

African
Union



REGIONAL STRATEGY

for the Stabilization, Recovery &
Resilience of the Boko Haram-
affected Areas of the

Lake Chad Basin Region



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Lake Chad Basin Region

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ACRONYMS

AGA:	African Governance Architecture
APSA:	Africa Peace and Security Architecture
AU:	African Union
AUC:	The African Union Commission
AULO:	African Union Liaison Office
BH:	Boko Haram
CBO:	Community-Based Organization
CEMAC:	Central Africa Economic and Monetary Community
CJTF:	Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF)
CSO:	Civil Society Organization
CTC:	Counter Terrorism Committee
CTED:	Counter Terrorism Executive Directorate
CVE:	Countering Violent Extremism
DDRRR:	Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation, Reinsertion and Reintegration
DPA:	Department of Political Affairs
DPS:	Department of Peace and Security
ECCAS:	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS:	Economic Community of West African States
FAO:	Food and Agricultural Organization
IATF:	Inter-Agency Task Force
IDP:	Internally Displaced Persons
IFIs:	International Financial Institutions
IOM:	International Organization for Migration
KMP:	Knowledge Management Platform

LCBC:	The Lake Chad Basin Commission
MNJTF:	Multi National Joint Task Force
OCHA:	Office of Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance
MPTF:	Multi-Partner Trust Fund
NEDC:	North-East Development Commission
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organization
PSC:	Peace and Security Council
PCRD:	Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development
P/CVE:	Prevention/Countering Violent Extremism
PVE:	Prevention of Violent Extremism
REC:	Regional Economic Community
SDG:	Sustainable Development Goals
SOPs:	Standard Operating Procedures
UN:	United Nations
UNDP:	United Nations Development Program
UNHCR:	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF:	United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC:	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNHCHR:	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNOWAS:	United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel
UNSCR:	United Nations Security Council Resolution

FOREWORD



In November 2017, the African Union Commission (AUC), Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) and Development Partners organised the first Conference on the Development of a Framework for a Regional Stabilisation Strategy. The Framework was aimed at facilitating a transition from active military engagement to addressing the root causes of the crisis and rationalising various initiatives to stabilise areas affected by Boko Haram.

The development of the Regional Stabilisation Strategy demonstrates the commitment by LCB Member States, AUC and LCBC to fulfil the decisions and commitments made in 2014, most notably the need for strengthening cooperation between regional and international actors in combating Boko Haram and protecting civilians. In this regard, the Stabilisation Strategy serves to achieve the AU's aspiration to Silence the Guns by 2020. In addition, the Strategy provides a shared understanding of the strategic objectives and provides clarity on the roles and responsibilities to be performed by each actor involved in the stabilisation process. Furthermore, the Strategy serves as a relevant tool tailored to address the key challenges affecting the LCB, such as climate change and promoting good governance, transparency and accountability in both the political and socio-economic domains. Last but not least, the Strategy provides necessary guidance for the development of tools that will be applicable nationally and regionally, and facilitate resource mobilisation.

Anchored on nine strategic objectives, the Strategy is designed to address the short, medium and long-term needs of the region towards stabilisation, resilience and recovery of the affected areas. In achieving these objectives, there is a strong imperative to involve local communities in the implementation of development initiatives.

The AU's Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 lay a foundation for the creation of conditions necessary for sustainable peace and development in the LCB region - based on the key guiding principles and values outlined at the November 2017 Regional Stabilisation Conference, namely: national and regional ownership; leadership(national, regional and continental); mutual accountability; cooperation and complementarity; mutually reinforcing partnership; transformative approaches to stabilisation development; gender mainstreaming; respect for regional, continental and international human rights instruments; and capacity building for effective service delivery to the affected populations of the region.

I am delighted to present the Regional Stabilisation Strategy for the LCB region, convinced that if effectively implemented it will transform the region by enabling the Governments of the region to sustainably address the root causes of the Boko Haram insurgency through transformative initiatives. In order to achieve its stated objectives, the Stabilisation Strategy needs to be implemented with the required human, financial, material and institutional

resources. I, therefore, call upon the LCB Member States and international partners to support the effective implementation of this Strategy.

H.E. Smaïl Chergui

Commissioner, Peace and Security

African Union Commission



As the population of displaced persons increased with each attack on villages and settlements in the affected countries of the Lake Chad Basin, each of the four affected countries devised its own strategy on how to cope with the humanitarian challenges. It soon became clear that better results would be achieved if the various national approaches to the challenges were to be harmonized into one regional strategy that would be adopted and implemented by each of the affected countries to ensure unity of purpose.

The Lake Chad Basin Commission, with the support of the African Union Commission, mobilized national experts and relevant United Nations Agencies to produce a draft strategy. The first Conference on Regional Stabilization Strategy, which took place in N'Djamena, Chad, in November 2017, produced a framework of the strategy. Several consultative meetings were held while thematic experts visited each of the affected countries to collect first-hand information about the humanitarian crisis and the respective strategies for addressing the challenges.

This strategy is the product of the broad consultations among experts of the Lake Chad Basin Commission and those of the African Union Commission, relevant agencies of the United Nations and other stakeholders, all focused on producing a common strategy that is acceptable to the four countries affected by the Boko Haram insurgency.

The Strategy is quite detailed, covering the multidimensional challenges in the region. It outlines 9 pillars of intervention as well as the implementation mechanism and the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders. The budget for implementing the strategy as well as the framework for mobilising the necessary resources to implement the various programmes are also spelt out.

It is my hope and prayer that the Strategy will strike the right chord among donor countries and agencies to donate generously for this noble cause.

H.E. Mamman Nuhu

Executive Secretary

Lake Chad Basin Commission &

Head of Mission of the Multinational Joint Task Force

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The crisis of Lake Chad, and the situation of the people who live around its shores, is of global concern. It is epic in scale, with complicated and intractable causes that will take a generation to resolve. Much is being done, but a step change is required in focus, approach, and the dedication of resources, if the world is to rise to the challenge.

There are many ways to define the situation around Lake Chad, and even more ways to conceptualise the response that is required. In essence, three separate but inter-related and mutually reinforcing crises have converged in the same locale: a structural and persistent development deficit; a breakdown of the social contract that has manifested in lawlessness and a violent extremist insurgency; and an unfolding environmental disaster that cannot be stopped, but which requires attention and resources to mitigate the impact on people, and to help them to absorb shocks and adapt over time.

A regional response is required because neither causes nor effects of the crisis respect national borders. Human development indicators for all areas around the Lake are some of the worst in the world; the insidious evil of violent extremism is immune to border control while the current reality and future threat of climate change humbles all human institutions and authority.

The Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) has been tasked by its Member States to organise and facilitate the mechanisms and processes required for enhanced cross-border cooperation on security and stabilization, early recovery and development. In March 2015, the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) authorized the deployment of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) as an expression of its support to the efforts by the Member States of the LCBC and Benin to *“create a safe and secure environment and contribute to stabilizing the situation in the areas affected”* by Boko Haram activities.

Despite the significant progress made by the MNJTF, overall success of the collective effort will be contingent upon coherent acceleration and completion by the LCBC Member States, together with all stakeholders, of the second Phase of the mandate as highlighted in the Strategic Concept of Operations of the Force, namely to *“facilitate the implementation of overall stabilization programmes by the LCBC Member States and Benin in the affected areas, including the full restoration of state authority and the return of IDPs and refugees”*.

This Strategy has been prepared by LCBC, with support of the AU. It seeks to establish a common approach and an inclusive framework for all stakeholders to support a timely, coordinated, and effective transition from stabilization to early recovery and the resumption of stalled development processes. Implementation of the Strategy will be guided and overseen by a Steering Committee, reporting to the LCBC Ministerial Council.

It is necessary to act with urgency and conviction if this transition is to be achieved and the successes of the MNJTF consolidated. The Lake Chad crisis offers both opportunity and obligation to operationalise the *“New Way of Working”* called for at the World Humanitarian Summit of 2016. Recognizing that humanitarian and development actors, governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private sector actors have been progressively working

better together to meet needs for years, the New Way of Working aims to offer a concrete path to remove unnecessary barriers to such collaboration in order to enable meaningful progress.

Wherever possible, those efforts should reinforce and strengthen the capacities that already exist at national and local levels. Although regional in scope, this Strategy is predicated upon the principle of national ownership and will be implemented by the national Governments of the affected states. Cross-border political cooperation is conceived as the first pillar of this Strategy. Facilitated by the LCBC, the recently established Governor's Forum for the Lake Chad Basin will be the primary vehicle to secure its realisation.

The scourge of Boko Haram requires continued military operations to contain it. This Strategy salutes the bravery and sacrifice of the MNJTF, and of all those in the uniforms of their countries who risk, and have sometimes given their lives to the struggle against violent extremism. Their work is unfinished and requires further financial and technical support.

Military operations and the demobilisation and disarmament of former combatants must continue until the State regains its monopoly on violence. This is unlikely to be fully achieved, however, if that monopoly is misused. Violent extremism feeds on grievance, and smart counter-insurgency tactics demand zero tolerance of human rights abuses. This Strategy seeks to ensure accountability as well as capacity of security forces to uphold basic principles of human rights in the discharge of their duties. Security and Human Rights thus, represents the second work pillar of the Strategy; the specific needs of the MNJTF to fulfil its mandate.

National efforts for demobilisation and disarmament of Boko Haram must be accompanied by a harmonised, regional approach to screening, prosecution, rehabilitation, and reintegration of combatants and persons associated with Boko Haram, in line with international standards. This is the third work pillar of the Strategy. The four affected countries have developed and agreed on the approach, prepared with technical support of the AU as well as relevant UN Agencies and entities.

The scale of the Lake Chad crisis is such that humanitarian assistance will be required for many years to come. The stabilization process must ensure access and security for its provision on the basis of need alone, according to the inviolable international principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence. Humanitarian assistance constitutes pillar four of the Strategy.

In many places around the Lake, the State is effectively absent, or maintains very weak presence in the lives of the people. Pillar five of the Strategy outlines how capacities and standards of governance must be improved if the social contract is to be restored, the development process restarted, and the environmental crisis managed.

Pillar six of the Strategy seeks to ensure that sustainable livelihoods replace provision of humanitarian assistance sooner rather than later. Infrastructure projects and other public works can provide immediate short-term employment and a fiscal boost to local economies. For the foreseeable future, socio-economic recovery in the Region will remain dependent on farming, fishing and livestock husbandry, and the early recovery and expansion of these is vital

through grant and credit programmes. Value-chain development and a resumption of cross-border trade can play a major role. In the long term, as peace is consolidated, and infrastructure rebuilt, demographic trends – the youth ‘bulge’ – will also require a conducive business environment that aims squarely to provide jobs through innovative policy and legal frameworks that promote investments, trade, and economic activity.

All future investment in socio-economic development must be climate-proofed: climate change fragility assessments should underpin the planning process to build resilience to shocks, support adaptation and mitigation, and ensure long-term sustainability.

Education is at the heart of the problem and will be key to its solution, and thus constitutes pillar seven of the Strategy. Schools must be rebuilt, teachers recruited and trained, enrolment rates improved, and attainment rates in literacy and other basic skills increased. Catch-up education must be available to those who have missed out, and non-State schooling must be subject to appropriate processes for registration, approval of curricula, certification of teachers and monitoring of quality. Basic education must be complimented with targeted vocational training and entrepreneurship initiatives to give young people the skills they need to join the labour market and earn a living.

Specific initiatives will be required to build the capacities of authorities and communities for the prevention of violent extremism, and this is the work of pillar eight. Communities need to be mobilised to challenge extremist narratives and public debate promoted to reject and denounce violent extremist ideology. Cross-border cooperation of all stakeholders needs to be enhanced, and local, national and regional peace architecture must be established and operational to ensure early warning of all forms of conflict, and the capacities of relevant stakeholders for timely response.

The Lake Chad crisis has disproportionately affected women and girls. A gender-sensitive approach must be mainstreamed into the response. Pillar nine of the Strategy therefore calls for specific actions to tackle a culture in which sexual and gender-based violence has become endemic. It is necessary also to undertake gender-specific research, and to design and implement initiatives that empower women and youth, supports their participation in all processes for stabilization, early recovery and development, and establishes mechanisms for improved gender-sensitive monitoring, reporting, analysis and advocacy.

It is intended that the implementation of all the work pillars of this Strategy should be linked and coordinated in the development of separate Territorial Action Plans for the eight worst-affected States or Regions around Lake Chad, and that LCBC with the support of the AUC will ensure coherence and coordination at regional level, as well as facilitation of the cross-border cooperation that will contribute significantly to their realisation.

This Strategy cannot, and does not, attempt to do everything. It is a first five-year down payment on what will be a generational effort. Limited and precious resources must be carefully targeted, and the current reality of weak governance and poor absorption capacities must be recognised and addressed.

Annex I of this Strategy establishes an indicative budget of an estimated 12 billion US dollars for its achievement. This is a huge and daunting figure. It becomes more palatable when understood as a grand total for all stakeholders – national and local Governments, as well as international technical and financial partners – and that includes all foreseeable military, humanitarian, and development assistance. The largest single contributor will be the Governments of Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria, through allocations of their national development plans, sectoral programmes, and crisis-specific initiatives that target the States and Regions concerned.

While this Strategy asks international partners to move beyond ‘business as usual’, and to increase levels and predictability of assistance, it recognises that we are not starting from scratch – the European Union in particular continues to provide significant levels of support through a range of mechanisms and programmes. Vision and implementation must ensure value-for-money. Articulating the stabilization process as the New Way of Working offers an opportunity to reduce the requirement for humanitarian aid year-on-year by initiating parallel processes for early recovery and development that can promote sustainable livelihoods and improve resilience for the future.

The Lake Chad crisis is a complex and urgent challenge, and only a regional approach, based on continental and international frameworks, and inclusive of the efforts of all stakeholders, can provide the necessary means for its resolution.

1. CONTEXT

This document is the Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko Haram-affected areas of the Lake Chad Basin and will hereinafter be referred to as the LCBC Regional Stabilization Strategy (or simply the Strategy). This section gives an overview of the scale and nature of the Lake Chad crisis, describes the frameworks and processes for intervention by the key institutional stakeholders, and recapitulates the process and principles by which the LCBC Regional Stabilization Strategy was conceived and prepared.

Introduction

The four riparian countries around Lake Chad – Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria, are experiencing unprecedented levels of crises, exacerbated by repeated incidences of violence from extremist groups. These crises have deepened instability and slowed economic growth in a sub-region that has historically been characterized by environmental and developmental challenges prior to the activities of the Boko Haram terrorist group and the resultant humanitarian crisis.

Among the many factors that have contributed to the current crisis, a lack of development progress on several fronts emerges as a key enabler of the political, economic and social marginalization that the sub-region has endured. Decades of neglect from national development plans and investments have caused the Boko Haram-affected areas of Lake Chad to fall far behind with regard to the progress that other areas of the four countries surrounding the Lake have seen. Ineffective governance, corruption, lack of, or inadequate basic services, mistrust of security forces and a sense of isolation from the central government are all results of the under-development that the region has seen, and these factors have contributed to an environment conducive to radicalization. Aside from being a source of grievances, under-development has also led to ineffective responses to emerging crises. Lacking frameworks for effective prevention and response to developing crises, governments of countries around the Lake Chad Region have been unable to address the seismic environmental, economic and political changes that the sub-region has experienced. The ineffective management of these shocks has further entrenched perceptions of marginalization and neglect that fuel grievances.

In addition to the development deficits, Lake Chad is frequently cited as having diminished due to climate change and desertification, resulting in the loss of traditional livelihoods and a propensity for populations to explore alternative livelihoods, including violent extremism. While variability in the Lake's water levels certainly heightens the vulnerabilities of communities that depend on it, the environmental dimension is far more complex. Over generations, the cyclical nature of flooding that affects the water levels in Lake Chad has made populations around the Lake highly resilient to changes in flooding levels, and caused them to move and adapt their livelihoods in response to environmental changes.¹ Although the general decline of water levels since the 1960s is a fact, Lake Chad contains more water today than it did during the drought period in the 1980s. However, the adaptive ability of populations living in riparian communities

¹ Lake Chad Basin Commission: Lake Chad Development and Climate Resilience Action Plan, endorsed at the Extraordinary Session of the LCBC Ministerial Council held on 13 November 2015.

is affected by growing population pressures. Demographic changes, particularly upstream around sources of water for the Lake are expected to increase competition for natural resources in conjunction with continued climate volatility. Having quadrupled since the 1960s, the population in the sub-region is expected to put increasing pressure on limited and fluctuating environmental resources, posing major challenges for the sub-region. The effects of climate change will directly challenge peace and security, which by virtue of the ongoing insurgency, is already worsening environmental conditions in the affected areas. Not only have violence and outright war disrupted social and economic life, they have also destroyed vital agricultural infrastructure and expertise, caused degradation in lands, forests, rivers and lakes, and has exacerbated the impact of droughts, floods and desertification..

The existence of radical narratives is nothing new for the Lake Chad Region. Decades of under-development and the cyclical droughts and environmental crises described above has seen the emergence of radical groups and radical narratives. Energised by the deplorable living conditions in the area and the genuine perception of marginalisation, these groups and narratives have persisted in the Region. Notwithstanding this history, the violent insurgency that the sub-region has experienced under Boko Haram since 2009 has been of a magnitude and scale not previously witnessed.

The destruction of basic infrastructure, health, educational facilities, commercial buildings, private houses and agricultural assets have left the Region with deep wounds and reversed development progress by decades for millions of people. It has also precipitated a severe humanitarian catastrophe, forcing millions of people in the sub-region into displacement, abject poverty, and despair.

These factors call for the development of a stabilization strategy for the Lake Chad countries that articulates and addresses the multidimensional challenges of the Lake Chad Basin. Rebuilding what has been destroyed will take years. Healing the wounds arising from this crisis will take decades. This Strategy aims to provide a framework for the Region to begin to take the first steps in an inclusive, participatory and sustainable process towards prosperity, peace and development for all who live in and around the Lake Chad.

Frameworks for Intervention

National governments, regional institutions, multilateral and bilateral partners have made important strides in responding to the Lake Chad crisis. National governments of the four riparian countries have led this response, primarily through increased military and security efforts to address the crisis. Cameroon, for example, deployed thousands of troops *under Operation Alpha, Operation Emergence 4* and joint operations with neighbouring countries in an attempt to curtail the growing security threats in the Far North Region. In 2016, Chad began close cooperation and collaboration with its neighbours, sending two thousand troops to Niger to support counter-insurgency efforts in the Diffa Region—the region in Niger which has been most affected by the crisis. In Nigeria, *Operation Lafiya Dole* has registered significant progress against the insurgency, resulting in the gradual opening up and easing of access to previously occupied areas. Aside from these nationally driven efforts, all four riparian countries, along with the Republic of Benin, have increased their military cooperation under the auspices of the AU-mandated Multi-

National Joint Task Force (MNJTF). The MNJTF, whose mandate was expanded in 2015 to more effectively combat the insurgency in and around Lake Chad has been a critical force in enhancing the security response to the crisis, particularly with regard to strengthening cross-border collaborations among the countries affected by the crisis.

To complement the necessary security response, national governments have also taken steps to provide a more holistic approach to the crisis. Recognizing the importance that security efforts be coupled with development solutions, Niger set up demobilization sites in 2016 and has adopted a special and comprehensive security and stabilization framework – “*Projet de Stratégie de Sortie de Crise de Terrorisme dans la Région de Diffa*”² for the support of the Diffa Region. This initiative is part of the broader security and development strategy for the Sahel and provides a framework for how Diffa can begin to build on the successes registered by the security response in order to entrench and consolidate stability and peace. In Nigeria, for example, the government launched the Buhari Plan in 2016 as a means to provide a framework for engagement in the Northeast of the country. This framework has been followed by the setting up of the Presidential Committee on the North-East Initiative (PCNI) to coordinate the response in the Northeast; the establishment of Operation Safe Corridor to provide rehabilitation and reintegration support to low-risk Boko Haram surrendees, and, more recently, the creation of the North-East Development Commission (NEDC) to tackle the root causes of the crisis. In February 2018, heads of state from the sub-region convened in Abuja at the International Conference on Lake Chad to explore regional solutions to address the diminishing water levels of Lake Chad. The conference resulted in the endorsement of an inter-basin water transfer to recharge the Lake waters and thereby address one of the root causes of the crisis. Taken together, these concerted efforts demonstrate strong political will in the four riparian countries to effectively address the Lake Chad crisis.

The efforts of national governments have been closely supported by international partners. The governments of Nigeria and Cameroon have undertaken joint *Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessments* with the United Nations, the European Union and the World Bank to help inform the broader response to the crisis in the two countries. The United Nations System has also been at the forefront of supporting the humanitarian response in the sub-region as well as promoting efforts towards early recovery and addressing the root causes. Such efforts have been supported by key partners to the Lake Chad Region, such as the European Union and the governments of France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and others.

Politically, the international community has worked in conjunction with national governments of the affected countries to raise the profile of the Lake Chad crisis and build momentum for holistic approaches to addressing the crisis. In March 2017, the United Nations Security Council visited the Lake Chad Region on a fact-finding mission, which resulted in UN Security Council Resolution 2349 (2017). In July 2017, the African Union Peace and Security Council (PSC) undertook a field assessment mission to the Lake Chad Basin countries (LCB). Following the visit, the AU PSC in its report reinforced its call for a comprehensive approach in the fight against Boko Haram, by taking a transformative approach towards addressing the root causes of violent extremism and radicalization, including poverty, illiteracy and massive youth unemployment.

2 Conseil National de Sécurité : *Projet de Stratégie de Sortie de Crise de Terrorisme dans la Région de Diffa* ; 2018, Cabinet du Premier Ministre, République du Niger

The international community has also mobilized critical support for the sub-region, notably through the Oslo Humanitarian Conference on Nigeria and the Lake Chad Region which resulted in \$672 million in support of efforts to help avert a famine in parts of the sub-region. In September 2017, the first Senior Officials' Meeting of the Oslo Consultative Group for Prevention and Stabilization in the Lake Chad Region was convened in Berlin and called for increased regional collaboration to address the crisis. Following this, the African Union and the Lake Chad Basin Commission hosted the Conference on the Development of a Framework for a Regional Stabilization Strategy which commenced the process of developing the current document.

This Strategy aligns with the aforementioned frameworks and builds upon previous and ongoing processes. In so doing, it aims to address the need for a comprehensive, sub-regional strategic approach to stabilizing the Lake Chad Region. This is an important step in creating sub-regional ownership of the response to the crisis and ensuring that local, national and sub-regional efforts are effectively coordinated and leveraged. Only through such an approach can the sub-region begin to stabilize and lay the foundations for a peaceful and prosperous future. This Strategy is an essential step for the Lake Chad Region in realizing the visions outlined by the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the United Nations' Agenda 2030.

Development of the Regional Strategy

At its 489th meeting held on 3 March 2015, the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), authorized the deployment of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) in the Lake Chad Basin Region for an initial period of twelve months as an expression of its support to the efforts by the Member States of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) and Benin to *"create a safe and secure environment and contribute to stabilizing the situation in the areas affected"* by the Boko Haram terrorist group. Pursuant to achieving its mandate, the MNJTF has successfully degraded the capacity of the group to wage large-scale insurgency operations and successfully dislodged it from its strongholds.

Despite the significant success of the MNJTF, the overall success of the collective effort will be determined by the level of long-term consolidation of achievements following the first phase of MNJTF military operations. The transition from a military-heavy footprint to medium to long-term stabilization is contingent on a coherent acceleration and completion by the LCBC Member States, together with all stakeholders, of the second phase of the mandate as highlighted in the Strategic Concept of Operations of the Force, namely to *"facilitate the implementation of overall stabilization programmes by the LCBC Member States and Benin in the affected areas, including the full restoration of state authority and the return of IDPs and refugees"*. The regional dimension of stabilization efforts is key to the success of national programmes implemented in this regard.

Against this backdrop, the LCBC and the AU hosted a Regional Stabilization conference, *"Supporting the development of a framework for a Regional Stabilization Strategy for areas affected by Boko Haram"* from 2 to 4 November 2017 in N'Djamena, Chad. The objective of the Conference was to develop a regionally applicable and acceptable policy proposal on stabilization, reconstruction and development in Boko Haram affected areas. Representatives of the AUC, LCBC, MNJTF, international organizations and regional economic communities, civil society organizations, academia,

religious and traditional leaders as well as bilateral partners, deliberated and interacted with the local authorities of the affected areas on prospective approaches towards developing common regionally acceptable and actionable recommendations that would guide the development of the stabilization strategy.

Key outcomes of the Conference included the adoption of 9 (nine) major principles that underpin the Strategy:

- National and Regional ownership
- Leadership: National, Regional and Continental
- Mutual accountability
- Cooperation and complementarity
- Mutually reinforcing partnerships
- Transformative Approaches to stabilization/development
- Respect for Regional, Continental & International Human Rights Instruments
- Capacity building for effective service delivery
- Gender mainstreaming

The Conference also made recommendations to guide the development and implementation of this Regional Stabilization Strategy, defined the broad pillars of intervention required, and agreed on next steps in the drafting process. The LCBC and the AU reaffirmed their partnership and formalised arrangements to establish a Strategy Taskforce of key stakeholders towards the realization of the Conference objectives.

Sequel to the Conference, a workshop focusing on the Screening, Prosecution, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (SPRR) of persons associated with Boko Haram was held in N'Djamena, Chad from 10–13 April 2018. The Workshop was organized by the AU and LCBC in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Attended by representatives from the LCBC countries, Benin Republic, the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), and international partners, the Workshop aimed to move towards the development of a regional strategy for the processing and handling of persons associated with Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Region. The April SPRR workshop was followed by another workshop in N'Djamena from 17–19 July 2018 with the objective of establishing coherent approaches to the screening and prosecution of Boko Haram associated persons. The outputs of both workshops were combined to form the pillar paper for the Screening, Prosecution, Rehabilitation and Reintegration of persons associated with Boko Haram and broadly reflected in Section 2.3.3.

In May 2018, a Joint Expert Team (JET) was deployed to the Lake Chad countries to assess the current situation and propose strategic objectives for each of the other pillars of intervention identified at the November 2017 N'Djamena Conference. The JET mission was supported by inception and de-briefing meetings held in N'Djamena and Niamey

respectively, with the participation of members of the Strategy Taskforce. The LCBC Stabilization Strategy is informed by the pillar position papers prepared by the JET mission.

In a technical review meeting hosted in N'Djamena in June 2018, the LCBC and AU convened partners and key stakeholders to further discuss and seek input on the findings from the JET mission. The workshop concluded that the AU and LCBC would revise and augment the findings from the field into a cohesive strategic document as a broader guiding framework. Partners agreed that this would be an important step in providing the shared vision necessary to advance collective efforts toward stabilization, recovery and development.

Following finalisation and internal review by the LCBC and AU, this Strategy was endorsed and adopted by the LCBC Council of Ministers at an inter-Ministerial Conference of representatives of the four Boko Haram-affected Lake Chad countries in August 2018.

2. THE STRATEGY

This section outlines the objectives of the Strategy, the approach that will be taken for its implementation and the work pillars that provide the overall framework for intervention.

Objectives of the Strategy

The overall objectives of this Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko Haram-affected areas of the Lake Chad Basin were established at the initial AU-LCBC Conference on the Development of a Framework for a Regional Stabilization Strategy for areas in the Lake Chad Basin Region affected by Boko Haram held in N'Djamena from 2–4 November 2017:

To generate applicable policies and programmes geared towards the short, medium and long-term stabilization and development of the Lake Chad Basin Region.

The Strategy will be anchored on commonalities while taking into account the peculiarities of each of the concerned States in the Lake Chad Basin Region.

The Strategy will be geared towards addressing the root causes of the crisis in the Lake Chad Basin Region to enhance resilience.

Approach & Methodology

Resolution of the huge challenges of the affected areas of the Lake Chad Basin Region requires a transformative approach. The cyclical nature of the crises that have historically plagued the sub-region need to be broken to change the trajectory of development for millions of people. Only a transformative and holistic approach can help to address the structural challenges of vulnerability and insecurity and begin to lay a foundation for sustainable peace and development.

Any transformative approach for Lake Chad must effectively address the absence of governance and development in borderland areas. It is imperative to strengthen political and technical cooperation across borders. The Strategy aims to advance cross-border collaboration by integrating it into the Means of Implementation under Section 3.

The delivery of humanitarian assistance, restoration of law and order and basic public services, and the resumption of development processes are all contingent upon the continued success of military operations to ensure the necessary security conditions. The conception and implementation of the Strategy herein is built upon the foundations established by the service and sacrifice of national security forces and the MNJTF. Continued support to the military security efforts of the MNJTF comprises Strategic Objective 5 of this Strategy (see Section 2.3.2).

The stabilization process, however, cannot be achieved by security responses alone; there is a pressing need to better manage the interface between military and civilian actors in the sub-region, to allow increased humanitarian access and a civilian-led stabilization process that can complement and build upon military efforts, allowing security forces

to focus on their primary responsibilities. In the light of lessons learned in Somalia and elsewhere, it is vital to properly sequence the stabilization process in order to consolidate military gains in timely fashion through the rapid deployment of civilian law enforcement and the restoration of basic public services, and the transition from the provision of life-saving assistance to interventions with longer term impact and development dividends. Failure to do so risks alienating, or even endangering local populations and losing the ideological struggle against violent extremism. Effective civil-military planning and cooperation must be at the heart of ensuring an integrated, targeted and sequenced transition from humanitarian assistance to sustainable development.

The effort itself provides an opportunity to *"win hearts and minds"* and to build trust between communities, governments and security providers for the long term. The approach must be inclusive and participatory; transparent, accountable and rights-based; appropriately targeted, suitably informed and collaborative, as well as subject to ongoing processes of coordination, monitoring and evaluation, and programmatic adjustment.

To deliver effectively on this, the Strategy calls for a *"New Way of Working"*, as per the recommendations of the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, to be at the heart of the response to the Lake Chad Basin Region crisis. Achieving the *"New Way of Working"* will require broader partnerships among UN agencies, international and local NGOs, private sector, civil society actors and government, and regional and continental institutions; commitment to developing a shared understanding of sustainability, vulnerability and resilience; readiness to work to (i) pool and combine data, analyse and share information; (ii) enhanced collaboration and coordination in planning and programming processes; (iii) effective leadership for collective outcomes; and (iv) develop modalities to finance and support collective outcomes.

The *"New Way of Working"* is about using resources and capabilities better, improving SDG outcomes for people in situations of risk, vulnerability and crisis, and shrinking humanitarian needs over the long term. It must also be about galvanizing new partnerships and collaboration—such as through the private sector, local actors' and multilateral development banks—in support of achieving collective and measurable outcomes for stabilization, recovery and sustainable human development.

The need to plan and sequence the handover of territory from military to civilian control, the requirement of working with and through sub-regional authorities with delegated competences, and the logic of concentrating resources to maximize impact, all argue for an area-based approach to the localization of the Strategy. A localization of the Strategy will, in turn, require domestication and local ownership, and enhance the prospects for effective and sustainable results.

Fulfilment of the Strategy will be determined by the successful implementation of a number of Territorial Action Plans (see Section 3.2.3) that will be developed according to a common approach, a consistent framework for monitoring and evaluation, and coherent requirements for reporting.

The following cross-cutting principles inform the design of the Territorial Action Plans and will be central to their implementation:

Do No Harm: The first principle of any intervention must be *"Do No Harm"*. Localised conflict analysis will be undertaken to inform the development of the Territorial Action Plans that will collectively comprise the implementation framework of the Strategy (see Section 3.2.3). The design and implementation of all initiatives under this Strategy will be carefully reviewed to ensure that they do not inadvertently facilitate human rights violations, exacerbate divisions between institutions and communities or worsen existing grievances.

A whole-of-society approach: Given the centrality of violent extremism to the crisis around Lake Chad, the Strategy herein is predicated upon a whole-of-society approach, in line with the UN Secretary-General's Plan of Action for the Prevention of Violent Extremism.

Violent extremism requires a response which inspires, rallies and facilitates every citizen to contest it through person-to-person contact, through peer group pressure and through communal action. In order to achieve such a level of public ownership of the Strategy, an inclusive approach must be taken which actively seeks to engage all sections of civil society, including local communities, traditional leaders, NGOs and CBOs, the media, academic institutions and the private sector. The approach should be consultative and participatory in design, in implementation, in monitoring and evaluation, and in any revision required to better target resources to needs. The mobilisation of a whole-of-society approach needs to be tailored to the specific area, given that the dynamics will look different from community to community, country to country, but should clearly inform the development and implementation of each of the Action Plans.

The Rule of Law & the Primacy of Human Rights: The Strategy seeks the fastest and smoothest possible transition from military emergency to civilian rule of law in all affected territories. The Strategy is premised upon a rule-of-law based approach, which emphasises the importance of treating terrorism primarily as a criminal matter and of building the capacity of actors within the criminal justice system ranging from police to judiciary to prison officials.

A human rights-based approach is essential to preventing and responding to violent extremism. Security responses that pay insufficient respect to human rights risk alienating stressed communities, feeding narratives of radicalisation and undermining their own objectives. Similarly, this Strategy puts anti-corruption efforts at the heart of its governance work. Critically, the approach requires the highest possible levels of accountability of its actors, to mitigate cynicism and to reassure all stakeholders as to the integrity and efficacy of every aspect of the concerted national, regional and international effort.

The Strategy will integrate human rights monitoring mechanisms to promote accountability and compliance with all international and continental norms and standards; promote relations of trust and confidence between security providers and local communities; and ensure human rights due diligence of all proposed interventions.

A Focus on Children, Youth and Women: Issues of gender are at the heart of the crisis around Lake Chad and will be central to its sustainable resolution.

Children, youth and women constitute the majority of the population around Lake Chad and have suffered

disproportionately in the conflict. As a matter of equality and justice, it is necessary to improve their protection and welfare while ensuring their empowerment as key actors as well as beneficiaries of this Strategy across all of its pillars.

Women have an important role to play in peacebuilding and PVE efforts, as recognised by UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 (2000), 2122 (2013) and 2242 (2015) on Women, Peace & Security. The Strategy advocates for enhanced participation of women in decision-making on security, peacebuilding and development at all levels and will strive toward equal participation of women in all Strategy governance structures and consultative mechanisms.

The important and positive contributions that young people can make and are making for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security in the world are recognized by the Security Council in Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security, unanimously adopted in December 2015 and Resolution 2419 adopted in June 2018. This Strategy recognizes that children and youth in and around Lake Chad can be a powerful force for peace and it will therefore ensure a strong focus on children and youth, both as beneficiaries and as agents of the interventions.

Environmental Sustainability: The ongoing crisis has significantly undermined community resilience, including the ability of the population to absorb initial shocks and adapt to climate change. Awareness and capacities of all stakeholders must be developed to mitigate current and future risks arising from climate change. Climate change may also exacerbate natural resources conflicts, in particular over land and water, often between different occupational groups, such as pastoralists and farmers. As the terrain becomes more arid and livelihoods more insecure, there are clear dangers that the ground becomes more fertile for extremist recruitment.

An understanding of the current impact and future implications of environmental degradation and climate change around Lake Chad and the interaction of environmental factors with the security and development dimensions of the overall crisis is understood as essential to the preparation of long-term development plans and the establishment of sustainable livelihoods. Environmental fragility assessment will be mainstreamed within the preparation of the Territorial Action Plans that will comprise the implementation framework of the Strategy (see Section 3.2.3).

International Humanitarian Principles: The ongoing crisis cannot be effectively addressed without an effective humanitarian response. In this regard, the Strategy has dedicated one pillar to the humanitarian response and there are elements of humanitarian work that straddle multiple pillars, such as *Empowerment and Inclusion of Women and Youth* and *Education, Learning and Skills*.

Any humanitarian support under this strategy will be guided by the inviolable international humanitarian principles. All actors and stakeholders under this strategy recognize the importance of respecting these principles and will do their utmost in upholding them.

The Pillars of Intervention

This Strategy will only be able to fulfil its objectives by prioritising its work. This section of the Strategy outlines nine priority pillars for action, identified through the process of Strategy consultation and development documented in Section 1.3 above.

These pillars provide for an integrated and holistic framework for a response to the instability in the Lake Chad Region. This response can be shaped in many different ways, but critical to a successful strategic approach is to ensure a comprehensive framework that addresses the multi-dimensional nature of the challenges in the sub-region. The pillars under this Strategy have been designed to enable horizontal linkages across pillars, allowing for synergies and optimization of impact as well as adequate opportunities for national and local ownership to tailor responses that are contextualized to the specific dynamics on the ground.

Each work pillar below defines the broad scope of work to be undertaken and the Strategic Objectives to be achieved. Specific initiatives to be undertaken will be developed in Territorial Action Plans that will collectively constitute the implementation framework for the Strategy. Strategic Objectives are recapitulated with indicative budget figures in Annex I of this Strategy.

Political Cooperation

National ownership is the foundational principle upon which implementation of this Regional Stabilization Strategy resides. The Strategy has been prepared by LCBC, with support of the African Union, at the request of the Member States concerned. The commitment and responsibilities of Governments to the fulfilment of the Strategy will be expressed through their membership of the LCBC Council of Ministers to which the Steering Committee for this Strategy will report (see Section 3.2.1).

Commensurate with the mandate given by its Member States, the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) will provide overall leadership and coordination of the implementation of the Strategy for Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Lake Chad Basin.

The LCBC will establish, chair and service the envisaged Steering Committee for Strategy implementation (see Section 3.2.1) and will take a proactive role in working with its Member States, the AUC, ECOWAS, ECCAS, CEMAC and international partners to ensure consistent and coordinated regional policy and action, coherent with all applicable institutional frameworks.

The Lake Chad Basin Governors Forum for Regional Cooperation on Stabilization, Peacebuilding and Sustainable Development will serve as the primary mechanism for cross-border cooperation as well as domesticating implementation of this Strategy. The expressed wish of the Governors to play a central role in the stabilization efforts of Lake Chad, as expressed during the inaugural meeting on the 8th and 9th of May 2018, in Maiduguri, lends to the strategy, the necessary political will and buy-in for effective implementation.

The Lake Chad Basin Governors Forum will serve as the mechanism for cross-border dialogue, coordination and exchange on issues relating to areas under this Strategy. This will ensure that synergies across the sub-region are leveraged, and that cross-border and transboundary solutions to the crisis are effectively explored. The convening of the Forum can also help to bring different local government efforts closer together in ensuring effective solutions for borderland areas.

In recognizing the unique position and interest of the governors of the sub-region to facilitate and help lead the stabilization efforts, the governors of the states/regions around Lake Chad will become the principal custodians of the Strategy's implementation. National Governments' in close consultation with local Government authorities will develop the Territorial Action Plans which will help operationalize the Strategy. Given this role, the Lake Chad Basin Governors' Forum also becomes an important platform for sharing information, knowledge, and progress on implementation of the Strategy to promote context-specific best practices for stabilization in the sub-region.

The African Union Commission (AUC) is the continent's oldest and most inclusive regional organization. It provides the most appropriate and effective forum in which African countries can and should convene to address peace, security, environmental and development challenges, and to chart a path forward based on mutual respect, human rights and a desire to lift the continent out of poverty. The AUC Agenda 2063, the African Youth Charter, the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), the Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) Policy, and the African Governance Architecture (AGA) provide a strategic framework and mechanisms for addressing many of the challenges and root causes of the Lake Chad crisis.

At the request of the LCBC Member States and Benin Republic, the AU PSC authorised the deployment of the MNJTF in 2015 and called upon AUC Member States to provide material and technical support. A joint AU-LCBC-MNJTF Steering Committee was inaugurated on 14 November 2016 to strengthen coordination and information-sharing.

The Lake Chad Basin with the support of the African Union Commission will chair the Steering Committee to be established to oversee implementation of this Strategy. The AUC will provide political support and technical assistance to the implementation and realisation of this Strategy on a continuous basis as required by the Lake Chad Basin Commission and its Member States, ensuring its full alignment with all applicable and agreed AUC frameworks and treaties.

Regional Economic Communities (RECs) have a key role to play in ensuring that sub-regional frameworks complement rather than duplicate or conflict with regional frameworks agreed upon in the context of the AU; they are, therefore, charged with ensuring both coordination and harmonization.

This Strategy will be presented to the African Union Peace and Security Council (PSC) and the following Regional Economic Communities for endorsement and support towards implementation:

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

The Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)

The Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC)

West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA)

This Strategy notes and welcomes the final communique of the joint summit of ECOWAS and ECCAS Heads of State and Government presented in Lomé, 30th July 2018, and their collective commitment *"to cooperate in conflict*

prevention, promotion of peace and stability..., particularly through the establishment and strengthening of early warning and rapid response to crises mechanisms at the national and regional levels, which involve civil society, opinion leaders, women, young people and state actors”.

Strategic Objective 1: Enhancing Political Cooperation

To improve cooperation, coherence and complementarity among the LCB member states

Strategic Objective 2: Strengthening National Capacities

To support National Governments to develop harmonised national coordination mechanism and systems, including the governors’ forum and the regional inter-parliamentary committee for an effective implementation of the strategy in the Lake Chad region

Strategic Objective 3: Role of Regional Economic Communities and Other Actors

To enhance and improve intra and inter regional cooperation for Peace Security and Development in the LCB region

Strategic Objective 4: Capacity of LCBC and AUC is Enhanced

To effectively enhance the capacities of the LCBC Secretariat and the AUC for the effective implementation of the strategy

Security and Human Rights

Since 2015, a more muscular security response from the governments, combined with coordinated military action through the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) has been largely successful in degrading Boko Haram’s capacity to maintain control of the territory in which it operates.

This work is ongoing and will take time and a combination of efforts to translate into stability and consolidation of peace. The first Strategic Objective for Security and Human Rights around Lake Chad is to ensure sustained support to MNJTF in order for it to fulfil its primary mandate. Current priority needs of the MNJTF are:

- Logistics support and necessary force multipliers.
- Capacity to develop an amphibious unit.
- Enhancement of civil-military relations.
- Communication and influence operations.
- Intelligence, border security and coordination with national forces.

These are detailed further in the pillar paper for security presented by the MNJTF Force Commander.

As military forces clear areas of Boko Haram control, a timely and sequenced transition to civilian security umbrella needs to be made in order for IDPs and refugees to return home and for humanitarian and development actors to

enjoy the secure access necessary to do their work. This planning process requires enhanced civil-military cooperation at sub-regional, national and local levels.

Policing capacities must be built for rapid deployment in areas deemed sufficiently secure for the stabilization, recovery and development process to be launched. This will entail provision of infrastructure for working and accommodation, vehicles and equipment for operations, and the recruitment and training of personnel necessary to establish the presence of the State and the long-term restoration of the rule of law. Issues of command and control, oversight and risk management will need to be fully considered to ensure law enforcement is properly prepared to assume control from the military. Border management must aim at a balanced approach that enhances security against the illicit movement of weapons, drugs and militants, while facilitating legitimate trade and transit, and the traditional mobility of cross-border communities and pastoralists. Enhanced cross-border processes, mechanisms and collaboration will be essential to ensuring appropriate border management in the sub-region.

Vigilantes in the Lake Chad Basin have filled an important gap in the provision of community security and continue to cooperate with the military and local administrations. The vigilantes who will continue to provide security services to their communities will require more formal training and accountability processes to avoid human rights abuses. Other members whose services are no longer required need to receive support to integrate into formal security structures or reintegrate into the civilian life of their communities and build new, different forms of livelihood.

Areas restored to civilian control still face the threat of continued Boko Haram influence as well as irregular patterns of asymmetric attack against soft civilian targets. A rights-based approach is a precondition of effective counter-insurgency tactics to “win hearts and minds” and defeat violent extremism. Security responses that pay insufficient respect to human rights risk alienating stressed communities, feeding narratives of radicalisation and undermining their own efforts in both the short and long term.

Highest possible levels of accountability are required of all security actors in respect of inalienable human rights as well as to mitigate cynicism and reassure all stakeholders of the integrity and efficacy of every aspect of regional efforts to prevent violent extremism. In this regard, this strategy calls for increased level of collaboration between national and cross border security systems and structures.

In collaboration with national authorities and local commanders, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for police and other local security providers will be reviewed and training provided to ensure compliance with all relevant human rights obligations and standards, to reduce instances of corruption and harassment, and to facilitate positive interactions with communities. National Human Rights Commissions and civil society monitoring mechanisms reaching to community level will be supported to ensure civilian accountability and enhance trust between communities on one hand and security forces on the other and to help support early warning and response architectures.

Strategic Objective 5: Enhancing Support to MNJTF Operations

To enhance support to the MNJTF to enable it to continue to fulfil its mandate.

Strategic Objective 6: Reinforcement of Community Security and Restoration of Rule of Law

To enhance capacities for safety and security at the community level through increased responsive law enforcement that extends and safeguards the rule of law to all areas, as military forces clear the territory under Boko Haram control.

Strategic Objective 7: Management of Vigilantes

Disarmament and demobilization of vigilante groups is managed through appropriate national initiatives for their peaceful re-orientation and reintegration.

Strategic Objective 8: Promoting Human Rights

To ensure that security service providers operate at the highest levels of integrity and respect for human rights based on international and continental norms and standards, through effective internal and external oversight and accountability mechanisms. With appropriate remedial mechanisms to address alleged human rights abuses

Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation, Reinsertion and Reintegration of Persons associated with Boko Haram

Countries in the Lake Chad Basin Region recognise that key challenges related to the handling and treatment of Boko Haram associated individuals do not fall under the rubric of classical Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR), considering the absence of a peace agreement or ceasefire as well as the lack of voluntariness to join the process. Rather, key United Nations Security Council resolutions require Member States to develop comprehensive approaches that encompass multiple dimensions: one aspect concerns accountability for terrorist offences and the need “to bring terrorists to justice”.³ This was subsequently included in a broader approach to develop “prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration strategies for returning foreign terrorist fighters”⁴, and to develop and implement a regional and coordinated strategy that encompasses transparent, human-rights compliant DDRRR in line with strategies for prosecution, where appropriate⁵. These elements were most recently elaborated by UN Security Council Resolution 2396 (2017) “to assess and investigate suspected individuals whom they have reasonable grounds to believe are terrorists...to develop and implement comprehensive risk assessments for those individuals, and to take appropriate action, including by considering appropriate prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration measures...in compliance with domestic and international law.”⁶

Consequently, countries in the Lake Chad Basin Region have agreed to develop a common regional approach, wherein the relationship between different pillars of screening, prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration is harmonised in line with international standards. Further, efforts to harmonise such strategies remain context-specific to the specific

³ Chapter VII, Resolution 1373 (2001).

⁴ Chapter VII, Resolution 2178 (2014).

⁵ Chapter VI, Resolution 2349 (2017).

⁶ Chapter VII, Resolution 2396 (2017).

needs of the situation and the different needs of certain groups such as women and children associated with Boko Haram.

Countries of the Lake Chad Basin Region employ different screening methods aimed at receiving, identifying, interrogating, screening, rehabilitating and reintegrating persons associated with Boko Haram. Screening is a multi-faceted exercise that requires both military and civilian participation as well as adequate resources, local knowledge, and oversight mechanisms. The sub-region faces several challenges in screening procedures as its efficacy is diminished by prevailing judicial capacities of the independent States. Despite the existence of independent country-level screening mechanisms, there are concerns around (a) developing contextually-informed risk assessment tools; (b) ability to sequence and draw inter-connections between screening and criminal prosecution; (c) defining the purpose of screening and the treatment determined as the best fit—these include prosecution and rehabilitation; and (d) forming a sub-region-wide systematic profiling and categorisation of people associated with Boko Haram with standardised screening procedures.

In this vein the regional strategy workshop noted the need for a “common regional approach in line with international standards” that guide procedures of receiving and screening persons associated with Boko Haram. This should be realised by instituting training opportunities, regional human rights complaints procedures on the reception of persons and standard operating procedures at the regional level. It is necessary to arrive at a common understanding of the screening process, including the screening criteria, consensus around ‘who’ is screened, linkages to criminal investigation and clarification of roles of entities tasked with screening. This could be realised through regional workshops, creation of a regionally harmonised case management system as well as efforts designating specific location and facilities for screening purposes.

The regional strategy considers the possible, most appropriate forums to hear and prosecute offences in the Lake Chad Basin related to terrorism and transnational organised crime. Broadly, it calls for strengthening national criminal justice capacities and policies while aiming at harmonising these policies with a common, regional outlook towards prosecution. This regional approach should be realised through strategic efforts aimed at developing systematic and common procedures in defining ‘categories’ of suspected individuals (actors, roles, procedures, applicable legal standards and inter-agency collaboration while arresting a terrorist suspect) and information sharing mechanisms within the different units of criminal justice institutions.

The Strategy calls for governments of the Lake Chad Basin countries to develop a criteria-based guide for prosecuting terror cases. This should guide decisions around national amnesty laws wherever applicable and produce uniform standards to be applied while conducting criminal investigations. Common prosecutorial strategies and procedures for individuals associated with Boko Haram must include provisions for diversion away from prosecution in the case of children. Finally, much of the State’s obligations concerning prosecution depend upon concrete steps undertaken by them; these include specialised training, provision of relevant equipment, ensuring the protection of judges and prosecutors to perform their duties and effective rule of law measures such as victim and witness protection measures.

Apart from the risks posed by Boko Haram, the regional strategy includes objectives that respond to the risks experienced by individuals associated with Boko Haram through the rehabilitation and reintegration pillars. Rehabilitation comprises a set of measures undertaken in prison, detention-like conditions and other institutions aimed to support the transition from being associated with Boko Haram to becoming a citizen of the community; these include abandoning the use of violent means to achieve change, generating income to cater for families' needs and avoiding recidivism. Presently, Nigeria is the only country with a rehabilitation programme (Operation Safe Corridor) in the sub-region, which defines procedures to transfer individuals associated with Boko Haram to concerned transit centres for a specified time along with provisions for de-radicalisation programmes, psycho-social support and vocational training courses.

A common regional approach to rehabilitation is linked to subsequent reintegration activities taking place in the community and including psychosocial support, health, nutrition (in a first phase) and vocational training and income-generating activities (in a second phase). In addressing certain ambiguities (e.g., rehabilitation of women and handling foreign fighters), harmonised national plans for rehabilitation should account for the specific needs of each individual, the context-specific needs and establish standardised duration of rehabilitation. Specific components include provisions for a de-radicalisation programme and contact with family and local community members during prison or centre-based rehabilitation. Gaps in national capacities to provide rehabilitation services are addressed through training for health specialists and information sharing for further development..

Reintegration takes place at the community-level and all countries should have reintegration strategies in place. Lessons learned can be drawn from the experiences of independent States. The role of traditional principles and traditional leaders and chiefs are identified as important for purposes of community sensitisation, public acceptance and aiding the transition and reintegration of persons associated with Boko Haram. Key emphasis was placed on community-based reintegration support and civilian institutional frameworks that are designed to oversee and support the reintegration objectives.

Harmonising reintegration strategy requires regional cooperation in terms of reintegration opportunity mappings, identification and initiatives (income generating opportunities aligned with market needs, vocational skills training, psycho-social support, opportunities for social inclusion, etc.) that support reintegration. Additionally, emphasis should be placed on preparing and equipping communities to support the return and reintegration of these persons, both in terms of enabling infrastructural (e.g. health, education, security), as well as sensitisation and information-based support.

Strategic Objective 9: Screening and Disarmament

To ensure that persons associated with Boko Haram are received, screened and disarmed according to a common regional approach in line with international and continental standards.

Strategic Objective 10: Transitional Justice

To strengthen and harmonize National transitional and criminal justice systems to effectively undertake the investigation and prosecution of persons associated with Boko Haram and other forms of accountability.

Strategic Objective 11: Rehabilitation and Reconciliation

To ensure that persons associated with Boko Haram and other violent extremist groups are rehabilitated according to a common regional approach linked to later reintegration activities and including psychosocial support, health, nutrition (in a first phase) and vocational training and income-generating activities (in a second phase).

Strategic Objective 12: Reinsertion and Reintegration

To ensure that persons associated with Boko Haram, members of vigilante groups/vigilance committees, returnees (including former prisoners), youth at risk and victims of Boko Haram receive community-based reintegration support, following a harmonized regional approach.

Humanitarian Assistance

The humanitarian crisis in the Lake Chad Basin remains the focus of attention of the Member States and international community. The Abuja Action Statement (2016)⁷ during the Regional Protection Dialogue on the Lake Chad Basin Member States agreed to a comprehensive action to enhance protection and respond to the most urgent needs of refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and other affected populations. Calling for compliance with humanitarian principles and standards as well promoting civil-military coordination, the Abuja Action Statement aimed to clarify the roles of humanitarian actors in the sub-region and drew attention to the importance of humanitarian access in providing for vulnerable people in inaccessible areas.

As stabilization efforts gather momentum, it is imperative that humanitarian assistance continues. The Lake Chad Region will not be stabilized without humanitarian assistance providing the necessary building blocks and enabling environment for other efforts to proceed. It is for this reason that this Strategy foresees a full inclusion of the humanitarian efforts in the Lake Chad Region, albeit guided by the inviolable internationally recognized humanitarian principles.

The humanitarian response under this Strategy will promote four strategic objectives. First is the provision of lifesaving assistance to all affected populations. The conflict has resulted in widespread displacement, destruction of shelter, infrastructure and collapse of basic services, mainly health, education and water and sanitation. As food and nutrition remain some of the biggest concerns, an estimated 4,025,486 of the affected population, including internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees, and returnees as well as immediate host communities remain in need of humanitarian assistance. The paramount priority must be to ensure that all affected populations have access to humanitarian assistance for their survival.

⁷ UNHCR: The Abuja Action Statement, August 2017
https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/UNHCR_3.pdf.

Second, displaced populations must be adequately supported with voluntary, safe and dignified returns. Though several displaced and refugee populations are returning to their communities of origin, the trend of returns remains very slow as many conditions are still unmet. The returnees are looking for durable solutions, including security, safety and protection, housing, accessible and quality social services, road networks and revitalized economic opportunities, including farming, employment and small-scale businesses. Within the above context, the Strategy will support those who want to and can return. These returns will be based on a thorough and credible understanding of the conditions in their communities of origin. In cases where returns can be made safely, this Strategy envisages a continuum of support, inclusive of logistical support, financial/economic reintegration packages and social service provision to make the transition back to their communities of origin sustainable.

The third strategic objective is aimed at addressing the protection, safety and security of all affected populations against any form of physical violence and hazardous situations. The effective legal protection framework in affected areas will be developed in line with international best practice on protecting vulnerable populations. The measures proposed under this strategic objective include but are not limited to the establishment of a reporting system that will first and foremost guarantee confidentiality for the victims and will also provide the much-needed data on the extent of the issue within affected communities. The protection and coordination mechanisms established in IDP and refugee camps will be reinforced and scaled up to encompass return communities in a concerted and inclusive manner. Protection interventions will build on and strengthen existing frameworks ensuring security, law and order in affected communities through advocacy and deployment of government actors to underpin protection and accessibility of humanitarian actors in these communities to monitor and support vulnerable populations.

Lastly, the conflict has resulted in tens of thousands of people killed, millions of people displaced, wide scale destruction of property, fraying of social ties and increase in tensions. Fear and mistrust among the population is widespread as the result of deep seated polarization following years of violence. The collective trauma from the wounds of the conflict is unparalleled and significant investments need to target the psycho-social scars both at the individual and collective levels. This will include targeted psycho-social support for individuals who are dealing with trauma as an essential step in empowering individuals to become self-sufficient and productive in local economies. This support will also entail services addressing widespread drug abuse as a prerequisite for the commencement of individual healing. Group and community interventions can promote the healing of shared wounds and trauma, and work toward reducing the inter-ethnic and inter-religious tensions that the conflict has stirred up. This needs to target social cohesion and trust among and between communities on the one hand and Government/security institutions and communities on the other hand, and includes awareness raising, psychosocial counseling support, and confidence and peacebuilding initiatives.

Strategic Objective 13: Humanitarian Lifesaving Response

To assist affected populations have access to basic lifesaving assistance, including food and nonfood items, clean water, health and sanitation support regardless of their respective areas of settlement.

Strategic Objective 14: Voluntary, Safe and Dignified Return and Resettlement

To ensure that displaced persons are supported in returning to their communities of origin based on the principles of voluntary, safe and dignified return.

Strategic Objective 15: Protection

To ensure effective and full implementation of the Abuja Action Statement of 2016 on protection.

Strategic Objective 16: Psychosocial Support and Social Cohesion

To provide affected populations access to quality psychosocial counseling services, and to actively participate in community cohesion and trust building interventions.

Governance and the Social Contract

The issue of governance is central to the Lake Chad crisis. Years of underdevelopment in the sub-region has hampered the ability to which governance responds to the needs of citizens. This has been particularly noticeable in the face of growing demographic, environmental, economic and political stresses, which have been inadequately managed, paving the way for the current crisis. Strengthening and promoting good governance is central to breaking the cyclical nature of crisis that the sub-region has witnessed and laying the foundation for longer term peace and sustainable development.

Governance in an area such as Lake Chad presents unique challenges. The limited infrastructure in its vast geographic expanse hampers the extent to which the State's presence is felt, in particular in the borderlands and islands in and around the Lake. Furthermore, the rich diversity in the sub-region demands a participatory, inclusive and decentralized approach to governance; bringing government closer to its people by improving horizontal relationships across society and vertical relationships between the government and the governed. Such an approach will help to strengthen the social contract, ensuring a trusting, fair and functional relationship between the state and its citizens.

Support to good governance will target four essential areas that are particularly important for stabilisation. First, local governance will be strengthened to enhance the delivery of social services in fulfilment of government mandates, including health, education, access to justice, economic development, revenue collection and ensuring that disaster risk management mechanisms are incorporated as core components of their mandates. In improving upon the delivery of public goods and services, people's faith in government will be gradually restored. Social service delivery should be guided by inclusive, participatory and transparent needs-based analysis which helps inform targeted service delivery to ensure that all groups and communities are catered for and consulted, including women, children, IDPs and other vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities. This will entail support to government institutions that lack the necessary capacities to fully and effectively deliver on their mandates. Support to local government will target capacity strengthening of civil servants as well as support to the development and implementation of local development plans which address. For example, reconstruction of health, education, housing and domestic markets

underpinned by tools which allow for monitoring and oversight of performance.

Insurance and other social protection schemes that are often externally funded will need to continue to be supported for at-risk communities as an integral pillar of assistance. Much of this can build on existing mutual support networks such as remittances and should avoid undermining this.

The Strategy envisages particular support to enhance the service delivery in the rule of law sector to enable an effective transition from military to civilian capacities (see also the Security and Human Rights Pillar of this Strategy). Deficits in perceptions of fairness and due process have arguably fuelled the conflict and led to reduced trust and confidence between state and citizen and must be addressed. Action will need to be informed through assessments to determine the current human and infrastructure capacities as well as capacities of customary/Sharia legal systems and formal sectors (including legal aid provision) ensuring vulnerable groups' needs are addressed in ways which ensure rule of law providers act independently, efficiently and fairly in administering justice. Action must also look at increasing the reach and scope of rule of law services by increasing access to justice and ensuring that services can be accessed by all communities and groups to ensure that no one is left behind. Given the level of human rights abuses during the conflict, the Strategy will explore opportunities for transitional justice arrangements, which could foster longer term reconciliation and address impunity.

Enhancement of service delivery must also target the borderland areas where the State presence is particularly weak. Delivery in these areas could be improved by innovative service delivery arrangements, leveraging upon traditional and religious institutions, which may have a stronger presence in these communities and could therefore contribute to the effective provision of certain public goods and services. Cross-border cooperation will be required, given that citizens may live in areas that fall under multiple jurisdictions or lead nomadic lifestyles.

Enhanced delivery of public services must be closely accompanied by effective accountability and oversight mechanisms. These will ensure that services are delivered in a timely, quality manner and that the communities most in need receive targeted support. Strengthening accountability and oversight mechanisms will also entail support to improved fiscal management systems and anti-corruption efforts as a means to help restore public trust in governments' handling of resources. Oversight mechanisms for broader governance systems will also include targeted support to monitoring, in particular, support to human rights monitoring to ensure that good governance addresses urgent human rights challenges in the sub-region.

In improving service delivery and accountability, there is also a need to invest in public engagement and participation in government ensuring that all citizens are heard, including women, youth, IDPs, the disabled and other marginalised groups. This will ensure a more responsive and participatory nature of governance for the entire Lake Chad Region. To support these efforts, awareness raising, capacity building and support toward the establishment and/or promotion of platforms for effective public input into government will be strengthened. There already exists a plethora of civil society organizations across the sub-region and these play an important role in ensuring public participation in governance. These actors need to be promoted and supported to empower and encourage citizens

to engage in governance. Existing mechanisms for facilitating public engagement in policy and legislative processes (such as town halls, public hearings, etc.) should be supported and expanded to give people, including those in the borderlands, the ability to have their voices heard and reflected in government decisions.

In recognizing the importance of a regional response to the crisis, the fourth strategic focus area for governance includes support to sub-regional governance structures and processes to promote effective management of border and transboundary issues. Improved efficiency in border management should promote the seamless movement of goods and services through frameworks, including the AU, ECOWAS and ECCAS protocols. Additionally, this focus area will promote collaborative governance around the sustainable management and use of natural resources that are shared across borders, including but not limited to the waters of Lake Chad. The Strategy foresees the establishment of mechanisms to help manage the sub-regional diversity, ensuring that all people have agency and influence in the broader administration and management of shared resources and transboundary issues. This focus area is expected to foster mutually beneficial solutions and strengthen sub-regional integration around Lake Chad.

Strategic Objective 17: Shared Values on Good Governance

Governance norms, principles and best practices are adopted by LCBC member states

Strategic Objective 18: Improving Service Delivery

To restore and strengthen state authority and institutions capacity to enhance the scope and improve the quality of social service delivery at the local level

Strategic Objective 19: Enhancing Rule of Law and Accountability

To enhance the capacity of rule of Law providers to deliver effective services to citizens, civilian oversight and accountability.

Strategic Objective 20: Enhancing Public Participation and Civic Engagement

To strengthen civic engagement and participation in the implementation of the strategy.

Strategic Objective 21: Improving Cross-Border Cooperation

To strengthen cross-border and transboundary cooperation for mutually beneficial solutions and sub-regional integration.

Socio-Economic Recovery and Environmental Sustainability

The crisis around Lake Chad has destroyed much of the economic activity and potential that the sub-region has historically been known for. The ability to produce goods (in particular from agriculture) has been significantly hampered, as has the ability to get those goods to market. This has resulted in a loss of livelihoods, decline in food security and increased hardship for millions of people around the Lake.

An essential element of stabilizing the sub-region involves revitalizing the local economy and boosting trade. This will in turn lay the foundations for inclusive economic growth and sustainable development.

The socio-economic recovery must build from the ground up, ensuring that local communities benefit. At the forefront of the socioeconomic recovery must therefore be a people-centred approach, ensuring that everyone has access to income and that this income can support and sustain a decent life. Only through ensuring that these basic conditions for socio-economic existence are met can the sub-region gradually transition away from dependency on humanitarian support towards more inclusive and impactful economic growth.

Socio-economic recovery will target four strategic areas that will create synergies and a broader collective impact for the sub-region. First, sustainable livelihoods, particularly in farming, fishing and livestock rearing must be strengthened. This will ensure that the sub-region's economic base is strengthened and mitigate any adverse effects from mounting stresses of conflict and environmental change. In this regard, efforts will ensure an increased adaptability within these livelihood sectors as well as investments into critical value chain infrastructures (such as marketplaces, storage facilities, pastoral routes, etc.) to enhance the economic viability and sustainability of these trades. Engagements on environmental protection and development are crucial in maintaining the health of the ecosystem.

Considering that the use of natural resources comprises the primary livelihoods base of the people, traditional resource management practices can be further enhanced through interventions like watershed management, ecosystem-based planning, natural resource management, climate-smart agriculture and soil conservation techniques (terracing, agro-forestry) that rehabilitate environmentally degraded areas in order to sustain and diversify livelihoods. Additionally, the creation of economic revitalization zones should be established, especially in rural areas, to promote investments and a conducive environment for small businesses and entrepreneurs.

Efforts will also include capacity building and training to ensure new and innovative ways of enhancing agricultural productivity and output. In this regard, the Strategy will also promote the development of a professionalized and diversified local labour force while recognizing that the economic base for the sub-region in the short to medium term will remain agriculture. Thus, in promoting stabilization, this Strategy will prioritize investments and interventions that promote the accelerated growth of these sectors and maximize their economic potential.

Critical to helping build the sustainability of these livelihoods is enhancing the economic dividends which they are able to generate. In increasing the economic dividends, efforts under this strategic objective will also include promoting regional trade, including informal cross-border trade. The increased civil-military cooperation outlined in this Strategy will support the timely easing of restrictions on movement and economic activity in place in Lake Chad and its associated estuaries and waterways to promote cross-border trade and the revitalization of economic activity. Additionally, it will also facilitate access and use of agricultural lands and promote the opening up of spaces for farming and livestock rearing. Support will also be targeted to restoring and rebuilding markets of sub-regional economic importance to help drive market demands for local goods and services. These efforts must also include a comprehensive review of existing crossing points and tariff systems in place which currently impede cross-border

trade. Tariffs and taxation at border crossings must be predictable, transparent and should, as a matter of principle not impede local and small-business trade. Aside from providing income to a large sector of the population, these investments will also help restore food security to the sub-region and enable a gradual transitioning away from humanitarian support.

Closely linked to promoting sub-regional trade and economic activity is the urgent need to invest in infrastructure that promotes regional integration and better connects borderlands to regional capitals and beyond. Joint regional planning, design and implementation of strategic infrastructural projects, particularly road networks, is essential to boosting trade, increasing the economic potential and promoting integration in the sub-region. Efforts should be jointly agreed upon to ensure that transboundary infrastructure projects are undertaken to improve linkages between the countries. As cross-border infrastructure is built, efforts will be made to connect borderland communities to ensure that these communities reap maximum benefits from these investments. Aside from road networks, this objective will also entail enhancing the energy and electrical infrastructure to connect the sub-region; expansion and improvements to mobile telecommunications networks to unlock opportunities in mobile banking and e-solutions; and the careful clearing and, where possible, use of invasive plants in the Lake Chad to create more navigable channels across the Lake. These efforts will help ensure that the Lake Chad Region is better connected and integrated for enhanced commerce, labour mobility and socio-cultural exchange and integration.

Efforts must also be targeted towards making a more conducive business environment in the sub-region to attract investments and contribute to economic growth. Under this focus area, massive investments are foreseen in infrastructural developments and enhancements, particularly improvements to the road and electrical networks to increase sub-regional connectivity and enable economic activity. Policy and legislative efforts must also promote a conducive environment, including promoting job creation and environmentally sustainable solutions, but also exploring tax incentive schemes through the establishment of economic revitalization zones where financial incentives for the private sector can contribute to increased investments and private sector participation in the recovery efforts. These efforts will help change the narrative of the sub-region as an investment risk towards becoming an investment opportunity.

In recognition of the close ties between the socio-economic prospects of the sub-region and the environmental changes, the fourth strategic objective specifically promotes efforts to increase the absorptive and adaptive capacities of communities around Lake Chad as a means to mitigate the effects and shocks of environmental changes. Support to this pillar will be guided by the *Lake Chad Development and Climate Resilience Action Plan* which was endorsed by the Lake Chad Basin Commission Ministerial Council on 13 November 2015. A review of this Action Plan by the Lake Chad Basin Commission will take place during the Inception Phase of this Strategy and help prioritize and sequence interventions with maximum impact for revitalizing the local economies around the Lake.

Strategic Objective 22: Supporting Sustainable Livelihoods

To support and promote livelihoods, particularly in the agricultural sector (farming, fishing and livestock) in a way that

takes account of climate change and environmental sustainability.

Strategic Objective 23: Improving Infrastructure for Regional Economic Integration

To mobilize investments to promote infrastructural development to increase economic, trade and cultural exchange.

Strategic Objective 24: Creating Conducive Business Environment

To ensure a conducive business environment is fostered through policy and legal frameworks that promote investments, trade and economic activity.

Strategic Objective 25: Ensuring Environmental Sustainability

To enhance the resilience of communities and systems around Lake Chad to adapt to environmental shocks for enhanced sustainability of interventions.

Education, Learning and Skills

Education is globally recognized as an essential element for preventing violent extremism, building peace and promoting sustainable development. Education has played a particular role in the Lake Chad Basin crisis. Decades of under-resourcing the education sector in the four riparian countries has led to a decline in the quality and access to education, particularly in remote and isolated areas such as those in and around Lake Chad. This has resulted in a sub-regional decline in the level of education and made the sub-region more susceptible to the scourge of violent extremism, which has repeatedly targeted educational institutions in its attacks.

Strengthening education and learning in the Lake Chad context will target three key areas. First, concerted efforts will be made towards increasing the access and quality of education for boys, girls, men and women. Recognizing education as a basic human right, the Strategy will aim to enhance the quality of education available through improvements in the training of teachers, provision of learning materials, and the restoration and rehabilitation of schools and learning centres. The aim of these investments will be to provide a conducive learning environment for everyone to achieve their full learning potential. In the short term, this is expected to entail support from humanitarian organizations and civil society in providing basic education, in particular for displaced populations and communities in areas where educational facilities have been damaged or destroyed. In the medium term, this will entail significant support to the latter to ensure that educational institutions are rehabilitated on behalf of resident communities and displaced populations and can access quality education in their communities of origin. Additionally, scholarship and cash transfer initiatives should be explored as a means to promote education, particularly of girls and young women, and exchange programs should be set up to promote intercultural exchange within the Lake Chad Region as well as beyond it.

Throughout these efforts, protection and safety in the education and learning sector is essential. Protection measures for learning institutions is fundamental, but efforts must go beyond this and promote increased awareness of the importance of education, especially for girls and young women.

The crisis in Lake Chad has closed or destroyed many schools and left thousands of children without access to education for several years. In order to ensure that this group is not left behind in the stabilization efforts, the second strategic focus area will include vocational training and skills acquisition, especially for this group. Programmes will be set up to ensure that basic education is provided for all whose educational prospects have been affected by the crisis, and directly linking this education into vocational training and the development of skills to ensure that those who were left behind are effectively capacitated and become a part of the local labour force. Given the dearth of quality vocational training centres across the sub-region, this strategic objective is expected to include expansion of learning centres. Although the latter target those who have been left behind, they should be made available to all who seek to gain skills and training to enhance their productive abilities.

Third, structural challenges in the education sector will be addressed through support to reform efforts and the promotion of increased education funding. Recognizing that an adequately funded education sector is a prerequisite for increasing the quality of education, this Strategy calls for regular increases in budgetary allocations to expand and improve the quality of education. Increased funding will be important in improving access to quality education as well as in ensuring that educational curricula in the Lake Chad Region are improved and quality assured. There exists a large number of learning institutions in the sub-region, but the quality of education around Lake Chad cannot be guaranteed because there is no standardized curriculum or accreditation system. It is important to begin assessing how reforms can address this issue by developing an agreed-upon curriculum, ensuring adequate accreditation of learning institutions and a transparent and merit-based certification process for teachers/instructors to begin to increase the quality of education made available to future generations. In this regard, efforts should explore how Western and Islamic knowledge can be mutually fostered and possibly integrated into hybrid curricula development that help to leverage the vast knowledge and value of each educational system. This would have important implications for promoting a shared understanding and collective values across the diversity and geographic remoteness of the sub-region.

The final strategic focus area for education is on social and cultural learning outside of formal educational institutions. Recognizing that much learning takes place outside formal settings, the Strategy will promote and strengthen opportunities for informal learning, particularly through social and cultural avenues. This is expected to help advance unity, tolerance and a shared understanding among communities. Under this focus, targeted investments will be made in promoting culture and recreational centres and sports which help provide avenues for social exchange and can go a long way in providing meaning and hope to marginalized people, especially youth. Targeting culture will include support to custodians of history and traditional narrators who are important in shaping a sense of collectiveness and cohesion for affected communities in understanding their own experiences.

Additionally, working through Parents Teachers Association (PTAs) and religious leaders as well as modern media will help promote narratives of understanding, unity and tolerance. Innovative approaches will also be explored, particularly as regards developing systems and mechanisms for promoting well-informed consumption of social media.

Strategic Objective 26: Restoring Quality Safe and Inclusive Education

To ensure the restoration and access of equitable education for all women, boys and girls in a safe and secure environment under appropriate civilian authority

Strategic Objective 27: Promoting Professional, Vocational Training and Skills Acquisition

To promote professional technical and, vocational training skill acquisition programmes in line with job market demand.

Strategic Objective 28: Reforming the Education Sector

To promote a reformed education system that is based on the local realities

Strategic Objective 29: Promoting Cultural and Social Learning

To promote cultural and social learning for increased interfaith understanding, tolerance and social cohesion.

Strategic Objective 30: Developing Education Infrastructures

To develop and improve adequate education infrastructure and ensure safe and secure environment for peaceful education.

Strategic Objective 31: Promoting Advocacy and Experience Sharing

To promote advocacy and experience sharing on education between LCBC Member States in the Region.

Prevention of Violent Extremism and Building Peace

Proposed regional support to the security efforts of Lake Chad governments to defeat violent extremism in the Basin are detailed in the MNJTF pillar paper. However, a central premise of this Strategy is that security responses alone will be insufficient to address the phenomenon of violent extremism and that the nature of the drivers and enablers of the phenomenon require that a developmental approach be taken.

In this sense, the prevention of violent extremism (PVE) is an objective of this Strategy to which all of its work pillars will contribute. A specific PVE pillar is considered necessary, however, to augment the overall effort and ensure that synergies of approach and activity are maximised to challenge the negative consequences of extremism, to restore the social contract and to achieve sustainable peace in the Lake Chad Basin.

In line with recommendations of the UN Secretary-General's Plan of Action for the Prevention of Violent Extremism, all countries of the Lake Chad Region either possess or are in process of developing national strategies and action plans for the Prevention of Violent Extremism based on a whole-of-society approach. The work of this pillar should augment and compliment national efforts, providing additional resources and a coherent approach to application in the States/Regions of the Lake Chad littoral, while also strengthening the cross-border cooperation between them.

An all-inclusive and participatory approach at local level is the best guarantor that the overall intervention will be perceived and accepted as demonstrably for the public good, undertaken in the interests of all and in accordance with the rule of law fairly applied.

Radicalisation and recruitment are ultimately highly localized processes, influenced though they may be by globalized ideas. Community peer groups (e.g. friends) as well as religious figures play important roles in facilitating recruitment to violent extremism. To better understand and respond to the phenomenon through each territorial action plan, an initial series of perception studies of community security will be undertaken to establish local context and baselines for programming, context-specific drivers and enablers of violent extremism, and levels of confidence in local government and security providers. Repeat perception studies will support mid-term and final evaluation of progress toward re-establishing the social contract between citizens and the State, allowing lessons to be learned and programming to be adjusted.

An inclusive approach must actively seek to engage all sections of civil society—local communities, traditional leaders, NGOs and CBOs, the media, academic institutions and the private sector. Especially important in this regard are traditional and religious leaders although all relevant stakeholders and actors need to be mobilised and motivated, capacitated, networked and coordinated to ensure that the prevention of violent extremism is mainstreamed into the design and implementation of all relevant interventions of the Territorial Action Plans.

Tactics and entry points to mobilise communities against violent extremism should be carefully considered to promote public buy-in and to deliver on broader objectives. Illiteracy is a root cause of the crisis and education is a key site of contestation between Boko Haram and the State. Thus civil society organisations should be supported to deliver a mass campaign that utilises functional literacy methodology to teach basic reading and writing, promote critical thinking and inculcate notions and values of citizenship and peaceful co-existence.

Communities across the Lake Chad Basin are struggling with an epidemic of drug abuse that is claiming many lives, tearing at the social fabric, and causing long-term damage to social cohesion. Boko Haram is known to be involved in drug supply and this is considered a security issue related to the financing of terrorist groups to be addressed by the MNJTF and civilian law enforcement agencies through their given mandates and activities proposed under Pillar 2 of this Strategy for Security and Human Rights. It must also be understood as a public health crisis, however and the manner in which it is addressed—through public awareness and provision of counselling and medical support to addicts—provides another opportunity to challenge violent extremist narratives, culture and acceptability at the level of individuals and communities.

All voices should be heard in public dialogue. Critical reflection and thinking should be promoted, and majority public opinion should be relied upon to frame the issue correctly and establish the societal discourse to isolate and refute violent extremist logics. Mechanisms should be established, and capacities strengthened, to ensure that all community stakeholders and women and youth in particular are able to participate in all forms and at all levels of the public debate.

Local and community radio should be supported as the primary means to address P/CVE as an issue and to mobilise a broad range of stakeholders to air their views and tell individual stories as part of on-air discussions. Local programming should focus on local voices and local content in recognition of the context-specific nature of the drivers and enablers of violent extremism. Women-only discussion platforms can stimulate interest in the gender-specific dimensions of the phenomenon of violent extremism. Former violent extremists in the process of reintegration into society should be articulated to the communications work of the Strategy wherever appropriate and beneficial (see Section 3.3.5).

It will never be possible to contain the ideology or manifestation of violent extremism within national borders. LCBC, in conjunction with the AUC, RECs and UN will work to facilitate cross-border collaboration for its prevention through enhanced information sharing, increased law enforcement and judicial cooperation, research and knowledge management, and networking of PVE practitioners.

Local, national and regional peace architecture should be consolidated and strengthened. This Strategy calls for ECOWAS and ECCAS to accelerate their work to develop a common model for early warning and response to conflict in order that the territorial action plans that constitute this Strategy can establish and operationalize the mechanisms and processes necessary to address current conflicts and to avert them in future in timely fashion.

The Strategy calls for the establishment of national and local peace architecture, with the primary responsibility for conflict prevention, management, resolution and peacebuilding. On one hand, the peace architecture should comprise of an early warning unit responsible for data collection, analysis and communication of response strategies at all levels. On the other hand, the peace architecture should comprise of a team of eminent personalities responsible for facilitating dialogue, mediation as well as reconciliation at local, regional and national levels. The establishment and operationalization of the early warning and response system is vital to the systematic monitoring and analysis of existing and emerging threats to peace and security, as well as to the development of concrete modalities to address them before they erupt in violent conflicts.

Member States of the sub-region were strongly encouraged to consider the recommendations of the PSC at its 502nd meeting of April 2015 which urged them to “fully take advantage of the Country Structural and Vulnerability Assessment and Country Structural Vulnerability and Mitigation Strategy tools developed by the AUC in their efforts towards the structural prevention of conflict and consolidation of peace and stability”. This is important to enable Member States to identify their vulnerabilities and resilience factors, and develop short, medium to long-term that take them into account. The implementation of the mitigation strategies will significantly contribute to addressing grievances associated to structural drivers of violent conflicts.

Strategic Objective 32: Supporting National Capacities for PVE

To support the development and implementation of national strategies and action plans for PVE in-line with international obligations and best practices

Strategic Objective 33: PVE Education, Knowledge and Capacities

To build up indigenous capacity in order to increase knowledge about the phenomenon and the drivers of violent extremism.

Strategic Objective 34: Mobilising Communities and Counter-Narratives

To empower local communities as actors to prevent, anticipate, and counter radical narratives

Strategic Objective 35: Promoting Cross-Border Cooperation for P/CVE

To enhance and empower local, regional and international cooperation based on synergy, appropriation and coordination at all levels

Strategic Objective 36: Supporting Peace Architecture

To build, review and strengthen local and national peace architecture, including early warning and early response mechanisms

Empowerment and Inclusion of Women and Youth

As outlined in Section 2.2 above, gender issues and a focus on youth will be mainstreamed throughout the work envisaged by this Strategy. Women and girls, men and boys, have all experienced the conflict differently, as both victims and actors, and are differently impacted by the development deficit that persists. Attention must be paid to these different experiences and impacts, if individual needs are to be addressed, so as to build resilience to radicalisation and recruitment, and to establish pathways to decent and productive lives.

The Strategy considers that the mainstreaming of gender issues, and the intended focus on youth, must be accompanied by specific and urgent action to increase protection for women and girls, and to ensure that women and youth are empowered to participate fully in planning and decision-making processes, in all actions for conflict resolution, early recovery and development, as well as all mechanisms for evaluation and enhanced accountability.

The Lake Chad crisis has disproportionately affected women and girls. From being at the forefront of the displacement crisis to constituting the majority of victims of sexual exploitation and abuse, to suffering stigmatization from association with different groups, women and girls are faced with different challenges than men and boys. While violence against women and girls is a serious patriarchal and cultural issue, it has been even more pronounced throughout the conflict as women and girls are subjected to sexual abuses and harassment as a weapon of war, enabled by families' and communities' denial and rejection. Thousands of women and girls have been abducted, raped or forced into marriage and continue to be used as suicide bombers against their will or as a result of religious conviction and radicalization. While women gender-based violence is predominantly caused by Boko Haram on the one hand, they are regrettably victims of abuses and harassment by security providers also. Upon their return into communities, they continue to live in trauma and stigma undermining their social and economic reintegration. In addition, due to hardship, women and girls are forced into survival sex and other negative coping strategies including

early marriage.

The current situation calls for specific protection measures for women and girls to be designed and implemented. Protection mechanisms must include support to the monitoring, reporting and holding to account those individuals and systems that oppress women and girls and undermine their effective engagement in the stabilization process. Women and girls must be actively involved as decision-makers in the planning, design, implementation and follow up of protection measures to ensure that these measures are relevant and best suited for the challenges that women and girls face in this context.

Women and girls must also be especially supported and promoted in empowerment initiatives that span a broad segment of interventions and sectors. This focus area will aim to address the structural barriers that women and girls face and establish an enabling environment for this demographic group to thrive.

Efforts should include promoting girls' and women's' education, ensuring their reproductive rights is upheld and safeguarding women's' health across the entire sub-region. In addition, targeted support toward women engaging productively in the formal economy, should include, but not be limited to, increasing their access to capital and other facilitative resources (such as legal and financial advice) to promote entrepreneurship. Existing women's networks and associations serve as important interlocutors for such support. Finally, interventions must also address the legal obstacles that exist, for example in inheritance law and land ownership, to enable women to engage constructively in the economy.

These efforts will be facilitated and supported by the integration, domestication and operationalization of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and pillar 2 of the AU Strategy for Gender Equality and Women Empowerment under the Aspiration 6 of the Agenda 2063. The current Strategy recognizes that National Action Plans already exist in some of the riparian countries and calls for all countries around Lake Chad to develop such plans. Additionally, the Strategy calls for the subsequent development of Territorial Action Plans to integrate, mainstream and operationalize UNSCR 1325 to ensure that girls and women are at the forefront of the stabilization process politically, economically, socially and culturally. Women and girls must not just be beneficiaries of stabilization and peace but must be active agents in achieving these goals.

A similar approach must be taken with regard to youth as a whole. Youth constitute the majority of the population in the sub-region, and they are the most vulnerable group for recruitment into violent extremist and radicalized groups. The dire state of local economies has contributed to a sense of hopelessness amongst many young people across the Lake Chad Region. This hopelessness underpins recruitment into radical and extremist groups, but it also drives migration, youth crime and delinquency, and drug abuse to escape the hardships of daily life and the lack of vision that many young people hold for the future. Central to stabilizing and building resilient communities is creating a vision for the future, especially for young people. Investing in youth help address the structural and root causes of youth vulnerabilities, but also help address the erosion of social values. As youth are left behind, their engagement in criminal activity, drug abuse, and radicalization, fuels a breakdown of social and cultural values. Intrinsically,

investing in youth is therefore an investment in strengthening social values and community cohesion. This Strategy will therefore focus on empowering and including youth as active agents of the stabilization and peacebuilding process.

In addition, this Strategy calls for domestication of both the AU and UN youth policy frameworks by creating appropriate mechanisms and programs to adequately mainstream youth engagement at all stages of policy and strategy development for peace, security and stabilization. Domestication efforts should also incorporate existing instruments in ECOWAS and ECCAS. The role of youth in promoting peace is also a major facet of The African Youth Charter, Agenda 2063 calls for the ratification, domestication and effective implementation of the Maputo Protocol, and the AU Roadmap on Investing in Youth to Harness the Demographic Dividend which are political and legal documents which serve as the strategic framework for African States, for youth empowerment and development at continental, regional and national levels. Youth groups, especially peace builders and the national and regional Youth Councils and Pan-African Youth Council, should be supported. In addition, the UNSCR 2250 calls for governments, youth organizations and the international community to develop concrete action for youth participation in peace and security. Hence, this Strategy calls on the four countries around Lake Chad to develop national action plans for UNSCR 2250, 2419, and also calls for Territorial Action Plans developed under this Strategy to operationalize UNSCR 2250 and 2419 to ensure that the implementation of this Strategy effectively addresses the root causes of youth poverty and radicalization and provides an inclusive platform for youth to engage in the stabilization process.

The situation for women and youth remains insufficiently understood, and this Strategy calls for more context-specific research to better understand the gender dynamics of the Lake Chad crisis, and to lay the foundations for targeted and effective interventions. Research needs to be accompanied by mechanisms and methodology for improved monitoring, reporting, analysis and advocacy to ensure that a gender-and youth-sensitive approach is truly mainstreamed, and that the stabilization process leverages effectively upon the capacities of each demographic appropriately and to the full. Existing monitoring and reporting mechanisms will be supported, as will the effective and constructive engagement of civil society actors. These efforts will ensure that the development aspirations of all groups are not just taken into account but are actually realized for inclusive and cross-cutting development progress for men and women, boys and girls.

Strategic Objective 37: Protecting Women and Girls

To ensure effective protection measures that empower women and girls as beneficiaries and can effectively engage in the stabilization and peacebuilding process as well as prevention and response to violence extremism. Protect women and girls from all forms of violence, exploitation and abuse.

Strategic Objective 38: Promoting Women Participation, Empowerment and Socio-Economic Rights

Through UN, AUC and RECs frameworks for Women's Empowerment domesticated and operationalised in national plans and Territorial Action Plans for the full and effective inclusion and participation of women and girls in the stabilization, recovery and resilience process, with provision for financial resources as well as coordination framework

for the implementation of the National and Territorial Action Plan,

Strategic Objective 39: Youth Empowerment, Participation, and Protection

To ensure effective mechanisms are established to ensure that youth are protected, empowered and effectively engaged in structured dialogues, stabilization and peacebuilding process..

Strategic Objective 40: Monitoring and Accountability

To improve research, monitoring, reporting, analysis and advocacy ensures that a gender & youth-sensitive approaches are mainstreamed and that the stabilization process leverages effectively upon the capacities of girls and women.

3. MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION

This section describes the roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders to the Regional Strategy, the mechanisms considered essential to securing its objectives and the prerequisites for achieving tangible, measurable results.

Accountability and Key Principles

Implementation of this Strategy requires an inclusive and participatory approach throughout the cycle of intervention design, delivery, evaluation and adjustment. Practice must match principles in regard to transparency, integrity and accountability of implementation if this Strategy is to enjoy the support of all stakeholders necessary to the achievement of its strategic objectives.

All stakeholders to the Strategy should be accountable for the following:

- *Accountability for results:* The work of the Strategy must compete with other national and international priorities for limited resources. Additionally, the imperative to ensure that affected communities are supported in the best way possible demands that every initiative is able to demonstrate that it is an effective investment with positive impact for affected communities.
- *Accountability for funds:* All actors are accountable to both donors and communities and should work to a broad transparency framework that allows LCBC with the support of the AUC to track investments made in the sub-region for coordination, monitoring and reporting purposes.
- *Accountability for efficiency:* Demonstrate that the approach and investment into the Strategy is a cost-effective means of promoting stabilization of the sub-region, delivering maximum value for money.

Implementation Mechanisms & Actors

Steering Committee for the Implementation of the Regional Stabilisation Strategy

A Steering Committee for Lake Chad Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience will be established to oversee all aspects of implementation of this Strategy. The Steering Committee will report to the LCBC Council of Ministers, who will provide strategic oversight and quality assurance.

The Steering Committee will be composed of representatives of the national Governments of Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria, as well as Benin Republic, the African Union Commission, the Lake Chad Basin Commission, the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF), ECOWAS, ECCAS, CEMAC and the United Nations. The Steering Committee will also include representatives of the International Support Group as well as a representative of a regional civil society platform.

The Steering Committee will be chaired by the Lake Chad Basin Commission with the African Union Commission.

LCBC will establish a Secretariat to service the Steering Committee, with technical support provided by international partners.

The Steering Committee will meet at a minimum on an annual basis, rotating its meetings between the four countries of the Lake Chad littoral.

International technical and financial partners to Strategy implementation will be invited to meetings with Observer status. Regular meetings of an International Support Group (see below, Section 3.2.7) will be held in parallel with meetings of the Steering Committee, in the same location for increased coordination.

An LCBC Secretariat will be established to provide the following services in support of Strategy implementation:

- Servicing of the Steering Committee for Strategy Implementation (see 3.2.1);
- Support to regional-level civil-military cooperation (see Section 3.2.2);
- Facilitation of cross-border cooperation mechanisms, including the Lake Chad Governor's Forum, a Regional Civil Society Platform and other standing or ad hoc cross-border dialogue initiatives (See Sections 2.3.1);
- Establishment of Strategy monitoring & evaluation framework, and annual reporting (see Section 3.3.3);
- Ongoing mapping of all completed, ongoing and proposed initiatives of the Strategy, development and maintenance of Strategy Results & Resources framework, regional donor liaison and coordination (see Section 3.3.3);
- Research and knowledge management (see Section 3.3.4);
- Regional communications work (see Section 3.3.5);

Capacity development support to LCBC and support to other forms of political and cross-border cooperation are included in the processes subsection of the results and resources framework (Annex 1).

An LCBC -MNJTF Civil -Military Cooperation Cell

Effective civil-military planning and cooperation is essential to ensuring an integrated, targeted, and sequenced move from humanitarian assistance to sustainable development. The effort itself provides an opportunity to *"win hearts and minds"*, and to build trust between communities, Governments and security providers for the long-term.

In the light of lessons learnt in Somalia and elsewhere, it is vital to properly sequence the stabilization process in order to consolidate military gains in timely fashion. Delivery of humanitarian assistance, restoration of law and order and basic public services, and the resumption of development processes are all contingent upon the continued success of military operations to ensure the necessary security conditions.

Civil-Military cooperation is part of the MNJTF mandate, and future support to this is included under Strategic Objective 1 of this Strategy, which responds to the MNJTF pillar paper for Security. Support to a civilian counterpart function will also be required, however; to this end, LCBC will establish a joint Civil-Military Cooperation Cell with the

MNJTF as part of the Secretariat service it will provide to Strategy implementation (see Section 3.2.1).

The joint LCBC-MNJTF Civil Military Cooperation Cell will have a particular focus on planning, sequencing and coordinating initiatives for extending humanitarian access, for the safe cross-border return of refugees, and for the secure opening of borders in support of human mobility and cross-border trade, following bilateral Government agreements to do so.

Territorial Action Plans for the Boko Haram-affected Regions

This Strategy is specifically concerned with the key Boko Haram-affected regions of the Lake Chad Basin. These are defined as the following:

- Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states in Nigeria;
- Diffa Region in Niger;
- Region du Lac and Hajder-Lamis Region in Chad;
- The Far North and North Region of Cameroon.

The implementation framework for the operationalisation of this Strategy will comprise a set of eight Territorial Action Plans for the eight States or Regions covered by the Strategy. The Territorial Action Plans will be prepared under the authority, coordination and guidance of the national Governments of the riparian states.

This Strategy will be implemented under the oversight and coordination of the national Governments through a devolved mechanism that allows Governors' to provide direct oversight and guidance.

The Governors' concerned will:

- Ensure timely preparation of the Territorial Action Plans to operationalise the Strategy in their States/Regions, according to the approach and methodology outlined herein.
- Oversee the work of a Secretariat to be established to support implementation of each Territorial Action Plan.
- Chair coordination meeting of humanitarian and development actors working for the implementation of the Territorial Action Plans.
- Maintain liaison with relevant national authorities with competences pertinent to the successful realization of Territorial Action Plans (e.g., military forces, government line ministries, etc.).
- Advocate for the provision of the required financial and technical resources necessary to the fulfilment of the Territorial Action Plans from national and international sources.
- Participate in meetings of the Lake Chad Basin Governor's Forum (see Section 2.3.1) which will serve as the primary vehicle for the cross-border political cooperation necessary to fulfilment of the Strategy on a regional basis.

The Action Plans will be organised to a common format, common approach and methodology (see Section 2.2), and according to the nine work pillars of this Strategy (Section 2.3). They will be informed by specific State/Region

research needs, identified and met, as well as by three studies that will be conducted in every State/Region:

- Conflict analysis;
- Community perceptions of security;
- Climate change fragility assessments.

All studies should integrate a gender lens to ensure that due attention is paid to the different experiences of men and women.

Each Action Plan will be subject to a common monitoring and evaluation framework to be established by the LCBC, allowing baseline data to be pooled and combined, common indicators to be developed, and a consolidated reporting regime to be established by the LCBC at regional level.

The benefits of political and technical-level cross-border cooperation are central to the regional approach. In the course of implementation of the Territorial Action Plans, further need or opportunity for cross-border cooperation is likely to arise. Subject to approval by the Strategy Steering Committee, and of the competent national authorities responsible, the LCBC Secretariat will facilitate the establishment and meetings of unforeseen *ad hoc* or standing cross-border dialogue mechanisms considered useful to the successful implementation of this Strategy.

Technical Coordination of Pillars of Intervention

Under the direction of the LCBC with support of the AUC, a Task Force of implementing partners and other stakeholders will support technical coordination of the pillars of intervention outlined in Section 2.3.

The role of the Task Force will be to establish joint analysis, pooled data, and a common monitoring and evaluation framework for the Strategy in support of operationalising the New Way of Working that is envisaged as central to the approach and methodology of Strategy implementation (see Section 2.2).

Pillar working groups of the Task Force will be invited to meet on a bi-annual basis and report to the Knowledge Management Unit of the LCBC Secretariat to be established (Section 3.2.1).

The Critical Role of Civil Society

The importance of properly articulating civil society to the implementation of this Strategy cannot be overstated and NGOs and CBOs have a particularly significant role to play in the definition and implementation of Territorial Action Plans. Radicalisation is often fed by real and perceived local disaffection and alienation from the State, and from mainstream political life. This distance can be closed by effective NGOs and CBOs that have local credibility in seeking to build community resilience against radicalisation.

The added value of civil society is, however, not limited to the design, implementation and follow-up of action plans. They are also expected to advocate for cross-cutting issues, challenges and possible solutions that can have broader regional value and impact. In this light, the Strategy foresees a regional role for civil society organizations that can

help contribute to the broader coordination, efficacy and relevance of stabilization efforts.

In recognition of this, the Strategy will support meetings of existing regional civil society actors around Lake Chad. For effective coordination and advocacy, such platforms will be represented both at State/Region level as well as in the Steering Committee for the Strategy.

In recognition of the sensitivity of the work for prevention of violent extremism and of the potential security threats involved, all NGOs and CBOs should conduct a thorough risk analysis in relation to their proposed work, maintain ongoing relations with relevant law enforcement agencies, and— particularly in those areas that may lead to direct contact and programming with violent extremists— should remain cognizant of all national laws pertaining to the financing and facilitation of terrorist groups.

The United Nations

An updated version of the UN Strategy on Boko Haram of September 2016 was approved by the Secretary-General in the first half of April 2017. Following his Executive Committee decision 4(a) (2017/29) of 23 February, a Core Group of the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) on Boko Haram was established, comprising the Department for Political Affairs (DPA), UNDP, OCHA, UN OHCHR, and others to further integrate UN efforts across the sub-region and help guide or/and lead implementation of the updated strategy and promote a coordinated approach of the UN System in the Lake Chad Region.

Under the strategy, the UN provides technical support to the regional Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) through the AU. A key objective of the humanitarian response pillar of the updated UN Strategy remains enhancing access to humanitarian assistance, including through civil-military coordination and logistics.

This UN's approach has been designed to be responsive to the principles, strategies and practices of the UN Counter Terrorism architecture, including binding Security Council Resolutions and the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. It also seeks to promote application of, and compliance with, all international obligations, norms and standards in regard to human rights and gender equality.

In addition, the UN's approach to support to the stabilization of the Lake Chad Basin will be guided by the UN Integrated Strategy for the Sahel and in accordance with Security Council Resolution 2391 (2017).

In programme conception, ownership and implementation, the Lake Chad Basin Commission and its Member States reiterate their long-standing commitments to "best practice" approaches in regard to national ownership and particularly the *Delivering as One* approach.

At the regional level, UNDP will provide capacity development support to the Lake Chad Basin Commission role as foreseen under this Strategy, including deployment of technical advisors to support the work of the LCBC-MNJTF Civil-Military Cooperation Cell envisaged (see Section 3.2.2).

International Partners

Multilateral and bilateral partners have a key role to play in the provision of technical and financial assistance to implementation of the Strategy herein. International partners are expected to work under the overall oversight and coordination of the Lake Chad Basin Commission and its Member States and AUC, and to abide by all principles and commitments of the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action.

Ownership: The Lake Chad Countries should lead the conception and prioritisation of the processes for stabilization, recovery and development through wider participation in formulation, taking a greater lead in aid coordination, and by utilising every available opportunity to deliver through government systems. All international interventions should have the recognition and approval of the relevant national government, and regional institutions where applicable.

Harmonisation: It is critical that partners ensure that duplication is avoided through better coordination, information sharing, simplified application and implementation, and commitment to national and regional monitoring, evaluation and reporting processes.

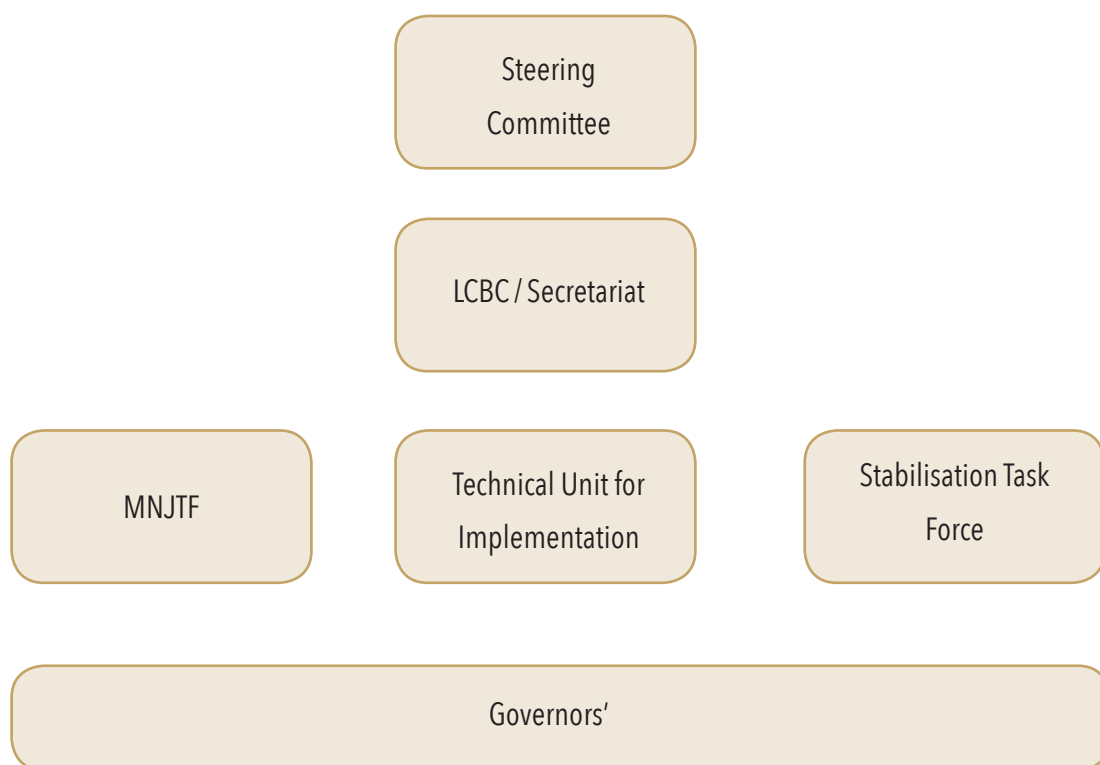
The governments of Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria have their own national programmes for response to the Lake Chad crisis as well as national development plans and sector strategies, and programmes under which resources are available to the affected areas. All actors are expected to work with and through national Governments and to align their interventions with national development plans and sectoral strategies and programmes.

It is considered essential that all assistance programmes at conception and funding explicitly demonstrate that they are filling a necessary gap and are not duplicating existing national or international efforts.

This Strategy calls for the Oslo Consultative Group to serve as the International Support Group to support implementation of the Strategy and its constituent Territorial Action Plans, with an amended composition and mandate as required. The role of the International Support Group will be to review and guide implementation of the Strategy and to discuss the financing mechanisms, financial and technical resources necessary to its realisation.

Implementation Organogram

The implementation structure outlined above is visually represented in the figure below. The structure calls for the Lake Chad Basin Commission's Ministerial Council as the apex decision-making body for implementation of the Strategy. Reporting to the Council of Ministers will be a dedicated Steering Committee, with membership as outlined in Section 3.2.1. The Lake Chad Basin Governors' Forum will report to the Steering Committee and advise the latter on progress of implementation of the Strategy. The Steering Committee and the Lake Chad Basin Governors' Forum will receive technical support by the Regional Stabilization Strategy Secretariat. This Secretariat will support in the coordination, information-sharing and follow up as regards to the Strategy as well as help facilitate the meetings of the Steering Committee and the Governors' Forum. The Steering Committee will also receive advice and support from the International Support Group as may be needed.



Ensuring Results

Strategy Duration and Phases

The intended duration of this Strategy is five years from date of adoption by the Lake Chad Basin Commission and its Member States. The Strategy may be extended, adjusted, or renewed as deemed necessary by the Steering Committee to be established for its implementation (see Section 3.1.1 above). Any such amendments must also be endorsed by the Lake Chad Basin Commission and its Member States.

The Strategy will be launched with a one-year Inception Phase, within which the following actions will be completed:

- Establishment of the LCBC Secretariat for Strategy Implementation, as defined in Section 3.1.1 above, including operationalisation of units for civil-military cooperation; facilitation of cross-border mechanisms; monitoring & evaluation and knowledge management;
- Consultations and sensitization efforts to ensure widespread buy-in, understanding and popularisation of the strategy;
- Preparation of strategic guidance note for Pillar programming, to be undertaken by the Lead Agencies appointed for the technical facilitation and coordination of each Pillar (see Section 3.2.4 above);
- Preparation of the Territorial Action Plans for the Boko Haram-affected areas listed in Section 3.2.3 above, under the oversight of each Governor, and under the overall coordination and support of the LCBC Secretariat;
- Mapping of ongoing and proposed national and international interventions for stabilization, recovery and development in the Boko Haram-affected areas to support donor coordination; definition of monitoring and

evaluation framework for the Strategy; establishment of online knowledge management system as communication and coordination tool for practitioners and other stakeholders to Strategy implementation.

- Definition and establishment of a resource mobilisation plan to multi-party Trust Fund to fund all pillars of the Strategy herein, with the exception of Strategic Objective 1 under the Security and Human Rights Pillar, which entails support to the MNJTF, for which a separate advocacy and donor resource mobilisation will be undertaken.
- Planning of the first Lake Chad Investment Forum (see Section 3.3.2, vi).

The LCBC Secretariat with the support of the AUC (see Section 3.1.1 above) will prepare an Inception Phase report for submission to the Strategy Steering Committee for endorsement, and to the LCBC Council of Ministers for final approval.

The Implementation Phase of the Strategy will commence upon approval of the Steering Committee Inception Phase report by the LCBC Council of Ministers.

Indicative Budget & Resource Mobilisation Plan

An initial indicative budget of an estimated 12 billion US dollars will be necessary to secure the objectives of the Strategy. This figure is disaggregated in Annex I to this Strategy, according to the work pillars and implementation mechanisms envisaged in this Strategy.

It should be noted, however, that the provision of technical resources will be equally as important as financial resources to the achievement of the Strategy. As detailed below, all stakeholders have something to contribute in terms of the human capital needed to secure the objectives of the Strategy.

The LCBC will develop a resource mobilisation plan for the Strategy during the Inception Phase. This will map all current and proposed national and international interventions against the Territorial Action Plans to be prepared in parallel, to identify gaps in assistance for future funding. Once the LCBC Council of Ministers has approved the Strategy Inception Phase Report, the Report, including the integrated resource mobilisation plan, will be presented to a Conference of international development partners to mark the launch of the Strategy Implementation Phase.

The resource mobilisation plan to be developed will encompass ongoing and proposed contributions from the following stakeholders to the Strategy:

National Governments

While the Strategy insists upon the principle of national ownership, the corollary of this principle is that national Governments commit to ensuring that the necessary financial and technical resources are dedicated or raised for its realisation.

In tandem with specific national programmes aimed at resolution of the Lake Chad crisis, sectoral national development plans and programmes will benefit the Boko Haram-affected regions of Lake Chad and will thus contribute to realisation of this Strategy.

Regional Economic Communities & the African Union Commission

Regional Economic Communities and the African Union Commission will be encouraged to provide the requisite financial and technical resources to ensure that the implementation of the Strategy aligns with and builds upon existing regional protocols, treaties and agreements most notably, Agenda 2063, and that it utilises the significant capacities that exist within these institutions to advance the agenda of regional integration and sustainable peace and security around Lake Chad.

The United Nations

UN core resources will continue to be dedicated to the resolution of the crisis in the Boko Haram-affected areas around Lake Chad. In addition, the UN would be available in supporting the LCBC resource mobilisation plan to be developed, in terms of international advocacy, exploration of innovative financing solutions, and facilitation of access for humanitarian and development actors in the field.

Establishing a Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) is envisioned as one of the instruments through which financing could be provided, with a specific focus on addressing priorities for which responsiveness, rapid disbursement, and pooling of risk is essential. The MPTF should help incubate new and innovative programmes; promote rapid response financing; enhance delivery capacities; and catalyse funding for partnerships with the private sector. The MPTF would however not cover pillar 1 of this Strategy on Support to the MNJTF, however, given donor restrictions on the utilisation of development assistance for military purposes.

Bilateral Donors

Bilateral donors have an enormous and indispensable role to play as financial and technical partners to the Strategy. It is intended that the development of the Territorial Action Plans will be accompanied by a process of substantive dialogue between political authorities (LCBC and Governors) and the donor community. The mechanism for this substantive dialogue will be the International Support Group for the Strategy, detailed in Section 3.2.6 above, which will, during the Inception Phase of the Strategy, oversee development of the Resource Mobilisation Plan with the LCBC. The donor community is encouraged to consider how best to ensure predictable and multi-year aid flows in support of planning as well as allowing enough time for the structural results envisaged to take effect.

In addition to significant financial contributions, bilateral donors continue to provide essential technical assistance, particularly through the provision of military personnel seconded to the MNJTF. It is envisaged that this crucial support to the MNJTF, with future needs outlined in Pillar 1 of this Strategy, will be maintained according to current assistance architecture and arrangements.

International Financial Institutions

International Financial Institutions can play a transformative role in securing the objectives of this Strategy, if the correct conditions are established to support their intervention. Attention will need to be paid to ensuring

sufficient absorption capacity and to the mitigation of political, security, economic and climate risks.

The LCBC Secretariat and the AUC will convene tripartite discussions between Governments, the UN and IFIs – the African Development Bank, the Islamic Development Bank, the World Bank and the European Investment Bank, among others – to explore the potential for innovative blended financing mechanisms combined with guarantee schemes and technical assistance to de-risk the investment climate for IFI engagement.

The Private Sector

The private sector should be mobilised in support of preparation and implementation of each Territorial Action Plan. Beyond simple corporate social responsibility investments, the private sector has a critical role to play in determining vocational training curricula, providing apprenticeships and work placements, in partnering on public financing for value-chain development.

Convening a “Lake Chad Investment Forum”, to rotate between the four countries on an annual basis, should drive significant attention and interest from major private sector actors in the sub-region and on the continent.

Communities, Civil Society & Volunteers

Civil society organisations can usefully provide an umbrella to deploy volunteers at community level, drawn from national, regional and continental initiatives. The person-to-person contact and the demonstration of solidarity at the heart of volunteerism can be a profound antidote to the extremist narratives of violent extremism.

Monitoring, Evaluation & Reporting

Limited and precious resources must be carefully targeted to ensure they achieve the most effective impact in terms of meeting the overall objective of the Strategy.

A detailed monitoring and evaluation framework will be established to accompany each Territorial Action Plan to be developed during the Inception Phase of the Strategy. The framework will comprise baseline data, targets to be achieved, and indicators to measure progress toward each Strategic Objective.

The LCBC Secretariat will ensure methodological consistency between Action Plans in order to facilitate overall monitoring and reporting of progress toward achievement of the overall Strategy.

The means of monitoring and evaluation of progress in implementing the Strategy and the accompanying Action Plans should include the following:

- The Lake Chad Basin Commission with the support of the African Union Commission should be informed of all initiatives falling under the scope of the Strategy and Territorial Action Plans. All initiatives of the Action Plan should include a monitoring and evaluation plan, with corresponding budget, and the conclusions, recommendations, and corrective action to be taken in response should be made available to the Lake Chad Basin Commission as well as to the sub-regional coordination mechanisms operating under the auspices of each Governor;

- In conjunction with international partners as necessary, the Lake Chad Basin Commission with the support of the African Union Commission will build the capacities for regionally-led monitoring and evaluation and make such expertise available for the assessment of initiatives in support of the process of stabilization, recovery and development;
- The Lake Chad Basin Commission with the support of the African Union Commission will organise independent mid-term and final reviews of progress in regard to implementation of the Strategy, utilising an inclusive and participatory approach;
- The Lake Chad Basin Commission with the support of the African Union Commission will produce an Annual Report for the public record that will collate and analyse data and trends in regard to the stabilization process as well as detail progress toward achievement of the overarching Objectives of the Strategy.

Research & Knowledge Management

All interventions of the Strategy must be evidence-based and predicated upon baseline data that in many cases will need to be collected. LCBC will hold a funding facility for research, to be unlocked upon joint request of individual Governors and of the International Support Group.

In addition to managing the research facility of the Strategy, the Lake Chad Basin Commission will establish an online Knowledge Management Platform (KMP). The KMP will serve three purposes: (1) as the go-to source for news and information on all aspects of the stabilization, recovery and development effort around Lake Chad; (2) as a repository for assessment reports, lessons learnt and good practices, both regional and global; (3) as a dynamic tool for coordination and the networking of practitioners. The KMP will be available in both English and French language versions.

Communications Strategy

While there is a clear dearth of information available to local communities in regard to the security situation, national and international responses, there is a relative thrust in media, particularly from Western sources. The Lake Chad Basin Commission will work with local and international media in all Lake Chad countries both to disseminate news and to facilitate public debate and understanding as regards the prospects and processes for stabilization, recovery and development.

Strategic communication should also be used in support of the development of counter-narratives to violent extremism. In particular, communications should promote concepts of citizenship and inculcate secular, democratic, right-based values. Additionally, culturally appropriate messaging can support achievement of key strategic objectives such as the importance of enrolling children in school or the empowerment of women.

A Regional Communications Plan will be developed by the LCBC Secretariat with the support of the AUC during the Implementation Phase of the Strategy (see Section 3.2.1).

4. ANNEX

Results and Resources Framework

Intervention Pillars	Strategic Objective	Cost (USD)
Intervention Pillar 1: Political Cooperation	SO1: Role of the LCBC: The Lake Chad Basin Commission is provided with the necessary capacities and resources to undertake its role foreseen in this Strategy, and to fulfil the mandate given it by its Member States.	10,000,000.00
	SO2: Support to the Lake Chad Basin Governors' Forum: Meetings of the Governor's Forum are facilitated, and the ascribed role of Governors respected and supported by all actors committed to the realisation of the Regional StabilisationStabilization Strategy.	2,500,000.00
	SO3: Role of the AU: African Union Commission supported to ensure alignment and integration of implementation of the Regional Stabilization Strategy with continental frameworks and processes.	2,000,000.00
	SO4: Role of the RECs: Regional Economic Communities work together to ensure inter-regional cooperation for peace, security and economic integration.	2,000,000.00
	Sub.Tot	16,500,000.00
Intervention Pillar 2: Security and Human Rights	SO5: Support to the MNJTF: MNJTF is provided with the necessary means to continue to fulfil its mandate	-
	SO6: Community Security and Civilian Law Enforcement Capacities: Community security is ensured through an increase in civilian capacities for community responsive law enforcement that extends and safeguards rule of law to all areas of the Lake Chad Basin as military forces clear territory of Boko Haram control.	48,000,000.00
	SO7: Management of Vigilantes: Disarmament and demobilisation of vigilante groups managed through appropriate initiatives for the integration of individuals into regular security agencies, or their peaceful re-orientation and reintegration into alternative employment opportunities.	80,000,000.00

	SO8: Human Rights : Security providers operate to the highest levels of integrity and respect for human rights, based on international norms and standards, through effective internal and external oversight and accountability mechanisms.	60,000,000.00
Sub.Tot		188,000,000.00
Intervention Pillar 3: Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation, Reinsertion and Reintegration of Boko Haram-associated Persons	SO9 : Screening : Persons associated with Boko Haram are received and screened according to a common regional approach, in line with international standards.	40,000,000.00
	SO10: Prosecution: National criminal justice systems in the Lake Chad Basin countries are strengthened and enabled to undertake the criminal investigation and prosecution of persons associated with Boko Haram.	80,000,000.00
	SO11: Rehabilitation: Persons associated with Boko Haram are rehabilitated according to a common regional approach linked to later reintegration activities and including psychosocial support, health, nutrition (in a first phase) and vocational training and income-generating activities (in a second phase).	80,000,000.00
	SO12: Reintegration : Persons associated with Boko Haram, members of vigilante groups/vigilance committees, returnees (including former prisoners), youth at risk, and victims of Boko Haram receive community-based reintegration support, following a harmonized regional approach.	160,000,000.00
Sub.Tot		360,000,000.00
Intervention Pillar 4: Humanitarian Assistance	SO13: Humanitarian lifesaving response : All affected populations have access to basic lifesaving assistance; including food and nonfood items, clean water, health and sanitation support regardless of their respective areas of settlement.	1,731,569,062.66
	SO14 : Voluntary, safe and dignified return and resettlement : Displaced persons are supported in returning to their communities of origin based on the principles of voluntary, safe and dignified return.	648,527,602.00
	SO15: Protection : Effective and full implementation of the Abuja Action Statement of 2016 on protection.	343,384,063.24

	SO16: Psychosocial healing and social cohesion : All affected populations receive quality psychosocial counseling services and actively participate in community cohesion and trust building interventions.	81,212,189.04
Sub.Tot		2,804,692,916.93
Intervention Pillar 5: Governance & the Social Contract	SO17 : Service Delivery : Government institutions improve social service delivery at the local level in scope and quality	3,712,300,000.00
	"SO18: Rule of Law and Accountability : Rule of Law Providers capacities are enhanced to provide effective services to citizens, civilian oversight and accountability"	48,000,000.00
	"SO19: Public participation : Citizen engagement and participation is promoted to contribute to more responsive government. "	73,100,000.00
	SO20: Cross-Border Cooperation : Cross-border and transboundary cooperation promotes mutually beneficial solutions and sub-regional integration.	48,000,000.00
Sub.Tot		3,881,400,000.00
Intervention Pillar 6: Socio-Economic Recovery and Environmental Sustainability	"SO21: Sustainable Livelihoods : Livelihoods, particularly in the agricultural sector (farming, fishing and livestock) are supported and promoted, in a way that takes account climate change and environmental sustainability. "	126,114,342.99
	"SO22: Infrastructure for Regional Economic Integration : Infrastructural investments promote an increase in economic and cultural exchange throughout the Lake Chad region and improve connectivity to the wider region"	2,614,000,000.00
	"SO23: Conducive Business Environment : A conducive business environment is fostered, through policy and legal frameworks that promote investments, trade, and economic activity"	129,200,000.00
	SO24: Environmental Sustainability : Enhancing the resilience of communities and systems around Lake Chad to environmental shocks for enhanced sustainability of interventions.	315,400,000.00
Sub.Tot		3,184,714,342.99

Intervention Pillar 7: Education, Learning and Skills	SO25: Access to Quality Education : Equitable access to education is ensured for all women, men, boys and girls.	1,088,700,000.00
	SO26: Vocational Training and Skills Acquisition : Vocational training and skills acquisition programmes help professionalize the local labour market, and are especially targeted toward individuals whose access to education has been affected by the crisis.	90,000,000.00
	SO27: Education Reform : Comprehensive and structural education system reform addresses the root causes of the crisis.	16,000,000.00
	SO28: Cultural and Social Learning : Cultural and social learning is promoted and strengthened for increased interfaith understanding, tolerance and social cohesion.	20,000,000.00
Sub.Tot		1,214,700,000.00
Intervention Pillar 8: Prevention of Violent Extremism & Building Peace	SO29: PVE Knowledge & Capacities: The drivers and enablers of violent extremism better understood at community level, and stakeholder capacities built to design and deliver measurable, targeted programming to deter, disrupt and defeat local radicalisation and recruitment efforts.	40,000,000.00
	SO30: Community Mobilisation & Counter-Narratives: Communities mobilised to challenge extremist narratives and public debate promoted to reject and denounce violent extremist ideology.	60,000,000.00
	SO31: Cross-Border Cooperation for P/CVE: Cross-border mechanisms and processes for PVE are in place and operational, and capacities developed for regional response.	40,000,000.00
	SO32: Peace Architecture: Local, national and cross-border peace architecture is established and operational to ensure early warning and early response capacities to better understand and address all causes and manifestations of conflict in the Lake Chad Basin.	29,900,000.00
Sub.Tot		169,900,000.00

Intervention Pillar 9: Gender and Women's Empowerment	SO33: Protection of Women and Girls: Effective protection measures ensure that women and girls can effectively engage in the stabilization and peacebuilding process. Protect women and girls from violence, exploitation and abuse.	50,000,000.00
	SO 34: Women's Empowerment and Participation: UN and AU frameworks for Women's Empowerment domesticated and operationalised in national plans and Territorial Action Plans for the full and effective inclusion and participation of women and girls in the stabilization process, and specific actions implemented to ensure that they are able to engage in, and benefit from, all efforts toward peace and development.	80,000,000.00
	SO35: Youth Empowerment and Participation: Effective mechanisms are established to ensure that youth are empowered and effectively engaged in structured dialogues, stabilization and peacebuilding process.	80,000,000.00
	SO36: Monitoring and Accountability: Improved monitoring, reporting, analysis and advocacy ensures that a gender & youth-sensitive approaches are mainstreamed and that the stabilization process leverages effectively upon the capacities of girls and women.	8,000,000.00
Sub.Tot		218,000,000.00
Pillar Total		12,037,907,259.92
Management and Operation Pillar	Strategic Process 1: Monitoring and Evaluation	5,000,000.00
	Strategic Process 2: Knowledge Management	5,000,000.00
	Strategic Process 3: Communication	5,000,000.00
Management and Operation Total		15,000,000.00
GRAND TOTAL		12,052,907,259.92

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African
Union



REGIONAL STRATEGY

.....
for the Stabilization, Recovery &
Resilience of the Boko Haram-
affected Areas of the
.....

Lake Chad Basin Region

