of some 68 million US dollars, judging from the sums engaged in Nigeria that year by the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and MSF.[140]

However, the overcharging of fraudulent contracts remains the "best" way of diverting government and international aid resources. The conflicts of interest are sometimes patent. A federal government secretary, Babachir David Lawan, was suspended in May 2017 and then dismissed for awarding PINE contracts to his own companies in Borno, Yobe and his home state of Adamawa to assist displaced persons. In Borno, the race for contracts has also influenced aid modalities. The construction of new houses prevails over direct funding to displaced persons to help them rebuild their home. These housing estates are highly visible and satisfy the donors, especially in Kanuriland towards Beni Sheikh, on the main road from Maiduguri to Damaturu. Yet they do not conform to traditional housing, with its separate compound for women. They could therefore well remain empty, or be allocated to those with the right connections to politicians.

The North East Development Commission (NEDC), set up by the government in Abuja, also resembles a contract machine more than anything else. Its equivalent in the south, the NDDC (Niger Delta Development Commission) established in 2000, was already renowned for its inefficiency and slated by local activists as mere "window dressing".[141] The NEDC is supposed to be funded by the

139 http://ngowatchdog.org/alert-40-fake-ngos-exploiting-idps-borno/

140 Humanitarian aid channelling through the UN agencies totalled USD 135 million in 2015, instead of the USD 150 million requested, and the ICRC and MSF operating budgets came to around USD 15 and 30 million respectively.

141 In 2003, the NDDC claimed that 190 of its 783 projects were operational. Yet an independent evaluation showed that it had completed only 100 of the 358 contracts awarded to local businesses (Omeje, 2006: 151, 162); Interview by Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos with one of the leaders of the insurgency, Asari Dokubo, in Warri, in 2011.

disbursement of 50% of the sums earmarked for the North East by the National Ecological Fund, in addition to 15% of federal transfers to the zone's six member states and 3% of the annual budget of any extracting company operating in the region. Unlike the oil-producing Niger Delta, the NEDC cannot count on the support of the extractive industry, as multinationals have not moved into the region. It could therefore remain an empty shell, without any real assets.

2.3. Aid-to-development linkage problems

The difficulties encountered in the four lakeside countries are not all specific to the region. Aside from aid diversion, they are recurrent in many crises and concern problems already identified by researchers: failure to adapt the response; contradictions between different projects; duplication of efforts; inequalities of access to international organisations' resources; and absence of coordination, both between states and between players with different intervention capacities and norms (ministries, donors and NGOs).

In Cameroon, in the department of Logone-et-Chari, some criticise initiatives disconnected from the realities on the ground: distributions of chicks that died soon afterward because epidemics were not considered; establishment of a herders' cooperative that does not satisfy local needs; an outreach project to promote schooling for girls when there were no schools or teachers; construction of a causeway that could penalise the farmers (see Box 13); and so on. The Three-Year Emergency Plan to Accelerate Economic Growth, moreover, provided for an agricultural scheme to be developed in Zina, in the heart of a wetland protected in principle by the LCBC Water Charter.[142] And no one knows how the projects to develop fish farming on the plains of the Logone River and black-eyed pea and maize agriculture at the lake could operate along with oil exploration campaigns in the Makary area and between Waza and Logone Birni.

Coordination problems run just as deep at national level in each country. In principle, specialised agencies are supposed to coordinate relief with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO), an inter-ministerial committee in Cameroon, and, in Nigeria, a Presidential Committee on the North East Initiative (PCNI), which claims to supervise the National Humanitarian Coordination Forum (NHCF), the VSF, PINE, and the Safe School Initiative (SSI). A new commission, the NEDC, is also tasked with sustaining and legalising all the initiatives on the Nigerian side.

142 Interview by Charline Rangé with the managers of the Cameroonian Association for Environmental Education (ACEEN), in Maroua, June 2017.

Box 13

Limitations of top-down planning: example of the Logone causeway in Cameroon

"The engineering firm that did that knows nothing about wetland plains. There are two ways of looking at flooding: for the government, flooding is a problem, whereas it creates wealth for the farmers. They know the flooding calendar well and adjust to it. But the decisions come from above. The farmers say, 'They'll build their causeway over our dead bodies.' The project was set up before putting any thought into the problems to be solved. Several options need to be considered and several options discussed. The causeway is just one option. There are others. You have to leave the door open and not impose a project. Most of the projects are political brainchildren. The technicians have to follow suit even when the investment is 'highly regrettable'."

Source: Interview with the managers of ACEEN, Maroua, June 2017.

In practice, the governments of the four lakeside countries exhibit no real will to coordinate their efforts at regional level. In Nigeria, in particular, the problems are magnified by the sheer size of the country, its administrative complexity, central government dysfunctions, wariness of Western humanitarians, and the usual rivalries for power in a federal structure (see Box 14). In Borno, Governor Kashim Shettima set up a State Relief Committee supposed to oversee assistance to displaced persons … and used to bring back into the political game some high-profile figures brushed aside by his predecessor Ali Modu Sheriff.[143] In September 2015, he also created a Ministry for Reconstruction, whose responsibilities overlapped with those of the NEDC and his ministries of Health, Public Works and Housing. In the neighbouring State of Yobe, a similar initiative was prevented mainly by a lack of funds and federal support.[144] The multilayered administrative strata could therefore complicate reconstruction and development efforts. Of the four lakeside countries, Nigeria is clearly the nation where it will be most difficult to negotiate an extension to the presence of the international aid players.

143 Bulama Mali Gubio was made chair of this committee.

144 Interview by Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos with the governor of Yobe in Abuja, 14 May 2016.

Box 14

Public action coordination problems in Nigeria

Problems of coordination are amplified tenfold by Nigeria's sheer size and administrative complexity. There are challenges at all levels. On the side of the donors, for instance, conflicts between the federal Ministry for Education and Bauchi State put an end in 2013 to a UNICEF and World Bank project to promote education for girls in secondary schools. At federal level, competition between the Ministry for Agriculture and hydraulic resources departments also paralysed the bodies managing the Yobe River and Lake Chad, respectively the Hadejia-Jama'are River Basin Development Authority (HJRBDA) in Kano and the Chad Basin Development Authority (CBDA) in Maiduguri. More fundamentally, the Nigerian government's "three-tier" structure continues to create clashes of jurisdiction between central government in Abuja, federated states, and LGAs.

Alongside the reforms conducted in 1976, 1984, 1988, 1992, and 2003, the constitutions of 1979, 1989, and 1999 assigned LGAs to managing primary schools, maintaining primary healthcare, and developing agricultural and natural resources, with the exception of mineral resources. Yet LGAs do not have the financial means to carry out their tasks and generally have to turn to the states, which monopolise their budgets. The education sector speaks volumes about these coordination problems. Whereas the secondary and higher education sectors are managed jointly by Abuja and the states, primary schools are financed 25% by the LGAs, 18% by the federal government, 13% by the states, 40% by the pupils' parents, 3% by a national commission (Universal Basic Education Commission), and 1% by development aid donors (Bollag, 2015).

2.4. Long-term structural challenges

In the longer term, the challenges awaiting reconstruction will probably extend beyond aid diversion and coordination problems. Steps will need to be taken, first of all, to restore a social contract, as the population has generally lost confidence in the government's capacities to take affirmative public action. Something also needs to be done to improve the appalling image of these regions, which were already seen as backward, if not "primitive", nationwide before the crisis. Historically, such perceptions explain difficulties in deploying skilled personnel in the zone, a point that clearly shows the need to develop training for civil servants recruited and assigned locally.

For the moment, however, governments of the four countries carefully avoid dealing with problems of governance, corruption, and security force abuses, which in turn have inflamed the Boko Haram conflict. Without a political vision, their initiatives look more like a shopping list of development projects with the usual specifications for education, health, employment, intensive agriculture,

housing, transport, and access to water and electricity. The focus of the NEDC on infrastructure is fairly typical in this respect. Top of its agenda is capturing part of Nigeria's rent in an imitation of the populations of the oil-producing Niger Delta, who secured a federal ministry dedicated to their region in 2008 and a social package for their militants demobilised under an amnesty granted in 2009. The same holds true for the North East States Transformation Strategy (NESTS) set up by the area's governors following economic summits in Bauchi in 2012 and then in Gombe in 2013. Taking its cue from a South West governors' economic forum in 2011, NESTS called for a Marshall Plan and the creation of a federal ministry dedicated to the region. Yet the many projects that it was supposed to support and evaluate ultimately never got off the drawing board (NESTS, 2014).

The donors' focus on countering terrorism and illegal emigration to Europe also tends to overshadow the area's other destabilising factors. Boko Haram is definitely not the only source of insecurity, in that violence is also fuelled by agro-pastoral conflicts, community clashes, political tensions, and repeated violations of human rights, not to mention the high frequency of fatal road accidents totally ignored by aid players. Exogenous factors have also contributed to exacerbating the crisis, such as when the collapse in oil prices shrunk the oil rent and reduced the governments' capacity to pay the civil servants of Borno, Yobe, and N'Djaména.

Last but not least, the challenge for national and international operators concerns construction, and not simply reconstruction. The entire zone was already highly vulnerable even before the first clashes with the Nigerian Taliban in 2003 and then with Boko Haram in 2009. In rural areas, in particular, basic public services were not running. Rural primary schools and health clinics were often empty. This is especially true of Nigeria, where access to education and healthcare was among the lowest in the country, alongside the North West zone.

Today, the scale of the task is huge and calls for a long-term approach to the region's (re)construction. Depending on how the situation evolves, policymakers will have to make choices, which we will examine in the next two chapters. The options will concern first and foremost whether to reaffirm central government authority with top-down public policies or with more open, democratic forms of governance. There is also the question of whether or not to opt for neo-liberal models, which could, for example, foster the expansion of agro-industries driven by large-scale land purchases in high-potential areas, at the expense of more socially inclusive family farming systems.

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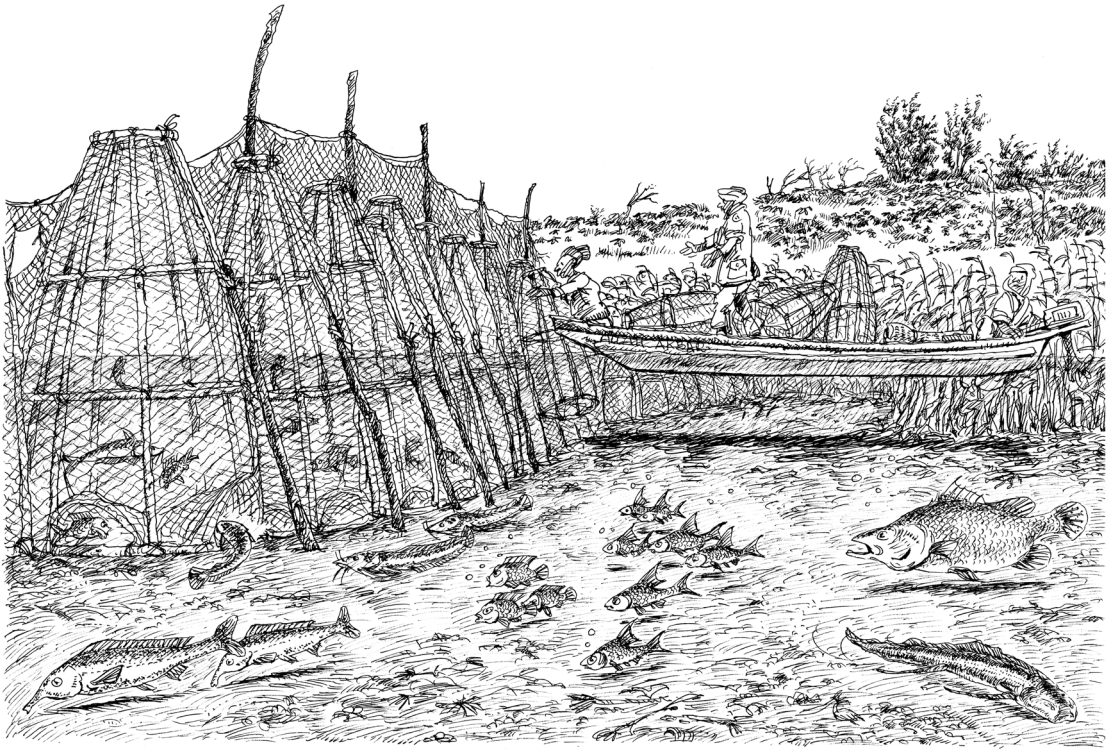
Section 3.
Exploring the way forward (the next 20 years)



Barrage of creels. Regulation of access to resources, a key issue.

Chapter 6.
Key variables

KEY POINTS

Development operators cannot control all the variables that will determine how the situation unfurls in the Lake Chad region. Climate change and world commodity price fluctuations are out of their hands. This is also largely true of demographic growth, which is subject to intense structural inertia. There is, however, the possibility of influencing security responses to the crisis and improving the forms of governance, a crucial point at local level. In economic policy, aid operators could also assist with public policy choices in agriculture, the extractive industries, and cross-border and domestic trade. One of the challenges will be to promote investment and diversify productive activities in rentier state environments. Repatriation and resettlement of displaced populations will also be essential to make the transition from emergency relief to development, as will youth employment and local capacity building.

We discuss here some of the main variables influencing the future of the space considered, differentiating between those beyond public policy control—only their repercussions can be addressed—and those that can be influenced by the choices made by the different types of players (governments and development partners).

1. Variables beyond public policy control

1.1. Climate

Following the fifth IPCC report, AR5 (2014), and pending sounder projections for the study zone, our climate hypothesis is as follows:

– An increase in temperature, compared with the situation observed in 2000, that could reach 2°C in 2050 (*Representative Concentration Pathway* – RCP 8.5) and 4°C by the end of the century (RCP 8.5). The change for the African continent could be less than 2°C for the middle and end of the century in the, improbable, event of RCP 2.6.

– Annual rainfall commensurably similar to that observed from 2000 to 2015 with, nonetheless, a possible lengthening of the rainy season and an increase in the occurrence of extreme weather events (Taylor *et al.*, 2017), such as the 150 mm of rain over Niamey on 12 June 2017.

Box 15

The IPCC's global climate scenarios (RCP)

The IPCC's climate projections are based on different greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions concentration scenarios.

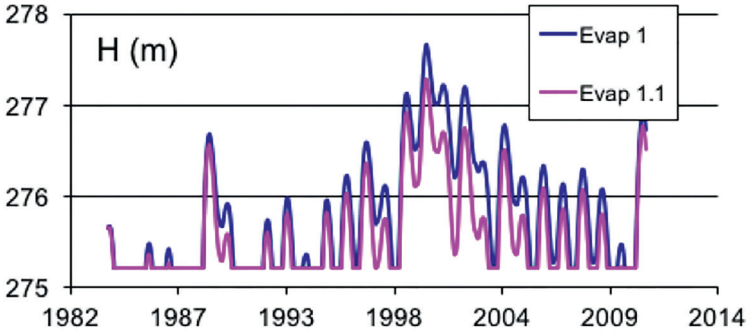
These concentrations were initially worked out from global socio-economic growth scenarios organised into four families (A1, A2, B1, and B2) by population growth and the shared or discrete implementation of clean energy technologies. In the IPCC AR5 report (2014), the IPCC introduced representative GHG concentration pathways (RCPs) to harmonise the approaches and speed up the assessments.

There are four RCP values, depending on the GHG emissions pathways to the year 2250. The most optimistic RCP 2.6 corresponds to a decrease in GHG emissions in the atmosphere by 2025. The most pessimistic RCP 8.5 (slightly higher than scenario A2) is based on a very sharp increase to 2200. The intermediate RCP 4.5 and 6 (very similar to scenarios A1B and B1) mark a stabilisation in GHG emissions to 2050 or 2200.

The potential century-end temperature rise for central Africa is 1°C to 2°C for the improbable RCP 2.6 and 4°C to 6°C for RCP 8.5 (IPCC AR5, 2014).

Assuming that precipitation over the basin does not show any significant change, direct temperature-induced evaporation from the lake will increase in a way that is still difficult to estimate, but could reach around 6% in 2050 and 11% in 2100 (GIZ, 2015). The impact of a 10% increase in evaporation on the level of the lake's northern pool was simulated using the hydrological model of the lake made available to the LCBC (Bader *et al.*, 2011; Lemoalle *et al.*, 2011). This is represented in Chart 5. Added to this is the decrease in the Chari River's runoff coefficient (share of rainfall received by the basin which is transported by the river), which occurred since the late 1970s and is potentially irreversible. These two factors combined, evaporation and runoff coefficient, raise the probability of low water levels for the lake's northern pool and Dry Small Lake Chad episodes, with their disastrous repercussions on the populations who use the northern pool's resources.

Chart 5. Simulation of the impact of a 10% increase in evaporation (Evap 1.1) over the current level (Evap 1) on the water altitude in Lake Chad's northern pool



Source: Authors' calculations based on the hydrological model of Lake Chad (Bader et al., 2011).

Completely dry periods are longer and more frequent. Current studies indicate that a 2°C temperature rise could reduce rainfed sorghum and millet yields by 10% to 20%, irrespective of the precipitation trend (Sultan *et al.*, 2013). Given the foreseeable upturn in demand due to demographic growth and changes in dietary habits, this warming, like the increase in extreme weather event frequency, raises the need to limit the sources of vulnerability over which governments have more control (access to credit and inputs, market regulation, insecurity, and land-use inequalities). This is also required to enable the farmers (broadly speaking) to adapt their production systems and practices. Moreover, a small change in rainfall indicates a shift in isohyets with a zonal impact on the possibilities for some crops and livestock practices. The farmers and herders' adaptability to inter-annual variability by means of mobility and diversification therefore needs to be preserved and, where possible, improved. Particular attention should also be paid to offensive seed policies, which risk homogenising crop diversity too quickly by imposing a few alien varieties supposed to be more resilient to climate change.

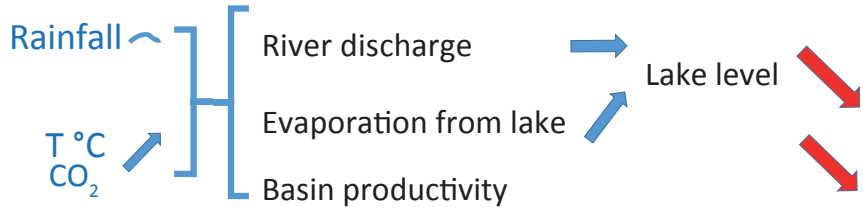
It should also be taken into account that a 10% variation in precipitation over the basin results in an approximately 30% variation in the Chari River's discharge and more or less the same change in Lake Chad's flooded surface area. The hydrological system hence remains highly sensitive.

It is therefore important to prepare for a future of greater difficulty for agricultural production due to the projected increase in temperature and extreme weather events, in an uncertain rainfall context, similar to the situation in 2000–2016. Extreme weather events can be both localised (storms, floods, and out-of-season rain) and relatively widespread (droughts), and are capable of significantly increasing the irregularity of agricultural production.

To date, little has been done to develop the water resources in the Lake Chad region. Aside from the classic agronomic techniques to capture water where it falls, we need to systematically consider the possibilities for storing water and using it more efficiently at different levels—from land plot through village land to the sub-basin—to tailor solutions to the array of local constraints. Larger-scale options, such as the inter-basin transfer between the Ubangi and Chari rivers, should be scientifically updated to better identify their advantages, disadvantages, and feasibility.

The combination of these constraints is summed up in Figure 3. When there is no marked change in rainfall over the basin, the rate of river flow is lower than during the wetter period (pre-1979). The rise in temperature combines with this first effect to decrease the level of the lake (for equal precipitation). Few studies appear to be available on the impact of climate change on the Sahel–Saharan zone.

Figure 3. Influence of the two variables indicative of climate change on Lake Chad's surface area and the agricultural yields of its basin



Source: Authors.

The drop in yields will result from the rise in temperature and the increase in the occurrence of extreme weather events. The arrows indicate the direction of the variation.

1.2. The international economic environment

Another very important variable, but one over which the governments of the Lake Chad region have hardly any control, is the international economic environment. This can be addressed by two variables with different effects on the countries studied.

1.2.1. Commodity prices and rent economy trends

Commodity prices form an economic fundamental in that the governments concerned depend on them to a great extent. In the recent period, the commodity price index has remained largely in line with oil prices[145] (see Chart 6). Oil prices are particularly important, since the four countries concerned are oil producers. Nigeria and Cameroon have been producing oil for decades, Chad became an oil producer in 2003, and Niger followed in 2011. Oil rent has become central to Nigeria and Chad's economies (nearly 30% of GDP, 60% of the national budget, and 90% of exports before the price slump in 2014), to the extent that other exported product prices (cotton in Chad) ultimately count for relatively little at national economy level. Oil carries somewhat less weight in Cameroon (6% of GDP, 10% of the national budget, and 44% of exports in 2015), where the economy is more diversified (manufacturing industry and primary exports of wood, coffee, rubber and, very recently, gold). In Niger, the main rent is provided by uranium—whose prices are only partially linked to oil prices owing to the geopolitical factor and the environmental issues associated with this mineral (sharp price drop following Fukushima (2011) despite oil prices remaining high). This rent is topped up by an as yet modest level of industrial gold mining (one mine in 2017). Oil production from the Agadem field has so far taken the form of oil products refined by the Zinder refinery for the national market. Export, planned for phase 2, has been put on hold in an environment of geopolitical uncertainty and, more particularly, low world prices.

Chart 6. Brent crude oil prices in US dollars per barrel (2002–2017)

Description: Crude Oil (petroleum), Dated Brent, light blend 38 API, fob U.K., US Dollars per Barrel

Source: IndexMundi (from the IMF).

145 This was not the case in the previous supercycle, the economic boom period, when high agricultural and mineral commodity prices ran alongside low oil prices.

Following a period of high commodity prices (2000–2014), levels plunged with the price per barrel falling to around 40 to 50 US dollars, as opposed to double this figure in the previous phase. This slump reflects the slowdown in Chinese economic growth, combined with other factors. It is difficult to predict how long it will last, even though the hypothesis of a shortening of global economic cycles is often advanced. It is also difficult to predict the impact of the reduction in world reserves (price rise) on oil prices and, inversely, the impact of the energy transition to a low-carbon economy (drop in demand, which has a knock-on effect on prices).

In the medium term (ten years), three commodity price trends can be predicted:

- There could be an upturn in prices over a cycle of several years, associated with global economic recovery for example—with India's booming economy taking over from China as the main demand centre and economic recovery consolidated in the Western countries. An improvement in the macroeconomic situation of the Lake Chad region countries would then bring the possibility of redistributing the rents through public employment, local government, and resumption of national public investment policies. In the short term, this could help ease socio-political tensions, although alone it is not sufficient (the Boko Haram crisis broke out in an upbeat macroeconomic context). This kind of economic climate opens up the range of possibilities, but what ultimately happens depends on the choices actually made (Magrin, 2015): they may favour economies that do not create jobs, thereby using the rent in luxury urban real estate; or, conversely, they may foster investment in human resources and productive infrastructures.
- The stabilisation of commodity prices at a low level similar to the current level would place the regional system under even more stress in the Lake Chad region. Difficulties paying civil servants, suspension of public projects, further debt, and increased dependence on aid would create macroeconomic conditions adverse to recovery. In the long run, if the French decision to gradually phase out nuclear energy were to become effective and be followed by other countries, it could weigh negatively on uranium prices and hence on the Nigerien government's already meagre resources. A sustained plunge in oil prices would jeopardise the fragile balances on which Nigeria rests.
- A period of commodity price instability cannot be ruled out either, with very short cycles of high and low prices. This instability would increase macroeconomic management problems for the oil-producing countries, which would in turn be detrimental to the development of long-term investment policies.

The use of the extractive rents to drive economic diversification in high-price periods is a key consideration. Its implementation remains a challenge.

1.2.2. Foreign flows

The international environment can also come into play with an increase or decrease in foreign aid and investment flows.

In poor countries with low resources and huge infrastructure and human capital investment needs, an increase in these foreign financial flows should normally be conducive, and even essential, to setting them on a more positive economic and political path. However, their impact depends on how they are assimilated into public policies.

International aid

In the short and medium term, we can envisage the following:

- A significant increase in official development assistance to further transition to a post-conflict situation and the long-term stabilisation of one of the world's most vulnerable regions, which would produce long-term positive effects if it succeeded in building government capacities (for example, at federal, state, and LGA levels in Nigeria) and if its players managed to improve their sector and geographic coordination. Recent commitments by the European Union and Germany's cooperation agency appear to be along these lines.
- The stabilisation of aid at its current level: aid that is both substantial—taking different forms depending on the area (emergency humanitarian relief in the zones most affected by the Boko Haram crisis; classic development aid in the study zone's peripheral areas)—and insufficient considering the scale of needs and the countries' developmental capacity crisis.
- A large reduction in aid due to a palpable improvement in the security situation and donor fatigue, increased fiscal constraints, or political priority change.

Foreign direct investment

In the short and medium term, we can envisage the following:

- An increase in foreign direct investment due to the return of security, an upbeat international economic environment, and an improvement in the business climate, if not government incentive measures. These investments could concern the extractive economy (mines and oil), but also agriculture and industry—making the most of the abundant manpower available and the emerging markets associated with demographic and urban growth. Attractive regional planning policies would doubtless be required to encourage industrial investments in regions penalised owing to their distance from the main national centres (north-east Nigeria's remoteness from Kano

and the south of Nigeria; and the north of Cameroon's remoteness from the south).

– Investments and agro-mineral export production holding at their current level, constrained by low commodity prices and, in the areas concerned, the Boko Haram crisis.

– No new investment and an end to existing production where profit conditions are no longer guaranteed (Chadian and Nigerien oil due to the costs of operating isolated fields, Cameroonian oil due to the exhaustion of reserves, and uranium due to the price drop).

In addition to the key issue of social and environmental regulation of the impacts of the extractive activities, investment in the agricultural sector can produce positive effects only if there is government oversight to ensure that employment needs are met without exacerbating social exclusion from land grabs and the marginalisation of herding.

1.3. Demographics

Two demographic variables will influence population growth in the study region: the rate of natural increase (balance of births and deaths) and migration.

The inertia of the population age structure limits uncertainties over natural population growth in the medium term. Any drop in the fertility rate (which has barely started in some of the areas studied; see Chapter 1, Section 2.1) or sharpening of the drop in the fertility rate in coming years would only marginally affect the Lake Chad region's population growth owing to the large youth bulge in the current demographic structure. A sharp drop in the fertility rate would, however, expand the time window available to develop the "demographic dividend".

The study region does not have a strong tradition of international migration on the whole: no pool of European emigration comparable to the Senegal River valley and no regional migratory field similar to that from the Mossi Plateau to Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. To date, most of the migratory flows have remained within the regional system or have taken the form of domestic migration to the central regions of the countries considered. Long-distance migration has often been for religious reasons (Egypt, Sudan, and Saudi Arabia) or for work (Libya and the Gulf countries) and has had no effect on considerable numbers in the Lake Chad region. Conversely, Lake Chad has attracted populations in the past from regions outside of the study zone (notably Zinder for Niger).

An increase in emigration is possible in the event of a significant worsening of living conditions should, for example, political and food insecurity become widespread. Emigration would then probably be regional: to neighbouring countries in the event of a political crisis in one of the four countries studied,

or to southern regions with more resources. One should bear in mind that these southern regions will also be under very strong demographic pressure (especially the south of Nigeria) and will consequently not be unrestrictedly open host areas.

There are hence three possible growth rate speeds for the Lake Chad region's population, estimated at 21 million inhabitants in 2006 and at 29.3 million inhabitants in 2017:

- Fast, corresponding to the current rate of natural increase (+3% per year) and relatively untouched by the reduction in the fertility rate or by interregional migration: the population would total 78 million inhabitants in 2050.
- Medium (+2.5% per year), corresponding to a gradual downturn in the fertility rate driven by development (e.g. progress in education and formal employment, especially for women; improvement in mother and child health; urbanisation) and moderate emigration to Gulf of Guinea cities or other destinations: the regional population would total 66 million inhabitants in 2050.
- Slow (+1.5% per year), reflecting, for example, a sharp rise in the death rate (conflicts, famine, and epidemics) and a high rate of emigration: the regional population would total 48 million inhabitants in 2050.

In Section 2.3, we address how migration could affect the population distribution in the Lake Chad region in the future, since its distribution will depend essentially on the choices made.

2. Variables within public policy control

2.1. Security and governance

Reconstruction and development possibilities will depend primarily on how the conflict evolves. Security and governance questions therefore need to be considered against how events unfurl with respect to both Boko Haram and government troops. The insurgency's dynamics are so local that there is no serious possibility of any real internationalisation of the conflict with engagement by Western troops or jihadists from Syria, Iraq, or Libya. However, the situation could deteriorate in the zone without affecting the area's four countries at national level. Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon, and Chad can very well continue to live with a persistent crisis in their peripheral areas. Yet the lakeside regions are hardly likely to cope and develop if governance and conflict management do not improve nationwide in the zone's four countries.

2.1.1. How the conflict evolves

Conflict internationalisation or stagnation

Regarding the insurgents, the eventuality of internationalisation with involvement from jihadist groups in Mali or Libya seems highly improbable, since the sect remains embedded in highly local recruitment and predatory dynamics, even as it takes advantage of the porosity of the region's borders. Conflict stagnation is actually the most likely scenario: Boko Haram has already proved its resilience and ability to slip through the cracks in the lakeside countries, like the Lord's Resistance Army in eastern CAR.

Peace

Of modest probability, the prospect of peace—negotiated or otherwise—cannot be ruled out. Unlike the rebels in the Niger Delta's oilfields, the sect has lost the tacit support it initially enjoyed following the brutality of the military crackdown. As time wears on, it could therefore lose momentum as it fails to renew its fighters, irrespective of any advances made elsewhere by an anti-terrorist coalition, whose territorial gains owe so much to civilian assistance and virtually nothing to the improvement of its troops' technical performances. In May 2017, the release of 82 schoolgirls from Chibok, negotiated with Boko Haram, also opened a channel for dialogue that could stand a good chance of giving rise to a more lasting agreement.

The problem is that public opinion, both internationally and in the lakeside countries, is not in favour of negotiating with the jihadists. Without amnesty, we might see a few prisoner exchanges and the release of Boko Haram fighters who were recruited by force. However, demobilisation of the militia will remain a nagging problem. It is estimated that the CJTF counts 22,000 men in Nigeria alone, double Boko Haram's ranks. For the time being in 2017, just 300 have been enlisted into the army and it will be very difficult to recycle the remainder in the military and the police because of the drop in oil revenues and the lack of funding.[146]

More importantly, there is a strong possibility that anti-terrorist coalition war crimes will go unpunished, which will do nothing to facilitate reconciliation, justice, and healing, not to mention compensation for the victims. Given the personal political career of the presidents of Nigeria, Cameroon, and Chad, it is difficult to imagine them holding their armies accountable. As a former dictator, Muhammadu Buhari himself escaped the investigations of the Oputa Panel[147]

146 Interviews by Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos with CJTF leaders in Maiduguri in 2015 and 2016. See also Pérouse de Montclos (2016: 243–248).

147 The Human Rights Violations Investigations Commission, which took the name of its president, Chukwudifu Oputa, a former high court judge.

into military regime embezzlement and human rights violations in the 2000s. Unable to judge and sentence the perpetrators of these crimes, the commission did at least manage to play a cathartic role by receiving the public's petitions and crushing the sense of impunity among officers who were sometimes ridiculed at their hearing. Yet nothing of this sort can be expected in the case of the "global war against terrorism".

2.1.2. National political pathways

Improvement or status quo

How the conflict evolves in practice will also depend on the political courses taken at national level. Along with democratic consolidation in the next presidential elections in Nigeria and Niger (in 2019 and 2021, respectively), successful transitions in Chad and Cameroon would, for example, defuse the jihadists' revolutionary rhetoric, which condemns social injustices by impious, illegitimate governments. Most probable, however, is that the region's hybrid forms of governance will persist, with a soft authoritarian regime in Cameroon and a hard one in Chad, and parliamentary systems with more or less fraudulent practices in Niger and Nigeria.

Worst-case scenario

We also need to consider the worst-case scenario. The lack of regional coordination already serves the interests of Boko Haram, whose combatants take advantage of international porous borders while the military of each country have to negotiate rights of hot pursuit. Yet the drop in government revenues in the zone's three main oil-producing countries—Chad, Nigeria, and Niger—could compromise the continuation of military operations by the anti-terrorist coalition. For reasons of domestic policy, the three main Western powers active in the region—the United States, United Kingdom, and France—are fortunately not prepared to take up the slack by sending boots on the ground, which would be the best way to turn a jihadist combat into an anti-imperialist struggle and a war of liberation from foreign occupation. It is hardly conceivable either that the United Nations, already tied up in Mali, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and CAR, will decide to send peacekeeping forces into the quagmire of the most populous country in Africa. Such an option would in any case be rejected by Abuja.

Beyond controversies about alleged links to Daesh or Al-Qaida, it is essentially local dynamics that will determine whether the situation deteriorates. If the simultaneous deaths of Cameroon and Chad's presidents were to coincide with failed elections in Niger and Nigeria, the severity of the resulting unrest could force the anti-terrorist coalition troops to totally withdraw from the lake in order to restore order in other regions or take direct part in battles over succession

to power. Like the jihadist groups in the north of Mali following the 2012 coup d'État in Bamako, Boko Haram would then take advantage of the situation to regain ground, learning this time to govern societies and not just control territories. The conflict would spread, the humanitarian crisis would escalate, and the chaos would trigger an exodus of migrants trying to reach the shores of the Mediterranean, which is not currently the case.

2.1.3. Local governance

Crisis or status quo

In this scenario, political unrest at national level would have repercussions at local level. The collapse of government authority and the drastic fall in government revenues would foster the outbreak of new community conflicts over scraps from the tables of rentier states and the meagre resources still available on the ground, possibly even refuelling land tensions between locals and outsiders. However, this scenario is improbable. It is much more likely that local governments will continue to operate with few resources and the endemic corruption that saps basic public services, compromises development projects, and forces authorities with shaky electoral credibility to legitimise their social support via clientage networks, with the help of traditional chiefdoms and religious leaders.

Improvement

In the best-case scenario, governments and traditional authorities would improve governance. Local governments would receive financial and human resources to provide basic public services, reduce social inequalities, and serve justice. The increase in wages, now paid regularly, would make the local administration more attractive and enable skilled staff to be recruited: engineers, doctors, accountants, statisticians, economists, legal experts, urban planners, etc. More transparent and more legitimate local governments would also be accountable for their budgets and activities. Their representatives would be truly elected and not appointed by fixed ballots. Biometric identification systems would prevent fraud, and institutional safeguards would guarantee impartial vote counting, for example, under the supervision of Nigeria's Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), which currently supervises national elections and leaves each federated state to hold local elections, even if this throws the door open to interference by governors (Adams, 2016).

2.2. Economic choices

2.2.1. Emergency relief and official development assistance

International aid developments constitute one of the keys to the short-term future of the Lake Chad region. There are a number of immediate concerns to be addressed by political choices to steer this aid and make it more effective in economic terms.

International donors could:

- Carry on as they are now with a high level of funding to humanitarian aid NGOs, which run the same types of programmes throughout the study region. This status quo would provide for the immediate needs of the most vulnerable populations, particularly forced migrants, recognised by international conventions for refugees as having to be protected and helped. At the same time, maintaining emergency relief in the long term could increase economic dependence on international organisations and drip-feed entire swathes of the region without developing a local and regional economy. This could lead to an increase in local governments and populations refusing to be made a ward of an outside, unchecked intervention, as is already perceptible to some extent in northern Cameroon and Borno in Nigeria. Another risk, if the insecurity continues, is that more humanitarian aid could be diverted and turned into resources for the armed groups, hence helping perpetuate the conflict.
- Curb humanitarian aid in the short term, considering that the security situation is improving and the populations' resilience strong, especially in the case of outbreaks of other major crises calling for emergency funds to be redirected to other regions. Although this policy may suit areas largely unaffected by the insurgency and where counter-insurgency measures have been lifted, it could result in a sharp rise in mortality in other areas as populations fail to provide for their basic needs (access to food and water, etc.). This policy shift, moreover, counts on a rapid improvement in the security situation, whereas Boko Haram could long sustain strong residual damage capabilities. In addition, it would rule out working on the structural socio-economic problems that were among the factors that fostered the development of the insurgency, such as socio-spatial inequalities and the lack of economic prospects for a predominantly young population.
- Maintain a high level of diversified, localised international intervention in order to develop local and regional economic stimulus mechanisms backed by producers, traders, and authorities. This solution implies that donors and operational players have sound knowledge of the local situations to be able to adjust to the wide variety of needs and changes in needs in the different areas of the Lake Chad region. It means being

able to assist the institutional players (international NGOs, civil society structures, devolved government agencies, local government bodies, etc.) and the diverse population categories (farmers, fishers, herders, traders, and so on; internally displaced persons and refugees; but also returnees, non-displaced populations, etc.). This would support the emergency programmes and underpin the government's economic policies, especially in terms of investment in infrastructures and family farming.

2.2.2. Economic policies

Economic policies have to contend with contexts determined by variables over which the regional players have no control (commodity prices, official development assistance, and foreign investment). A number of forms of economic policies can be envisaged:

- Public policies combining family farming support with development of the domestic markets. The aim here would be to meet the food and employment challenges associated with the demographic boom while developing the outlets opened by expansion of the domestic markets, especially the urban markets. The resumption of farming support services (including credit and insurance) would be accompanied by a socially inclusive and secure tenure policy and investment in infrastructures (transport, water, energy, and communications) and agricultural produce processing.
- The status quo would be to maintain a heavy dependence on the extractive rents, mainly invested—when prices are buoyant—in city infrastructures. There would continue to be little public intervention in farming support and land governance, which would rule out any substantial increase in production and could fuel socio-political tensions.
- Policies designed to stimulate agricultural production and diversify government resources, driven by large-scale and specialised mechanised agriculture funded by domestic and foreign investment, ploughed directly into production—such as the agropole model, one of the fashionable manifestations of these policies in the region today (projects in Niger near Lake Chad and operational projects in Benoue in Cameroon and Adamawa in Nigeria). The economic efficiency of these business farming projects—as much in terms of creating agricultural value-added as creating jobs and increasing incomes—has been largely challenged, including by the World Bank in its recent report, *Rising Global Interest in Farmland: Can it Yield Sustainable and Equitable Benefits?* (Deininger *et al.,* 2011). Such a model therefore presents the risk of failing to meet the food challenge, of proving vulnerable to environmental changes (extreme weather events) and, more importantly, of being at odds with the major demographic implications of the stage of demographic transition that the Lake Chad

region countries are experiencing (massive influx of young people onto the labour market). It would also result in potentially socially explosive land exclusion.

2.2.3. Trade

Trade trends are fundamental to the long-term future of the lake region and a factor over which the regional players have a high level of capacity for action. Three policies can be envisaged:

- Promoting the development of local and regional trade as a factor for economic development and territorial integration and as a source of potentially government-controlled tax revenues. A series of measures could set the stage for the development of this trade: a gradual lifting of barriers to mobility associated with counter-insurgency operations and the return of security; government introduction of strict control of the illegal levies charged by their agents and removal of part of the checkpoints; investment in road infrastructures (trunk roads tarmacked and tracks rehabilitated and maintained elsewhere) and in landing stages along the waterways and markets, to enable the development and diversification of productive outlets; and the introduction of aligned, controlled, and measured state taxation on trade.
- Maintaining the status quo would effectively see the continued reconfiguration of the regional system, marked by substantial barriers to trade movements (insecurity and regional blockade and checkpoint strategy). This would exacerbate the economic situation for the producers and traders who do not have access to urban markets or can take their goods to market only by paying high transport costs. This situation would keep the general economic slump in place, but would doubtless benefit other territories by relocating certain trading channels.
- Blocking the regionalisation momentum with permanent border closures, more road checkpoints, unwarranted levies, and all manner of restrictions on movements would force the economies back onto their national markets, further the saturation of these markets in countries deprived of regional outlets, and probably cause major economic crises.

2.3. Settlement and mobility

2.3.1. The future of the populations displaced by the conflict

There are two possible developments with respect to the situation of internally displaced persons and refugees. These could combine depending on how the security situation evolves in the region's different areas:

– The refugees and internally displaced persons could stay in their host locations if the insecurity persists, especially in rural areas, and if a syndrome of dependence on humanitarian aid develops. This situation would perpetuate the needs of people who have become dependent on outside resources from international organisations and could increase tensions between migrant populations and unassisted host populations. It would also change long-term settlement patterns and consequently drive up land-use tensions in the rural host zones and urban sprawl in the host cities, creating huge infrastructure and job needs that emergency relief would find difficult to meet.

– The refugees and internally displaced persons could gradually return to their homes with the improved security situation and the end of the emergency relief programmes. Part of the returns could also be hastened by governments used to displacing their populations by force. Unemployment, lack of access to land, and tensions with local populations in the host spaces could also drive more spontaneous returns. These returns, as long as they are not connected with new violence, would rekindle complementarity between productive spaces and alleviate the land situations in current migrant host environments, but would entail a need for equipment, often in disrepair or destroyed, in the refugees' and displaced persons' places of origin.

2.3.2. Forms of urbanisation

This is a variable on which public policy can have a more or less direct medium- or long-term effect. Urbanisation can evolve in different ways, depending on the macroeconomic climate and the planning choices made, or not.

– A first configuration would see active regional development policies encouraging decentralisation and investment in secondary urban centre facilities. SME-SMI fabric take-off or modernisation incentives would be put in place to encourage handling, storage, and especially agricultural processing activities creating value and providing jobs.

– Conversely, persistent regional recession and an explosion of violence in cities such as N'Djaména, where urban warfare seen in the past (1979–1982) would re-erupt, could impede the progress of urban development and contain demographic growth in the cities at the rate of natural increase. This would result in a deficit of formal and informal employment and the absence of integrative economic dynamics.

– A rentier crisis point without any proactive regional policy, combined with persistent rural crises (economic, environmental, and security), would be conducive to rapid urban growth concentrated in the largest regional cities (N'Djaména primarily, followed by Maiduguri, Garoua, and Maroua to a

lesser extent, and then Diffa) and in the southern cities outside the Lake Chad region. It is here that state rent is mainly invested (in civil service wages and infrastructures) and here too where access to international aid is the most direct. The pattern of small towns would continue to stagnate with a very low level of service access and few agricultural processing activities. Metropolisation strategies drive economic growth and the migratory attractiveness of the large cities (Yaoundé, Douala, Abuja, Lagos, etc.).

2.4. Inequalities, cultural dynamics, and social relations

2.4.1. Relations between and within communities

The positive scenario

In a positive scenario, the political authorities stop using identity and religious rationales to rule by a system of clientelism that fuels antagonism between locals and outsiders. Instead, the authorities promote a civic-minded model that improves such factors as access to healthcare services, education, and information. Greater government transparency then disables the power of the rumours, "conspiracy" theories, and beliefs in invisible forces that usually feed the fears of witchcraft and outsiders. At the same time, the region's governments build a constructive dialogue with the religious organisations to prevent extremism and the risks of sectarian escalation. Now working with codified, standardised, stabilised procedures, the Islamic and customary judges can also resume their traditional role and prevent the summary justice of militias and lynch mobs by mediating and informally settling conflicts between individuals or groups.

Status quo or crisis

The most probable scenario, however, is that the political authorities will continue to exacerbate inter- and intra-community tensions, which vary depending on the places and periods. A crisis situation would then provoke the spread and diversification of the conflicts. With an increase in the habitual abuses of the region's coercive government apparatus, the brutality of the repression would fuel violence and lend credibility to the insurgent dynamics.

2.4.2. Intergenerational and gender relations

The positive scenario

In a positive scenario, the improvement in the economic and political situation creates jobs, effectively reduces poverty, and narrows social inequalities. Young people and women are the main beneficiaries of this, as they are of the phasing out of the male gerontocracies, such as in Nigeria where a recent

2018 constitutional reform is on course to reduce the qualifying age to run for political office. Displaced persons of rural origin are determined to stay in the urban centres rather than return to the countryside. They make the most of being closer to the corridors of power to assert their rights and demand better political representation. Militiamen and amnestied Boko Haram combatants receive vocational training to enable them to find a job, paid employment, or join the security forces.

Status quo or crisis

The most probable scenario, however, is that social discrimination will persist and add to tensions in the region. Reconciliation, in this case, would be problematic, as families in the conflict-stricken zones often know their victims' killers or have become torn apart by conflictual allegiances. The worst-case scenario would see a spread of youth revolts, an increase in violence against women, and total obstruction of access to power monopolised by a male gerontocracy.

2.4.3. Employment

In view of the demographic projections, youth employment is a major economic and socio-political challenge. Different choices are possible, although they are all constrained by the international economic environment:

- Public policies focus on strengthening urban dynamics through light industry and the development of information and communication technology services. Heavy investment would be required in infrastructures and training, which rules out the possibility of significant effects on employment in the short and medium term, especially since such a development assumes an improvement in the "business climate", which is improbable in the current situation. This policy would most likely leave the outlying regions by the wayside (case of the Lake Chad region for Nigeria, Niger, and Cameroon) and exclude rural youth (in the majority).
- The priority is placed on large-scale private investment to develop the food industry. This is currently the stated political option chosen by Cameroon, Nigeria, and Niger for youth employment (among other objectives). Without massive investment in the upstream and downstream sectors (as is the case today with the first projects), these projects and their associated reforms (in land tenure and seed availability) will be detrimental to family farming,[148] which directly or indirectly employs the vast majority of young people.
- There is no active public policy for employment. International recommendations for the development of the informal sector could give rise to

148 See, in particular, the recent study based on a comparison of agropoles in Cameroon and Burkina Faso (Blein *et al.,* 2017).

a proliferation of poorly coordinated "business facilitation" projects (development of behavioural competencies and commercial and/or technical skills, sometimes with credit facilitation measures) that are incapable of catering for all the constraints young people have to contend with. In the Boko Haram (post-)crisis context, short-term, stop-gap programmes (food-for-work programmes, cash-for-work programmes, and labour-intensive infrastructure works) could at best act as safety nets for a small number of young people.

– An active youth employment policy is put in place with a combination of support for family farming and the informal sector (rural and urban) in order to increase incomes and diversify the economy. The quality of education would need to be improved in the medium term for formal jobs to really develop in services. Cross-cutting approaches to the question could improve responses to problems, providing access to the necessary resources for economic independence (from parents and patrons) and the socio-political empowerment and recognition to which young people also aspire through access to employment.

2.4.4. Civil society

Civil society organisations are generally weak and lacking in structure in the Lake Chad region today.

Three developments could take shape:

– Firm establishment of decentralisation and relevant long-term support, focusing on institutional capacity building, could drive the development of more balanced local governance arenas, where civil society organisations (various associations, producer groups, and NGOs) would have their place. Civil society would then be able to organise and structure itself, to the point where it could set up regional (cross-border) networks for relevant matters (management of extractive industry impacts, defence of the interests of family farming against the food industry, cultural associations, ombudsman associations to manage farmer-herder conflicts, etc.).

– Continuation of the status quo with a weak civil society with highly imbalanced geographic coverage. In some places, there is virtually no civil society, with the few existing organisations open to opportunistic, sometimes hit-and-run, aid-siphoning strategies. In other places, organisations are strong locally, rooted in the social structure, sometimes endogenously and sometimes as a result of the region's development history (cotton producer organisations in Cameroon's North Region and Mayo-Kebbi Ouest in Chad) or outside interventions (Christian missions in the Mandara Mountains and Chad's Mayo-Kebbis). They struggle to make their voices heard in local political choices.

– There is also the possibility that the existing organisations could disintegrate, incapacitated by the absence of funding options and political space—in the event of withdrawal by emergency players or a drop in development assistance—or otherwise crushed by the rivalries caused by an influx of too much support.

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Fulani herders near Lake Chad. Maintaining pastoral mobility is a major socio-political imperative in the region.

Chapter 7.
Policy options and scenarios

KEY POINTS

Development operators will have to make choices. First, they will have to reconsider their articulation to security policies that prioritise repression over the resilience of populations hit by the economic sanctions of the anti-terrorist coalition. Choices will also concern the types of possible partnerships with national governments, the private sector, local governments, traditional chiefdoms, and NGOs. Regional planning and agricultural production priorities, preferably socially inclusive, will also have to be established. Yet there is nothing to say that development efforts will have a lasting impact. It is possible that the current situation will continue, or that the combination of choices made could produce a positive, or negative, scenario. Given the current state of affairs, a status quo appears probable.

Considering the abovementioned variables, the choices facing policymakers concern primarily their priorities (security or development); the players in charge of implementing them (central or decentralised government, private sector or "civil society"); the economic, social, and regional development models to be promoted; and responses to the environmental challenges. Although we present individual options here, public policies are often ultimately the product of compromises and hybrid combinations of the possible options.

1. Policy options

1.1. Security and/or development: Where do the priorities lie?

The relationship between security and development is neither unequivocal nor necessarily positive. Poverty eradication cannot be equated with counter-terrorism. The idea that international aid could buy social peace around the lake is effectively based on two unproven hypotheses: that jihadism is driven by poverty rather than government corruption or authoritarianism; and that aid prevents conflicts, irrespective of its negative repercussions when it funds belligerents or exacerbates competition for rare resources.

A number of elements argue for a clear distinction to be made between the two approaches. First of all, military interventions intended to secure an area are supposed to be short term, whereas development assistance is seen as a long-term undertaking. The two types of engagement are not necessarily compatible and are liable to get in each other's way. Economic sanctions imposed by the military, for example, can totally jeopardise development, if not civilian survival itself. This is evidenced by the drastic measures taken by the anti-terrorist coalition armies to control population movements, set up border buffer zones, and deprive the insurgents of their supply sources around Lake Chad.

Development operators all too often do not have the choice: the priority is placed on security rationales, which amount to urgently treating the symptoms rather than the causes. Confusion between the two types of engagement can then place social players at risk when they are seen as agents of a military initiative trying to "win the hearts and minds" in order to dissuade civilians from joining the rebels. The war against terrorism can also wrongly point the finger at certain population categories, such as the Fulani and Koranic school students, who are collectively seen as potential jihadists. Instead of stigmatising them, aid players would do better to include them in community programmes (Inks *et al.*, 2016: 21).

1.2. Choosing between government and other players

Another important policy choice for development operators consists of working with central governments or, conversely, trying to sidestep corrupt administrations by opting for partnerships with the private sector, NGOs, customary authorities, and/or religious organisations. The pros and cons of all these options are well known.

Channelling aid through governments can help improve the performance and legitimacy of the public authorities. Yet this option also risks feeding corruption and aggravating social inequalities by strengthening the power of gatekeepers and intermediaries acting as development brokers. In the study area, governments are known for their capacities to divert funds and accept terms of reference they do not implement. In 2006, Chad unilaterally broke the agreement it had with the World Bank to reinvest a large share of oil revenues in health and education. In Nigeria in 1985, General Ibrahim Babangida committed to a structural adjustment plan whose reforms were postponed indefinitely. In practice, the junta used privatisation programmes to reward its allies and divert more funds from public companies (Dijkstra, 2004: 89–115; Browne, 2006: 48). Since the return to civilian rule in 1999, the different governments in Abuja have also avoided applying the international financial institutions' "recommendations". In 2006, the agreement negotiated with the Paris Club provided for debt relief in return for Nigeria investing up to one billion US dollars per year in the Millennium Development Goals. In reality, that did not happen at all and evaluations showed that hundreds

of millions had vanished into thin air every year, reaching a hundred billion naira in 2015.[149] Any increase in aid can therefore only be envisaged in the long term and in a management context that will improve absorption capacities.

Opting for partnerships with the private sector is therefore a way to circumvent exclusive relations with corrupt administrations. The aim here is also to improve the performances of the projects undertaken. Nigeria, whose private sector is much more developed than in the neighbouring countries, is very much in favour of this. Presidents Goodluck Jonathan and then Muhammadu Buhari both banked on Aliko Dangote, known as "the richest man in Africa", and Theophilus Danjuma, a former defence minister turned oil magnate. In 2014, a foundation called the Victims Support Fund (VSF) was consequently set up to raise private funds for the victims of Boko Haram, while the Presidential Initiative for the North East (PINE) provided for the establishment of a part government-owned company, the North East Regional Development Corporation, which would have been 30% owned by the region's states, 20% by the federal government, and 50% by investors supposed to keep a handle on its management by ensuring compliance with the rules of corporate social responsibility (PINE, 2014). Yet the projects did not deliver. Modelled on the huge post-independence agricultural marketing boards that became riddled with corruption, the North East Regional Development Corporation never saw the light of day. The VSF, established in July 2014 under the management of Theophilus Danjuma, took over a year to become operational. In practice, it has remained extremely dependent on government subsidies, to the tune of ten billion naira in 2016. While some businessmen use it as a public relations exercise to improve their philanthropic image, it has managed to raise only two billion naira, essentially from the banking sector and Danjuma's personal foundation.[150] Moreover, the context in north-east Nigeria does not facilitate partnerships between the public and private sectors: multinationals did not invest in a region that has few entrepreneurs of any stature—unlike, for example, the south-east's Igbo traders, who learnt to reconstruct without government assistance their devastated region after the Biafra War.

Opting to work with international or local NGOs therefore has the advantage of bypassing corrupt businessmen and civil servants, who are often associates in business dealings. This is the option preferred by a good number of respondents on the ground, who are suspicious of the political class's misdeeds. The problem is that such an option also encourages a breach of social contracts, de facto privatisation of public services, and disengagement by governments losing their regulatory function. Furthermore, nothing guarantees that "civil" society will be more virtuous and less corrupt than civil servants. There are not really any

149 Daily Trust, 8 May 2016, p. 64.

150 Aliko Dangote never paid the billion naira he promised the VSF, possibly out of fear of embezzlement. Interviews in Abuja on 10 May 2016.

opposition parties or unions in the regions around Lake Chad, and the local NGOs in these areas are very weak. Many associations have been set up only recently to capture part of the humanitarian rent, sometimes for public officials, and they have neither the human resources nor the financial capacity to absorb the funds from the international community.

Going through the customary and religious authorities improves grassroots support in the local communities, but the question needs to be put as to their performance and representativeness. Traditional heads may have allocated land to displaced populations to get their hands on humanitarian aid resources. Some are extremely corrupt and prepared to resort to violence to stay in power. The informal representation and mediation veracity of the religious leaders should not be overestimated either. Lobbies such as the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) are highly politicised and fragmented. Islam's adherents are also divided, and their disputes have had their own role to play in the emergence of Boko Haram. In Nigeria, the Jama'atu Nasril-Islam (JNI) platform has failed to reconcile them, especially since it represents essentially the interests of the Muslim establishment. Throughout the region, Izala and Salafists are found in good number in trading and urban environments, while the "traditional" Sufi brotherhoods are found more in rural areas. In other words, associating them with development actions in such areas as education and health could end up confining the projects to specific communities, moreover with a risk of discrimination depending on certain religious characteristics. The same remark holds for the Christian organisations. In all cases, it would be a terrible mistake to discriminate between religious movements and give preference to Christians or certain Islamic traditions rather than others. Such an option risks aggravating suspicions and alienating entire segments of the population, by giving the impression that the development efforts serve first and foremost the security interests of "imperialist powers" engaged in the war on terror.

1.3. Central or local government?

In this context, it would be unwise to further weaken central governments by passing them over for private or informal institutions, which all have their own limitations. Instead, regional coordination and monitoring should associate public authorities, development players, international financial institutions, and local partners duly selected for their reliability. Given the rampant corruption, no option is entirely satisfactory.

Tying aid to improving governance, with all the time that would take, could well hasten destabilisation as revenues plunge amidst Boko Haram attacks. Imposing restrictions risks either rejection in the name of national sovereignty or an explosion of social unrest, as seen in Nigeria when the draconian terms of the structural adjustment plan triggered riots in 1985, or even a breach of contract as in Chad with the World Bank in 2006. Relaxing the conditionalities of highly

fungible aid risks aggravating the social inequalities by fuelling corruption for the benefit of the rich. This is the most probable option. After all, Chad and Nigeria hardly suffered for their breach of contract with the donor community in the 1980s and 2000s. Many international policymakers today consider that they are vital to stability in the Sahel, a position that makes it unlikely to see strong conditionalities to drive the political and economic reforms that these countries need.

If we are to accept the fungibility of aid and support the governments with a combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches, it is then important to consider the targeting of the interventions. Decentralisation proponents would surely argue that efforts should concentrate on local governments, especially in rural areas where needs run highest and citizen representation is weakest. The difficulty will be to avoid a Sudanese scenario, when humanitarian organisations supported local administrations that diverted aid, yet did not relax their tax pressure on the populations (Loane & Schümer 2001: 68). In the case of the Lake Chad region, the challenge is also that an improvement in local governance necessarily requires national reforms. Instead of democratisation, decentralisation could well end up decentralising corruption and institutional violence. Local governments are institutions whose projects are hardest to monitor. The development agencies have their offices in the capitals and have more influence with the central governments, which themselves see their implementation capacities plummet when they seek to enforce decisions at local level. Consequently, work needs to be conducted with the same intensity at all levels of administration.

1.4. Economic policy choice challenges

Public development policies are expected to take a position in a certain number of more or less long-standing debates, whose current and future implications for the Lake Chad region are worth noting. The underlying choices are not exclusive: they are meant to find a compromise between different focal points, the most significant of which are presented below.

1.4.1. Which transition between emergency relief and development?

A first choice concerns the place of aid in the development process and in the bridge between emergency relief and longer-term development planning. Can we settle for structural emergency relief or can we take it forward towards medium-term development programmes that strengthen links with local and national players, based on approaches that promote ownership of the mechanism and measures put in place? How do we see the bridge between maintaining humanitarian programmes and setting up development programmes?

1.4.2. Which structural transition?

Another fundamental debate relates to the structural transition forms. It has been accepted since Lewis (1954) that development goes hand in hand with the transition from a mainly rural, agricultural population to a mainly urban population employed in the secondary and tertiary sectors, with productivity gains in agriculture enabling accumulation. The pace and terms of the transition are to be defined depending on the context.

The World Bank (World Bank, 2007; Lin, 2012) believes that what is needed today in Africa is a sharp rise in agricultural labour productivity—implying the elimination of uncompetitive farmers and prioritising large-scale private agricultural investments—in order to invest in industrialisation and modern urban activities producing value and guaranteeing better integration into international markets.

Others (Losch *et al.*, 2012, 2013) believe that, in contexts of high demographic growth and youthful populations (as found in the Lake Chad region) and the constraints of globalisation associated with large productivity and competitiveness asymmetries, new regional development models need to be invented based on support for labour-intensive family farming, rural economic diversification, and massive investment in secondary urban centre facilities. Their reasoning here is that it is unrealistic to think that industrialisation and the metropolitan economy could create enough jobs in the short term to employ the many labour market entrants.

1.4.3. Control nature or support mobility?

Another major choice concerns the nature of the choices made to address the environmental vulnerability of agriculture (Lemoalle & Magrin, 2014). Should farming (and herding) be secured by major schemes and maximum control over nature (and therefore water), or should there be support for the models that the populations have used to date to cope with environmental variability (mobility, job diversification on farms, and multifunctional spaces)?

The region's development history has shown that attempts to control nature on a large scale have often ended in failure, like the large irrigation projects on the Nigerian shores of Lake Chad. The project to transfer water from the Ubangi River to Lake Chad, which remains on the LCBC's agenda despite the many obstacles (see Chapter 1., Box 1 and Chapter 2, Section 3.2), is a paragon of a major hydraulic project that claims to solve in one fell swoop (and at great expense) all the regional problems (Lake Chad's water level, availability of water in the basin for agriculture, stockbreeding, towns and cities, regional integration, etc.). However, any generalisation would be unwise when what is actually the recent history of water management in Central and West Africa needs to be interpreted from a dynamic point of view, where technical, social, and institutional difficulties exist alongside learning curves (Barbier *et al.*, 2009).

The rural societies' use of mobility, job diversification, and multifunctional spaces in response to environmental variability has proved effective in certain contexts, such as on the southern shores of Lake Chad (Rangé, 2016). Nevertheless, it meets with certain limitations. These may be climate-related in the case of total environmental change (prolonged drying of the lake's northern pool, repeated drought in the Sahel, etc.), but are mainly socio-political when local political trends lead to land exclusion amidst growing demographic pressure.

So demographic growth and climate change call for an improvement to the way the Lake Chad Basin's water resources are harnessed. Here too, hybrid public policies will need to be devised to optimise the water in a variety of forms (groundwater and surface water) by combining new schemes with tried-and-tested mobility and diversification responses.

1.4.4. Investment of rents in metropolitan development or more balanced regional planning?

One regional economic policy choice relates to the management of rents (extractive in the main). Is it better to invest them in the countries' largest cities (outside the study region, with the exception of Chad) in keeping with the World Bank's recommendations in its report on economic geography (2007), which advocates scaled-up metropolitan development as alone capable of creating high growth rates? In this case, development funding in the other spaces would concentrate on investments in human resources (education and health), based on the idea that they promote positive geographic and social mobility. In the long run, metropolitan development could have knock-on effects on the other national hubs. In areas such as those in the Lake Chad region, subject to very high socio-political tensions, there is understandably a risk associated with such a model based on priority investment in the most competitive places with the hope of gradual spillover to the other territories.

Yet investment in regional development—from the point of view of value-creating activities at the interface between rural areas with productive potential and the urban network of main and secondary cities—could conceivably drive more balanced development that is more conducive to peaceful socio-economic and political environments. This means devising a regional development model that mainstreams spatial (and social) inclusion (AfDB, 2015). One course of action could be to deepen the decentralisation processes, in particular by accompanying transfers of responsibilities (relatively far-reaching, especially in Cameroon and Niger) with corresponding financial transfers (and aid). However, the Nigerian example clearly shows that financial decentralisation is no silver bullet. Despite the large flows received by the federated states, they have failed, especially in the Lake Chad region states, to generate any significant regional development momentum. The decentralisation of public development funding can be effective only if it is accompanied by *(i)* sharing roles with devolved

government agencies to enable local players to effectively steer the projects, and *(ii)* introducing oversight and check-and-balance mechanisms to improve accountability, including at local level.

1.5. Choices in response to environmental change

Climate change is an unavoidable factor. However, the adaptation measures need to give due consideration to the uncertainty regarding their exact repercussions.

The rise in temperature across the entire cultivable area has created the need to improve agricultural practices (e.g. fertilisers, adapted varieties, agroforestry to improve soil carbon content) and farmers' incomes, in particular with better market access to maintain a rural population. If rainfall remains unchanged, the increase in evaporation will restrict the expanse and length of flooding of the temporary marshlands and small reservoirs used by the herds.

The populations on the southern side of Lake Chad have developed water channelling and retention systems to use the resource more efficiently. Water and soil conservation practices could conceivably be improved throughout the basin and cultivable study area. This adjustment would reduce, albeit not eliminate, the risk and impact of poor rainfall.

The inter-basin transfer project aims to provide fuller control of the water resource. The fear of Lake Chad drying up in the short term—bred by the lake's changes of state with the droughts of 1972, 1973, and 1984—was comforted by a misinterpretation of the few scientific data available at the time and a strong lobby for major works. After Transaqua had been presented in 1982, with its proposed transfer from the Ubangi River to the Chari River basin of an initial 100 km^3 per year, Cima International conducted a feasibility study for LCBC (2011) at the request of Lake Chad's lakeside heads of state. Following this study, the solution chosen by the LCBC consisted of two dams for a total annual transfer of 6.4 km^3 per year, which cannot meet the goal of restoring Lake Chad to its medium state (Magrin & Lemoalle, 2015). The 2012 Summit of the Heads of State then decided, as a first step, to improve the water flow in the Chari–Logone system and to launch dredging and weeding operations to develop Lake Chad (LCBC-GIZ, 2016). A new study is scheduled concerning a transfer of 50 km^3 per year, following an agreement signed by LCBC and Power China in 2017 (LCBC, 2017).

2. The scenarios

These six main variables (climate, international economic situation, demographics, security and governance, economic choices, settlement and mobility, and inequalities and social relations) could combine in all number of ways that would be difficult to analyse.

This section draws on a summary of the regional system's recent history up to the current period to present a description of three scenarios for the three decades to come, chosen by combining a steady trend for the "external" variables (unaffected by regional scene players' choices) and variables presenting strong structural inertia, which is not the least improbable state of affairs, with a description of the implications of different political dynamics in terms of governance and development choices.

2.1. The variables considered

2.1.1. Average external and structural variables

The scenarios here consider an average trend for the climate, commodity price, and foreign financial flows (aid and foreign direct investment) variables, similar to the current situation or perceived as the most probable at this time.

The gradual increase in temperatures could be accompanied by a slight upturn in rainfall over the basin. Yet as rising temperatures also bring an increase in evapotranspiration, we consider that Lake Chad's natural annual inflows will stay stable at the current level (some 20 km^3). Precipitation will remain similar to the 1991–2017 period (wetter than the 1980s and 1990s and dryer than the 1950s and 1960s), but rising temperatures and the frequency of extreme weather events will make agricultural production more uncertain.

Commodity prices will stay at a relatively low level, albeit with a slight upturn as the growth upswing in India and post-Brexit Europe offsets the Chinese slowdown and recession in emerging countries. Oil will sell for an average $60 per barrel ($49 in July 2017; it held at over $80 from 2009 to 2014).

Foreign financial flows will remain at a level similar to that observed since the early 2000s. Development assistance will increase slightly in the Lake Chad region, despite budgetary constraints as a rule among Western donors, since the region is seen as a highly vulnerable area whose stabilisation is strategic for France and Europe (security and migration); it is also a priority region for climate change adaptation funds. Foreign direct investment will remain stable at a relatively modest level, with sectors designed to serve the domestic markets (cement, construction and civil engineering, telephony, agricultural equipment, etc.) gradually replacing investments in the extractive sector. However, the geographic position of the Lake Chad region makes investment in the area less profitable than in the metropolitan areas of the Gulf of Guinea.

Demographic growth will fall slightly as a result of the development policies (education for girls and healthcare) and emigration to Gulf of Guinea cities, but it will remain high (2.5% growth per year): the region will grow from 29.3 million inhabitants in 2017 to 66 million in 2050.

2.1.2. Weight of politics

Our scenarios are conditioned by trends and choices in the areas of security, national and local governance, and development policy. We assess their implications for the other variables and the order of the regional system as a whole. We believe that the most probable scenario is a status quo.

2.2. Three scenarios

2.2.1. A bright future picture: Formulation of an inclusive regional development model

A first scenario would see the gradual return of security as the Boko Haram group is depleted, with some elements eliminated while others are driven to the negotiating table after losing all support from the populations due to their abuses and the gradual return of governments providing public goods. This development would be accompanied, gradually as security progresses, by a transition from emergency relief to a more coordinated, long-term development approach. Some displaced persons would gradually return to their original places of residence, especially when they had good land situations there, while others would settle in the host locations to develop new and possibly non-agricultural (trade and crafts) activities there or otherwise would migrate to the cities. The governments would help local authorities manage land-use tensions as displaced persons returned to the most coveted spaces.

At the same time, positive political developments would take shape in the countries bordering Lake Chad—peaceful elections in Nigeria and Niger, and peaceful transitions conducive to progress with democracy and the rule of law in Chad and Cameroon. Empowered, the central governments would concern themselves with creating the conditions for effective local governance. This would imply transferring responsibilities and significant—and most importantly, regular—financial resources to local government. It would also call for a more efficient distribution of roles between local government and devolved government agencies. Scaling up these agencies' resources would be a condition for their capacity to usefully serve the local government bodies. The consolidation of oversight and check-and-balance mechanisms, at both central and local levels, would help reduce corruption and improve the quality of the public services provided. Regional governance would be improved by building local elected officials' capacities and means of action, and by their working with local stakeholders (civil society organisations and universities) in legitimate, participatory arenas. This entails, in particular, clarifying the land access rules and establishing mechanisms to secure resources based on democratic principles.

Public development policy choices would consolidate these developments. The priority would be placed on developing the production and trade systems (between

countries and between urban and rural areas), which provided most of the wealth before the crisis. The vulnerability of family farming would be considerably alleviated by introducing a set of farming support services (access to credit, inputs, insurance, extension, advisory services, and research) in addition to improving the other services for rural communities (access to education, healthcare, water, transport, energy, etc.). High-productive-potential areas would receive priority investments in access (roads), post-harvest operations (storage and processing), and production support. Light engineering works would secure and improve the harnessing of water resources (for herding and agriculture), using local know-how where appropriate (temporary levees to protect against high water and mini irrigation channels in Lake Chad, etc.). These would be combined with spatial management systems. Support for mobility and multifunctional spaces would form responses to climate insecurity. Diversification of the forms of water use (groundwater, surface water, and main and secondary valleys)—vital to increasing and securing production in a context of climate change—would be organised considering the resource's balances and its transnational dimension, in keeping with the provisions of the LCBC's Water Charter.

Funds for local development and regional planning would be invested in infra-structures for secondary cities and roads. Political agreements on regional integration would be implemented with concrete local cooperation measures to manage circulation tensions (in the event of food shortages, insecurity, and health risks).

In the main cities, training programmes would be developed to improve the return on commodities produced in the region (agricultural or extractive) for domestic and regional consumption. An attractive tax policy would be put in place to promote investments for the regional market (CEMAC and ECOWAS). Rents from the extractive economy would be invested in regional development and economic diversification, in association with institution building. A high level of environmental regulation would limit the negative impacts of production. It would promote a shift away from the enclave economy and the creation of linkages with the national and local economy through the development of strict local content policies.

Progress with urbanisation, better access to services, and the improved situation of women (access to education and employment) would expedite the reduction in fertility and consequently expand the window of opportunity for a demographic dividend.

2.2.2. Status quo: compartmentalisation and slow deterioration

A second scenario would see the continuation of currently observed trends.

In security, Lake Chad's lakeside governments, plagued by huge economic straits due to low oil prices, would tolerate the persistence of a certain level

of violence in some regions (central Borno, Sambisa Forest, Lake Chad, and Yobe River), considering that the Lake Chad region's dynamics ultimately have little effect on their vital interests. The humanitarian community would remain in place working for the survival of millions of displaced persons in difficult conditions, but also sustaining corruption and rivalry between the "winners" of the emergency relief system and the others. Mobility between host locations and former lands would continue to develop, enabling stakeholders to benefit from humanitarian resources (and protect acquired land rights) as they modestly resume production in their areas of origin.

The governments' current weaknesses would continue: dependence on commodity prices (stable at a fairly low level), financial and institutional dependence on international cooperation (especially for Niger, Chad and, to a lesser extent, Cameroon), and inability to design and implement coordinated development policies (in the four countries). Elsewhere, basic public services would continue to suffer from public policy sector segmentation rationales; rivalry between ministries, devolved government agencies, and local governments; and corruption at different levels. Authoritarianism and clientelism, which dominate politics, would also generate growing tensions in a context of reduced rent.

At local level, tensions—especially land-use tensions—would be perpetuated by unfinished decentralisation (in Cameroon, Niger, and especially Chad) and local governance dysfunctions amidst so much clientelism and identity manipulation. These are becoming particularly acute as displaced persons return to former lands, often occupied by other groups in between (Fulani herders in the northern Nigerien lobe of Lake Chad, for example). In the longer term, growing land pressure on high-potential areas due to demographic growth and deteriorating productive conditions in the ordinarily rainfed crop zones could also exacerbate tensions, short of a significant improvement in local governance, and create extremely negative impacts on biodiversity.

The development situation is gradually becoming intolerable, owing to a combination of the depressed modern national economy—compelled by low oil prices to cut public procurement and civil servants' purchasing power—and recession in the informal sector (cross-border and urban–rural trade), which is severely hampered by barriers to movement set up to combat Boko Haram. In the cities, the situation is provoking growing strikes in the industrial sector and the civil service, creating a bleak climate for investment. The sluggish urban economy cannot create enough jobs to absorb demographic growth; many university-trained young people remain jobless, forming further vehicles for instability. The cities are prevented by their poor attractiveness (mediocre services and insufficient jobs) from absorbing a large proportion of the young rural labour market entrants. Rural areas are seeing a fresh upsurge in insecurity—in the classic forms of rural banditry seen prior to Boko Haram, with or without political or religious agendas—and an upturn in emigration flows to the cities of the Gulf of Guinea.

The fertility rate is falling very slowly, with barely a chance of benefiting from the demographic dividend.

Deterioration in the situation due to be stability of the currently observed variables could morph into a third scenario.

2.2.3. Glimpse of an undesirable future: Fragmentation

Entry into a deep crisis for one or more of Lake Chad's lakeside governments (following a succession crisis in Chad or Cameroon or the degeneration of elections in Nigeria or Niger) would force an immediate let-up in the combat against Boko Haram, who would then find refuge in the territory(ies) concerned to be able to reform and expand. This situation could be the result of protracted aggravation of the tensions created by the current national dysfunctions, ignited by a specific event (death of a head of state or poorly handled election unrest).

Boko Haram refuges aside, development policy choices could exacerbate the regional situation by countering the long-run models underlying the region's order: multifunctional spaces and mobility to cope with environmental variability.

The Chinese project to transfer water from the Ubangi River to Lake Chad could be deemed beneficial to offset the rise in needs and meet the agricultural challenges induced by climate change. It would develop the uses of water for irrigation in the basin and the cities, while continuing to supply water to Lake Chad. In addition to its predictable environmental and social impacts (drying of the channelled Chari River's floodplains and wetlands; reduction in the usable floodplain areas at Lake Chad; biodiversity changes, etc.), it would expose the Lake Chad Basin to a high level of geopolitical dependence on the upstream countries. The cost of the project would be driven up further by the fact that financial compensation would have to be paid to the Congo basin countries (DRC and CAR) for the resource drawn from them. The transfer would divert a large proportion of financial resources to the detriment of other needs (whatever the estimates, it represents a cost equivalent to decades of official development assistance to Chad, all sectors combined). Only a massive influx from the private sector could be conceivable for such an infrastructure to pay off, which would leave the door open for all number of large-scale capitalist hydro-agricultural developments.

With or without an inter-basin transfer, unregulated neo-liberal policies promoting large-scale agricultural investments as the key to the regional development equation would have extremely negative repercussions. The promotion of agribusiness in forms more or less proficiently interfaced with surrounding family farming would give private players water and land resources denied family farms by partially public investments (such as the inter-basin transfer and large-scale hydro-agricultural developments). These capital-intensive agropoles would proletarianise part of the rural population, but not enough to absorb

demographic growth. Vertical integration would eliminate part of the chain of informal urban–rural interface jobs (handling, storage, transport, trade, and processing) to the benefit of a much smaller number of more highly skilled formal jobs, inaccessible to rural populations.

In this toxic climate, the promotion of extractive investments (oil and mining) would open the door to the arrival of unscrupulous corporations (if not "rogue firms"). The social and environmental impact of their activities, poorly regulated by governments seeking quick rents, would fuel regional tensions.

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Appendices
Indicators
and sentinel data

Appendix 1. The methodological problems

Development players, economic operators, and policymakers need long-term, cross-sectional indicators to develop and monitor their (re)construction policy for the regions around Lake Chad. Yet this is problematic. First of all, existing available data are unreliable and need to be used with the greatest caution. Secondly, they are not always accessible or centralised: they are rarely archived and are sometimes not published at all, so that field missions have to be organised to extract them on the ground. Thirdly, they are all too often neither standardised nor comparable across time and space, since they are not based on long time-series and are built differently from one country to the next and one period to the next. Last but not least, they are subject to political manipulation: figures on numbers of inhabitants, internally displaced persons, refugees, Muslims, Christians, and victims of terrorism or the security forces are all disputed and used to produce electoral rolls, claim a larger share of government revenues, complain about "ethnic" marginalisation, draw the international community's attention, assert the dominance of a religious community, and so on (Pérouse de Montclos, 2013a, 2013b; Pérouse de Montclos *et al*., 2016).

Such constraints mean that indicators need to be found that will capture the dynamics of the regional system at an intermediate level, without necessarily descending to the in-depth micro level of project monitoring and evaluation. The challenges are considerable. There is a striking lack of knowledge of the region. Mapping is not good and struggles with the limitations of oral place names—which prompted the Cameroonian authorities, for example, to try to make internally displaced persons give their camps different names from their home villages. The absence of civil registration data, not to mention land registry data, also creates aid recipient identification problems. Attempts to put a figure to needs, trade flows, and resources are equally problematic. Livestock, in its own way, reflects these problems. In many cases, herd headcounts are the result of arrangements between herders and tax officials, while estimates of agricultural production rarely take seasonal migration into account and are often based on samples of farmers chosen according to the local officials' personal affinities.

Nobody even knows how many inhabitants the region really has. The problem is not due solely to the fighting and forced migrations that may have depopulated certain areas. It is also due to technical difficulties in the region's four countries to access remote areas; overcome logistical, topographic, and linguistic barriers;

deal with vague administrative boundaries; prevent displacements in mid-count; and count nomadic and sometimes illiterate populations, not to mention women secluded in keeping with an Islamic principle of gender segregation (*purdah*). Household heads have also been known to return to their native village during census operations, which effectively minimises the urban growth rates, or report children who have actually gone to live elsewhere.

The case of Nigeria is particularly instructive in that the population figures may have been deliberately manipulated (Campbell 1976: 242–254; Ahonsi 1988: 553–562; Okolo 1999: 321–325). In some cases, the figures have been minimised to avoid paying taxes, a phenomenon observed in Borno back in 1903 (Tukur, 2016). In other cases, they have been inflated to secure better political representation and more funds from central government. Following the failings of the 1960s and 1970s (see Box 11), all censuses have been disputed. Although some have eventually been published and still serve as references for demographers today, the 1991 census gave a total of 90 million inhabitants, 30% less than the forecasts at the time, while the 2006 census with its 140 million inhabitants is suspected of having been revised upwards somewhat to meet the per capita income criteria required to renegotiate the country's debt with the Paris Club. Population projections are also doubtful: depending on whether forecasts are based on UN calculations or International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis figures, projections range from 371 to 399 million inhabitants by 2050 and from 576 to 752 million inhabitants by 2100, even rising to an upper bracket of two billion in some cases!

Obviously, these population inaccuracies render unreliable all the demographic, economic, and social indicators used by development assistance operators around Lake Chad, whether with respect to the age pyramid, gender ratios, migratory flows, or rates of malnutrition, fertility, mortality, and unemployment. There are also problems with the array of definitions, statistical tools, and methods of calculation, which prevent comparisons across regions. The International Labour Organization (ILO), for example, defines the unemployed as all adult persons without work, available for work, and seeking work during the reference period. Yet such a definition can scarcely capture underemployment, seasonal low periods, first jobseekers, and apprenticeship of minors in the Lake Chad region. Along the same lines, the household notion can cover rather different realities, depending on the situations. In principle, it is a socio-economic unit of one or more persons who live under the same roof and share the same food, but who are not necessarily tied by blood or marriage (Randall *et al.*, 2011). Yet matters become complicated in polygamous and highly mobile societies. For example, the Kanuri have a traditionally high divorce rate (Cohen, 1961), a characteristic confirmed by all accounts heard by this study's researchers. In addition, the insecurity has precipitated the dispersion of the region's populations, complicating even further any count of their households.

The Boko Haram crisis has in effect revealed how fragile the international aid operators' indicators really are. The United Nations, with its contradictory positions on the subject, announced, for example, that following an attack by insurgents in 2011, more people had fled Damaturu than the city had residents, displaced persons included (Pérouse de Montclos, 2013b). For their part, the Nigerians have put forward school enrolment levels that are improbable, to say the least, in a country where government schools have been known to inflate their figures to secure more subsidies, while private schools understate theirs to avoid paying taxes. Some establishments in Borno exist on paper only. The case of the Chibok local government area (LGA) is particularly symbolic in the light of the international outcry at Boko Haram's kidnapping of 276 schoolgirls in April 2014. Despite the prevailing insecurity, the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) announced that year a 153%, 48%, and 96% increase, respectively, in the number of primary school pupils, secondary school pupils, and lower secondary teachers. The total number of primary and secondary school pupils in the Chibok LGA is supposed to be 80% of a population of 103,790 inhabitants![151]

In such a context, development and emergency operators are reduced to doing the best they can with imperfect and incomplete, if not totally false, data. All too often, consultants' reports on the humanitarian crisis around Lake Chad recycle figures and analyses taken from free online articles written by Nigerians or southern Cameroonians who, although more educated than the northerners, do not know the region. For instance, some reproduce all the Malthusian clichés on the Sahel, speculating about an alleged link between the demographic pressure, lake drying, unemployment, drug trafficking, and jihadist violence (WFP, 2016: 15).

Development operators can also conduct quantitative surveys to fill the gaps in defective statistics. Although these surveys definitely refine analysis at micro level, they quickly prove to have limitations over and above the immediate problems of access on the ground in dangerous areas.[152] Without reliable data on the main socio-demographic characteristics of the populations studied, the first problem is that the samples chosen are not representative. Surveys of this kind are also local in their scope, which rules out any extrapolation. Without a baseline, the snapshot they present of the situation at a given moment in time cannot be used to identify trend upturns or downturns. Moreover, quantitative surveys generally have a purely declarative value; it is inadvisable to draw causal

151 Similarly, the authorities reported 399,445 primary school pupils for 234,082 inhabitants in Magumeri in 2014. In Hawul, a similar sized LGA, the figures given were 63 pupils and 1,264 teachers in primary, and 1,254 pupils with no teachers in secondary education. Excel tables collected by Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos from the SUBEC in Maiduguri in May 2016.

152 *The Economist* magazine observed that "every number" in its first quantitative survey of Nigeria conducted in 1982 was "probably wrong" (Kohli, 2004: 331)!

links and explanatory determinants from them. Studies of household incomes and consumption are frequently biased in this way, since the rich are reluctant to reveal the real level of their wealth (Watts & Lubeck, 1983: 134).

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Appendix 2. Potential indicators

This appendix considers the input chosen for this study to discuss the existing indicators and those that could be added to capture the Lake Chad region's dynamics. The proposed options consist sometimes of collecting and managing (organising, analysing, and disseminating) existing data and other times of creating data where they do not exist. The main indicators are summed up in Table 2 at the end of the appendix.

1. Security and governance

1.1. Violence monitor

Given that the reconstruction possibilities for the regions bordering Lake Chad depend first and foremost on how the security situation evolves, consideration needs to be given to monitoring indicators. Leading centres of peace studies all maintain that the number of deaths due directly to armed conflicts is the only indicator that can reasonably be used for comparisons to identify trends in violence in a country or region and from one period to the next. The fact is that violence is multifaceted, and its non-lethal manifestations are too many and varied to be able to establish universally recognised categories. Interpol, for example, had to abandon the publication of comparative tables on world crime rates, because the definition of what constitutes a crime varies enormously from one country to the next. In Nigeria, adultery with a married woman can carry the death sentence under Sharia law in the north, but a mere reprimand from a cleric in the south. The practices of private security companies, which generally focus on the number of attacks, are just as confused, as they basically lump together lethal and non-lethal incidents.

Experts at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) and Every Casualty Worldwide (ECW) therefore concentrate on conflict-related excess mortality to identify trends. Their databases, without claiming to be comprehensive, are based on "passive monitoring", which consists of recording, archiving, and coding incidents for the most part reported in the media and open sources. This methodology differs from victimisation surveys and insecurity polls, which take a snapshot of the situation at a given time but cannot be used to track trends. In addition to the usual problems of sample representativeness, perception surveys

in particular sometimes return findings entirely different from the reality—such as in France, where the feeling prevails that criminal violence has increased when homicide rates are actually on the decrease from one decade to the next. It is well known that temperatures felt can artificially rise and fall depending on wind and rain factors. Qualitative interviews in the regions bordering Lake Chad could consequently reveal a heightened awareness of land conflicts. Yet an upward trend can only be confirmed where there is a definition and accurate count of the lethal clashes actually due to competition for control over land.

In the absence of police and military statistics, it is therefore important to develop "passive monitoring" systems in the zone's four countries. Such a tool already exists with the University of Ibadan's www.nigeriawatch.org database, managed by the Institut Français de Recherche en Afrique (IFRA). Unlike the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED), which produces only aggregate statistics, the NigeriaWatch project monitors the ECW charter standards and publishes its sources for each piece of data so that information can be checked on a case-by-case basis, a basic scientific principle. Constantly updated by Nigerian (rather than French, Swedish, or British) researchers, it also has more comprehensive and longer-term information on Nigeria. An extension of the project to Cameroon would be perfectly conceivable, based on the media coverage of a newspaper that is highly active in the north, *L'Œil du Sahel*. A feasibility study would be necessary for Niger and Chad, since the humanitarian organisations' reports do not cover long enough periods to be able to identify trends. Obviously, the statistics produced in this way would have to be put to qualitative analysis. The Centre for Peace and Security Studies at the University of Yola (Modibbo Adama University of Technology) and the Centre for Peace, Security and Integration Studies and Research at the University of Maroua are well placed to do so. They could also round out the mechanism with studies on access to justice and courts.

1.2. Local governance

Development operators generally monitor shifts in the political contexts surrounding their interventions with weekly, monthly, or quarterly situation reports. This strategic work could be improved upon by posting and storing monographs and available studies on a website, whether Chatham House, Transparency International, DFID, or USAID surveys on corruption and justice in Nigeria, or African Union polls on perceptions of governance and security in French-speaking countries. A combination of qualitative and quantitative analyses would also be useful. It would be interesting to investigate the extent to which elections have positive effects on the legitimacy and workings of the public institutions. Analysis of the media and social networks would speak volumes in this respect.

Failing election observation missions, the development of local governance could be monitored by simple, closed questions administered to partners at the

universities of Diffa, N'Djaména, Maroua, Yola, and Maiduguri, essentially on the following:

- National, regional, and local election timeframes
- Actual length of terms of office
- Identification and mapping of the levels of elected and non-elected local administration positions
- Percentage of women in elected office, etc.

1.3. The political economy of the zone

It is important to monitor the zone's political economy, since it largely determines the intervention environment for the development operators. The problem is that the region suffers from a great deal of tax and fiscal opacity, with local officials hardly used to being accountable. However, local university partners could do some institutional groundwork by administering simple, closed questions to find out, for example, whether the different local administrative levels in the four countries publish budgets including their revenue and expenditure. The data available could be onlined on a joint website. The model for this is the excellent work by BudgIT (yourbudgit.com), a Nigerian initiative designed to both inform and educate the public about their fiscal transparency rights pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act signed in 2011. It would also be interesting in the study zone to collect and compile the evaluation reports on the different development projects funded by international, national, and local operators. This would be a world first, since it has never been successful in the other crisis regions for want of standardised procedures and political will on the part of the donors.

2. Climate and environment

The Chari River's discharge at the N'Djaména TP (*Travaux publics*) gauging station is an aggregate indicator of total annual rainfall over the basin (at peak flow or annual discharge). This measure could be coupled with readings of a gauging station on the Cameroonian side opposite the Chadian gauging station in order to secure data collection. Although this data cannot describe the distribution of rainfall over the season, an important productivity factor, it does provide a good approximation of total harvests and informs the lakeside populations in late October as to what the lake's high-water level will be from December (southern pool) to March (northern pool). The development of the telephone network is enabling the expansion of this informal warning network.

AGRHYMET agro-meteorological maps (quarterly forecasts and reports based on satellite and field data) usefully supplement the above indicator by specifying the distribution of useful rainfall in time and space. They are no doubt more

reliable than the national agricultural statistics, which also arrive late. They serve mainly to inform farmers of the advised sowing calendar at the start of the crop season.

Satellite altimeters provide a good estimate of water levels in the lake's southern pool, but not for the northern pool for which there has been no direct observation of water levels since 1976. Setting up one or more gauging stations or recorders managed by the local agencies of the national department of water resources would make for a debate based on observed data. Similarly, data on water levels at the Tildé station for El Beid, a tributary of the Yaere, would be useful to evaluate the flood in this system.

Climate change has begun to raise temperatures in different parts of the globe. It is essential to have more precise information on the effect of this phenomenon on the Chad basin (with a suitable network of regularly monitored meteorological stations) to be able to adjust potential agricultural adaptation measures and contribute to knowledge of the climate in this region, which currently provides very little input to the databases used for global models.

3. Production systems

The study zone's four countries have more or less good-quality systems within the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) for monitoring agricultural and livestock production at local level. Their indicators are based on the findings of geo-referenced field surveys. In Niger, for example, they inform the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahelian Zone (CILSS) early warning systems (EWS), in place since the droughts of the 1970s and 1980s to prevent and manage food crises. This system has been put to the test on a number of occasions, especially during the 2005 food crisis when the system's flaws were identified and corrected. Today, this early warning system is held up as a model and operational example for all the Sahelian countries. It is based on a set of indicators that compile satellite observations and local field data on:

- Vegetation, monitored by satellite by AGRHYMET since 1985, to evaluate cropland and pastureland production to provide advanced warning of food crises for people and animals. A fortnightly bulletin is issued at regional level starting in May for a three-month period to provide information on:
  - The development of the rainy season (field data on rainfall)
  - The NDVI (Normalized Difference Vegetation Index), which characterises vegetation cover based on the progression of the Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) and estimation of the production of biomass
  - Estimates of forage and cereal output.

– Stockbreeding. Each region has a trained, supervised, equipped team (GPS, computers, compasses, and motorcycles) in the livestock ministry's regional delegation, supported in each department by livestock agents who collect data for the following indicators:

  • Onset of the rainy season (arrival of the rains and establishment of grass cover)

  • Surface water supply (qualitative index)

  • Animal health (pockets of disease)

  • Animal movements

  • Terms of trade for livestock/cereals (based on data from the agricultural market information systems—AMIS—and the livestock market information systems—LMIS).

This early warning system is integrated into the National Food Crisis Prevention and Management System (DNPGCA), in conjunction with the Food Crisis Unit (CCA), the National Food Products Board of Niger (OPVN), the AMIS, and the LMIS. Community-based early warning and emergency response systems (SCAPRU) were created in connection with decentralisation and the experience of crisis management in 2005. They inform the observatories and form the base level of the information that is then passed up through the departments and regions.

Although the presence of aid in the Diffa Region before the Boko Haram attacks in 2015 provided a gauge of the scale of the crisis and a way to quickly respond to needs, the data collected by the early warning system also help identify significant changes in production systems:

– Biomass monitoring shows the changes in the availability of resources in a context of high climate variability.

– Agricultural and livestock market price monitoring provides information on the ratio of supply to demand, on constant prices reflecting stable production levels, on sharp price drops indicative of localised overproduction, and on sharp price rises due either to a deficit of production or strong demand.

– Livestock-to-cereals terms of trade to the disadvantage of stockbreeding indicate an impoverishment of herders, which, if they were to continue, would point to possible capital loss.

These indices produced routinely in Niger are available from the different institutions that produce them (AGRHYMET, AMIS, LMIS, and the livestock ministry). The information produced warrants analysis independently of the food crisis system, to detect crisis situations for production systems and hence social groups and geographic sectors.

Although all the Sahelian countries have known of the model since the late 1980s, uptake has been laborious outside Niger. Burkina Faso has adopted it just recently, and Chad recently asked Niger for a training mission to kick-start their early warning system. Nigeria and Cameroon's systems are not operational. In Niger, market prices are collected by the WAMIS-NET[153] network, but the series are added to as and when projects take charge of data collection. Chad and Cameroon are not members of this network. In Cameroon, prices are collected on the markets by the agriculture and livestock services at arrondissement level, but only a fraction of them are digitised at too slow a pace to be able to be used as monitoring indicators and with no interaction between the different levels (local and intermediate levels send the data only to central level). In Chad, prices are monitored and broadcast by rural radio.

It is possible to improve these information systems, but this will require some years of experimentation.

Other possible production system indicators amount to ad hoc monitoring on representative sites by a regional system.

4. Mobility and migration

Existing data on migration and mobility are scattered and seldom updated.

General population and housing censuses (RGPH) generally provide information in each country on:

- The percentage of inhabitants born in other regions (place of birth)
- The percentage of inhabitants who have changed region in a shorter space of time (previous place of residence)
- The population situation at time *t* (current place of residence)
- The percentage of foreigners and their origin by region (immigration evaluation)
- Differentiation, in some cases, between types of migrants (permanent or temporary migration)
- Deduced net migration by region.

However, these censuses:

- Are national, and therefore unsuitable for regional comparison
- Vary in reliability depending on the country and the year

153 Network of 15 West African countries. See the website: www.resimao.net

- Cover variable time periods, depending on the countries and their statistical data production capacities
- Lack availability with respect to the oldest of them, due to a lack of archiving.

A first step on the road to building migration indicators would be to collect all the censuses taken on the countries in the region (available library archives) and conduct a comparative analysis to produce a short summary of long-term migratory trends in the Lake Chad region (emigration/immigration; interregional migration; and urbanisation and rural population growth). This first step would provide a simple IT tool for the compilation and analysis of existing data on migration (past censuses), capable of incorporating future census data.

Other data on migration come from the humanitarian players. They focus on displaced and refugee populations. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), UNHCR, and the IOM propose generally systematic data on forced changes of residence: numbers of displaced persons and refugees, hosting forms (cities, sites, camps, etc.), location, and so on. These data provide rough figures on forced migration but suffer from a lack of more qualitative analyses of forced migrant pathways. Well-sampled multi-site surveys could help understand what becomes of displaced and refugee populations (return dynamics, socio-economic trajectories, and access to services). These surveys could be conducted in coordination with NGOs producing good-quality, detailed, and mapped data on the displaced persons and refugees, such as the International Displacement Monitoring Centre and Reach Initiative. They could be rounded out by work to improve the compilation and study of the generally vast, scattered, imbalanced, and rarely archived grey literature produced by NGOs, in a database in cooperation with OCHA (and its websites http://reliefweb.int and https://www.humanitarianresponse.info).

In addition, information on certain migration phenomena remains sketchy despite their socio-economic importance: seasonal mobility (agricultural and pastoral) and sudden mass migration phenomena (due to climate crises, discoveries of extractive deposits, etc.). Regular seasonal mobility data collection could be organised at some sampled sites (crossing points, and source and destination areas) in order to analyse productive dynamics. Sudden migration phenomena could be studied by ad hoc reactive surveys at migrant arrival sites to identify their places of origin, their mobility, the length of their migration, their migration networks, and their socio-economic trajectories.

5. Trade and trade traffic

On the whole, little is known about trade movements in the Lake Chad region despite their importance to productive dynamics and regional integration.

Aside from qualitative surveys, the only tool that exists to attempt to fathom trade dynamics is the monitoring of agricultural and livestock prices on the markets (national monitoring, as in Niger, and FAO monitoring in each country with the food price information systems). However, price trends are affected by a wide range of factors extending far beyond the mere conditions of trade themselves: productive questions, monetary situations, and political constraints. Other more ad hoc information provides some indication of security conditions in transport (NGO accessibility map) and export–import movements (customs and data that can be accessed only locally).

There is therefore a need to create a trade traffic monitoring system in the Lake Chad region, taking a sample of roadside and market observation sites in order to:

- Check price trends
- Check the state of roads and progress with rehabilitation projects
- Take road, river, and lake counts
- Count checkpoints and legal/illegal levies
- Evaluate transport costs
- Analyse marketplaces (number of vehicles, diversity and origin of products, etc.).

These elements could be entered in a geographic information system on trade traffic trends in the study region. Once the methodological protocol is in place, the data could easily be collected by local correspondents (selected traders, producers, and transporters) with university oversight. The trade traffic monitoring system in the Lake Chad region would provide insights into the economic dynamics between territories, transport costs, production sector trends, market hierarchies, and the territories' integration and segmentation dynamics. It could also be used by the international aid players to improve the way they adjust the nature of their interventions to local economic situations (type and length of aid, geographic perimeter, etc.).

6. Health, education and access to services

A great deal of information is produced by governments and international players on access to services. This information can on the whole be separated into sophisticated data produced for specific purposes—requiring too much collection and processing work to lend itself to regular monitoring—and very basic data of

varying quality produced by government bodies. Their poor quality (especially, but not exclusively, in Nigeria) is such that there is a need for data to be produced based on a sample of representative sites. A particular challenge, therefore, is to identify the most significant, reliable, and straightforward data to be collected.

In public health, for example, multiple indicator demographic and health surveys (DHS-MICS) produce particularly useful detailed data that is partially spatial: geographic differences between the capital and other cities, urban and rural areas, and regional differences are presented for many of the indicators (surveyed households' general socio-economic characteristics, fertility, reproductive health, child health, breastfeeding, nutrition, malaria, child labour, domestic violence, female status, etc.). Studies of this kind were conducted in Cameroon in 2011, Niger in 2012, Nigeria in 2013, and Chad in 2014, with the support of partners such as, in the case of Chad, USAID, UNFPA, UNICEF, AFD, Switzerland, the World Bank, and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Yet the survey mechanism is both heavy and focused on health issues (although, as mentioned, it does provide broader social and demographic information). This means that it cannot be used for regular monitoring (e.g. on an annual basis) to measure trends in access to services, even in the field concerned.

We therefore propose here several indicators, ranging from the simple to the sophisticated, which can measure the development situation and access to services in the four countries on an annual basis:

SMART surveys (measuring mortality, nutritional status, and food security in crisis situations) are based on methodology developed by UNICEF in response to specific challenges and contexts.[154] They can be used as an indicator of children's health and the food situation in the Lake Chad region by choosing sites representative of the range of regional situations. The question here regards uptake of the method by local teams.

In health, the number of health workers per capita (doctors, nurses, and midwives) provides information on the government's investment. This can be supplemented by the theoretical average range of health centre action, which captures average distance to different levels of health centre and therefore the extent of exclusion of part of the population.

The rate of access to clean water is a simple indicator that speaks volumes about changes in living conditions. It also measures investment by government and its partners in the water sector and changes to their project implementation capacities. It provides information on both female health and the situation of women (for whom an improvement in the clean water supply frees up time for other activities), and it can be monitored annually based on national statistics from the hydraulic or water ministries.

154 https://smartmethodology.org/about-smart/

Access to sanitation is also a highly useful qualitative indicator for monitoring housing quality and urbanisation trends. Relatively harmonised government data can generally be found in this area.

Access to energy is not a very easy area to handle. Access to electricity, for example, is often theoretical when there are frequent electricity cuts due to management difficulties and periods of tight supply to demand. In addition, there is not always a proven link between electrification and economic development.

Key education indicators need to correspond to the different levels of the education pyramid, considering differences between boys and girls in each case. In primary education, for example, this means reporting on gross enrolment rates and pupil–teacher ratios. In secondary and higher education, these indicators could be rounded out by other data to improve student category monitoring.

University records should provide the information required to track student numbers, but also social and geographic origin, given that distance can say a great deal about the capacity of universities and cities to provide prospects for social ascension to young rural populations. Similarly, it would be interesting to track such elements as the proportion of grants or scholarships and the number of strike days. The collection, organisation, and processing of these data could be assigned to teaching teams at the universities and regional schools.

With respect to private services, a map of mobile phone network coverage would be useful to determine relative isolation and disconnection trends. However, this depends on the operators' willingness to share their data. Moreover, there is no one telephone operator present in all four countries bordering Lake Chad. Orange, for example, operates in Niger and Cameroon but, to our knowledge, not in Nigeria or Chad. Short of having data provided by the operators, information could be collected on the ground by simple surveys of regional nodes such as weekly markets.

Last but not least, data on the number of financial establishments, banks, and savings and credit institutions, along with theoretical access distance for inhabitants, are useful to determine socio-economic integration. These data probably exist (World Bank), but would need to be analysed at study space level.

7. Inequalities, cultural dynamics, and social relations

Existing data are rare and difficult to aggregate for country comparisons. The number of formal jobs, for example, is generally available at national but not sub-regional level. Evaluation of the informal sector remains poor. Nevertheless, available statistics such as the age pyramid could be used to assess the scale of the challenges awaiting young people on the labour market. Sex ratios are also useful for gender analysis.

Data on cultural dynamics are important to understand relations between groups. With a sharp increase in Hausa in the zone, languages used in trade can reveal such factors as the development of social and community-based hierarchies to the disadvantage of linguistic minorities. The same holds true for school enrolment rates, which often determine access to the civil service and government institutions. The difficulty here is that ethnic and linguistic maps are not updated and are often misleading when they draw set lines. The reality on the ground is much more fluid than the picture of compartmentalisation, especially in exogamous societies.

In these circumstances, it is important to set up monitoring systems, which would prove very expensive for some. However, simple indicators could be developed in the religious and associative areas:

– Number and types of places of worship in control municipalities such as Diffa, Damaturu, Gombe, Marre, Gwoza, Mubi, Bol, Kousseri, and Maroua

– Identification and analysis of the main purposes of their Islamic and Christian organisations

– Number of operational local NGOs found in Maiduguri, Damaturu, Gombe, Yola, Garoua, Maroua, Diffa, and N'Djaména.

Table 2. Summary of the main proposed indicators

Security

- Location and levels of lethal violence: passive monitoring systems tracked in Nigeria and developed in the neighbouring countries.
- Access to justice: ad hoc studies conducted.

Governance

- Strategic reports: produced on a weekly, monthly, or quarterly basis.
- Monographs, available studies, project and programme evaluations: compiled, archived, and published online.
- Media and social networks: qualitative and quantitative analysis.
- National, regional, and local elections: identification of elected and non-elected entities; tracking of election timeframes, lengths of terms of office, and percentage of women in elected office or standing for election.
- Local administration fiscal transparency: current state of affairs and identification of problem areas.

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Climate and environment

- Rainfall: discharge of the Chari River at N'Djaména coupled with readings on the Cameroonian side and water level recordings in the lake's northern pool and at Tildé.
- AGRHYMET agro-meteorological maps.

Production systems

- Agricultural and livestock prices on the markets, biomass, animal movements, etc.: early warning systems tracked in Niger and developed in the other countries or otherwise supplemented by ad hoc surveys.

Mobility and migration

- Emigration/immigration, interregional migration, urbanisation and rural population growth: summary drawn up and onlined, based on census data.
- Humanitarian monitoring of forced displacements.
- Seasonal agricultural and pastoral mobility developed at sampled sites.

Trade and trade traffic

- Price trends, state of roads, and transport costs—developed based on road, river, and lake counts, including the number of vehicles, product diversity and origin, and estimates of legal and illegal levies.

Health, education, and access to services

- Demographic and health surveys, nutritional data and food security monitoring by UNICEF.
- School enrolment rates, pupil–teacher ratios, etc. rounded out and tracked at higher education level.
- Telephone and banking networks mapping.

Inequalities, cultural dynamics, and social relations

- Age pyramid and sex ratio.
- Formal employment developed by disaggregating available data at sub-regional level.
- Mapping of the number and type of places of worship and religious NGOs.

Table of illustrations

Maps

Charts

Figures

Tables

Boxes

List of acronyms and abbreviations

ACEEN	Cameroonian Association for Environmental Education
ACF	Action Contre la Faim/Action Against Hunger
ACLED	Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project
ACN	Action Congress of Nigeria
AD	Alliance for Democracy
AFAN	Apex Farmers Association of Nigeria
AFD	French Agency for Development
AfDB	African Development Bank
ALFA	All Farmers Association of Nigeria
AMIS	Agricultural Market Information System
ANPP	All Nigeria People's Party
APC	All Progressives Congress
APP	All People's Party
BGR	Bundesanstalt für Geowissenschaften und Rohstoffe (Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources—German cooperation agency)
BIR	Brigade d'Intervention Rapide (see RIU)
BYA	Borno, Yobe & Adamawa
CAN	Christian Association of Nigeria
CAR	Central African Republic
CARPA	Stockbreeding Research Support Centre
CBDA	Chad Basin Development Authority
CCA	Food Crisis Unit
CEMAC	Central African Economic and Monetary Community
CERI	Centre for International Studies and Research (France)

CILSS	Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahelian Zone
CJTF	Civilian Joint Task Force
CNPC	China National Petroleum Company
CPC	Congress for Progressive Change
CPDM	Cameroon People's Democratic Movement
CRU	Climate Research Unit
DHS-MICS	Multiple Indicator Demographic and Health Survey
DNPGCA	National Food Crisis Prevention and Management System
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECHO	European Community Humanitarian Office
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECW	Every Casualty Worldwide
EFCC	Economic and Financial Crimes Commission
ET	Evapotranspiration
EWS	Early Warning System
FAO/GIEWS	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations / Global Information and Early Warning System
FARS	Revolutionary Armed Forces of the Sahara
FROLINAT	National Liberation Front of Chad
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHG	Greenhouse gases
GNPP	Great Nigeria People's Party
ha	Hectare
HDI	Human Development Indicator
HJRBDA	Hadejia-Jama'are River Basin Development Authority
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced People
IFRA	French Institute for Research in Africa
ILO	International Labour Organization

INEC	Independent National Electoral Commission
Inhab.	Inhabitant
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IRD	French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development
ISIS	Islamic State in Iraq and Syria
ITCZ	Intertropical Convergence Zone
JNI	Jama'atu Nasril-Islam
km	Kilometre
LCBC	Lake Chad Basin Commission
LCBI	Project in Support of the Lake Chad Basin Initiatives
LGA	Local government area
LMIS	Livestock Market Information System
MACBAN	Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria
MDD	Movement for the Defence of Democracy
MINEPAT	Ministry of the Economy, Planning and Regional Development (Cameroon)
MINEPIA	Ministry of Livestock Fisheries and Animal Industries (Cameroon)
MJRN	Movement for Justice and Rehabilitation of Niger
MNJTF	Multinational Joint Task Force
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
MPLT	Popular Movement for the Liberation of Chad
MPS	Patriotic Salvation Movement (Chad)
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières / Doctors Without Borders
NAFAN	National Farmers Association of Nigeria
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NDDC	Niger Delta Development Commission
NDVI	Normalized Difference Vegetation Index
NEDC	North East Development Commission
NEMA	Nigeria's National Emergency Management Agency

NESTS	North East States Transformation Strategy
NGN	naira (Nigerian currency)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NHCF	National Humanitarian Coordination Forum
NPC	Northern People's Congress
NPN	National Party of Nigeria
NRC	National Republican Convention
NW	Nigeria Watch
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ONASA	National Office for Nutrition and Food Security
OPVN	National Food Products Board of Niger
PCNI	Presidential Committee on the North East Initiative
PDP	People's Democratic Party
PINE	Presidential Initiative for the North East
PLANUT	Three-Year Emergency Plan to Accelerate Economic Growth (Cameroon)
PNSA	National Food Security Programme (Chad)
RCP	Representative Concentration Pathway
RESILAC	Economic and Social Inclusive Recovery Project for Lake Chad (regional programme)
RGPH	General Population and Housing Census
RIU	Rapid intervention unit
RPBA	Recovery and Peace Building Assessment (World Bank)
SCAPRU	Community-Based Early Warning and Emergency Response System
SCIP	South Chad Irrigation Project (Nigeria)
SDP	Social Democratic Party
SEMA	State Emergency Management Agencies
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute

SMART	Measuring mortality, nutritional status and food security in crisis situations
SODECOTON	Cameroon Cotton Development Company
SODELAC	Lake Chad Development Company
SSI	Safe School Initiative
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States dollar
VSF	Victims Support Fund

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AFD is an inclusive public financial institution and the main actor in France's development policy. It makes commitments to projects that genuinely improve the everyday lives of people, in developing and emerging countries and in the French overseas territories.

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Crisis and Development

The Lake Chad region and Boko Haram

From 2009, insecurity linked to the insurgency of the Boko Haram group and its repression spreads from the heart of Nigerian Borno to the north-east of the country and then to the border areas of neighboring countries, Cameroon, Niger and Chad. The crisis has progressively affected the entire region of Lake Chad, one of the great cross-border areas of Sahelian Africa, at the crossroads of Africa savannahs and desert, of West Africa and Central Africa.

This study is the first to address the Boko Haram crisis from a perspective transcending the political and linguistic boundaries between English-speaking Nigeria and the three French-speaking countries bordering Lake Chad. Carried out by a multidisciplinary team of seventeen French, British, Cameroonian, Nigerien, Nigerian and Chadian researchers, it considers the Lake Chad region as a system. Its components and their environmental, economic and political interactions are grasped from a diachronic perspective before, during and after the peak of violence. The analysis leads to a prospective reflection considering the next 20 years.

Based on the observation that the crisis has shaken the relationship system that made the Lake Chad region resilient, this reference study aims to shed light on the crucial choices that will define its future development trajectory.

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