

COMMISSION DU BASSIN DU LAC TCHAD



LAKE CHAD BASIN COMMISSION

***TECHNICAL SUPPORT PROJECT FOR THE RESTORATION OF THE ECOLOGICAL
AND ECONOMIC FUNCTIONS OF THE LAKE CHAD BASIN
(PARFEBALT)***

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Terms of Reference:

**“Recruitment of a Consultant to Develop and Validate an Action Plan for
Mainstreaming Gender into Natural Resource Management and a Guide to
Gender Responsive Budgeting in the Water Sector in the Lake Chad Basin”**

June 2026

1. Background and Rationale

The Lake Chad Basin (LCB), shared by **Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria, the Central African Republic and Chad**, is one of the most important socio--ecological systems in Central Africa and the Sahel. Historically, Lake Chad covered a vast water surface of approximately 25,000 km² in the 1960s, supporting millions of people through fishing, agriculture, livestock farming and small-scale cross-border trade. However, due to a combination of pressures, including rainfall variability, climate change, overexploitation of water resources, demographic pressure, conflict, and environmental degradation, the surface area of the lake has declined significantly, sometimes to as little as 2,500 km² during the driest years.

This drastic reduction has severely undermined the production systems and livelihoods of nearly **47 million people, 80% of whom live in rural areas** and rely directly on the basin's natural resources. Women, in particular, play a key role in agricultural, fisheries and pastoral value chains. However, access by women to water resources, local governance and decision-making mechanisms remains limited, despite the vital contribution of women to family and community economies.

At the same time, the Lake Chad Basin (LCB) faces **persistent security challenges**, fuelled in particular by the activities of non-State armed groups, intercommunal conflicts over resources, land disputes and poverty. These factors worsen difficulties in accessing natural resources, and place increased pressure on women and young people, who are often the most vulnerable to social, economic and climate-related risks. The African Development Bank (AfDB) highlights that environmental degradation, droughts, floods, weak resource governance and unequal access are major factors contributing to fragility in the basin.

In response to this situation, the Member States of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) adopted the **Strategic Action Programme (SAP) 2023–2035** in 2022, focusing on integrated water resources management, climate resilience, ecosystem conservation and support for local livelihoods. **PARFEBALT**, supported by the AfDB, is one of the key operational instruments for implementing the SAP and preparing a programme of structural investments to revitalise the lake. The project places **gender-sensitive governance**, inclusive participation, the economic empowerment of women and the involvement of women in the sustainable management of natural resources at the heart of its priorities.

However, despite the significant role of women in value chains across the basin, including fishing, irrigated agriculture, processing and trade, women remain largely under--represented in decision-making bodies at both community and institutional levels. Project analyses highlight several structural challenges:

- Low representation of women in community-based natural resource management structures;
- Lack of institutional frameworks that systematically integrate gender into water-related policies and programmes
- Limited access for women to training, finance, productive equipment and commercial networks;
- Increased vulnerability to the effects of climate change and resource-related conflicts;

- Inadequate consideration of gender issues in sectoral public budgets, particularly in the water, agriculture and environment sectors;
- Insufficient methodological tools to integrate gender into natural resource planning and management at LCBC and Member States.

To address these issues, PARFEBALT explicitly provides for the development of:

1. **An Action Plan for Mainstreaming Gender into Natural Resource Management;**
2. **A Guide to Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB) in the Water Sector.**

These two instruments are mandatory project deliverables and are essential for establishing equitable, inclusive and gender-responsive governance across the basin.

This approach is also aligned with the AfDB Gender Strategy 2021–2025, which focuses on:

- The economic empowerment of women;
- Access by women to markets;
- Improved participation of women in governance and in the structural transformation of economic sectors;
- Systematic integration of gender into public policies, programmes and budgets...

The Consultant shall ensure that the Action Plan and the Gender-Responsive Budgeting Guide are strictly aligned with the commitments already set out in the PARFEBALT appraisal report, particularly the minimum quota of 30% participation of women in governance bodies, the strengthening of the economic capacities of women within fisheries value chains, gender mainstreaming across project activities, the presence of a gender specialist within the Project Management Unit (PMU), and the results framework indicators relating to gender-responsive governance and the strengthening of the economic capacities of women. In this context, the recruitment of a consultant specialising in gender, development, natural resource governance and gender-responsive budgeting is essential to:

- Conduct an in-depth analysis of gender inequalities in the Lake Chad Basin;
- Propose strategies adapted to local socio-cultural dynamics;
- Raise awareness among, and train, institutional and community stakeholders;
- Strengthen the integration of gender considerations into planning and financing mechanisms;
- Support LCBC in fulfilling regional and international commitments, including SDG 5, SDG 6, SDG 13, SDG 15 and the Lake Chad Basin Water Charter.

The development of these two instruments will enable LCBC to harmonise approaches, improve inclusive governance of natural resources, strengthen the socio-economic resilience of women and young people, and prepare a sustainable investment framework to support the ecological and economic revitalisation of the Lake Chad Basin.

2. Objectives

2.1 General Objective

Strengthen mainstreaming gender into natural resource management in the Lake Chad Basin and support Member States in adopting gender-responsive budgeting practices in the water sector.

2.2 Specific Objectives

The consultancy firm shall be required to:

- Conduct a gender diagnostic analysis of natural resource governance and the water sector in LCBC Member States;
- Develop a Strategic Action Plan for mainstreaming gender into natural resource management in the Lake Chad Basin;
- Develop a Technical Guide to Gender-Responsive Budgeting in the water sector, adapted to national frameworks;
- Organise and facilitate validation workshops with stakeholders;
- Train LCBC executives in the use of both tools;
- Define an operational implementation matrix for the Strategic Action Plan, specifying, for each action, institutional responsibilities, deadlines, estimated costs, funding sources, monitoring indicators, expected outputs, implementation risks and reporting procedures;
- Provide the Gender Expert of the Project Management Unit (PMU) with the necessary monitoring tools, including monitoring grids and reporting templates, to ensure daily compliance with the gender commitments outlined in the evaluation report.

3. Expected Outcomes

The expected deliverables from the Consultant are as follows:

- A gender diagnostic report;
- An Action Plan for gender mainstreaming;
- A Guide to Gender-Responsive Budgeting in the water sector;
- Validation and training workshop reports;
- Final documents formatted, validated and submitted to LCBC.

4. Scope of the Assignment and Responsibilities

4.1 Scope of the Assignment

The assignment shall be conducted in the Member States located within the basin area, namely Cameroon, Chad, the Central African Republic, Niger and Nigeria.

4.2 Responsibilities

The responsibilities shall include the following:

- Literature Review and Diagnostic Assessment

- Analysis of national and regional instruments, including the Lake Chad Basin Water Charter, SAP, gender policies and national legislation;
- Collection of qualitative and quantitative data through interviews, focus groups and other appropriate methods;
- Analysis of gender inequalities in relation to:
 - Access to water;
 - Governance;
 - Participation in decision-making;
 - Agro-silvo-pastoral-and fisheries value chains;
 - Integration of a specific analysis of climate vulnerability under Category 1 and the impact of security fragility, particularly the Boko Haram crisis, on access by women to resources, in order to ensure a “Do No Harm” approach;
 - Analysis and summary of primary data from the ongoing Socio-economic Vulnerability Study to identify structural barriers to access by women to equipment kits.
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➤ **Development of the Gender Action Plan**

The plan shall include:

- Strategic and operational objectives;
- Priority actions for the short, medium and long term;
- An annual implementation matrix;
- Unit costs and budgeting assumptions;
- A breakdown by project component;
- Responsibilities by stakeholder, including LCBC, the PMU, Member States and partners;
- A facilitation strategy for the LCBC “Champions” Team;
- Monitoring, evaluation and reporting procedures;
- Risk management measures and critical assumptions;
- Synergies with other project studies;
- Cross-border coordination mechanisms.

➤ **Development of the Gender-Responsive Budgeting Guide**

The guide shall:

- Propose a methodology applicable to the five Member States concerned;
- Integrate national budget cycles by proposing a cross-reference matrix with the budget classifications of the five Member States, in order to ensure interoperability of the guide; Include a chapter on alignment between programme budgets, project activities and gender-responsive indicators;
- Provide budget sheet templates applicable to LCBC and Member States;
- Include a simplified user guide for non-specialists;
- Provide examples of budgeting for gender-related actions under Components 2.1, 2.2 and 3;
- Detail the mechanisms for gender-responsive budget monitoring.

➤ **Capacity building**

- Integration of recommendations.
- Training for beneficiaries (LCBC) on the use of the developed tools.

5. Organisation of the Assignment

5.1 Duration

The total duration of the assignment is estimated at **four (4) months**.

5.2 Deliverables

The expected deliverables are as follows:

- **Validated inception report, including the methodology, schedule and stakeholder mapping;**
- **A regional and country-specific gender assessment report comprising:**
 - Institutional, socio-cultural and legal analysis;
 - Stakeholder mapping;
 - Specific barriers to access by women and young people to natural resources and governance;
 - A detailed analysis of barriers to access by women's cooperatives to conservation and processing equipment kits;
- **A budgeted and phased Gender Action Plan comprising:**
 - Strategic vision;
 - Operational priorities and objectives;
 - Priority actions,
 - Gender-responsive indicators;
 - Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism
- **A Gender-Responsive Budgeting Guide comprising:**
 - Principles and methods;
 - Gender-responsive budget templates;
 - A specific framework for the financial monitoring of the procurement and maintenance of conservation equipment kits for women's cooperatives;
 - Practical tools for ministries, local authorities and LCBC;
 - Budget performance indicators aligned with the LCBC results framework;
- **A Validation Workshop Report**
 - A summary PowerPoint presentation for institutional use
 - An Excel matrix or budget table for use by the PMU.

6. Profile of the Consultancy Firm

6.1 Institutional Expertise

- At least five (5) years of experience in Gender and Social Development;
- Experience in:
 - Development of gender plans or strategies;

- Implementation of gender-responsive budgeting (GRB);
 - Support for water governance or integrated natural resource management;
 - Capacity-building for government bodies, local authorities and communities;
- Experience in at least one Lake Chad Basin country;
- Demonstrated experience in conducting studies analysing land-related and intercommunity conflicts linked to the use of water and grazing land in the Lake Chad Basin;
- Proven track record in developing gender plans or gender-responsive budgeting guides.

The consultancy firm shall be considered favourably where the following strengths are demonstrated:

- A conflict-sensitive and social cohesion-oriented approach;
- Expertise in inclusive governance;
- Experience working with vulnerable groups, including women, young people and displaced persons;
- Previous work in the Sahelian region or the Lake Chad Basin;
- Proven tools or methods for mainstreaming gender into the water and agriculture sectors.

6.2 Minimum Team Requirements

❖ **Team Leader – Public Finance / Gender-Responsive Budgeting Expert**

- Certificate: A Master's Degree in Public Finance, Gender Studies, Social Development, Environment or a related field;
- Experience: Ten (10) years of experience in development project management, preferably in regional or cross-border programmes;
- Experience working with vulnerable groups, including women, young people and displaced persons;
- Competences:
 - Experience in inclusive governance;
 - A conflict-sensitive and social cohesion-oriented approach;
 - Project cycle management (planning, implementation, reporting, monitoring and evaluation);
 - Multi-stakeholder facilitation (local authorities, government departments, CSOs and communities);
 - Proficiency in donor standards and procedures (AfDB, EU, World Bank...);
 - Excellent writing and communication skills;
- Previous experience working in the Sahel or Lake Chad Basin regions.

❖ **Expert in Local Governance and Community Development**

- A Master's Degree in Sociology, Local Development, Political Science, Governance, Anthropology or a related field;

- Experience: At least five (5) years of experience in supporting local authorities and promoting citizen participation;
- Competences:
 - Experience in participatory assessment;
 - Experience in establishing local committees;
 - Experience in capacity-building for community organisations;
 - Sound command of social inclusion, gender-sensitive and conflict-sensitive approaches;

❖ **Expert in Environment and Sustainable Natural Resource Management**

- A Master's Degree in Environment, Forestry, Water and Sanitation, Climate Change or a related field;
- At least five (5) years of experience in environmental projects;
- Competences:
 - Knowledge of environmental policy;
 - Experience in environmental management;
 - Experience in the management of fragile ecosystems;
 - Knowledge of soil restoration techniques, agroecology and water management.

7. Logistics

- LCBC shall provide strategic documents and facilitate access to stakeholders.
- The Consultant shall be responsible for logistical organisation and travel arrangements.

8. Supervision

- Supervision: LCBC Technical Department;
- Coordination: PARFEBALT Project Management Unit (PMU);
- The Consultant shall work under the direct technical supervision of the Gender and Social Inclusion Expert of the PMU. The Gender and Social Inclusion Expert shall ensure that the tools produced meet the project's day-to-day management needs and comply with AfDB Gender Marker 2 standards. The consultancy firm shall participate in the technical meetings of the Monitoring Committee.