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*International School  
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# **The security issues in the Lake Chad Basin**

*Proceedings of the Maroua Seminar on 14 and 15 September 2018*

## **AXIS 1 :**

*Phenomenological  
approach and  
cartography of a  
multivariate insecurity  
in the Lake Chad Basin*

## **AXIS 2 :**

*The humanitarian-  
development-security  
continuum in the Lake  
Chad Basin: taking up  
the challenges of  
sustainability, security  
and development*



*African Journal of International Security*

# Table of Content

Table of Content .....	1
The Lake Chad Basin: an underworld and insecure space-time which requires a coordinated and global action for a sustainable security.....	5
Axis 1: Phenomenological approach and cartography of a multivariate insecurity in the Lake Chad Basin .....	13
Boko Haram in The Lake Chad Basin: A Transnational Insurgency .....	15
Division or fragmentation of Boko Haram? Recent developments and upcoming risks for the Lake Chad Basin .....	41
Counter-discourse and language of resilience by young people against Boko Haram in the Far-North region of Cameroon .....	67
Vulnerabilities and Identities: An Endosemic Analysis of a Culture of Survival in Lake Chad .....	89
Cross-Border Crime, Jihadist Terrorism and Trafficking in the Lake Chad Basin: Phenomenology of Threats and Outline Solutions.....	111
AXIS 2: The humanitarian-development-security continuum in the Lake Chad Basin: taking up the challenges of sustainability, security and development.....	135
Humanitarianism, refugees, IDPs narratives: Comparative study of Cameroon, Chad and Nigeria .....	137
Resolving Humanitarian Crises after the Cycle of Refugees, Displaced Persons and Decommissioned Structures : The Case of Humanitarian Crises in Darfur (Western Sudan), Northern CAR and South-East Niger ...	155
Prospects for the resilience of the populations which are victims of insecurity in the Lake Chad Basin. ....	187
Adapting Africa's Collective Security Frameworks to Lake Chad Basin's Predictable Threats: a case for Prospective Strategy .....	211
Lessons and prospects for a lasting stabilisation of the Lake Chad Basin ...	233
Closing Remarks For Rasi Maroua.....	255

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# Editorial

## The Lake Chad Basin: an underworld and insecure space-time which requires a coordinated and global action for a sustainable security

By Brigadier General BITOTE André Patrice  
DG / EIFORCES

The Lake Chad basin, in its broadest sense, is located in a vast area covering the eastern part of the Sahel region of Africa and covers a surface area of 2,381,636 km<sup>2</sup>, bordering the southern edge of the Sahara Desert (geographical basin). It consists of a network of underground and surface water, connecting the Hoggar (Algeria) to the Ténéré (Niger / Chad), Tibesti and Ennedi (Chad), the North East of Nigeria and northern Cameroon<sup>1</sup>. More specifically, the said “active” Lake Chad basin or “conventional basin” covers meanwhile a surface area of 967 000 km<sup>2</sup>. It contains most of the surface water, found in the southern basin. This area corresponds to the border area of the four countries along the lake, namely: Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria and Chad. These countries are organised around the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC), founded on May 22, 1964 with a view to ensuring the concerted management of water and other resources of the Lake Chad Basin<sup>2</sup>.

One of the specificities of the Lake Chad Basin lies in the hetero-

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<sup>1</sup> Michel Luntumbue “The LCBC and security challenges of the Lake Chad Basin” Analysis Note for the Research and Information Group on Peace and Security, No. 14, December 2, 2014 in OBS2011-54\_GRIP\_NOTE-14\_CBLT .pdf

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

geneous nature of its population, which accounts for the coexistence of several communities (Hausa, Djoukoum, Margui, Mousgoum, Massa, Ibo, Choa Arabs, Kotoko, etc.). The population that occupies this area today is estimated at nearly 30 million people living mainly from fishing, livestock, agriculture and trade. Moreover, the area has for centuries become a major intersection of trade and cultural exchanges<sup>3</sup>. However, since the early 1980s, the lake area is constantly decreasing due to several factors (climate fluctuations, decadent rainfall and over-exploitation of the lake's water for irrigation needs). With approximately 2,000 km<sup>2</sup> today, the lake area was nevertheless estimated at 25 000 km<sup>2</sup> before 1973, a decline of about 90% of the area that the lake occupied in 1960<sup>4</sup>. Clearly, this gradual draining of the lake is a source of conflict and insecurity around its perimeter.

The Lake Chad basin is also a vast economic area where the formal and informal rub shoulders, at the same time it is a place of permanent reproduction of criminal dynamics. Indeed, we are witnessing the resurgence of a protean insecurity, notably characterised by the proliferation of various forms of trafficking (weapons of all sorts, human beings and organs), cattle rustling and vehicles, jack hostages for ransom, the emergence of armed groups enrolling veterans, activities of "Highway robbers", etc. Meanwhile, the Lake Chad Basin is becoming the scene of a permanent identity conflict. These different phenomena of insecurity, combined with the emergence of Boko Haram in this area, have adverse consequences for the riparian States. Apart from the growing psychosis and growing population movements, the atmosphere of insecurity also causes disruption of the local economy, mainly based on agriculture and livestock.

Indeed, the violence perpetrated by the terrorist group Boko Haram in the northeast of Nigeria have gradually extended over parts of

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Emmanuel Salliot, quoted by Michel Luntumbue, *ibid*.

neighbouring countries including Cameroon, Niger and Chad, with devastating impacts on agricultural activities and thus food safety. However, agriculture is the main source of income for 80 to 90% of rural households in the Lake Chad basin. Also, the feeling of insecurity and the threat of kidnapping posed by terrorists, have deconstructed the lifestyles of these farming communities. Consequently, agricultural production has fallen sharply, increasing by the same fact the food risk in the areas affected by the attacks. The forced population movement, due to violence has increased the pressure on host communities, which, correspondingly, tends to exacerbate an already serious humanitarian situation and amplify the risk of social tensions.

At the same time, pastoral activities have also experienced deep disturbance. Cattle are being targeted by terrorists or abandoned by herd's men who fear for their safety. Due to security constraints, some borders were closed and some areas restricted from access to pasture; anything that tends to accentuate the tensions between farmers and herders in this area.

In 2016, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) estimated that 11 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance in the Lake Chad Basin. According to FAO, this area would host one of the largest humanitarian crises in the world. For the State of Cameroon alone, FAO estimates that about 4 million people living in the area are affected by the violence (particularly in the Far North), 1.6 million people would require humanitarian assistance, 1,445,100 people would be a situation of food insecurity, including 31,000 children suffering from severe malnutrition, and 251 000 people are in forced migration situation<sup>5</sup>. To this must be added the decline of the tourism industry due to the desertion of the touristic sites in hazardous areas.

Faced with this rampant and widespread insecurity, affected coun-

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<sup>5</sup> See [www.fao.org/emergencies](http://www.fao.org/emergencies) or [www.fao.org/resilience](http://www.fao.org/resilience)



tries have taken a number of measures to curb the phenomenon. Within the civilian population have emerged self-defence structures and popular “justice”, baptised vigilance committees involved mainly in rural areas. At the State level, hardening of the exceptional laws against aggravated theft and the creation of specialised units to fight against serious cross-border crime have been initiated, for example, the establishment of the Central Office for the repression of banditry (COR-B) in the CAR, and the creation of the Versatile Group of Intervention of the National Gendarmerie (GPIGN) in Cameroon, Operational Commands and Light Intervention Battalion (BLI) later became Rapid Intervention Battalion (BIR) to limit insecurity and to close down the “highway robbers” and other criminal gangs.

In terms of bilateral cooperation, intelligence sharing, as well as the deployment of joint actions, enabled Cameroon and the CAR to win a number of military victories. Similarly, between October and December 2005, the joint commissions held between Cameroon and Chad, and CAR and Cameroon resulted in a tripartite initiative Cameroon-Chad-CAR for collaborative management of security issues at their common borders. This is the idea of setting up a joint security force of the Lake Chad Basin Commission, initiated in 1994 between the spring countries, to curb the insecurity phenomena in the region, which eventually led to the creation of the Force Multinationale Mixed (Multinational Joint Task Force) of the Lake Chad Basin (MNJTF-LCBC) in 1998. After a long latent period, the said force will be reactivated in 2012 following the resurgence of the Boko Haram sect. In November 2014, the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU) officially approved its establishment<sup>6</sup>. In its current form<sup>7</sup>. The MNJTF-LCBC is deployed as part of the fight against terrorism in the region.

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<sup>6</sup> See [https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Force\\_multinationale\\_mixte](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Force_multinationale_mixte)

<sup>7</sup> Apart from Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria and Chad, which are full members of the LCBC, a non-member country has joined, Benin.

Despite these measures, there is still insecurity at a level, which is still incompatible with the goals of sustainable stability and development of the riparian States. Many researchers have so far tried to explain this resilience by advancing structural factors ranging from the carelessness of political governance to economic and social dysfunctions, passing through the ecological dangers. Based on analysis, these factors only partly explain the exacerbation of violence<sup>8</sup>. They provide, therefore, a partial explanatory reading of insecurity maintained by Boko Haram and other criminal groups in the Lake Chad Basin.

Hence the question at the heart of these studies, and whose examination animated the discussions and guided the contributions of researchers mobilised for the occasion, namely: how to understand the sedimentation of a widespread and multivariate insecurity in then Lake Chad basin and what would be the defence and security scheme most appropriate for sustainable neutralisation of various forms of threats manifested in this area?

Based on analyses, the insecurity in the Lake Chad Basin is a multifaceted and complex phenomenon, which requires that the entire thickness of its temporality and spatiality be taken into account. Indeed, a strictly cyclical reading of security issues in the Lake Chad Basin would be reductive.

In fact in 1958, Fernand Braudel wrote: *“For me, the story is the sum of all possible stories - a collection of trades and points of view, of yesterday, today, tomorrow (...) The only mistake, in my opinion, would be to choose one of these stories and exclude the others. It was, it would be a historical mistake”*<sup>9</sup>. For this author, *“the short time is the most capricious, the most deceptive peri-*

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<sup>8</sup> Read Harouna Barka, “The memory of battles in the Logone and Chari and their identity and political issues,”

<sup>9</sup> Fernand Braudel, “History and social science: the long term”, in *Annals. Economies, Societies and Civilisations*, 13th year, No. 4, 1958, p. 734.

*ods*<sup>10</sup>”; hence his dislike for the “event” and “grave suspicion” in relation to a traditional story<sup>11</sup>, the so-called event.

However, if the Braudelian perspective is highly relevant in the referral phenomenon of rampant insecurity in the Lake Chad Basin, it cannot evade the more cyclical short time and the average period that considers the ruptures which in temporality, influence in a more or less decisive manner, the evolution in the security situation, from a shift in the rationality and strategies of actors present. This means that the long term and the situation will come together in our framework, from a perspective quite complementary and holistic, that of applied geopolitics.

From this perspective, we can agree that the insecurity in the Lake Chad Basin is certainly a story written in the long term; coastal States have inherited a pre-colonial and post-colonial past, which generates insecurity. Moreover, insecurity in this area has the ability to reproduce, mutate and reinvent itself at the mercy of changes in repressive policies of States and the emergence of new criminogenic circumstances. These circumstances in turn generate new violence vectors and are the emergence of new entrepreneurs of insecurity with sometimes new modes of action that are beyond the conventional understanding of spatiality and theatricality of threats.

Sub regional initiatives at the ECCAS and the LCBC favouring essentially military-repressive solutions have been tried but with limited effectiveness in terms of the resilience of criminal groups. Also, the traditional method of approach, highly institutionalised and heavy mechanism to stem insecurity in this area needs to be rethought or addressed once more in its very essence. Anything that now calls for a critical look on classic formulas of combating crime and, therefore, to call for new paradigms on which security

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., P. 728.

<sup>11</sup> The traditional story to Braudel is that which for long, dominated the thinking of historians, which focuses attention on the short time, the individual, the event.

operations in the Lake Chad Basin could be built.

This shows the relevance of a global, coordinated, multi-sectorial and multi-scalar action involving both public and private sector stakeholders in defence and security in an approach that links between the army and the nation, between the civilian and the military/security component, putting humans (being both material and perceptual) in the heart of schemes and security devices!

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# Axis 1

**Axis 1: Phenomenological approach and cartography of a multivariate insecurity in the Lake Chad Basin**



# Boko Haram in The Lake Chad Basin: A Transnational Insurgency

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PhD in Political Science, International Relations of IRIC

## Introduction

On 19 February 2013, the family of French citizen Tanguy Moulin-Fournier, while on a tourism trip, was abducted in the area of Dabanga, located in the Far North of Cameroon. On 4 April 2014, three Italian and Canadian priests were also abducted at Tchéré, while 10 Chinese workers suffered the same fate at Waza on 17 May 2014<sup>1</sup>. Not far from there, in N'Djamena, a suicide bomber blew himself up near a police academy on 15 June 2015. About a month later, on 11 July, another terrorist blew up his explosive load at the entrance to the market of Chad's political capital, resulting in 16 deaths and 80 injured<sup>2</sup>. More so, on 6 February 2015, Niger's southern towns of Diffa and Bosso, were attacked by Islamists from Nigeria. All these facts demonstrate the internationalisation of attacks by Boko Haram which began in 2012 and have now become a major factor in the practices of this organisation. Since

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<sup>1</sup> Freedom C. Onuoha, "*A Danger not to Nigeria alone – Boko Haram's transnational Reach and regional Responses*," Peace and Security Series, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Abuja, November 2014, available on (<http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/nigeria/11066.pdf>), consulted on 22 February 2017, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Kana, 2015, quoted by Henshaw Orock Arrey, "Terrorism in Sub-Saharan Africa : the case of the Boko Haram (Islamic State province in West Africa)," in Daniel Evans (dir.), *Journal of the International Relations and Affairs Group*, Volume V, Issue II, 2015, p. 265.



the beginning of this year, including 2014 and 2015, the regional spread of terrorist threats has become a fact and a serious concern either for the leaders of the region or for the scientific community.

In learned circles, the Boko Haram phenomenon is assessed in various ways and has extensive literature. A first major trend presents this sect as an insurgency and internal terrorist movement. It is not only the expression of political rationale in the north of the country but also the consequence of a faulty national economic policy<sup>3</sup>. Contrary to this national approach its relevance is unquestionable, as we note a multiplication in regional and transnational analyses of the Boko Haram phenomenon. According to researchers, such impetus can be explained by close socio-historical ties, dysfunctions within the Lake Chad Basin States, and the historical ambition of reconstructing the Sokoto Empire<sup>4</sup>. Without limiting themselves to the transnational extent of the threat, many writers have shown interest in the material and immaterial consequences on Nigeria and neighbouring States<sup>5</sup>. On the contrary, other publications focus on the national and regional efforts to combat Boko Haram. They report on actions undertaken, shortcomings and potential avenues for improvement<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Marc-Antoine Perouse de Montclos, “*Nigeria’s Interminable Insurgency? Addressing the Boko Haram Crisis*,” Research Paper, Africa Programme, Chatham House, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, September 2014, available on ([https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/field/field\\_document/20140901BokoHaramPerousededeMontclos\\_0.pdf](https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/field/field_document/20140901BokoHaramPerousededeMontclos_0.pdf)), consulted on 15 March 2017; Lucky E. Asuelime, David J. Ojochenemi, *Boko Haram: The Socio-Economic Drivers*, New York, Springer, 2015.

<sup>4</sup> Leon Koungou, *BokoHaram. Parti pout tuer*, Paris, L’Harmattan, 2016 ; Ouba Abdoul-Bagui, « De la contagion islamiste dans l’extrême-Nord du Cameroun : risques et limites », *Vigie/Bulletin d’Analyse Stratégique et Prospective*, N° 003 and 004, EIFORCES, December 2014, pp. 39-46; Pauline Guibbaud, *BokoHaram: Histoire d’un islamisme sahélien*, Paris, L’Harmattan, 2014.

<sup>5</sup> Henri MbarkoutouMahamat, « Réfugiés et personnes déplacées au Cameroun », in Issa Saibou (dir.), *Les effets économiques et sociaux des attaques de BokoHaram dans l’Extrême-Nord du Cameroun*, Kaliao, Spécialedition, University of Maroua, November 2014, pp. 13-33; Mark BolakFunch, “Border Shutting and Shrived of Human and Merchandise on the Nigeria-Cameroon Passage of Banki and Limani,” in Issa Saibou (dir.), *ibid.*, pp. 35-62 ; Assiatou& Mina Kaci, *Enlevée Bar BokoHaram*, Neuilly-sur-Seine, Editions Michel Lafon, 2016.

<sup>6</sup> Olivier Hanne, Guillaume Larabi, *Jihâd au Sahel. Menaces, opération Barkhane, coopération régionale*, Paris, Bernard Giovanangeli Editeur, 2015; Augustin Charles

Despite their relevance, these studies and their various approaches do not deeply explain the transnationalisation of Boko Haram. Reference to the word “regionalisation”, to report on the transnational scope of the threat<sup>7</sup>, seemingly limits the analysis to the simple spread of this protest from Nigeria. This would be a neglect of the important wave and stakeholders of insurgencies within neighbouring States, who play an important role in the transnational breakthrough of this movement. Besides, if researchers like Guibbaud note the sharp ambition of Boko Haram to institute a caliphate in the region, they however remain silent on the mechanisms and underlying logic towards the establishment of this caliphate.

It is at this point that comes in the core question of this study, notably: how do we understand the regionalisation of Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin, mindful of the cross-border system of Islamist protest and the spread of terror? Like this original hypothesis, the regionalisation of Boko Haram seems to be concretised by transnational insurgency whose goal is to reshape the politico-territorial order in the region and to establish a Caliphate with multinational scope.

From a conceptual angle, insurgency, from the Latin *insurgere* (meaning “to stand up”), refers to the planned, methodical and sustainable use of violence to overthrow an existing order<sup>8</sup>. Yet, for the purpose of this study, this concept shall be detached from its stato-national definition to fit a multinational scope, from where the concept of transnational insurgency comes. This means the production of violence which moves from an internal territorial epicentre and which, thanks to multifaceted military manoeuvres,

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A. Mbia, « La “Mobilisation nationale contre BokoHaram” au Cameroun : une objectivation du triptyque peuple-armée-nation », *Vigie, op. cit.*, pp. 81-85; Zachée Betché, *Le phénomène BokoHaram : au-delà du radicalisme*, Paris, L’Harmattan, 2016 ; Jean Eudes Biem, « Evolution du statut polémologique de Bako Haram face à stratégie globale des Nations Unies en Afrique centrale: esquisse de prospective intégrée », *Vigie, op. cit.*, pp. 73-80.

<sup>7</sup> Freedom C. Onuoha, “*A Danger not to Nigeria alone...*,” *op. cit.*

<sup>8</sup> David Galula, *Contre-insurrection. Théorie et pratique*, Paris, Economica (trad.), 2008, p. 12.

through cross-border affinities and a favourable societal situation, goes beyond borders, to establish a new geopolitical and territorial order. Different from the simple transnationalisation of an insurgency movement from a country, transnational insurgency means the existence, abroad, of a pre-existing insurgency wave for the export of violence.

In this respect, this article seeks to analyse the regionalisation of Boko Haram under the lens of transnational insurgency as defined herein above. It seeks to understand the specific micro-insurgency contexts of each State which ease and expand the Boko Haram project in the sub-region. Otherwise, it aims to analyse the parallel lines of the linkages between a mega Boko Haram insurgency which moves from Nigeria to other localised and heterogeneous situations in neighbouring countries which stick to Boko Haram as an opportunity. All of which could help envisage other solutions for a better response.

For data interpretation, transnationalism stands as the most adapted theory because it sheds light on the capacity of pivotal players to question the monopoly of violence and territoriality, consecrated by the Westphalian sovereignty<sup>9</sup>. To better study States affected by transnational “turbulences”<sup>10</sup>, the privileged methodological approach is geopolitics<sup>11</sup>. More so, this shall be drafted thanks to scientific publications, official documents, as well as data collected from the Far North of Cameroon, following the direct and indirect observation model.

To develop the main idea, this study will begin by examining the transnational wave of Boko Haram on the basis of political protest, before analysing its ambition to establish a revolutionary politico-territorial order.

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<sup>9</sup> Carl Schmitt, *La notion de politique. Théorie du partisan*, Paris Flammarion, 1992, pp. 42-43.

<sup>10</sup> Jean Jacques Roche, *Théorie des relations internationales*, 8e édition, Paris, Montchrestien, 2010, pp. 114-118.

<sup>11</sup> See Aymeric Chauprade, *Géopolitique. Constantes et changements dans l'histoire*, Paris, Ellipses, 2003, pp. 9-12; also see Pascal Lorot, François Thual, *La géopolitique*, 2e édition, Paris Montchrestien, 2002.

## **A transnational wave of insurgency**

Describing the specific nature of transnational insurgency, especially in the context of the Lake Chad Basin, goes through the elaboration of a type of transnational projection of armed groups.

### **Type of transnational projection of armed groups**

The objective of this exercise is to reveal the specific feature of projection done by Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin. On the basis of criteria for classification such as: privileged references, ultimate goal, as well as the methods and techniques used, we can distinguish four types of projections. For operational reasons, they shall be classified under two groups, notably apolitical and political types on the international level. It is also worth noting that none of these types is exclusive. An armed group can very well commit itself under two projection forms in a parallel manner.

### **Types of apolitical projections**

First, it is important to lift any ambiguity which may appear in our approach. Indeed, the two types of transnational projections studied here are referred to as apolitical because of the non-political nature of their ultimate goal in foreign countries. The groups committed to this logic may very well have political claims within their frontiers of origin, but once outside, they take an apolitical stand. This can be seen under predatory projection and (re)habilitation projection.

### **Predatory projection**

There exist several situations where armed groups from one State attack another, not for any claims or protest whatsoever but to carry out predatory operations on foreign people. This form of transnational projection seeks to illegally amass riches. The ultimate goal is personal or collective enrichment. In fact, criminals or rebels based in a State most often nurse the ambitions of covetousness on the border communities located on the other side.

The intention is even stronger when the target zone is not adequately supervised by defence and security forces, but also when there exist clandestine cross-border trafficking networks.

This is the case of more or less violent raids recorded in the Lake Chad Basin where looting is a frequent habit of armed groups<sup>12</sup>. In this example, the criminals cross the border, not for whatsoever political motivation, but to amass riches. The absence of political claim is also noted for the case of an organisation looking for an environment for (re) rehabilitation.

### **(Re) habilitation projection**

In some cases, an armed group may project outside to move away from the threat lurking around it in its State of origin. It seeks a non-hostile “host territory”, where it can build or rebuild its forces properly carry out operations in its own country. It is in this logic that is found the mechanism of rear bases and tactical response bases. We know of situations in Africa where armed groups benefited from the passive nature or support of foreign States favourable to the establishment of rebel camps on their territories. We notably think of the use of the territory of Sudan as rear base by the rebels of the Ugandan People’s Democratic Army (UPDA). And this, with the support of President Omar al Bashir, in exchange for their operational support in the fight against the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA)<sup>13</sup>. The ultimate goal of this establishment abroad was to protect itself from the military pressure of the Ugandan government and to reconstitute their force, to properly carry out the fight against the Ugandan People’s Defence Forces (UPDF).

This situation of hospitality may however change in the event of breakdown of solidarity by foreign authorities. In this case, the armed group adopts dissimulation as technique for conservation

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<sup>12</sup> See Issa Saïbou, « La prise d’otages aux confins du Cameroun, de la Centrafrique et du Tchad : une nouvelle modalité du banditisme transfrontalier », *Polis*, Vol. 13, Numéro 1, février 2006, pp. 119-146.

<sup>13</sup> See Tim Allen and Koen Vlassenroot, *The Lord’s Resistance Army: Myth and Reality*, London, Zed Books, 2010.

and preservation. The tense nature of its relations with foreign armed forces may lead to hostile operations towards the group, from where the choice of enclaved areas for the establishment of camps. Escaping the “*Iron Fist*” operation carried out in 2004 by the Ugandan army in South Sudan, the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) entered Congo and hid in the Garamba national park, in the Eastern Province in 2005. However, it clashed with the Congolese army and those of the region under operation *Lightning Thunder*, launched on 14 December 2008<sup>14</sup>. This operation fundamentally disturbed the “rest” of an organisation which had come to the DRC to reconstitute its forces and resume combat in Uganda. Under the logic of rehabilitation, its intention in Congo or South Sudan was not similar to those of groups committed under political projection.

### **Types of political projection**

In this form of transnational projection, the armed group neither loots nor prevents whatsoever military pressure. Rather, it seeks to further its political and geopolitical interests on a foreign soil. It may push for the adoption of a specific policy, on the part of another government, just as it may seek to dominate a foreign population. In this context, we distinguish the terrorist projection and the insurgency projection.

### **The terrorist projection**

It corresponds to a situation of export of violence with huge psychological impact in foreign States. The operations carried out generally target the population and, often, the armed forces. Terror spreads through the multiplication of massacres against civilians. For the assailants, this is an alternative and indirect<sup>15</sup> strategy to escape from the fire power of State forces. Fundamentally, they seek to create panic and shock within the population, to later on compel the government to carry out or avoid implementing a given policy deemed obnoxious by the armed group. This form of

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<sup>14</sup> Peter Eichstaedt, *First kill your family: child soldiers of Uganda and the Lord’s Resistance Army*, Chicago, Lawrence Hill Books, 2009.

<sup>15</sup> Lucien Poirier, *Stratégie théorique II*, Paris, Economica, 1987, p. 128.

violence gives a strong stand and draws the attention of the populations and government authorities<sup>16</sup>.

The Kenyan State suffered this type of projection on 21 September 2013. On that sad day, the Westgate mall was attacked by Al-Shabab Islamists, a group based in Somalia. The ideological nature of that attack was clear, mindful of the separation of Muslims and Christians during the killings<sup>17</sup>. The political dimension of the attack resided in the will of Islamists to punish the Kenyan government for its military intervention on Somalian soil in 2008 against the Shabab. It is also from that angle that we can analyse the Kampala attacks of 11 July 2010. For Uganda is also engaged on Somalian territory under the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). From these examples, we note that terror is used to influence State policies and to promote ideologies. The prospect of insurgency shall on its part be deeper, ambitious and more elaborate.

### The insurgency projection

Different from the terrorist projection, the insurgency projection does not limit itself at the simple spread of terror among the populations and the simple exercise of pressure on government, but rather seeks to overthrow the governing order of a foreign country and to take long-term control of at least part of its territory. It clearly appears in this case that the ambition is higher. It all begins from the epicentre where most of the insurgency players come from. They merge with foreign insurgency players (**Map 1**) to overthrow the ruling order, be it just on a part of the territory which they shall control and govern.

Yet, considering the nature and importance of the ambition, it is necessary that the group had sufficient resources to defeat the armed forces of the targeted State. Concretely, insurgency projection involves fierce battles with foreign troops, given that it seeks to conquer and control the territory and dominate all those living there. The example

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<sup>16</sup> Philippe Braud, *Violences politiques*, Paris, Seuil, 2004, p. 41.

<sup>17</sup> Newton KahumbiMaina, "A history of Christian-Muslim relations in Kenya," in Gordon L. Heath, David K. Tarus, *Christian Responses to Terrorism: The Kenyan Experience*, Ontario, Pickwick Publications, 2017, p. 22.

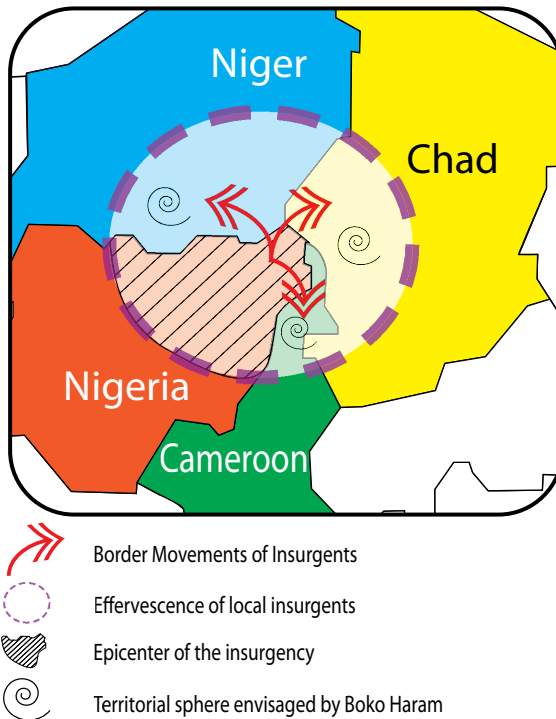


of the Islamic State (IS), with its projection in Syria, is very illustrative in this respect. However, for this study, we would focus on the projection of Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin.

## **Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin: Mechanism and logic of transnational insurgency**

Keen attention to the regionalisation of Boko Haram takes into account the conceptual and theoretical relevance of what we call “transnational insurgency”. It operates following a well specified mechanism and logic which should be analysed to service the overarching concept of this article. Overall, we can note that transnationalisation begins from an epicentre then spreads to other neighbouring States.

**Map 1:** Sample of transnational insurgency (Boko Haram).



**Source:** Map sketched by the author.



## The Nigerian epicentre

By epicentre, we mean a place of strong internal protest, from where the insurgency wave begins and later spreads to other States (**Map 1**). This is a politico-territorial entity, subject to protest carried out by insurgents, which control at least one internal space, from where they would project from outside.

Nigeria is faced with an Islamist insurgency since 2003, when the first riots took place between Boko Haram and the police. It worsened in 2009 after the execution of Muhammad Yusuf. The country has since witnessed real chaos perpetrated by a multi-secular Islamist movement. It gets inspiration from figures such as Usman Dan Fodio<sup>18</sup> and Muhammad Marwa<sup>19</sup>. The birth of Boko Haram in 2002 with Muhammad Yusuf is an inheritance from this ancient preaching. From both Wahhabi<sup>20</sup> and Salafi<sup>21</sup> trends, despite the syncretic tendencies in the practice, this sect envisions the purification of the society and the political system.

Beyond the ideological dimension, the insurgency also originates from the general precarious situation in the north of the country caused by bad governance and corruption. To this can be added socio-political protest championed by the leaders of the north of the country against the power of the south represented by Goodluck Jonathan<sup>22</sup>. This means the roots of Boko Haram also emerge from the malfunctioning of the national socio-political and socio-economic structure.

On an operational level, after the years of peaceful action under Mohammed Yusuf, the actions of the sect became very violent

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<sup>18</sup> SeyniMoumouni, *Vie et oeuvre du Cheikh Uthmân Dan Fodio (1754-1817) : De l'islam au soufisme*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2008; David Robinson, *Muslim Societies in African History*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004.

<sup>19</sup> Marc-Antoine Perouse de Montclos, *Villes et violence en Afrique noire*, Paris Karthala, 2002, p. 237.

<sup>20</sup> Jean-Philippe Conrad, « Origines et réalités de l'islamisme activiste », in Gérard Chaliand (dir.), *Les stratégies du terrorisme*, Paris, Desclée de Brouwer, 1999, p. 22.

<sup>21</sup> Anne-Clémentine Larroque, *Géopolitique des islamismes*, Paris, PUF, 2014, pp. 23-29.

<sup>22</sup> Sur la dimension sociopolitique de Boko Haram, read Pauline Guibbaud, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

following the execution of this leader in 2009. Under the lead of Abubakar Shekau, the jihadists launched a bomb attack at a police station at Kankara, in Katsina State, on 20 June 2011. On 25 August 2011, they repeated the same act against two police stations in Gombi, in Adamawa State. We can also highlight the attacks on schools such as those of Mamudo (July 2013), Gujba (September 2013) and even BuniYadi (February 2014), where insurgents massacred students and teachers, while others were either raped or abducted<sup>23</sup>.

To tackle this, the government declared a state of emergency in December 2011. It then created a *Joint Task Force* (JTF) comprising 3200 men<sup>24</sup>, charged with carrying out *Operation Restore Order* in Borno State. Yet, this was a form of militarisation of police missions with numerous dysfunctions. Even the *7th Infantry Division* which took over from the JTF in 2013 did not succeed in spite of its initial 8000 troops<sup>25</sup>. In all, the low discrimination between insurgents and civilian populations in the conduct of repressive operations<sup>26</sup> contributed in the loss of popular support which is very important in revolutionary war.

The consequence was the rise of the number of sect members from 4 000 in 2009 to between 6 000 and 8 000 in 2014<sup>27</sup>. A plus which came to add to its multiple internal and international funding networks. It also equipped itself, in 2014, with huge weaponry such as light armoured vehicles used for patrols, tactical infantry vehicles such as the BTR-4E, MBT, T-72 and T-55, all seized from Nigerian forces<sup>28</sup>. With these capacities, it captured, from February

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<sup>23</sup> Assiatou& Mina Kaci, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

<sup>24</sup> Don Michael Adeniji, *Nigeria: Boko Haram and National Security*, Abuja, Garmond Projects Limited, 2015, p. 209.

<sup>25</sup> *ibid.*, p. 208.

<sup>26</sup> Baga village, in Borno State, was already, in April 2009, the centre of numerous extrajudicial executions, unlawful arrests, not forgetting that more than 200 people were killed or injured by the Nigerian forces. See M.-A. Perouse de Montclos, “*Nigeria’s Interminable Insurgency?...*,” *op. cit.*, p. 15.

<sup>27</sup> Interview under Chatham House Rule, Abuja, July 2014, quoted by *ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

<sup>28</sup> Joseph Dempsey, “*Boko Haram’s armoured fighting vehicles*”. Military Balance Blog, 2015, February 18, available on (<https://www.iiss.org/en/militarybalanceblog/blogsections/2015-090c/february-8272/boko-haram-armoured-fighting-vehicles-3dff>), consulted on 16 February 2018.

2015, the greater part of the Borno, Adamawa and Yobe States. In other words, Boko Haram became a quasi-conventional politico-military organisation located on a well identified territory and owning all necessary tools for its transnationalisation.

### **Boko Haram targets the Lake Chad Basin**

It stands evident that transnational projection is at the centre of all transnational insurgency mechanisms. Nonetheless, the latter implies the existence, in foreign countries, of an internal insurgency wave of whatsoever scope. To strengthen the ranks of local “insurgents”, Boko Haram proceeded with wide propaganda in neighbouring States to draw many people to its cause through captivating and dominating minds<sup>29</sup>. The cyberspace and infosphere<sup>30</sup> are important expression media where the jihadists can operate anonymously, with a greater coordination of their actions and<sup>31</sup> send their message across. Through this method, the sect psychologically destroys the allegiance of populations to the State order<sup>32</sup>. The consequence is the rise of local protest waves in neighbouring States and the birth of new protest hotbeds.

Visibly under its international branch called *Ansaru* which emerged in 2012 and is led by MammanNur, Boko Haram began some timid actions in 2012 and 2013, before engaging in quasi-conventional military operations in Cameroon and somehow in Niger in 2014. Cameroon has particularly recorded, in its northern part, 460 frontal attacks between March 2014 and June 2015, with a total of 1500 deaths<sup>33</sup>. We can underscore, among others, the attacks in Kolofata (13 January 2015), Achigachia (28 December 2014) and

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<sup>29</sup> François Gere, *La guerre psychologique*, Paris, Economica, 1997, pp. 28-30.

<sup>30</sup> Gérard Chaliand, « Terrorisme et médias », in Gérard Chaliand (dir.), *Les stratégies du terrorisme*, op. cit., pp. 229-230.

<sup>31</sup> Benson (2014, 303), quoted by YinkaOlomajobi, *Frontiers of Jihad: Radical Islam in Africa*, Ibadan, Safari Books, 2015, p. 331.

<sup>32</sup> Gérard Chaliand (dir.), *Stratégie de la guérilla*, Paris, Edition Payot & Rivages, 1994, p. 33.

<sup>33</sup> Richard Moncrieff, Hans de Marie Heungoup, “*Boko Haram: Cameroon must shift from a military tactic to long-term development*,” November 22, 2016, available on (<http://mgafrica.com/article/2016-11-22-00-boko-haram-cameroon-must-shift-from-a-military-tactic-to-long-term-development>), consulted on 17 February 2018.

Amchidé in the Far North of Cameroon (15 October 2014)<sup>34</sup>. The Nigerian towns of Bosso and Diffa suffered the same fate in February 2015.

To this should be added guerrilla warfare marked by numerous ambushes and harassment of defence forces and neighbouring States. The Rapid Intervention Battalion (BIR) was ambushed in the night of 17 October 2015, in the Cameroonian locality of Limani, found in the Far North. Bombings have also been on the rise. We can quote those in N'djamena on 15 June and 11 July 2015. We cannot forget to mention those carried out in the Cameroonian town of Maroua on 22 and 25 July 2015. Two attacks which respectively recorded 13 deaths and 32 injured on the one part and 20 deaths and 79 injured on the other part<sup>35</sup>. Clearly, the insurgents use guerrilla warfare and terrorism as alternative strategies to create malfunctions in foreign States to achieve their revolutionary politico-territorial ambitions.

## **Revolutionary politico-territorial ambitions**

The specific nature of what we call “transnational insurgency” resides in its revolutionary ambition, notably overthrowing a ruling order, capture part of the territory and establish a new politico-territorial order in a foreign country.

### **The deterritorialisation of the Lake Chad Basin**

In its international trend, Boko Haram is an organisation hostile to territorial markings instituted by colonisation and consecrated by the accession of States to independence. This opposes transnationalisation favoured by some factors which would be interesting to highlight.

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<sup>34</sup> Operating under the context of defensive action whose advantages are higher than offensive action, Cameroonian forces pushed back all Boko Haram attacks. For the concepts of offensive and defensive action, see Carl Von Clausewitz, *De la guerre*, Paris, Perrin (trad.), 2006, pp. 261-266.

<sup>35</sup> Tanya Narozhna, W. Andy Knight, *Female Suicide Bombings: A Critical Gender Approach*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2016, p. 105.

## Relevant factors of transnationalisation

The emergence of the jihadist wave of Boko Haram in the remainder of the Lake Chad Basin flows thanks to multifaceted factors, affecting physical and human geography, politico-security situation and the border socio-economic environment. All these variables contribute to the projection of Islamists and their insidious movement along the borders with disregard for the existing territorial order.

Under human geography, there is a regional sociological continuum, either on the ethno-linguistic or religious level. For instance, the Kanuri language is spoken by the Bornoans, Béribéri, Yerwa, Manga, Sirata and Koolé who live in Cameroon, Nigeria, Niger and Chad<sup>36</sup>. Also, Boko Haram is often presented as a kanuri insurgency which easily spreads thanks to the sociological proximity which exists in the region.

Insurgency also becomes transnational due to a continuum of religious identity at cross-border level. The existence of Islamist tendencies in the neighbouring States of Nigeria are an essential vector. As an illustration, the youths belonging to the cultural and Islamic association of Cameroon marked by the influence of Arabic States do not hesitate to reject the syncretism promoted by the *lamibé* and *modibbé*, in favour of fundamentalist Islam<sup>37</sup>. In Chad, Islamism is indeed marginal, but well present. In 2006, the Wahhabi faithful represent between 5 and 10% of the population<sup>38</sup>. These Islamists comprise internal insurgency agents and are the relays for transnational insurgency.

They work intelligibly with the insurgents at the epicentre and thus

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<sup>36</sup> Issa Saïbou, « Résurgence de la question musulmane dans le bassin Tchadien », in Issa Saïbou (dir.), *Les musulmans, l'école et l'Etat dans le bassin du Lac Tchad*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2016, p. 11.

<sup>37</sup> Guilbert TaguemFah, « Processus politique, mutation sociale et renouveau islamique au Cameroun », in Patrice Yengo (dir.), *Résistances et Dissidences, l'Afrique (centrale) des droits de l'homme*, Tome 2, Nouvelle série, n° 4, Paris, Khatala/Rupture-solidarité, 2003, p. 234.

<sup>38</sup> US Department of State, "International Religious Freedom Report 2006," Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, available on (<https://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2006/71293.htm>), consulted on 20 February 2018.

ease the external projection of the latter. Concretely, in Cameroon, Niger and Chad, the Buduma ethnic group established around Lake Chad enlisted within the sect to recover what it considers as “its lake”, in the face of Hausa domination<sup>39</sup>. This sociological group enabled the exporting of Boko Haram through the banks of the Lake to each of the neighbouring States of Nigeria. In Chad, the existence of a local cell of Boko Haram was disclosed following the bombings of 15 June 2015 in N’djamena<sup>40</sup>. In Cameroon, we can mention the arrest in January 2015, of about thirteen traditional rulers (“*lawan*”) in the Mayo-Tsanaga Division. They were suspected of colluding with the Islamists. Before them, the Mayor of Fotokol, Mahamat Moussa and 8 other people, had been arrested for similar reasons on 26 September 2014<sup>41</sup>. On the other side of the border, that is Niger, there is an Islamist wave which came from Nigeria and settled in the Maradi and Zinder regions in the 1980s and 2000s. In 2007, it even tried to create a movement similar to Boko Haram, but was unsuccessful. Far from being simple terrorist cells, these players are considered to be agents of a local insurgency wave against the government and an important support to the transnationalisation of violent Islamism.

The multiplication of these relays is thanks to the existence of numerous situational and structural malfunctions favourable to the recruitment of vulnerable populations for insurgencies. We believe that the precarious socio-economic climate, criminal phenomena<sup>42</sup> and the on-going humanitarian crisis in the three neighbouring States to Nigeria bordering Lake Chad. Yet, faced with these problems, the State’s presence is not really felt. Not only does it

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<sup>39</sup> C. Seignobos interviewed by Christophe Boisbouvier on RFI, on Friday 29 September 2017.

<sup>40</sup> Available on the link (<https://francais.rt.com/international/3762-tchad-operation-contre-boko-haram>), consulted on 20 February 2018.

<sup>41</sup> « Cameroun : 13 chefs traditionnels aux arrêts pour complicité présumée avec Boko Haram », 07/01/2015, available on (<http://www.cameroonvoice.com/news/article-news-17251.html>), consulted on 20 February 2018.

<sup>42</sup> See, among others, Issa Saïbou, *Les coupeurs de route. Histoire du banditisme rural et transfrontalier dans le bassin du lac Tchad*, Paris, Karthala, 2010 ; John Igue, *L'Afrique de l'Ouest : entre espace, pouvoir et société. Une géographie de l'incertitude*, Paris, Karthala, 2006, p. 244.

carry out inconsistent human care policies, but the security mechanisms in the border zones with Nigeria are insufficient, notwithstanding that some stakeholders at State level are corrupt<sup>43</sup>.

The transnationalisation of Boko Haram is therefore a complex process which blends several factors ranging from the jihadists' projection capacities to collusion with local insurgents, passing through precarious environments and structural crime rooted in the Lake Chad Basin. Thanks to the different opportunities, the Islamists successfully promote transnationality versus the existing stato-territoriality.

### **Transnationality versus stato-territoriality**

Translated in English by “Western education is a sin”, the name “Boko Haram” already clearly states its ideological and operational orientation. The rejection of western civilisation also implies the questioning of the principles of State organisation in force in the West and implemented in Africa, following colonisation. Among these principles is found stato-territoriality, that is the existence of a well carved territory and wherein each State exercises its authority. From the onset, this principle is a hurdle to the standing traditions of the numerous people of the Chadian basin. Moreover, the territorial reconfiguration imposed by the colonialists put to question the great imperial entities like the Sokoto. According to the jihadists, the promotion of transnationality is therefore the preliminary phase in restoring the ancient territorial order.

To succeed, they disrupt the authority of the State by attacking the armed forces. By so doing, they shuffle the entire classical language even including that sovereignty, for not only do the States face internal struggles but also face revolt and protest from transnational players<sup>44</sup> who consider all territorial limits as being

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<sup>43</sup> Marielle Debos, *Le métier des armes au Tchad: le gouvernement de l'entre-guerres*, Paris Karthala, 2013, p. 203.

<sup>44</sup> Bertrand Badie, « De la souveraineté à la capacité de l'Etat », in Marie-Claude Smouts (dir.), *Les nouvelles relations internationales. Pratique et théories*, Paris, Presses de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, 1998, pp. 47-50.



virtual<sup>45</sup>. In this regard, Boko Haram uses the movement of people and goods across State borders to establish a no-border action system to protest the<sup>46</sup> current stato-territoriality. Ordinarily, the securing and surveillance of frontiers means submission to a specific regulation for all persons and goods which cross them. Yet, faced with the jihadists, these principles are fundamentally violated. The territorial and border representations of insurgents are structured by history marked by the destruction, at the start of the XXth century, of the Sokoto Islamist empire, which expanded over the four States around Lake Chad (**Map 2**). The structuring of colonial borders according to the *Hinterland* principle constitutes for them a subversion of history and a violation of the memory of their ancestors.

The Nigerian sect rejects the territorial order resulting from colonisation and grants privilege to free movement and free action across the sides of territorial limits. This matches its ambition to restore the historical memory of ancient empires built on the ashes of several smaller States. The construction of a new territorial order is a decisive stage.

### **The construction of a new stato-territorial order**

Transnationality promoted by Boko Haram does not simply limit itself to the establishment of a trans-state reticular system for terrorist, criminal or other extreme religious purposes through the region. This organisation seeks to grow a new world order characterised by re-territorialisation operated on a transnational level, and this to establish a caliphate in the region (the return of history).

### **Re-territorialisation on transnational bases**

To better understand the mechanism in place here, it is important

<sup>45</sup> Philippe Moreau Defarges, *La guerre ou la paix demain ?*, Paris, Armand Colin, 2009, pp. 23-25.

<sup>46</sup> Karoline Postel-Vinay talks about extra-territoriality materialised by the structuring of territorial spaces and the capacity of pivotal layers to re-invent the territory. All these mechanisms being at the heart of post-modernism. See Karoline Postel-Vinay, « La transformation spatiale des relations internationales », in Marie-Claude Smouts (dir.), *op. cit.*, pp. 164-168.



to analyse the transnational insurgency path of Usman Dan Fodio which Boko Haram is seemingly drawing inspiration. From the Gobir Kingdom, this Islamist launched an insurgency which enabled him to invade other Hausa kingdoms like Zamfara, Katsena and Kebbi among others<sup>47</sup>, and this, with the help of the Hausa relays living in these entities. By this method, he succeeded to establish a transnational action system with movements through the frontiers of pre-existing States. Next, he began a re-territorialisation process with the shaping and reshaping of his Sokoto Empire created in 1808. On the ashes of the ancient territorial order, Dan Fodio established a new order, through the re-territorialisation process.

In its projection in the Lake Chad Basin, Boko Haram adopted since 2014, the same approach. In fact, in a bid to establish a Caliphate, it created an action system which extended to the neighbouring States to Nigeria bordering Lake Chad. However, and different from Usman Dan Fodio, it did not succeed in re-territorialising this transnational system. For it did succeed in having a long-term control over parts of territories abroad. From January-February 2015, it faced a massive military response from Chad, Niger and Cameroon. In spite of failure, the Islamists nonetheless succeeded the feat of capturing the locality of Achigachia for some hours where they hoisted their flag on 28 December 2014. Fortunately for the State of Cameroon, aircrafts from the air force were sent to carry out strikes<sup>48</sup>, which resulted in the falling back of dismayed insurgents.

The hoisting of their flag is very significant from the angle of symbolism. This act suggests territorial reshaping, no longer at the borders of the north-east of Nigeria controlled by the Islamists, but with an extension to Cameroon, which had part of its territory

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<sup>47</sup> He also understood the Liptako in the Niger belt, the Nupé, and even part of what will become Adamawa. See Houis Maurice, « Mouvements historiques et communautés linguistiques dans l'Ouest africain », *L'Homme*, tome 1, n°3, 1961, p. 81.

<sup>48</sup> « *La force aérienne camerounaise a frappé des jihadistes de Boko Haram* », *Défens' Aero*, 30 décembre 2014, available on (<http://www.defens-aero.com/2014/12/la-force-aerienne-camerounaise-a-frappe-des-jihadistes-de-boko-haram.html>), consulted on 14 October 2018.

under the control of the Caliphate for some hours. It is therefore a fact that Boko Haram's strategy was territorial. Capturing some localities would help them in the construction of a new territory under control beyond its Nigeria home. Besides, it is important to recall that the Cameroonian village captured by insurgents is located 290 km from N'djamena, the capital of Chad. Visibly, in the event of more captures in Cameroon, they had planned to extend to Chad to control a more vast territory. In the same vein, the large scale attacks on Diffa and Bosso fell under the same logic of territorial occupation and reshaping what could become a future Caliphate.

Clearly, the deployment of Boko Haram at regional level consecrated the virtual nature of borders and the presence of a transnational system. This configuration is simply a preliminary stage towards re-territorialisation materialised by an expansion and reshaping of the territory controlled by the sect. The ultimate goal of these manoeuvres is to create a Caliphate through the region.

### **The establishment of a Caliphate in the Lake Chad Basin: secular fantasy**

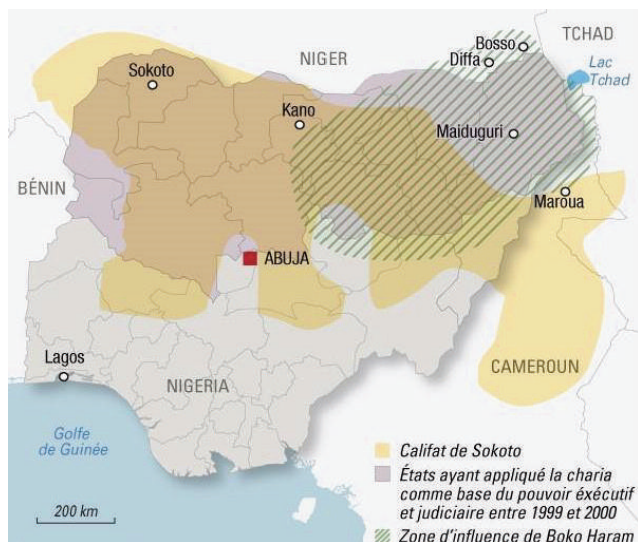
The creation of a Caliphate had always been at the heart of Islamist geopolitics. Due to the destruction of great historic Islamic empires, the establishment of such an entity represented for many Muslims, a means to overcome marginalisation and<sup>49</sup> to protest a world order dominated by secularism. This position is the fruit of an ancient tradition where Askia Muhammad I tried to establish Islam as the Songhai State religion between 1493 and 1528<sup>50</sup>. This was the same logic for Usman Dan Fodio, founder of Sokoto. A Caliphate which seems to inspire Boko Haram in its project for a state.

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<sup>49</sup> S. Sayyid, *Recalling the Caliphate Decolonisation and World Order*, London, Hurst & Company, 2014, p. 118; also see Aymeric Chauprade, *op. cit.*, p. 444.

<sup>50</sup> Joseph P. Smaldone, *Warfare in the Sokoto Caliphate: Historical and Sociological Perspectives*, London, Cambridge University Press, 1977, p. 20.

## **Map 2:** Boko Haram imposes its Caliphate



**Source:** (<http://www.autantledire.com/cartographie-boko-haram-sur-les-traces-du-califat-de-sokoto-par-remi-carayol/>), consulted on 12 March 2018.

From the map above, we can clearly see the stretch of the Sokoto Empire which, while having most of its territory in Nigeria, has an extension in Niger, Chad and Cameroon. For the Islamists, a similar entity should be established on the same space, which is a sanctuary territory needed for the survival of the group<sup>51</sup> of faithfuls of the region. Thanks to a transnational community of historical traumas and future projections, there is a mimetic cross-border system being created and the transfer of ideas<sup>52</sup>. Such is the foundation of the emergence of a politico-religious community divided across the four Border States of Lake Chad. Like the other Islamist movements, Boko Haram grants privilege to the *Ummah* (community of faithfuls) to the detriment of *Watan* (fatherland), given that in their eyes, the State is not the lead political entity<sup>53</sup>. The progressively transnational ideological community, constructed with the help of local relays, comprise the preliminary

<sup>51</sup> François Thual, *Les conflits identitaires*, Paris, Ellipses, 1995, p. 21.

<sup>52</sup> Javier Santiso, « Circulation des idées et relations internationales », in M.-C. Smouts (dir.), *op. cit.*, p. 230.

<sup>53</sup> See S. Sayyid, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

phase of territorial occupation needed to establish the Caliphate.

Despite its wild intentions, the sect has still not succeeded in establishing its Caliphate. To a lesser extent, it contented itself with a mini-Caliphate in the Nigerian town of Gwoza, which its members captured on 14 August 2014. That day, Shekau proclaimed the creation of a Caliphate. During his preaching, he indicated that the territory controlled was just one of the components of the Islamic State, an organisation to which Shekau shall swear allegiance in March 2015<sup>54</sup>. In the image of this middle-east mentor committed to creating a Caliphate comprising part of the Iraqi and Syrian territory, the Nigerian sect had, during its time of glory, a fundamentally territorial State-gearred strategy.

Summarily outline the methodological approach which enables you to carry out this analysis (location of study zones, sources used, analysis methods...)

Need to focus on empirical data which reflect the transnational character of the phenomena (local data)

Re-conceptualise sub titles showcasing reality than ideas

Finally, the analysis of the regionalisation of Boko Haram as a transnational insurgency is an interesting approach in the study of the cross-border flow of the activities of armed groups. Beyond the simple analysis of the export of the operations of a violent organisation, this article explores the mechanisms of transnationalisation, up to now still covered in the background with regards to the international push of the Nigerian sect. Moreover, beyond the purely national perspective, this study falls within the transnational analytic range of insurgency movements. Thus, the issue of terrorism falls within a system of protest against the State and cross-border projection. Terrorism is no longer a simple tool

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<sup>54</sup> On the ties between Boko Haram and IS, see Interview of Mathieu Guidère: « *le ralliement de Boko Haram est une victoire stratégique de Daech sur Al-Qaïda* », Le Figaro.fr, Mars 2015; on the strategic relations between international and regional jihadist groups, see David J. Kilcullen "Countering global insurgency", *Small War Journal*, 30 Nov 04, 2005, available on (<http://smallwarsjournal.com/documents/kilcullen.pdf>), consulted on 16 November 2017.

for the spread of terror to distort the established order. It is now being used as a means to overthrow this order. The prospect in this case is fundamentally territorial. Such an analysis contradicts the approaches that refute any territorial ultimate goal for terrorism, which is just an alternative strategy used by armed groups to achieve their goals. And for this study, the ultimate goal of such a practice is to reverse the cross-border established state order, to take control of the territory and to establish a new stato-territorial order based on the Sharia. For prospects, it should be noted that the approach adopted here reflects the transnationality of factors which produce violent extremism. Therefore, it could serve in the elaboration of regional policies based on the cross-border handling of societal dysfunction and the amputation of the State. Besides, it should be noted that the analysis made here reports on the underlying mechanism for the regionalisation of Boko Haram. It does not take into account the current situation whereby it would be proper to talk about “the Boko Harams”, due to the splitting of the sect. Since August 2014, date of the designation of Al Barnawi as the new emir of IS in West Africa, an international faction has been formed opposed to the more national and traditional faction led by Shekau. This bipolarisation of the regional insurgency itself, and new security stakes may both constitute interesting avenues for research to better understand the evolutions of the terrorist threat in the Lake Chad basin.

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# Division or fragmentation of Boko Haram? Recent developments and upcoming risks for the Lake Chad Basin

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## Introduction

The split experienced by Boko Haram in August 2016 augured a new dynamic of fragmentation dominated by two major groups. Jama'atu Ahlis Sunnah Lidda'awati wal-Jihad (JAS), the initial movement heir to the first hours of struggle remains led by Abubakar Shekau who is criticized for his brutal authority, the loss of conquered territories and the impertinence of targets. The Islamic State in West Africa (ISWA) is led by Abu Musab al-Barnaoui. If these two distinct and rival tendencies are well known, regularly being the subject of media and scientific analyses, it must be emphasized that there is a third tendency, smoother and less explored, whose level of nuisance is more felt than perceived. These are the autonomous groups, offspring of a brutal break with the Boko Haram supra-structure, whose routes of affirmation and action are reduced to survival. In dozens of groups led by former lieutenants of Boko Haram or local gurus and made up mostly of fighters from the localities they run, these Boko Haram metastases are scattered along the border with Nigeria. Without any ideological substance, the struggle these groups are waging builds on a terrorist-criminal field, at the crossroads of terrorism and organised crime.

Now split into several disparate more or less rival groups, Boko Haram shows a more threatening face, not only to the stability of States around Lake Chad, but also to affected communities and the humanitarian action. The dissident opinions under maturation is a testimony of perpetuation potential of the factions that reconfigure the Boko Haram threat at several scales. The perception of the Boko Haram threat in the sub-region is therefore to be questioned again, in order to identify the new challenges posed by this factional dynamic in the Lake Chad Basin. This paper falls within a reconsideration of the views that define Boko Haram as a threat. It analyzes the different contexts that have, over time, sedimented recurrent practices of protest by Islam, apprehends the process that led to the split of the movement, identifies the territorial anchoring of each group and analyzes the risks induced by these split positions of Boko Haram on the strategic and security mechanisms of the States around Lake Chad. In the background, we shall explore future challenges and risks. The study builds on numerous field surveys, a specialised documentation and in-depth interviews with key stakeholders. The approach is descriptive and analytical with the backdrop of an interdisciplinary perspective.

## **Splitting of Boko Haram: historical depths and recent developments**

The current dynamics of Boko Haram questions the ideological ingredients of the movement, so as to lead to the inevitable process of binary fission, then split up, peculiar to terrorist groups.

### **An ideological uniqueness difficult to pin down**

Until March 2015, with its allegiance to the Islamic State (IS& Daesh), Boko Haram succeeded in maintaining its organic integrity and keeping its ideological unity. The “whimsical and somewhat delirious<sup>1</sup>” character of its leader Abubakar Shekau seems to bring Boko Haram closer to al-Qaeda, but the Islamic State (IS) had

<sup>1</sup> Romain Caillet cited by AFP, in Léon Baron, “Le groupe Etat islamique reprend-il le pouvoir sur Boko Haram ?” in <https://information.tv5monde.com/afrique>, page accessed on April 03, 2019

always considered the latter as its Wali (leader) in West Africa. With an estimated potential of 3,000 to 6,000 combatants in 2014, a large area of influence covering the Borno, Adamawa and Yobe regions, added to territorial externalities in Cameroon, Chad and Niger and a multinational foreign legion, Boko Haram constituted a threat, especially since it adopted terror as mean of expression and deterrence. The extreme violence perpetrated by Boko Haram against the largely Muslim populations, kidnappings of women and children, attacks of mosques, were quickly disapproved from within the movement, which led to internal tensions<sup>2</sup>. In total, Boko Haram's insurgency and the counter-offensive led by national armies left 20,000 dead, 2.6 million refugees and displaced people in northeastern Nigeria and the bordering regions of neighboring countries around Lake Chad. This human disaster by the firm hand of Abubakar Shekau made the character controversial, no longer unanimous within the commanding superstructure of Boko Haram.

Yet, before the appointment of Al Barnaoui as new leader of the West African Caliphate by the IS on August 2, 2016, tensions were perceptible between the two leaders, foreseeing a division of the movement. Al Barnaoui's clear and committed speeches, backed by a more ambitious vision of a caliphate in West Africa, seem to contrast with the war rhetoric of Abubakar Shekau, who, according to several experts, never recognized him as leader and spokesman for Boko Haram. The bottom line of discord lies less in the ideology than in the modalities of leading of the armed struggle to achieve the goal of constituting the Islamic caliphate.

One could question the ideological orientations of Boko Haram, which are considered today by several observers as the apple of discord between the two groups getting more and more rivals. What is the religious ideology of Boko Haram? In different approaches to the analysis of the question, two tendencies emerge, more or less conferring an ideological matrix to the sect. First, it is necessary to consider that Sufism is dominant with its Qadiriyya and Tijaniyya components, whose practices and rituals are

<sup>2</sup> "Boko Haram : la guerre des chefs fait rage", Le Point Afrique, novembre 2016

commonly accepted and shared by a majority of Muslims living in the States around Lake Chad. The reality of Islamic groups and sects is old in Nigeria. An overview of Islamist sects and groups would be edifying.

**Table 1:** Islamist movements and sects in Nigeria influencing the Lake Chad Basin

Categories	Sects	Components	Territorial anchorage
Dominant groups	Sufism	-Qadiriyya -Tijaniyya	Majority of Nigeria and neighboring countries (Cameroon, Chad, Niger)
	Salafists & anti-Sufi groups	-Jama'atu Izalatil Bid'a wa Iqamat al Sunna (Izala) -Ahl al-sunna wa'l-jama'a	Middle Belt States and Northeast Nigeria, Niger
	Shiite	-Islamic Movement of Nigeria or Muslim Brothers -Jam'at al-Tajdeed al-Islami	States of Kano, Kaduna
	Yoruba Muslims	Nasrul-Lahi Fathi Society of Nigeria (NASFAT)	State of Lagos and federations across Nigeria
Marginal groups		Maitatsine	Kano, Maiduguri, Kaduna, Gombe, Funtua, Yola
		Darul Islam	State of Borno and Niger
		Mahdiyya	Kano
		Yan Hakika	State of Nasarawa
		Jama'atu Ahlul Sunna li Da'awati wal Jihad (Boko Haram)	Northeastern Nigeria, Far North of Cameroon, Region of Diffa in Niger and Lake Chad

**Source:** Synthesis prepared from: A.R. Mustapha & M. Bunza, 2017, « Contemporary Islamic sects & groups in northern Nigeria », in A.R. Mustapha, *Sects & Social Disorder : Muslim Identities & conflict in Northern Nigeria*, Abuja, Premium Times Books ; A. R. Mustapha, 2017, « Understanding *Boko Haram* », in A.R. Mustapha, *Sects & Social Disorder : Muslim Identities & conflict in Northern Nigeria*, Abuja, Premium Times Books.

The table above shows that the social and religious life in Nigeria is irradiated by a set of ideological antagonisms. The renewal of divisions, most often carried by leaders and gurus of all kinds, has always shaped an abundant production of acts of violence and discourses correlated to the different socio-political and ethno-religious contexts<sup>3</sup> of Nigeria. According to Abdul Raufu Mustapha and Mulhtar Bunza, despite some differences of interpretation in ritual practices<sup>4</sup>, Sufism has kept its unity and coherence with local customs. However, despite the unification efforts of the Umma around the Sardauna of Sokoto in 1962, initiated by the then Prime Minister of Nigeria, Ahmadou Bello, the frontal divisions emerged in 1971 within the Jama'atu Nasril Islam. Abubakar Gumi, former religious advisor to Ahmadou Bello who died in 1966, published a pamphlet in which he questions the Sufi practices. In the wake of this reformism, gradually meshing Nigerian Islamic circles, his followers created in March 1978 in Joss, capital of the State of Plateau, a religious association called Jama'atu Izalatil Bid'a wa Iqamat al Sunna, known as Izala<sup>5</sup>. Salafist by inspiration and fundamentally opposed to Sufism, the Izala movement will structure a radical ideology that succeeded in imposing itself as a vector of a particularly violent social satire.

In the wake of this proliferation of religious thoughts of different scales, *Jama'atu Ahlul Sunna li Da'awati wal Jihad*, commonly known as Boko Haram, appeared in 2000 in Maiduguri. Under the leadership of Mohammed Yusuf, the ideology of the movement is deeply rigorous and contextual. The religious thought of Boko Haram builds on two essential elements: the dislike of the Western model whose misdeeds are visible on the Muslim community in northeastern Nigeria and the powerful rise of the Wahhabi Salafism embodied by the Izala movement. It is necessary to recall that between 1980 and 1990, the internal dissensions within the Izala Movement have somehow wiped out the Salafist ambition of

<sup>3</sup> read Chris Kwaja, "Les moteurs pernecieux du conflit ethnico-religieux au Nigeria", in Bulletin de la Sécurité Africaine, n°14, July 2011

<sup>4</sup> Like the Qadiriyya movement accusing the Tijaniyya of "exuberant emotions"

<sup>5</sup> A.R. Mustapha & M. Bunza, 2017, « Contemporary Islamic sects & groups in northern Nigeria », in A.R. Mustapha, *Sects & Social Disorder : Muslim Identities & conflict in Northern Nigeria*, Abuja, Premium Times Books, pp. 54-97

certain Nigerian Islamist circles. The competition between various Islamist sects on the vast market of the Nigerian faith shows signs of saturation, both in terms of ritual practices and discourses that have become redundant over time. Taking advantage of the multiple divisions in the Izala movement, whose most Salafist branch has largely overshadowed, and a fragile socio-political context, Mohammed Yusuf, founder of Boko Haram, takes back the initiative over the weakened Salafist tendency by opportunistically renewing the religious discourse that he builds around bad governance in Nigeria, responsible for many daily difficulties of believers. Boko Haram is thus the product of a specific context, “it is within this context of self-jihad and the formation of competing organisations within the “prayer economy” that Boko Haram emerged out of the broad Salafist tendency”<sup>6</sup>.

The ideological systems of Boko Haram result from a dogmatic syncretism that links the Muslim brothers, the Shiites and a Salafist branch of Izala. If the Boko Haram ideology is based on a set of borrowing of various Islamic thoughts and a rigorous and controversial interpretation of Wahhabi Salafism, it also rests, since it turned into a violent movement, on two major ideas: death and revenge<sup>7</sup>. According to the Governor of the State of Borno, Kashim Shettima,

For me, there are two major factors that drive the Boko Haram sect, which are spiritual belief and economic desires. Those with spiritual beliefs are led into believing that when they kill, they obtain rewards from Allah and the rewards translate into houses in paradise. When they are killed, they automatically die as martyrs and go to paradise straight away. In other words, death is the beginning of their pleasure. Then, whoever they target to kill is an infidel and will go to hell. (...) One dangerous thing about their ideology in their belief that when they attack a gathering or a community, any righteous person in the sight of God, who dies as a result of their attack, will go

<sup>6</sup> Mustapha & Bunza, 2017, p.70

<sup>7</sup> A. R. Mustapha, 2017, « Understanding Boko Haram », in A.R. Mustapha, *Sects & Social Disorder : Muslim Identities & conflict in Northern Nigeria*, Abuja, Premium Times Books, pp. 147-198

to paradise, which means they would have assisted the person to go to paradise in good time by their actions, and any infidel killed by their attack will go to hell, which to them is what he or she deserves and no regret for his death. This is the spiritual aspect that drives the sect, to the best of my understanding<sup>8</sup>.

The programmatic declination of the still embryonic ideology of Boko Haram is represented in a sort of alienation of historical borrowings, the most significant of which is the notion of “fighter of faith”. Appropriating “the work of God”, Boko Haram is part of the tradition of the Caliphates who, by means of jihadist wars, makes Islam triumph or redress injustices. Through the application of the *sharia* as an antidote against corruption, and jihad as a legitimate method of action, Boko Haram has thus built a politico-ideological system in which the Salafist dogma mingles with the socio-economic vices and injustices that undermine the Muslim society of northeastern Nigeria. This identity is difficult to pin down, especially as the terrorist group is sectarian when trying to indoctrinate young people, totalitarian when seeking to constitute a holistic vision of an Islamic caliphate, and fundamentalist when seeking to control the modes of pageantry of the populations, especially women<sup>9</sup>. Today, the movement is at the junction of the thought and the practice of two Sunni movements - the Wahhabism, born in Saudi Arabia in the eighteenth century, and the political Islam of the Muslim Brotherhood, impelled in Egypt in 1928<sup>10</sup>.

### **An inevitable division**

Dissent within Boko Haram is evolutionary. With the appointment in August 2016 of Abu Musab Al Barnaoui as the new governor of the Islamic Province in West Africa, in replacement of Abubakar Shekau, several experts had no illusions concerning the fatal

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<sup>8</sup> T. Abbah & H. Idris, 2014, “What Boko Haram fighters told me about sect”, Sunday Trust, 4 May, <http://dailytrust.com.ng>, interview with Governor Kashim shettima of Borno State, accessed on line on September 3 2018.

<sup>9</sup> “Boko Haram et le terrorisme islamiste au Nigeria : insurrection religieuse, contestation politique ou protestation sociale ?”, in Questions de Recherche, N° 40, June 2012

<sup>10</sup> Léon Koungou, 2016, Boko Haram : Parti pour durer, Paris, L'Harmattan, p. 24



outcome of the cohabitation of the two leaders. However, long before, signs of dislikes between the main leaders of the movement appeared. According to testimonies relayed by Nigerian scientific and media circles, Mohamman Nur, Habib Yusuf called Abu Musab (Al Barnaoui) and Aliyu, the main leaders, disapprove the methods used by Abubakar Shekau during the sessions of the *Shura* Council. Other testimonies collected, especially in Mora from ex-spouses of fighters and ex-hostages who have stayed in the forest of Sambisa, attest tensions and clashes among followers grouped into factions around several leaders<sup>11</sup>. On the whole, Abubakar Shekau's opponents blame him for his erratic and undisciplined leadership. The divorce is definitely set with the appointment in August 2016 of Abu Musab Al Barnaoui as governor of the province of the Islamic State in West Africa. Concurrently, Abubakar Shekau established his stronghold in the Sambisa Forest with control over the south and the center of the State of Borno, while the Al Barnaoui faction moved further to the north of the States of Borno and Yobe, bordering Niger and Lake Chad. A fracture that definitely includes Boko Haram among sustainable threats<sup>12</sup>.

Several clashes between the two rival camps are reported by September 2016, thus confirming the fracture within the terrorist movement. Direct clashes between JAS and ISWA are growing in numbers. Mongumo, a locality situated in the State of Borno and controlled by Boko Haram, witnessed the first battle between the two groups. Many fighters loyal to Shekau were killed. The territorial demarcation lines between the two groups being porous, clashes multiply. Between 2016 and 2019, about ten face-to-face clashes resulting in ISWA gaining territory and followers were recorded.

The logic of competition between both factions increased the pace of the attacks between them or against the civilian population. The desire for power and affirmation leads to an inflation of violent operations on both sides, even if, moreover, signs of proximity between the two

<sup>11</sup> Interviews with many women, ex-wives of Boko Haram fighters, who returned to communities, Mora, June 14, 2018

<sup>12</sup> O. Mahmood and C. Ndubuisi Ani, "Factional Dynamics within Boko Haram", ISS Research Report, July 2018

tendencies are perceptible<sup>13</sup>. This eventuality is shared by Roland Marchal who holds that “A priori, there is rivalry between both branches of Boko Haram, but it does not exclude certain horizontal cooperation between them in very special conditions”<sup>14</sup>. At the same time, both leaders seem to realize that a unified Boko Haram would be dreadful in the strategy of building an alternative Islamic caliphate in the States built on the Western model.

### **Beyond the duality of factions, a fragmentation of Boko Haram?**

The tendency to limit recent developments within Boko Haram to a division seems narrow. It does not reflect the real changes taking place inside the Boko Haram galaxy. Terrorism being a reproductive phenomenon, as supports the selfish gene theory developed by the British biologist Richard Dawkins, stating that ideas are like genes, they seek to replicate themselves. As such, an idea, concept, symbol or religious belief like that promoted by Boko Haram will seek to reproduce in as many minds as possible and the human conscience constitutes the perfect ecosystem<sup>15</sup>.

It is believed that in reality, Boko Haram is experiencing lasting and continuous forms of dissent. With regard to States of the Lake Chad Basin, Boko Haram now has several dreadful forms. Making predictions on the ideological inputs and the anchor territories of various Boko Haram dissident groups is risky. However, four main faces are currently perceptible, depending on whether they are considered proven or potential threats.

### **Indiscriminate terror of original Boko Haram**

Heir to the long history of Boko Haram, whose main traits refer to all-out terror, the Boko Haram led since 2009 by Abubakar Shekau has systematically amplified the use of violence. Until the division

<sup>13</sup> In a video published on November 10, 2018, Abubakar Shekau appears under the banner of the Islamic State in West Africa, which is today under the authority of his rival, Al Barnaoui, since August 2016. Read Renseignor, N°1051 of November 11 2018

<sup>14</sup> Kadiatou Sakha, “Boko Haram : entre recul territorial et influence régionale”, <http://www.open-diplomacy.eu>, January 13, 2018

<sup>15</sup> Richard Dawkins, 1978, *Le gène égoïste*, Paris, Armand Colin

observed in August 2016 that reconfigured the movement into two rival factions, Boko Haram particularly demonstrated an immoderate use of violence. Repeated assaults, major attacks on strategic targets, incursions into villages with loss of life and destruction of property are the features of what Corintin Cohen calls “catch-all of violence”<sup>16</sup>. The Boko Haram tendency having Abubakar Shekau as emblematic figure remains a sad one even after the division.

If time has passed, it remains that an anatomy of JAS is today difficult to operate. Did Boko Haram restructure? What are some of the features of the terror movement in northeastern Nigeria and neighboring countries? Three elements today seem to constitute the operational identity of Boko Haram. First, it keeps an important part of its usual territorial anchorage. From its historical stronghold, the Sambisa Forest, Shekau’s band continues to control territorial portions, often combating the Nigerian Army and ISWA. Between the States of Borno, Yobe and the Adamawa region, Boko Haram defines a non-integrated scope of action with porous borders compared to the rival tendency. Its land anchorage mainly covers the north-south cross-border corridor bordering the west of the Mandara Mountains, the south and the center of the State of Borno with ambitions to control the Maiduguri-Bama-Banki highways to the Cameroon’s border, and Maiduguri-Dikwa-Gambaru-Fotokol to Cameroon. In the Far North of Cameroon, Boko Haram’s influence covers the councils of Mokolo and Mayo-Moskota in the Mayo-Tsanaga, Mora and Kolofata in the Mayo-Sava and Fotokol, Makary, Darak and Hilé-Alifa in the Logone and Chari. This mapping of Boko Haram’s areas of influence is not part of a straitjacket. On the contrary, the threat intended to be spontaneous, rustic and unpredictable, Boko Haram does not offer of reading a grid of the territories under its control. Integrated continuous spaces or closed sanctuaries, more or less controlled areas help the sect keep its nuisance potential, escape the tracking operations of the multinational forces and penetrate

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<sup>16</sup> [https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2016/04/29/boko-haram-est-un-atrape-tout-de-violence\\_4911151\\_3212.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2016/04/29/boko-haram-est-un-atrape-tout-de-violence_4911151_3212.html), page accessed on April 3, 2019

territorial levels.

In terms of its *modus operandi*, Boko Haram focuses mainly on kidnapping campaigns, incursions into different villages, attacks on military targets and State infrastructure. These various operations, generally expeditious, aim to recruit fighters and other logistics resources, stock up and especially impose terror on populations. Less regular and particularly opportunistic, Boko Haram attacks are on a large scale also directed to cattle raids. According to the World Bank, about 17,000 heads of cattle and thousands of sheep and goats were swept away by Boko Haram attackers between 2013 and 2018, for a total value of 3 billion CFA francs<sup>17</sup>.

### **ISWA and the twofold option of smart terrorism**

As soon as it dissented, ISWA demonstrated its ability to be a dreadful threat. From an ideological point of view, the question remains unanswered as to the actual substrate of ideas promoted by the tendency of Al Barnaoui. However, on the basis of the reasons given for the separation from JAS, Shekau's funambulist personality and the essentially violent orientation of the actions justified the divorce. As a result, we understand that within ISWA, violence is an instrument that contributes to the strategic intelligence of the movement. Thus, how does ISWA differ from JAS out of the different personalities of the two leaders? Three characteristics can be identified from ISWA's influence in the Boko Haram conflict.

First, with its psychological advantage after the first victories against the fighting units of Shekau, ISWA extends its influence to the north. Sensing the need to set up a rear base necessary for the survival of the movement, ISWA focuses on the outskirts of Lake Chad, not without continuing attacks on JAS positions around Bama, Ghoza and Gambaru. To keep the advantage of a proactive mobility in its operations, ISWA claims a scarlet and dotted territory, from the historical strongholds of Boko Haram located

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<sup>17</sup> World Bank, "Breaking down barriers to regional agricultural trade", Report, August 2018

in the States of Yobe and Borno to the islands of Lake Chad. In contact with Cameroon, ISWA areas of influence go back to Lake Chad. In spite of their disparity, the territories controlled by the movement keep a kind of homogeneity as they bring together the States of Borno and Yobe with Niger, they form a belt around Lake Chad, integrating several islands of Nigeria, Chad and Cameroon. Historically very little surrounded by the riparian States, Lake Chad seems to be the main sanctuary of ISWA in an extension strategy to the forest of Allagarno in the north of the State of Borno. These various positions, both at the borders of the four States and at usual outbreaks of insurgency inside Nigeria, allow ISWA to spread out specific operations on primarily strategic targets (military, Western societies, State institutions).

Then, where the ideological matrix does not oppose the two movements, the translation of this ideology into operating modes has constituted a real bone of contention. Taking a stand against JAS, Al Barnaoui's movement changed the orientation of the use of violence and set it on essentially strategic objectives. The change of strategy first applied on the types of targets. ISWA distinguishes between military and institutional targets and the populations in which it has auxiliaries. Subtly, the desire for a lasting anchoring of the people is clearly displayed. To do this, the movement avoids making the fatal mistake of Shekau, who made himself an enemy of the populations he has terrorised. Drawing lessons from the manifested dislike of the populations against JAS, Al-Barnaoui and his movement instead dubbed them. They patiently build networks on the movement's controlled territories, to gain a foothold in the long term, as Daesh did in Iraq and Syria<sup>18</sup>. Shall the approach not reveal a systematic logic of indoctrination, the fact is that ISWA thus performs a structural reconsideration of the chain of actors by first ensuring the allegiance of populations. This seems to have convincing results, as compared to the terror propagated by Shekau's organisation. According to a Fulani inhabitant of the Shuwaram village in Lake Chad, "the fighters attacked our

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<sup>18</sup> Yan St-Pierre, cited by L'Express, 30 March 2017, [On line], [https://www.lexpress.fr/actualites/1/monde/boko-haram-la-faction-barnaoui-etend-discretement-son-emprise\\_1894105.html](https://www.lexpress.fr/actualites/1/monde/boko-haram-la-faction-barnaoui-etend-discretement-son-emprise_1894105.html), page accessed on November 23, 2018.

communities, killed people, stole our cows, took our wives and children and burned our houses”. Several consistent testimonies reported by VAO Africa attest that in November 2017, Mamman Nur, one of ISWA leaders, personally went to address the villagers on some islets of Lake Chad. The jihadist leader assured them they “were free to move unhindered as long as they do not cooperate with the soldiers fighting his group”<sup>19</sup>. Insidiously, in this logic of dubbing the populations of its controlled areas, ISWA instrumented the traditional inter-ethnic or inter-community conflicts of access to the lake’s resources. Between affirmation of identity, control of resources and individual routes of accumulation, ISWA has found in Lake Chad a breeding ground for membership and revolt<sup>20</sup>.

Ultimately, the scope of ISWA controlled spaces indicates its desire for a sustained anchoring. First, we see a logic of challenging Shekau on the traditional spaces of Boko Haram. The first armed conflicts between the two factions occurred in the historic strongholds of the movement in the States of Borno and Yobe, notably in September 2016 in the Monguno area in the State of Borno, as well as in Abadam near the border of the Niger<sup>21</sup>. Organized and intelligent, ISWA intensified its attacks in the Lake region. In 2017, 362 terrorist attacks were recorded in the Lake Chad, an increase of 29%, compared to the previous year<sup>22</sup>. Focusing on strategically important targets, such as military bases in Nigeria and Niger and Western companies in Niger, gives the movement a special status within the group of organisations that have pledged allegiance to Daesh, who we know is militarily defeated in the Middle East. Thus, the local jihad of ISWA builds on an international movement that serves the global jihad<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> VAO Afrique, “Boko Haram : la faction Barnaoui étend discrètement son emprise sur les rives du Lac Tchad”, 30 March 2017.

<sup>20</sup> C. Seignobos, “Boko Haram et le lac Tchad. Extension ou sanctuarisation ?”, *Afrique contemporaine*, vol. 255, n° 3, 2015, pp. 93-120 ; “Boko Haram : c’est l’expression d’un communautarisme”, interview, *Jeune Afrique*, 4 August 2016

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.nouvelobs.com/monde/20160907.AFP6962/nigeria-combats-entre-factions-rivales-de-boko-haram.html>, page accessed on February 13, 2019.

<sup>22</sup> Mahmood, O., 2018, “Despite its divisions, Boko Haram is not weaker”, ISS, Addis Abeba.

<sup>23</sup> Trotignon, Y., “Al Quāida et le jihad aujourd’hui”, in *Lettre du Retrex-Recherche*, n° 7, 4 December 2013.

## **From groups more or less affiliated to Boko Haram to local-scale empowerment of terror**

The massive recruitment of populations in bordering areas by Boko Haram, known to have favored actors relevant to its expansion strategy, has led to a terror empowerment process in villages. By recycling the know-how of local warriors, Boko Haram has opened up reconversion or outsourcing opportunities for predation and accumulation purposes.<sup>24</sup> This is a violence perpetrated by local actors or who know the targeted villages. This new model of violence, orchestrated by local children, started in 2014 against a dual context of escalated military repression under regionalization and spectacular military success of Boko Haram on the fronts of Lake Chad and localities bordering Niger and Cameroon. Without building on the logic of breaking with the attacks and incursions of Boko Haram fighters coming from Nigeria, the new forms of abuses occur when the recruits that join the Boko Haram course in each neighboring village of Nigeria realize that the collective (Caliphate of Gwoza, application of sharia) and individual (better living conditions, return to a dogmatic faith) project is in reality a pie in the sky. Under pressures from national armies and the Multinational Joint Force (MJF), the megastructure of Boko Haram is gradually cracking, leaving many of its fighters wandering, who, to survive and exist, are mutating through empowerment, dispersion or recomposition. The recomposition that occurs lead to the constitution of furtive, light and mobile groups, acting by circumstances, whose purpose no longer follows a global Islamist project, but rather a survival by itinerancy or entrepreneurship of disorder.

The deconstruction of the original groups of Boko Haram attackers did not only free the followers who left the bordering villages of Cameroon, Niger and Chad, it also allowed a more timely circulation of weapons and a revision of the fighters' routes. Thus, in a bands of two, three to ten fighters, Boko Haram followers now replicate the same form of violence. Two stages can be observed

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<sup>24</sup> "Boko Haram, une impossible sociologie politique ?", in *Afrique Contemporaine*, 2015/3, n° 255, p.87



in the process of pursuing Boko Haram's barbarity: first, the progressive return to the initial villages, of which they have a great knowledge of the geography and available material and food assets. This approach of returning to the villages reflects the shift of the Islamist violence towards a criminal violence. Then, the perpetration of cattle raids, cereal harvesting and deadly raids on villagers is part of the resilience of these criminal groups against the reduction of their spaces of expression. At variable levels, the itinerancy of criminal groups is thus shown by a double articulation: first of all, the proximity with the localities of origin; and secondly, the predation and survival strategies.

Based on the conclusions of a paper presented in other circumstances<sup>25</sup>, several modes of terror empowerment are observed. The first is a tendency to group together people from the same village. In this case, there is an inclination towards a "brotherly" appeal to join the group in which a relative of the village or the family is already active. In Cameroon, for example, many parents in the localities of Kolofata, Moskota and Fotokol have joined their offspring or parents in the districts. By force or by will, these forms of grouping within Boko Haram occur with the movement of whole villages. The data collected today help in cross-checking the integration level of these communities in the operating system of Boko Haram. Note that the voluntary displacement of people of Bornori or Kerawa villages, or the forced displacements in the localities of Gousdat-Vreket, Moudogoa, Kamdjidji, Hourbetch and Ldaoutsaf in 2014, led to the massive return of nearly 400 people in 2016, men, women and children included<sup>26</sup>. By opportunism too (entrepreneurs of disorder), parents who do not stand humiliation and stigmatisation from their community ended up joining the side of their relatives in Boko Haram.

The second tendency is the formation of autonomous groups of

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<sup>25</sup> Mbarkoutou Mahamat, "Insécurité, appropriation locale de la terreur et problématique de la reconstruction post Boko Haram à l'Extrême-Nord du Cameroun et dans le Lac Tchad", Paper presented at the Regional Conference on Peace Building and reconstruction in the Chad Basin, 26-28 September 2016, Yola, Nigeria.

<sup>26</sup> Study report, "Les ex-otages de Mozogo", February 2016, CERPSI, University of Maroua.



attackers. They are heterogeneous, grouped into crime entrepreneurs who scour the bordering villages. They are inspired by ancient forms of robbery (cattle theft, raids in grain lofts, ambushes on roads) to cover their food needs. The actions of these groups of criminals is also part of a logic of harming defense forces, security forces and vigilance committees. The actions perpetrated using IEDs seriously damage the operational units of the Cameroonian army and the section 1 of the Multinational Joint Force.

The recidivism of former brigands who made amends by joining the ranks of vigilance committees appears as one of the reproduction modes of the violence. The context of decongestion of borders that initiated the economic mobility, the rambling of livestock stolen from breeders and abandoned by Boko Haram attackers are, among other things, evidences of collusion between populations and Boko Haram and factors of the recidivism observed in the vigilance committees. In 2016, the arrest of the famous leader of vigilance committees of the Canton of Mozogo, Kolofata and Djakana<sup>27</sup> in the Far North region of Cameroon illustrates a *modus operandi* specific to the traditional uses of accumulation and survival by violence.

If the perpetration of terror by local actors occurred in a kind of continuum of Boko Haram's methods of exactions, the formation of an autonomous awareness of rupture and production of terror at the local level was truly manifested within these organised groups. Without ideological background or real project, they lost the link with the Boko Haram's suprastructure. Since 2017, they have been active in low control areas, especially in cross-border areas like the islands of Lake Chad, the national parks of Waza and Mozogo, and the cross-border strip between different States and Nigeria around Lake Chad. Thus, Boko Haram's insurgency nourishes and produces new localised insurrections whose outcome inevitably leads to new forms of criminogenic expressions and aspirations.

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<sup>27</sup> Salatou, A., "Comités de vigilance et après ?", le jour, n° 2092, 30 December 2015 ; Douwouré Ousmane, "Kolofata : le président du comité de vigilance jeté en prison", L'Œil du Sahel, n° 869, 22nd December 2016.

## **Ex-combatants, an outgrowth of Boko Haram in communities**

The ex-combatants of Boko Haram, referred to as “returned”, “repented”, “disengaged” and “followers”, who visit their communities are potential sources of threat. Whether they returned spontaneously or following a DDR operation, many of them are already enrolled. Even if more or less organised frameworks are set up to welcome them, many are rambling or remain poorly supervised. The situation of this category of ex-partners varies according to States.

In Nigeria, the *Safe Corridor* operation implemented in 2015 to ensure the deradicalisation and reintegration of ex-combatants of Boko Haram experienced various fortunes. Admittedly, the Mallam Sidi based center, 32km from Gombe, the capital of the State of Gombe, received more than 2,000 ex-combatants. But there is no evidence of the efficiency of the deradicalisation nor the percentage of reintegration. In Niger, in Goudoumaria, a desert locality in the region of Diffa, in the south-east of the country, hundreds of Boko Haram ex-combatants undergo a psychological and socio-professional recovery in a dedicated center. The National Program to support Boko Haram elements aims to consolidate peace and promote the socio-economic reconstruction of the areas affected by the Boko Haram crisis in the region of Diffa. It manages the capitulation of Boko Haram elements through training, rehabilitation, deradicalisation and socio-occupational reintegration. Here too, it is not possible to exactly attest how effective the results have been since January 2017. In Chad, the situation is more worrying. In the absence of a structured reintegration process for Boko Haram defectors, many of the rendered were oriented to communities. It is only in 2017 that precautionary measures are taken to confine the ex-combatants. Unlike other States bordering Lake Chad, Cameroon is the last that acquired an instrument for the reintegration of the ex-combatants of Boko Haram. More inclusive in its targets<sup>28</sup>, the National

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<sup>28</sup> The NCDJR also takes into account ex-combatants from separatist groups active in the North-West and South-West regions of Cameroon.

Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (NCDDR) is Cameroon's response to the general tendency of return to peace by the armistice, supported by the Regional Stabilisation Strategy validated in Abuja in August 2018, under the auspices of the LCBC and the African Union.

In addition to Chad and Cameroon, which stand like the poor parents of State responses to the management of the rendition of Boko Haram fighters, it shall be emphasized that experiences from Nigeria and Niger are also worrying. In Nigeria, during the Safe Corridor operation, many ex-combatants re-offended by deserting the center of Gombe. In Niger, while 233 ex-combatants were reintegrated at the Goudoumaria center in March 2019<sup>29</sup>, it must be admitted that many of them escaped. The last escape occurred in the night of November 24 to 25, 2018 and involved 7 ex-combatants, 3 of whom are still running<sup>30</sup>. In addition, dozens of ex-members of Boko Haram return directly in their communities protected by their families in the affected areas of the region of Diffa. Similar situation in Cameroon, where supervised ex-combatants regularly escape. In October 2018, of 113 ex-combatants, 10 escaped and remain in the nature till date. In communities, particularly in the Mayo-Tsanaga division, many ex-combatants, due to an inadequate profiling system, are categorized as ex-hostages and directed to the locality of Zamay<sup>31</sup>, real receptacle for all kinds of defectors coming from Boko Haram. In Chad, following the construction of the Daressalam camp, situated at 7km to Bagassola in the lake region, thousands of ex-associates of Boko Haram are under military surveillance. Until February 2018, the camp sheltered 3,000 elements from Boko Haram. Hundreds of ex-combatants have joined the communities without proper disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration process,

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<sup>29</sup> Alambédji Abba Issa, "Programme National de prise en Charge de la reddition des éléments de Boko Haram au Niger", Paper presented at the Consultative Workshop on the Review and Validation of the Standard Operating Procedure and the Multinational Joint Task Force on the Management of Persons Associated with Boko Haram, Ndjamená, 26-28 March 2019

<sup>30</sup> Oumar Hama Saley, "Niger : des ex-membres de Boko Haram se sont évadés du camp de repentis de Goudoumaria", Sahélien.Com, 25 November 2018

<sup>31</sup> Mbarkoutou Mahamat and Bana Barka, 2018, "Understanding Boko Haram Reintegration in Cameroon", PAIC/USAID Study report, October 2018

particularly in the districts of Bagassola, Kinasserom, Ngouboua<sup>32</sup>.

On the whole, it is fair to consider that the approximate treatment of Boko Haram rendered by the States constitutes a real threat to peace. Each community affected by the Boko Haram crisis recorded the return of ex-combatants whose reconversion routes remain problematic. Boko Haram is no longer a phenomenon exclusively limited to the conflict zones. It experiences particularly subtle mutations that spread it in communities through its fighters. Indoctrinated or trained to gun use techniques, these Boko Haram offspring constitute a more patented form of the Boko Haram threat.

## Strategic and security risks for the Lake Chad Basin

The faction dynamics within Boko Haram is causing serious risks both for the stability of the Lake Chad basin and for the safety of people and goods.

### Strategic risks

Strategic risks refer to the outbreak of several distinct areas threatening the stability of the entire Lake Chad Basin and corresponding to several fronts, inducing *de facto* several types of responses. As a result, we see three fields of instability coexisting: one with an all-out violence, the other with a more structured violence, and the third subject to organised crime or terror-crime; several zones of terrorist instability connected, particularly between the Sahel and the Gulf of Guinea via Lake Chad<sup>33</sup>.

**Table 2:** Scale of Strategic Risks, Operational Impact and Challenges for the States of the Lake Chad Basin

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<sup>32</sup> Kodi Mahamat, "De la radicalisation au désengagement : une étape dans le désenchantement de Boko Haram au Tchad", paper presented at the Regional workshop on the management of people disengaged from Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin", Maroua, February 2018

<sup>33</sup> J.P. Pham, "Boko Haram : la menace évolue", in Bulletin de la Sécurité Africaine, N° 20, April 2012

Nature of the risk	Operational impact	Challenges
Multipolarity of threats	Existence of conflict hotbeds animated by different actors	Sub-regional cooperation and sustainability/ adaptation of response mechanisms
	Appropriation of Al Barnaoui's discourse and sedimentation of sustained protest grounds	Questioning the sovereignty and authority of States
Positioning Lake Chad in a cycle of sustainable instability	Reinforcing the logic of exclusion and marginalization for the control of resources	Constitution of a tribal conscience in conflict with the republican citizenship
	Surfing of Salafist groups in Lake Chad, interconnection with the extremist hotbeds of the Sahel, Enlargement of the Islamist arc	Strengthening or weakening of ISWA, reincarnation of local terrorism and marginalization of States, International cooperation against terrorism
Violent extremism as means of expression of communities	-Transition from a tribal and socio-religious claim to protests based on Islamist political corporations Example. Budumaland	Adaptation of the national governance to the local one, reflecting aspirations of the populations at the base
	-Risk of interconnection between terrorist hotbeds of the Sahel and Lake Chad with identity claims (Fulani, Mbororo)	

## Security risks

The security risks refer to the actions and operations of violence perpetrated against the populations and civil and military targets. They raise the issue of durability of the instrumental violence in a socio-economic environment of crisis, whose inputs could build around identity, access to resources, and control of the traditional power. As the main actor of conflict systems and violence in Africa<sup>34</sup>, the States bordering Lake Chad must upgrade, both in the

<sup>34</sup> B. Gebrewold, 2009, *Anatomy of violence : understanding the Systems of Conflict and Violence in Africa*, Ashgate Publishing Limited, England

understanding of security stakes and in the offer of responses, with the major challenge being to correlate them to the avatars of the threats.

**Table 3:** Scale of Security risks, Operational Impact and Challenges for the States of the Lake Chad Basin

Nature of the risk	Operational impact	Challenges
Persistence of terrorism acts	JAS area: organized attacks, sporadic incursions, suicide bombing	Development of integrated counter-terrorism frameworks Different perceptions of strategic stakes by the States Sustainable development Democratic participation of populations (decentralization, federalism ...)
	-Multiplication of attacks on civilian targets: people killed, girls abducted, influx of refugees and displaced people, abandonment of land, cessation of production activities, forced conscription, cattle raids	
	ISWA area: Organized attacks on military targets, increased kidnappings of personalities, increased collaboration of populations	
Redeployment of organized crime networks	Migration of Boko Haram groups to criminal organizations (increased raids in villages, road cutters, kidnapping, cattle theft)	Combining actions to prevent and combat organized crime with the imperatives of development

Fragility of consensus and renewed inter-community conflicts	Instrumentation of Boko Haram by communities and resurgence of past conflicts (Mandara Mountains, Lake Chad)	Integration of environmental issues at the center of public development policies
	Return of refugees, displaced and returning people, recrudescence of tensions between communities and displaced persons over the control of resources (land, pastures, habitat, and fields, fishing areas...)	Regular and alternative financing of humanitarian crises, establishment of early conflict warning mechanisms, radicalization and violent extremism
	Weak prospects for rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-partners of Boko Haram	Weak prospects for rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-partners of Boko Haram

## Conclusion

At the beginning of this analysis, we questioned the recent developments that undermine the ideological and material integrity of the threat represented by Boko Haram for the Lake Chad Basin. It appears that in light of facts and the spatial and societal reconfigurations induced by the crisis, the Boko Haram threat as apprehended so far must be rethought. Beyond the so-called “major” factions, namely the Shekau tendency (JAS) and the Al Barnaoui faction (ISWA), other entities no less minor must be considered in the identification of the threat. These are more or less autonomous groups that produce insecurity, and the ex-combatants whose approximate treatment is an extension of Boko Haram within the host communities. The armed gangs and ex-combatants carry a nuisance potentially identical to that of the two main rival components of Boko Haram.

The security crises renewal process experienced by the Lake Chad Basin announces a strategic shift in this part of Africa, increasingly sandwiched between the unstable Sahel, the troubled Gulf of Guinea, adding to the Islamist arc. The fear is that the current trend of the atomisation of Boko Haram will continue. It will gradually build on a dynamic of dissemination following several trajectories: migration to organised crime with the persistence of high-way robbery, kidnapping, urban criminality and ethno-fascist claims. This also implies rethinking the detection and repression mechanisms, in order to readapt them to the flexibility of Lake Chad basin’s specific threats, which have become unspeakable, rustic and multiform. To do so, it is imperative to understand the current and underlying faces of the Boko Haram threat.



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# Counter-discourse and language of resilience by young people against Boko Haram in the Far-North region of Cameroon

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## Abstract

This study aims to demystify, deconstruct, and even discredit the messages and beyond, the propagandist ideology that plagued the intelligence of the young people in the Far-North of Cameroon for nearly a decade. It precisely questions not only the heuristic potential of the counter-discourse relating to apprehend and resolve post-war ideological confrontations (conflicts, controversies, breaks and convergences), but also and above all, highlights, based on a corpus, the different strategies used by resilient youths to refute assertions, demonstrate lies, illustrate false promises in order to objectify the facts. In the same vein, this research-action proposes to stimulate the critical spirit of the targets so that they react positively, from the origin of the ideology to the discourse, gauging the presented arguments and counter-arguments. This study appears to be crucial insofar as the victims of war, especially the young people from the Far North, North and South-West regions of Cameroon, need a convincing rhetoric to get out of this whirlwind and reconnect with the life of yesterday. In the same vein, it prepares the target population psychologically to get out of

the vagaries of war and opens the way for alternative discourses advocating values such as living together, respect for linguistic and cultural diversity, etc.

**Key words:** counter-discourse, deconstruction, youths, after-war, Boko-haram

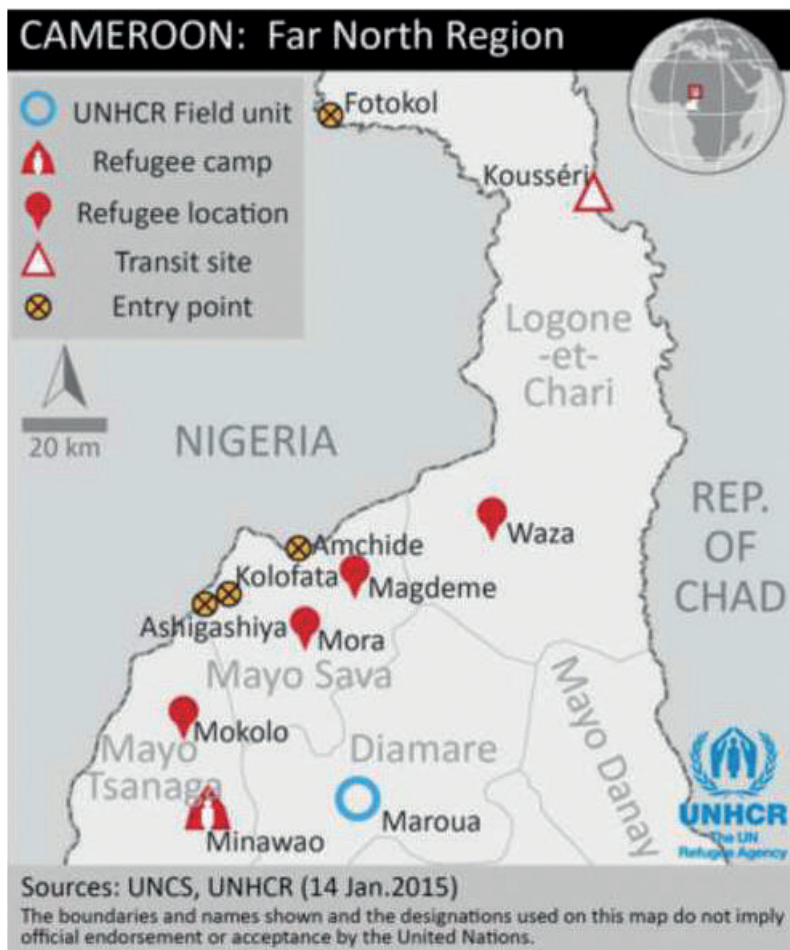
## Introduction

The rise of violent extremism in the Lake Chad Basin in general and in Cameroon in particular led to reflection on response strategies to counter this phenomenon. At the heart of these strategies is the counter-discourse in public spaces to raise awareness against the politico-religious ideology of the extremists. The counter-discourse in this work is seen as an invitation to the acceptance of others and integration. Thus, the paradigmatic relationship or even the “conflictual intimacy” (Terdinam 1985) which links discourse and counter-discourse will be perceived from a discursive and communicative angle. Under this research, it shall be necessary to question both the type of axiology which the counter-discourse of resilience responds to and the deconstruction strategies of the stereotypes deployed in this process. Emphasis will be put on the denunciation of the jihadist ideology and especially the effect of this approach on the target populations.

## Context of the study

This study stems in a context of reconstruction, at a time when the ultimate will of the Cameroonian government and its people is to pick up the pieces after the war against Boko-haram. Counter-discourse is perceived as a point-by-point response to a speech represented here as jihadist propaganda. The discourse itself perceived as “any statement assuming a speaker and a listener, and where the first intends to influence the second in some way” (Benveniste 1974: 241-2). This is also what and why social actors

struggle for (Foucault, 1971). In this context, thinking of a counter-discourse for ideological and group reorientation in a public space considered as “a place of exercise of the public speech, a place of production and social circulation of meaning and as a place of debate relative to the social discourse” (Auboussier 2015), is of primary interest, given the clarity of the objectives assigned. Thus, we shall react against youth exposure to Boko-haram jihadists, deconstruct the feeling of powerlessness in the face of this scourge in a field of communication that is quite theirs, in order to prevent them from spreading fear and desolation in regions already battered by poverty, but especially by refuting and reorienting the preconceived information instilled by them. To achieve this, an understanding of the study environment is required.



## Methodology

### Data collection method

The data collection method consisted of a participant observation, registration and, alternatively, the interviews of a sample of 25 youth engaged in the discourse of resilience in the towns of Mokolo, Mogodé-Koza, Mora and Kousseri between October and December 2018. Most of these young people work for NGOs that fight violent extremism on the field through awareness campaigns. The others are young religious (Muslims and Christians) seeking to bring peace through mosques and churches. This collection took into account the ABCDEF-E communication strategy (Audience, Behaviour, Content, Delivery, Engagement, Follow-up / Evaluation). However, the assessment section alone has been studied partially, since it required time to measure the impact of the counter-discourse on the change of behaviour of the audience.

C-D	Towns	Audience	Behavior	Content	Channel	Engage- ment	Follow up - Evaluation
4	Mokolo	100	Receptive	RTVI, Press	VP, FTF, DP, N	Slogans, popular saying	SMS, WhatsApp, Phone
6	Mogodé- Koza	64	Receptive	RTVI, Press	MA, VP, DP, N	Slogans, popular saying	SMS, WhatsApp, Phone
5	Mora	156					
	Recep- tive	RTVI, Press	VP, MA, FTF, DP, N	Slogans, popular saying	SMS, WhatsApp, Phone		
6	Kousseri	70	Receptive	RTVI, Press	VP, MA, FTF, DP, N	Slogans, popular saying	SMS, WhatsApp, Phone

VP: Video projection

DP: Drama play

FTF: Face to face

N: Narrative

RTVI: Radio and TV information

## 1.2. Method of analysis

In our quest to deconstruct the jihadist ideology, we used an epistemological framework consisting of integrating argumentation into discourse analysis. In fact, Amossy (2000: 29) defines argumentation as a set of :

*“Verbal means that a speaker implements to act on its listeners by trying to make them adhere to a thesis, to modify or reinforce the representations and opinions it lends to them, or simply to provoke their reflection on a given issue.”*

As concerns this study, we shall “modify the representations and opinions” which Boko Haram lent them, and bring them back to the common sense, building on a fifteen-minute counter-discourse produced by a young resilient member of the vigilance committee of Mogodé-koza, who denounces, as a witness of Boko-haram’s atrocities, the excesses of the extremists, under an awareness campaign conducted by an NGO. Given the scarcity of jihadist speeches, the latter uses online messages from Abubakar Shekau. We shall thus bring out the weaknesses of his religious argument, while highlighting language practices of resilience vis-a-vis the jihadist ideology.

### Denunciation of jihadist ideology

Bartlett (2015: 4) considers that “the use of counter-discourse is a participatory and commonly used reaction against violent extremism and hate content. (...)”. It is perceived as an argument with a positive content, in reaction to the hate or radicalisation discourse of a group, exposing its imposture, its lies and opposing ideological or theological arguments. In this sense, the relationship between discourse and counter-discourse is based on the argumentation to show the merit of one’s point of view or to refute one’s opponent’s point of view.

Thus, our corpus presents a structured denunciation, a refutation of the ideology of the opponent, represented by jihadists in general and Abubakar Shekau in particular. It consists first of all in presenting



the rhetoric of Abubakar Shekau, by underlining the elements he highlights, as well as the internal and external dynamics that underlie it: “Celui-là qui dénie un pouvoir légitime en proférant des injures et des menaces de mort”, “Celui-là qui nargue l’appartenance ethnique des autres et qui foule au pied la religion des autres”, “Celui-là qui remet en cause la démocratie, l’école occidentale avec lequel il utilise le nom de Dieu”, “Celui-là qui estime que les autres sont en retard par rapport à notre temps”. This step is considered as the identification phase of the weaknesses of the opponent, including the mechanisms likely to trigger such attitudes and behaviours, followed by the successful attempt of the speaker to devalue, discredit this discourse, in order to put an end to these received ideas, promote reconstruction, awareness and thus a new orientation. From this point of view, the speaker starts from the outset to unravel the characteristic features of this ideology and hopes to draw the attention of the audience in a public space considered “as a place of practice of public speech, a place of production and social circulation of meaning and a place for debate about the social discourse” (Delforce, 2010: 58-59). He does not fail to ask rhetorical questions to the crowd, for the ultimate purpose of consciousness awakening. “Pensez-vous qu’il ait la solution de tous les problèmes du monde ?” “Pensez-vous qu’il puisse asseoir son pouvoir si ce n’est par la terreur et la désolation ?” “Pensez-vous que Dieu soit fou en créant toute une diversité de peuples, de langues et d’ethnies ?”. The awakening of consciousness is what triggers the deconstruction process by challenging the ideas received on the hatred of the other and all related atrocities. And as links of the same chain, he takes care, thereafter, to explain to the audience the unorthodox processes of the terrorist sect, by reminding how important religion is, love and peace, as underlined in the following lines: “De la même manière que nous aimons Dieu, aimons notre prochain”; “De la même manière que nous respectons les autres, nous respectons également les codes sociaux comme la démocratie,” which sharply contrasts with Shekau’s perception. Moreover, the speaker underlines Shekau’s inconsistency, claiming that others are “en retard”, while his practices prove otherwise. This is why he places them under the barbarity of

past centuries. The speaker goes ahead, reaching the sensibility of his audience with his dramatic and revolted testimony. Therefore, he scrutinizes the atrocities that are still vivid in his memory as a volunteer in the vigilance committee of his village: “Moi j’ai vu les corps jonchés sur le sol après les explosions”; “Moi qui ai vu des corps de paisibles citoyens calcinés et méconnaissables”; “Moi qui ai vu des familles entières décimées ou kidnappées par ces gens sans foi ni loi”; “J’ai même vu des frères mutilés et égorgés par ces gens-là”. It is precisely the boiling of this revolt which constitutes a capital step, if not the most important, of this process of awareness. That certainly will initiate the inversion of the deal, what we call reorientation. By this process, he calls on others in the community not to be fooled, not to give in to psychosis, but much more to react, because, since he does not have appropriate equipment to fight a technologically armed enemy, he only has his courage and his will to stop the invading enemy. He wants to make his audience understand that he is the incarnation, the living proof of the anti-jihadist struggle; in short, he is a model to follow. That is why he sends a vibrant call to the crowd, that listens attentively and in absolute calm, to react to get out of this torpor. He ends up admitting the shortcomings of the present society, which are found everywhere, knowing that perfection does not exist, these can be solved in other ways than the use of lethal violence and psychosis. But before closing his speech with a unifying proposal that allows the “dilution” of the conflictuality (Auboussier, 2011), the return to the peaceful life by the quest for a noble gain, he does not fail to scold the leader of the sect, asking the question why he does not preach by the example and blow himself up to be the first to enter paradise.

### **Argumentation strategies of the counter-discourse**

In the fifteen-minute counter-discourse, the extract of which is the subject of this study, the speaker uses a myriad of expressions and a particular style to have a considerable success on the audience. From the outset, he reveals the ideology of the imagined and fantasized world advocated by Shekau. In the four introductory sentences of this research-action, the leader of the jihadist ideology

that our speaker refers to as “celui-là” is indexed by the distortions to the ethical and aesthetic rules of today’s modern society. The corresponding lexical selection is revealing: “Injures”, “menace”, and “mort”. The verbs “dénier”, “narguer”, “fouler” and “remettre en cause” reflect the hindrance and discomfort that characterise this discourse, which is at the antipodes of the jihadist speech. In this demystification process, he emphasizes the shortcomings of Shekau’s statements, which are very obvious, for the power of “Dieu, par Dieu et pour Dieu”, that is, the opposite of democracy, is it a myth or a representation of his mind that leads him to have a wrong view of the world? The speaker, to distance himself from this idea, will build on concrete arguments, referring to the history of ancient battles and empires in order to establish the comparison with the current society, which certainly has its flaws, but in no way justify the actions of the terrorist sect.

The speaker not only rejects the ideology, but also proceeds by a tactical retreat consisting in an introspection, a turn back in his memory which preserved all the atrocities of the war. The related lexicons are very significant: “corps”, “jonchés” sur le “sol”, “explosions”, “calcinés”, “méconnaissables”, “décimées”, “kidnappées”, “mutilés”, “égorgés”.

He emerges from his gongs with a determination to face the enemy, because he now has a leitmotiv, a sufficient reason to face the evil, to defend against this ruthless enemy able to attack the most vulnerable people.

But in the end, it is not a physical weapon he points towards the opponent, it is a virtual weapon made up of words, it is a discourse of awareness as a translation of his frankness.

### **Impact of the counter-discourse**

Any act of communication has a special purpose and therefore leaves marks on its way. In this section, we shall study what Kerbrat-Orecchioni (2002: 28) calls “the set of observable phenomena that are deployed during a particular communicative

act”. As part of this counter-discourse, we set out to study the marks aiming to deconstruct psychosis in the face of a personal attack, as is the case in this corpus, without ignoring the enunciative marks deployed by our speaker to demystify the jihad duty and the warning to the entire international community.

#### 4.1. Linguistic subjectivity in the deconstruction of personal and globalised threat

In this passage, the speaker unfolds before the audience a counter-discourse rhetoric aimed at demystifying the personal threat addressed by Boko Haram through Abubakar Shekau to Sultan Sanusi of Kano. Thus, from the enunciative point of view, the speaker, in the eight introductory sentences of his speech, tends to fade from it. Rather, he directly attacks Shekau on his threats and outrageous ideology. His presence will only be perceived in the thirteenth sentence. He intervenes first of all through the personal pronoun of the first person plural “nous”, which has nine (09) occurrences in the text, when he proposes to mark his solidarity with his audience in this test which opposes Boko Haram to the modern society: “afin de **nous** imposer leur vision du monde par les armes ?”, “de la terre **nous** venons”, “de la même manière que **nous** aimons Dieu”; “De la même manière que **nous** respectons les autres”. He also uses the pronoun to refer to Boko Haram supporters. This pronoun is used to mark the distance between Boko Haram supporters and his audience while drawing the attention of the latter on the hatred and violence of the former: “Et vivre dans une société démocratique ne veut pas dire qu’**on** aime pas Dieu”; “Lorsqu’**on** compare son nom aux tirs d’un fusil de guerre”; “Lorsqu’**on** menace de mort un dignitaire religieux, un président et qu’**on** traite de menteur les autres, je crois qu’**on** doit pouvoir se demander également qui **on** est”. The personal pronoun “moi” also participates in this apparatus with five (05) occurrences. It states his personal involvement in this activity: “La preuve est que **moi** je suis musulman”; “Voilà pour **moi**, ceux qui sont en retard”; “**Moi** j’ai vu les corps jonchés sur le sol après les explosions”.

The speaker does not hesitate to dilute again in the societal mass by the mere occurrence of the possessive adjective “notre” in the following passage: “**Notre** siècle n’est plus celui des empires et des batailles barbares”. Midway through his speech, he unfolds the personal pronoun of subjectivity “je” in twelve (12) occurrences.

Nine (09) occurrences of the personal pronoun “je” were identified: “Moi **j**’ai vu les corps jonchés sur le sol après les explosions”; “**J**’ai même vu des frères mutilés et égorgés par ces gens-là”; “**Je** vous jure que devant de telles atrocités, moi **je** ne suis pas resté indifférent”. The speaker, through the abundant use of this pronoun, presents the situation he experienced and draws the attention of his audience to the violent extremism of Boko Haram. His explicit presence in this speech is a testimony of his will to assume his discourse, assume his words. He is determined to publicly refute the obscurantist ideology of Boko Haram.

The presence of the listener is also perceptible in this counter-discourse through the personal pronoun “vous” which appears five (05) times in the text: “Pensez-**vous** qu’il ait la solution de tous les problèmes du monde ?” “Pensez-**vous** qu’il puisse asseoir son pouvoir si ce n’est par la terreur et la désolation ?” “Pensez-**vous** que Dieu soit fou en créant toute une diversité de peuples, de langues et d’ethnies ?”. With the use of this pronoun, the speaker calls on the listener who is none other than the crowd who listens attentively whether through rhetorical questions or the use of the imperative.

#### 4.2. The “ethos”

Ethos is a Greek word that means character, state of mind, psychic disposition. Amossy (1999) defines this term in its classical meaning, as the self-image that the speaker constructs in his speech to influence his listener from a certain number of traits. According to Maingueneau, “the proof by the ethos consists on making a good impression, by the way one builds his speech, giving an image of oneself capable of convincing the audience by gaining its confidence”. And therefore shall the speaker build a good self-

image to persuade his interlocutor. The notion of the ethos not only involves the verbal behavior, but also the physical aspect of the speaker. To convince his audience, the speaker projects his credibility in his speech. Thus, from the beginning of his speech, he refutes the ideas of his opponent, showing his audience that his words stem from a well-structured society, recognized by all. This is all the more important, for he resorts to intertextuality by showing how wrong jihadist practices are, drawing inspiration from the Qur'anic verse which reads "from God we come and to God we shall return". He also turn to his memory to share his personal experience in the vigilance committee of his village with his audience through these words: "**Moi** j'ai vu les corps jonchés sur le sol après les explosions"; "**Moi** qui ai vu des corps de paisibles citoyens calcinés et méconnaissables"; "**Moi** qui ai vu des familles entières décimées ou kidnappées par ces gens sans foi ni loi"; "**J'**ai même vu des frères mutilés et égorgés par ces gens-là". He does not hesitate to bring out the fiber of the vulnerability of the woman and the girl by underlining this: "**N'**en parlons plus pour nos femmes et filles violées et violentées par ces gens-là". To further enhance his credibility, he shows his commitment to the cause by solemnly swearing "**Je** vous jure que devant de telles atrocités, moi je ne suis pas resté indifférent et c'est ce qui justifie ma présence devant vous et mon engagement pour le comité de vigilance de Mogodé". To show his unwavering commitment to his community whom he is willing to give his life for, he states: "**Je** réagis exactement comme le sultan de Kano qui est attaqué dans ce discours"; "**Je** réagis exactement comme tout bon père de famille qui veut protéger les siens".

It is through these that the speaker seeks to gain the trust of his audience, by showing that he has mastered the functioning of contemporary modern societies, different from what is sought by the jihadists. At the same time, he shows his credibility by his commitment in this fight.

### 4.3. The “Pathos”

One of the goals of public speaking is persuade the audience. The pathos is one of the argumentation techniques intended to persuade by creating emotion on the receivers. The argumentation by the pathos calls on the feelings and desires of the audience. In her book on argumentation in the discourse, Ruth AMOSSY (1999: 246) believes that:

The term “pathè” in the plural thus refers to the emotions that an orator “must know to act effectively on the minds” and these are “anger and calm, friendship and hate, fear and trust, shame and impudence, kindness, pity and indignation, envy, emulation and contempt”.

Through this quote, we can say that the pathos is the set of emotions of anger, calm, friendship, hate, pity evoked by the speaker to influence the audience and make them see, think and act. It is the emotional effect produced by the speaker on the audience. In our corpus, the speaker uses several methods to touch the feeling of his audience. Thus, we have the use of figures of speech of amplification, expressive punctuation, language registers that allow the speaker to influence the feeling of his audience to refute the extremist ideas of Boko Haram.

#### 4.3. 1. Figures of speech

Thus, there are figures of speech like:

- the gradation, which has the effect of insistence and highlight of an idea by the use successive terms for increased intensity and the repetition of the same structures of sentence. This is the case of “**Celui-là qui** denie un pouvoir légitime en proférant des injures et des menaces de mort”,

“**Celui-là qui** nargue l'appartenance ethnique des autres et qui foule au pied la religion des autres”,

“**Celui-là qui** remet en cause la démocratie, l'école occidentale avec lequel il utilise le nom de Dieu”,



“**Celui-là qui** estime que les autres sont en retard par rapport à notre temps”.

The same goes with the following example:

“**Moi** j’ai vu les corps jonchés sur le sol après les explosions”,

“**Moi** qui ai vu des corps de paisibles citoyens calcinés et méconnaissables”,

“**Moi** qui ai vu des familles entières décimées ou kidnappées par ces gens sans foi ni loi”.

- Comparison is also part of this persuasive arsenal through this example: “Dieu est **amour** et non pas **haine**”, the speaker seeks to establish a contrast between the loving God he knows and the caricature of the jihadists.

- The rhetorical question, which consists in asking a question to the audience while knowing the answer, and the expressive punctuation. These are illustrated by:

“Et **d’où vient-il que** des gens venus de nulle part se lèvent un beau matin en déformant les versets d’une religion de paix afin de nous imposer leur vision du monde par les armes ? ”

“**Pensez-vous qu’il** ait la solution de tous les problèmes du monde ?”

“**Pensez-vous qu’il** puisse asseoir son pouvoir si ce n’est par la terreur et la désolation ?” ”

“**Pensez-vous que** Dieu soit fou en créant toute une diversité de peuples, de langues et d’ethnies ?” ”

- The personification consists in giving life to an idea or a thing. It appears in the text through the expression “asseoir son pouvoir”, because this gives life to something abstract: “pouvoir” that can “s’asseoir”. This gives a particular and subsequent rhythm, hence the alliteration.



### 4.3.2. Language register

Language is often a function of the audience and the communication situation. Thus, to adapt to his audience, the speaker shifts between three language levels in his speech.

The familiar register

It is used very little by the speaker and is summed up not by whole sentences, but by few words and expressions. The following statements are illustrative: “**Moi j**’ai vu les corps jonchés sur le sol après les explosions”,

“**Moi** qui ai vu des corps de paisibles citoyens calcinés et méconnaissables”,

“**Moi** qui ai vu des familles entières décimées ou kidnappées par ces gens sans foi ni loi”.

“**J’ai même** vu des frères mutilés et égorgés par ces gens-là”. Through this register, the speaker wants his discourse to be more expressive and interested. Words like “moi je”, as well as expressions like “ces gens-là”.

The current register

This is the average level of language. This is the language used in everyday life as the name suggests. It is illustrated in the following speech:

“Je crois aussi qu’on doit se demander pourquoi on n’envoie que les enfants des autres se faire exploser et non soi-même, car si on veut le « paradis » dans l’anarchie, on doit pouvoir y aller en premier pour montrer ce bel exemple”.

The honorific register

The honorific register is also felt in the speaker’s speech through the use of a rich vocabulary, complex sentence structures and figures of speech. As for vocabulary, we find in his speech the use of words like: “atrocités”, “anarchie”, “ethnies”, “empires”, “terreur”, “nobles”, “cohabitation”, “violentes”.

Complex sentence structures include: “En plus, dites-moi, n’avons-nous pas raison de réagir face à de tels comportements surtout lors que nous ne sommes pas d’accord ?”,

“Et celui qui juge l’Arabie saoudite de ne pas pratiquer l’islam comme il se doit, s’est –il jugé lui-même pour prétendre aller en terre sainte ?”, **Je** ne sais pas s’il aura le courage de le faire vu toutes les atrocités commises”. Through the use of these different language registers, the speaker seeks to reach with his speech all the components of his audience.

#### 4.3.3. Focus

The speaker adopts two types of focus in this discourse. At the beginning of his intervention, he adopts an external focus. In the first eight sentences, he does not intervene in his speech. It just presents the facts by describing the weaknesses of jihadist rhetoric. He only presents external aspects, facts, actions and events. He only presents comments on the characters, the facts which he speaks of: “Celui-là qui dénie”, “Celui-là qui nargue”, “Pensez-**vous** qu’il ait la solution”, “Pensez-**vous** qu’il puisse asseoir son pouvoir”.

From the eighth sentence, he adopts an internal point of view. At this level, the speaker is involved in his speech. His presence is remarkable through the use of the first person plural: “afin de **nous** imposer leur vision du monde par les armes ?”, then as his counter-rhetoric grows in intensity, he dissociates himself from the jihadists by using either “on” or “je”, which appear in several occurrences. The same goes with the possessive adjective “notre” and the pronoun “moi”.

Through the use of these two types of focus, the speaker, using the external focus, seeks to give his speech an objective perspective, to have the confidence of his audience. Showing facts in an objective perspective, and referring to the misconducts of the jihadist sect gives him positive returns. With the internal focus, he gets involved in his speech to stimulate the emotion of his audience and draw its attention to the outrageous deviance of Shekau and his group.

## **Elements of the argumentation of the counter-discourse of resilience**

When arguing, it is certainly intended to justify a point of view. But this justifying purpose is accompanied by a positioning aim of the counter-discourse in relation to a previously produced speech. Responses to a hate speech may therefore have different argumentative aims: reacting to hate speech with counter-arguments in order to persuade and change the point of view of an opponent. These arguments unfold in the different sentences which each have a well defined structure.

### **5.1. The structure of the sentence**

In his counter-rhetoric, the speaker expresses himself using complex sentences with explanatory value. Most of these are relative and completive.

#### **- Relative clauses**

It is worth noting that the speaker hugely uses relative subordinate clauses. These are complex sentences and their use brings a precision on the idea developed in the main clause and are of capital importance for this counter-discourse, because, in the demystification process of the jihadist ideology, facts are explained and this process makes the sentence complex. Our corpus has several relative clauses: “Je réagis exactement comme le sultan de Kano qui est attaqué dans ce discours”; “Je réagis exactement comme tout bon père de famille qui veut protéger les siens”. These relative clauses are expansions of the noun. In this discourse they play the role of the qualifying adjective. Better still, they describe the acts of Boko Haram supporters and bring precision with regard to their behavior on a daily basis.

#### **Completive clauses**

They are the equivalent of a noun or a nominal group. Completive subordinates in this discourse play the role of complement; they complement the meaning of the main clause, providing more

precision. The speaker makes use of completive clauses in his discourse to show the gravity of the practices of violence and the excesses of the sect. There are many occurrences in our corpus: “et vivre dans une société démocratique ne veut pas dire qu’on aime pas Dieu”, “Je vous jure que devant de telles atrocités”, “je crois qu’on doit pouvoir se demander également qui on est”.

However, there is also emphasis, topicalisation, cleavage and negation.

### Emphasis

The emphasis process is also represented in this discourse through topicalisation and cleavage.

- Topicalisation is the accession of an entity to the status of topic, that is, the explanation by its organisational status. It appears in this corpus through the following sentences:

“Moi j’ai vu les corps jonchés sur le sol après les explosions”, “Moi qui ai vu des corps de paisibles citoyens calcinés et méconnaissables”, “Moi qui ai vu des familles entières décimées ou kidnappées par ces gens sans foi ni loi”. Not only this aims to supporting the speaker’s anti-Jihadist arguments, but also and above all providing new explanatory elements that shed light on those who were under the yoke of Boko Haram.

### Cleavage

It consists in focusing a constituent not only by moving it at the end of the sentence, but by surrounding it with a presentative. It is perceptible in the corpus through the presentative “voilà”: “**Voilà** pour moi, ceux **qui** sont en retard”.

Cleavage also appears as a question in the speaker’s words: “**est-ce** pour autant dire que notre mission c’est de faire du mal aux autres ? ”

### Negation

It is used to refute the drifts of the jihadist doctrine and at the same time to give force to one’s remarks. Thus, to authenticate his

argument, convokes what is written in the Qur'an. Negation is illustrated in sentences such as: "notre siècle **n'est plus** celui des empires et des batailles barbares"; "il n'est **pas** non plus celui des conquêtes barbares au nom de Dieu".

## 5.2. Lexical fields

Three main lexical fields structure this text and complement each other: These are the lexical fields of demystification, rejection of violence and forgiveness.

While the lexical field of demystification includes verbs such as: "dénier", "narguer", "estimer que", "penser que" to sow doubt in the ideas that jihadists have instilled in people,

the lexical field of the rejection of violence is illustrated by words and expressions such as "imposer", "différence", "batailles", "corps", "explosions", "haine", "violence", "paisibles", "citoyens", "calcinés" et "méconnaissable", "décimées", "kidnappées", "gens sans foi ni loi", "frères", "mutilés", "égorgés", "violées", "violentées", "atrocités", "indifférent". We note through these lexical fields that the evil has traumatised the speaker and he is driven by the desire to change things.

The lexical field of forgiveness is illustrated in this text by words like "vivre ensemble", "valeur", "bonne conduite", "respect", "paix", "cohabitation", "républiques", "modèles", "manquements", "solution", "recours", "revenir", "vie paisible", "voies et moyens", "nobles", "gagner son pain" et "aller de l'avant".

## 5.3. Verb tenses

In this discourse, two verb tenses are mostly represented: the present of the indicative dominates the text with 66 appearances. It is the tense par excellence of the discourse. It updates facts, insisting on the urgency to act, to become aware and recover, as the speech is delivered. Nevertheless, occurrences of past tenses dot the discourse, namely the past perfect which expresses precise facts and finished in the past. It plays a crucial role in this corpus,

because it makes an introspection of the facts and immerses listeners in the memory of the speaker sharing his experience, his testimony of the atrocities of Boko haram: “Moi j’**ai vu** les corps jonchés sur le sol après les explosions” it appears six (06) times. The simple future or tense of future facts appears with 02 times: “Je ne sais pas s’il **aura** le courage de le faire vu toutes les atrocités”. The imperative which appears only in one instance (01) expresses the speaker’s advice to his audience. Besides, it is an advice of conciliation and forgiveness which comes just at the end of this discourse to prevent the hints of resentment that can arise in people’s hearts and help people move forward: “**Sachez** que même dans les républiques les plus modèles, il y a des manquements qui peuvent trouver une solution ailleurs que le recours à la haine et la violence”. Finally, the subjunctive with three (03) appearances, expresses in our case, uncertain facts: “Pensez-vous qu’il puisse asseoir son pouvoir si ce n’est par la terreur et la désolation ?” . In this illustration, for example, it is doubtful that Shekau could seat his power without terror or desolation.

## Conclusion

The counter-discourse of ideological reorientation, subject of this study, is a very beneficial method to fighting against violent extremism, radicalisation and terrorism, as it is faster, more flexible, more responsive, and able to combat the jihadist discourse everywhere. Under this research-action, it largely contributed to the beginning of the deconstruction of the jihadist discourse in the memory of our respondents by gradually restoring self-confidence through the “face to face” method which largely helped to shed light on those who were dubious, as they had the opportunity to ask all their questions. However, this research-action must be complemented by specific actions like projects to reintegrate young people into active life. It is important to recall that in this region, poverty is the main cause of enlistment of young people, seduced by the idea of a salary beyond their expectation offered by Boko-haram. Relations to religious dogmatism are very present and reflect the influence of religion on the being. There is therefore a need to denounce not only extremist religious leaders, but also and above all the circulation of video and audio propagandist messages in order to attack radicalisation at the root. This will help bring back a good part, if not the majority of these populations plunged for a decade in obscurantism, to certain cardinal values recognised worldwide: respect for other peoples differences, respect for institutions and living together.

## Suggestions

Some suggestions are worth being raised for more effective counter-discourses:

The government should **encourage more young people in adopting “face to face” strategies** to give the opportunity to those already radicalised, those being radicalised or those still in doubt to ask questions and make a total blackout.

Young people should convince their peers on the ground **crisis exit**

**strategies, self-employment leads** or else by informing them of **government projects which they can subscribe.**

NGOs fighting violent extremism, radicalisation and terrorism should make greater **use of Muslims, Christians or other young believers** in these strategies.

## Prospects

Some avenues for reflection on the evaluation of the impact of counter-discourse after the passage of young resilient can be shared. This shall aim at measuring the scope, the impact of the counter-rhetoric on the way the targets think and in the long run, on his attitudes and behaviors. In this case, we shall:

- **Follow the evolution** of his thought and his behavior during the months following the popularisation of the counter-discourses.
- Explore the impact of new ways of delivering **non-audio messages or videos such as sports, music, drama, and any other form of arts** that go unnoticed and act effectively especially in this context where there are still some vague resistance and sporadic actions of the terrorist group.
- Insert the use of **slogans** in the counter-discourses for quicker results
- **Effectively** enforce Cameroon's anti terrorism law to prosecute and punish the perpetrators of hate speech, who often operate with impunity and use several tricks (audio or video recordings) to convey their ideas.



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# Vulnerabilities and Identities: An Endosemic Analysis of a Culture of Survival in Lake Chad

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## **Abstract.**

Lake Chad is at the interface of fragility and vulnerability. This fragility can be attributed to a number of factors, namely: 1. The effects of climate change which are known to have a “threat multiplier” impact that converges and interacts with other environmental, economic, social and political shocks and pressures; 2. The global context of instability, atrocities by militias and Boko Haram in villages and islands around the lake and 3. Conflicts fueled by governments and social institutions which find it difficult to ensure security and equitable development. At the same time, conflict and fragility often contribute to environmental degradation and undermine the ability to adapt to climate change, thereby creating a vicious circle of vulnerability and growing fragility. This somber scenario is characteristic of Lake Chad and seems to be the typical identification mark of the country for several decades now. This paper proposes to present an endosemic view of the vulnerabilities inherent in Lake Chad through an understanding of the logic and cultural practices of the local residents that experience these vulnerabilities. The paper adopts a three-fold strategy in its analyses. It firstly presents an overview of the vulnerabilities and fragilities of Lake Chad; Secondly, it

discusses the individual and collective perception of vulnerability in an environment characterised by vulnerabilities embedded in the collective imagery; and, thirdly, it analyzes the different identities that emerge against a backdrop of cultural assimilation of the vulnerabilities that have become a strategic weapon for the survival of local Lake Chad residents.

**Key words:** *Vulnerability, Endosemia, Climate Change, Identity, Lake Chad.*

## Introduction

Generally speaking, there are two contradictory debates on the issue of the future of Lake Chad, given the dizzying rate at which its waters are receding. In a very ancient past, explorers such as Commandant Lenfant, Monteil, Nachtigal, had already predicted the eventual disappearance of Lake Chad, on the basis of the lake's evolution over time (Saibou, 2001). Even today, NASA's (2001) conclusions confirm this fact by explaining that the narrowing lake between the end of the 1960s and the present period announced its eventual disappearance. This fear of seeing Lake Chad disappear motivated the more or less realistic project of transferring water from the Ubangi River to the lake. Some scientists are now refining their positions by explaining that the future of the lake will be highly dependent on the evolution of rainfall patterns in the Chari-Logone basin and its groundwater (Lemoalle et al., 2011). This position is reinforced by *the Atlas of Lake Chad* published in June 2015 under the auspices of Gérard MAGRIN, Jacques LEMOALLE and Roland POURTIER.

In fact, apart from the Lake Chad Atlas, research in the Lake Chad area is mainly the work of geographers (Levêque, 1983, Kolawole, 1988, Clanet, 2000, Magrin, 2007, Ndadoum, 2012). , historians (Lefèvre, 1957, Saibou, 2001, 2002, 2006, 2012), hydrologists (Lemoalle et al., 2011, Chouret et al., 1974), climatologists (Trémolières, 2010), who generally addressed issues of availability,

decline and conflicts of access to the resources of Lake Chad; settlement and agrarian dynamics; rainfall variations and agrarian systems (irrigated agriculture, recession and rain-fed agriculture); issues related to drought and declining lake water levels; population growth and resource availability; the notion of climate change and variability; safety issues and environmental variables; the correlation between climatic variations, conflicts and access to the lake's natural resources (fish, land, pasture and water); cross-border conflicts and security

Nowadays, the conjunction of an armed conflict and an ecological crisis has amplified scientific curiosity on Lake Chad. Global warming and Boko Haram are threatening regional balances as well. The scientists<sup>1</sup> show that beyond its visibly exceptional character, Lake Chad in fact serves as a symbol of the challenges of sustainable development in Africa. These require the search for innovative ways to reconcile the viability of fragile and increasingly uncertain natural resources, population growth, political integration and the necessity for development. These results thus present the profile of the fragility and vulnerability of Lake Chad irrespective of the time scale under consideration.

As mentioned before, this paper presents an endosemic analysis of the inherent vulnerabilities of Lake Chad, and more precisely in the southern basin, based on an understanding of the logic and cultural practices of local residents that experience these vulnerabilities. Employing the perspective of the inside, the issue is to show that the notion of vulnerability in Lake Chad must be correlated with that of identity in order to define the possible levels of articulation between the perceptions that residents have of their identities and the opportunities that these offer to different accumulation routes. Therefore, resources and identities are the foundation that defines the threshold of access to opportunities to escape vulnerability. The scope of the study includes the island communities of Kofia in the locality of Blangoua, Darack in the locality of Darack in Cameroon

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<sup>1</sup> Bertrand Lemartinel, « Atlas du lac Tchad, sous la direction de Gérard MAGRIN, Jacques LEMOALLE et Roland POURTIER, 2015 », *Physio-Géo* [En ligne], Volume 9 | 2015, mis en ligne le 25 octobre 2015, consulté le 11 Février 2019. URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/physio-geo/4633>

and the localities bordering Guitté and Mitériné in the district of Mani, Hadjer Lamis province in Chad. It is a fact that the variability of Lake Chad is timeless and has always led to complete changes in landscape. As a result, local populations adapt to it through mobility and pluriactivity. However, there has not yet been an ethno-analytical study of local residents' adaptation techniques. Using the lake's population perceptions, the study will deconstruct the local polarizing reactions around the mobility-pluriactivity binomial. Firstly, an overview of the vulnerabilities and fragilities of Lake Chad are presented; secondly, there is a discussion of the individual and collective perception of vulnerability in an environment characterised by vulnerabilities embedded in the collective imagery and, thirdly, the study analyzes the different identities that emerge against a backdrop of cultural assimilation of the vulnerabilities that have become a strategic weapon for the survival of local Lake Chad residents masked by the mobility-pluriactivity pair in a context of humanitarian crisis never recorded in the region.

## **Overview of the vulnerabilities and fragilities of Lake Chad**

The issue is to determine the vulnerabilities that characterise Lake Chad and understand how the populations live and perceive these vulnerabilities. In fact, the inherent vulnerabilities of Lake Chad are forms of adaptive identities by local residents in the hyper-changing ecosystem that is Lake Chad. The manifestation of the vulnerabilities is also discussed here.

### **What does the notion of vulnerability in Lake Chad refer to?**

The notion of vulnerability refers to the finiteness and fragility of human existence. When people are vulnerable, it undermines their self-sufficiency and dignity, their integrity in terms of physical or age-related psychic wellbeing, their age, sex, origin, social class, etc. In this sense, vulnerability is multifaceted, namely, economic,

political, cultural, mental, social, environmental, security and existential. Vulnerabilities in Lake Chad are individual (Women, Men, Children, Returned Refugees, IDPs); collective (ethnic, community, religious linguistic), historical (Kanem-Borno Empire, Sokoto, No man's land, Razzia, caravan routes); socio-economic (dwindling fisheries resources, land competition, health, formal and informal education); political and geostrategic (contrasting interests of the four riparian countries in the aftermath of independence); lacustrine/ecosystemic (resources curse, contraband, and cross-border mobility).

All in all, vulnerability in the Lake Chad region is ultimately about the individual and collective perception of different ecological, climatic, political, economic, social and cultural threats; about the loss of autonomy fueled by population growth, dwindling and competing resources, usurpation of the lake as a hiding place for criminals and other armed groups; about the loss of human dignity or physical or psychological integrity related to age, gender, social background, and class, etc.

In this text, getting an understanding from within of the notion of vulnerability in the light of its daily appropriation by local residents is crucial to the understanding of their logic and existential choices. And all this can only be grasped from local residents' definition or identification of themselves. This leads us to consider the notion of identity as a mirror reflecting the cultural assimilation of the notion of vulnerability presented above, a notion that has become the strategic weapon of survival of the residents.

Identities are understood through the manner of adapting to change that is unique to the subject (i.e. dialogic and dynamic.) While identity is both collective and individual, it may not only be limited to the existence of people and individuals exclusively. It is multidimensional and combines inherited and selected components. This induces in the individual the coexistence of an objective and subjective identity to which we do not all accord the same value. The objective identity is national, linguistic, ethnic, religious, social, sexual, and professional. The subjective identity

of the individual is defined in reference to his identity, which to him seems to be the most important and decisive in a context, and cannot be separated from what matters most to him. This idea implies sorting and manipulation. In other words, individual or collective identities at the lake reflect the assimilation and perception of vulnerabilities.

## **What are the vulnerabilities inherent in Lake Chad?**

Lake Chad is essentially characterised by great variations in surface area, irrespective of the time scale considered. Its total freshwater area has decreased by 95% over the last 50 years (LCBC 2011). The current lake is a stable “small Chad”, despite its natural annual and inter-annual changing cycles. In fact, for nearly four decades, a general decrease in rainfall, the degradation of vegetation cover, and persistent droughts have changed the environmental conditions and the lives of the populations bordering Lake Chad. The cross-border diagnostic analysis of the Lake Chad Basin prepared for the benefit of the CBLT-FEM program for the reversal of land and water degradation trends by Hassan Haruna and Martin Bloxom show that: the drying-up of Lake Chad, the advance of the desert and decline of agriculture, animal industries and fisheries, pose a threat to the social and economic well-being of more than 22 million people living in the Lake Chad Basin (LCBC, 2008).

Additionally, this increasingly changing climate is worsening the problems faced by the predominantly rural population around Lake Chad, most of who depend on agriculture, fishing and livestock farming. This climate-fragility profile summarises the main challenges that the Lake Chad region faces because of the interaction between climate change and the fragility<sup>2</sup> that the concept of vulnerability can express better. The current state of the lake, however, does not prevent or discourage large transnationalised people from converging towards its shores and

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<sup>2</sup> Nagarajan Chitra et Als; 2018, Climate-Fragility Profile: Lake Chad Basin. Berlin, ADELPHI.

islands. This attractiveness of the lake to the populations puts pressure on its resources with the corollary being variations in the use of the environment and a recurrence of conflicts and crises.

The Lake Chad Basin region is currently experiencing one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world. More than 10 million people are in need of immediate humanitarian assistance and 3.7 million are expected to face severe food insecurity in Northeastern Nigeria with its tentacles in Lake Chad during the next lean season;<sup>3</sup> this situation only further increases the competition for resources that are shrinking further. The crisis was triggered by violence linked to armed or terrorist groups like “Boko Haram”.

This is a paradox that has been observed in the lake in this decade. Since the beginning of the atrocities of the Boko Haram sect to the present day, many citizens of the riparian countries have found refuge in the lake. Children and women are by far the most numerous despite the fact that Al Barnaoui’s Boko Haram faction has transformed the space into their hiding place. The terrorist group reigns supreme here, under the “complicit” eye of the security and defence forces of the riparian states. This strange cohabitation of executioner and victim has created new alliances against a backdrop of community reconfigurations with exclusion as a *modus operandi*. Social and environmental relationships are therefore diverse and diversified under the mold of vulnerabilities expressed by the resurgence of underlying conflicts and violence that explain insecurity in Lake Chad, and that do not only go beyond the current violence but are rooted in the historical context of the region as well. In this case, vulnerability is not only ecologic, but especially social and psychological, it is based on the reactivation of the instinct of survival by the residents who are ready to make all kinds of compromises to gain access to resources.

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<sup>3</sup> Rapport de REACH, 2017, « Evaluation multisectorielle dans la région du Lac Tchad » [“Multisectoral Evaluation in the Lake Chad Region”], TCHAD, USAID.



## **Survival Instinct as an Individual and Collective Vision-Image of Vulnerability**

According to ecological anthropology, the relationship of man to nature is linked to the structures and social logics identified in a cultural space-time (Descola, 2008, Chavallon, 2009). According to these authors, nature and culture are an inseparable whole which are both internal and external to the individual. Because of their cultural practices which are geared towards the lake, the local residents understood this very quickly. These practices take shape through the deployment of struggles for, and around, the lake's resources, and the diversification of individual and community relations which are always the interface of the environment and society, and are understood at the level of professional reconversions and identity mobilities.

Professional reconversions are spaces where the perception and management of the inherent vulnerabilities of Lake Chad can be understood. The goal in this section is to show how the notion of vulnerability is both internal and external to local residents, how it feeds on the environmental and socio-cultural context that characterises the ecosystem, and how it has evolved according to the tripartite Space-Local Residents-Time. The concept of vision-image effectively refers to this mental and physical cohabitation of the ideal projection of life on the lake (vision) and the perception and representation (image) of the concretisation of this life on the lake by daily practices and lifestyle choices of the local residents.

## **Professional retraining, an ethnico-identity resilience rooted in ethno-religious corridors.**

Every new day is a challenge to local residents. An observation of professional retraining trends enables an understanding of local residents' choices (change or continuity of profession) in time and space, as they are faced with climate changes, dwindling natural resources, insecurity and heterogeneity of interests fuelled by competitions for control of resources. The trends also enable an

understanding of the sense behind individual and community activities, and behind identity and ethnicity, guiding these professional retraining efforts as manipulable multidimensional social constructs that are constantly changing according to the places where they are mobilised. We noted individual and community trajectories.

## Highly ethnic individual trajectories

Climate change and the demographic boom mainly affect young people. For example, at a football stadium near Kofia, an island town in the locality of Blagoua in Cameroon, we randomly identified 54 young people aged between 18 and 40. These young people were water vendors, drug sellers, doughnut sellers, grilled meat sellers, butchers, speedboat repairers, dressmakers, net sellers, carpenters, restaurant owners, native doctors, farmers, shopkeepers, call-box owners, fish merchants and mercers.

### *Plate: Young people in their new activities at the lake*

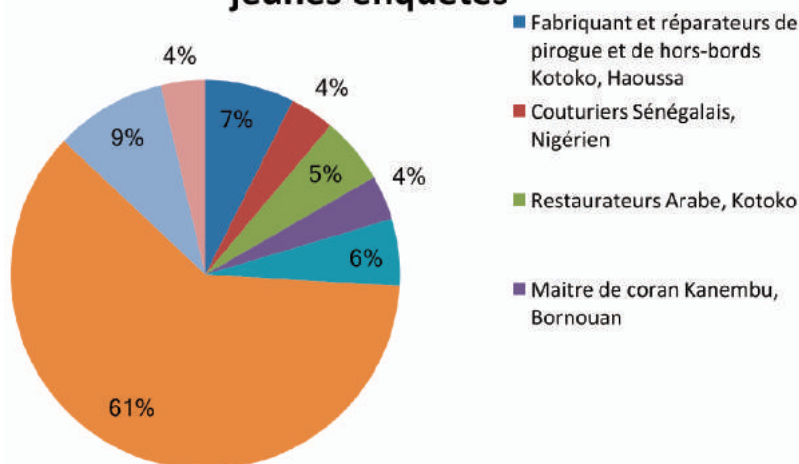


The relevance of this long list of occupations lies in the fact that they are moving further and further away from fishing which was once considered the main activity on the island of Kofia.

This sample, which is not representative of the total population of the island, is at least an indication of the distribution of the choices made by the young people of the island. It reveals the absence, presence and domination of certain ethnic groups in the practice of these activities. We can for example note the absence of the very numerous Djoukouns in Kofia. This absence indicates three facts: either the Djoukoun remained fishermen and did not see any interest in swapping professions; or that they are not sociable and prefer to remain in their community, or they are victims of social exclusion by the other communities and thus poorly integrated. The other notable absence is that of the Malian community whose membership is greater than the Senegalese community. The absence of this group may be a factor of chance or the fact that it may still be heavily involved in the fisheries sector. Exclusion as an explanation however may not be totally disregarded. Another glaring element in this sample is the strong involvement of the Kanembou in almost all activities. It is clear that they play an important economic role on the island. In this role, this community are supported by the Hausa. We will return to the professional trajectory of the Kanembou, which is far from being an individual enterprise but rather a community project. It is also important to emphasize that this sample will be analyzed at both the individual and community levels.

It is clear that the trajectories of activities are motivated by very specific ethnic affiliations. That is to say that the choices made by the young people follow an ethnic, and identity pattern, which reveals not only the nature of social relations in Blangoua, Guitté, Darack and Kinasserom, but also the structural pattern of relations between ethnicities and nationalities in a context of a struggle for resources for uncertain social mobility that is not a given to everyone, and for maintenance of acquired skills for others, as specifically presented in the following diagram.

## Répartition socio-professionnelle de 54 jeunes enquêtés



***Diagram: Socio-professional and ethnic distribution of 54 young people interviewed in Kofia***

These activities reveal a kind of ethnic and identity division that constitute the highest room for manouvre that young people have in terms of professional retraining. If not, how can one explain that having been fishermen for over three generations, the Senegalese suddenly choose to be tailors whereas around the lake, their ancestors (grandfathers and fathers) were fishermen? How can one understand that the Qur'anic masters and other religious leaders are now Bornouan or Kanembou? In fact, the drying up of the lake in the 1970s caused immigrant residents to discover the economic opportunity offered by the dewatered islands that had become full of fish. Then, everyone became a fisherman. But decades later, these professional choices were quickly replaced, by the old professional identities.

However, climate changes gave the other communities the chance to excel. This was the case of the Kanembou, Shoa Arabs and Haoussa, to the detriment of the Bornouan, Buduma<sup>4</sup> and Kotoko.

<sup>4</sup> The nomenclature of ethnic groups in Cameroon does not indicate the presence of Buduma. This is for the simple reason that the Buduma of Cameroon have merged into the Arab Shoah groups and therefore consider themselves Arab Shoas. In Darack they were assimilated to the Hausa to gain access to resources and integrate power circles.

Indeed, it is the ethnic identity of each and every community that inspires and (re) defines the professional choices of individuals with the key priority being control of resources as a mark of power and social hierarchy.

The socio-professional careers of Kanembous are atypical. They have an initially diversified itinerary, founded on a myriad of activities of all sorts to lead to a convergence of dominant activities directed towards trade and religious affairs on the sidelines. The Kofia trees serve as a shade every morning and afternoon to young boys and girls who love Koranic lessons. Their shifty-eyed master (the Marabout) feigning seriousness can easily be noticed by his sitting position in front of the children; by his trousers that end between the knees and ankles, and by his long beard that is reminiscent of clichés of fanatics and extremists. Apart from the Kanembou and Haoussa who are by far the most numerous, other ethnic groups also lend themselves to this daily ritual. The peculiarity of Kanembou is that most of them come from neighboring Chad haven been sent by their parents or left on their own initiative. In the evenings after the six p.m. prayer, these children go from house to house to gather food, counting on the charity of families for their evening meal. During break time, the children roam the market square which will later on be their gathering point when they reach adulthood. However, in between their studies at the Koranic school and their begging in the streets and in the large commercial spaces, these children go to initiation huts aided and supported by other Kanembou owners of large businesses on the islands of the lake.

The water sellers were the most numerous of the group of young people we interviewed; and they were all of Kanembou extraction. In fact, all the actors involved in the water trade of the lake are Kanembou, and this is not a coincidence. They come to the very young ones (5 to 14 year-olds) to study the Koran with the Koranic school masters. The latter then integrate the rank of Talibé *children* with all the attendant ills: begging, abuse, theft and delinquency. Once past childhood and the age of puberty, these children begin

to practice the most innocuous jobs that allow them to survive i.e.: dockers and canoe conveyors, fish cleaners, fishermen apprentices, divers in restaurants etc. After collecting enough money, they buy a carrier and twelve cans with a capacity of twenty liters each for the transport and distribution of lake water in households, restaurants and other services. In fact, the lake's water is very popular for its flavor and serves as a daily drink.<sup>5</sup>

A carrier generally contains twelve (12) cans of twenty (20) liters. Three (03) cans are sold for 20 Naira.<sup>6</sup> The value of a trip is equivalent to 80 Naira. The water seller sells an average of 15 water carriers a day. This equates to 80 Naira times 15 turns giving 1,200 Naira on average as daily income for the water seller. One thousand two hundred (1200) Naira is the equivalent of four thousand (4000) CFA francs. This brings the revenue to one hundred and twenty thousand (120,000) CFA francs per month. This apparently stable income is relatively higher than the monthly income of some small and medium-sized fishermen. Many residents however prefer to carry on with fishing because to them, the water business is demeaning and difficult. Water vendors donate much of their monthly income to elderly Kanembous. The latter would help them start their own business after five to eight years. Generally, they give them money and ideas at the right time. Before that however, the water vendors gradually abandon this activity for youngest ones in favour of less restrictive and more “worthy” jobs (owning restaurants, selling “beignets” etc) in hopes of becoming a confirmed “great trader” in and around the lake or in neighboring Chad. In the end, all the big Kanembou traders are former Talibés who nowadays invest in sale of fishing equipment and employ many fishermen who are victims of the dwindling fishing resources. Alternatively in Darack, it is the Hausa who

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<sup>5</sup> Many holes have been drilled in the lake to avoid the consumption of its waters which are responsible for many waterborne diseases. However, old habits die hard. People have abandoned these boreholes whose origin and quality of water are being questioned. Residents continue to drink the water of the lake they have known for years to the delight of water sellers. Could this practice not be an explanation for the recurrence of cholera outbreaks in the lake, and the high rate of waterborne diseases and intestinal worms? One thing is however certain; it is imperative that a sustainable solution combining the perception of lake water and the supply of drinking water to the lake be considered.

<sup>6</sup> Equivalencies between CFA currencies in Cameroon and Nigeria's Naira vary over time. During the interview period in 2017, 1,000 FCFA was worth 540 Naira.



control the economy while in Guitte, the Arab Shoas, Haoussa and Zagawa are in control. The fisheries deficit is therefore as an opportunity for social mobility Kanembou, Haoussa and Arab Shoa traders . These communities have therefore been able to benefit from the new dispensation in different ways. And that is how they have become very powerful and influential around the lake, alongside the Djoukoun Nigerians.

### **How young people used the opportunity of dwindling fish resources to stay in the race for competing resources**

The fishing sector has experienced innovations under the influence of a dynamic and opportunistic youth, the strong demographic growth and the economic opportunity propelled by the strong demand of the big cities of Chad and Cameroon. The closure of Nigerian borders also favored the emergence of new young actors in the fisheries production chain.

The fisheries production chain consists of two main categories: fishermen and workers. The latter are made up of several actors involved at different levels: collectors, processors, merchants, dockers, traders, sellers and carriers, with fewer and fewer “free fishermen”<sup>7</sup>. Many young fishermen are under contract. That is, they work for the Kanembou and Haoussa in exchange for fishing equipment or money.

For example, traders are linked to fishermen by reciprocal dependencies: they provide the equipment on credit to the fishermen and depend on them for their supplies. In some cases, fish smokers buy fingerlings<sup>8</sup> that they give to fishermen who deliver them free fish for a few days or weeks depending on the number of cans of fish sold. The smokers say it’s cheaper for them. Smokers who can not afford to buy and store fingerlings

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<sup>7</sup> “Free fishermen” are actually fishermen who work for themselves.

<sup>8</sup> The fingerlings are very popular for baiting the big fish of the lake. Maga and Pouss are the main towns that provide these fingerlings as bait. This business which is dangerous for the Logone plains and Lake must be formally prohibited. It is suicidal and bordering on violent extremism in the light of climate change and the fragility of Lake Chad and the wetlands that make up the Yaerés.

to rebuild their business buy directly from fishermen everyday. The largest fish smokers on the lake are mostly Hausa, Kanuri, Malian and Djoukoun. Wholesalers (local intermediaries established in Nigeria) are generally large Haoussa, Kanouri, and Kanembou traders based in Maiduguri with large fish storage shops which they in turn deliver to other wholesalers or retailers.

In addition to the wholesalers, there are local carriers that own speedboats that live off the transportation of goods and men in the lake and especially to Nigeria. Restrictions related to the Boko Haram crisis in the State of Borno have now led to the limitation of travel and certain economic transactions.

Fishermen who do not work under contract are converted into fingerling sellers; which enables them to stay in the fishing chain. The Hausa and most of the Mousgoum and Massa have started trading in fingerlings caught in the Yaérés. It has practically been fifteen (15) years since Bello Mahamat from Maga abandoned fishery for agriculture; and ten (10) since he swapped agriculture for the trade in fingerlings as his main source of income. These fingerlings (*petrocephalus* and *Clarias*) are sold for 15,000 CFA francs (the buying price is 10,000 CFA francs) per 40-liter can to fishermen who fish in the deep waters of the lake using baby hooks baited with *petrocephalus* and specific gillnets called “filet à capitaine [Capitaine fish net]”. Indeed, Bello Mahamat<sup>9</sup> trades in fingerlings that come from Pouss and Maga. He says that this very profitable trade enabled him to cultivate beans on a one-and-a-half hectare field. This very risky trade which threatens the survival of the fingerlings is practiced at night aboard 404 Peugeot cars which carry between 30 to 35 cans per load. It is more intense between January and March.

Indeed, the fish leave the lake annually to breed in Chari, Logone, El Beid and the Yaérés. It is these fingerlings and other adults that return to populate the lake. However, the abusive exploitation of

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<sup>9</sup> Interview conducted in Darack on Monday March 25, 2014 with Bello Mahamat, 38 year-old husband of two wives, father of 15 children and former fisherman.



the fingerlings of Pouss and Maga is leading to the slow extermination of the Lake's fish thereby disrupting the whole ecosystem. These young and older fishermen (sellers, buyers and resellers) involved in the trade in fingerlings are aware of the ecological risks and consequences on the vulnerability and fragility of Lake Chad which is closely linked to the fragility of the Logone and Chari rivers. However, they say they have no choice if they must survive and integrate the complex chain of Lake Chad predators. Sampling and competing for resources are the order of day. In fact, it is this category of fishermen, and more specifically the Blaburdu (marketers and resellers of fresh fish at the lake) and other operators of lake resources, who collaborate directly with Boko Haram in their control of resources.

### **Spatial and ethno-linguistic mobility as a strategic weapon for the survival of residents in Lake Chad**

The driving up of Lake Chad frees up spaces that are quickly invaded by people of various backgrounds. Mobility consists in moving from one space to another in search of available resources. Pluriactivity is a function of the tri-exploitation of the lake, oriented towards fishing, agriculture and breeding, according to the seasons. The dwindling fisheries resources create strong competition between national and international residents. The consequences include the superposition of several rights and rules on the same spaces and resources are defined and reinforced by the exclusion and marginalisation of groups and communities; propagation of conflicts; communitarianism is exacerbated and founded on the anteriority to the space; observed recourse to identity where sociological differences are brought to the fore and instrumentalised to define these rights and acquisitions.

The result is that mobility is no longer only spatial. It is also ethnic, linguistic and national. Zambi, one of our informants is at the same time a Peuhl, Hausa and Malian. He was born around 1968. From our interview with him, his life journey and choices reveal a character who understands his changing environment and does

everything to adapt to the new realities. When asked how he sees his life on the lake, Zambi replied: *Bone tampata, bana hairu tampata. Min ndon djodi dow tamunde*. Translation: Misfortune and happiness alternate with each other in life; it is hope that makes all the difference and that makes one live. He continued in these terms:

*I am from Sokoto. My father is Peulh and my mother is Haoussa. But I feel more Hausa since the twenty-five years I spent at the lake. I have five children. My first wife was Hausa. I married a second Hausa woman as well five years ago and she gave me two children. My stay at the lake always pushes me to consider life in terms of patience in the face of uncertainty and growing insecurity. In agriculture, I combine beans and potato cultivation; then I engage selling smoked fish make up for the deficit in, the practice of which has become more and more difficult and competitive. The smoked fish trade has become uncertain over the last five years. The Malians and the Djoukoun however remain the leaders in the sector. That's why I joined my neighborhood brothers, the Malians with whom we work and pray together. However, I'm the boss (laughter). For us, the real suffering is when we can no longer sell what we produce.*

When asked why he chose to live with the Malian community instead of joining the Hausa who are the most numerous, he replied:

*I lived with the Malian community from the time I arrived in Kinesserom. It was with them that I learned to fish with the trap and the hawk. The atrocities committed by the Chadian water and forestry technicians who impose the fishing permits and taxes on the circulation of fishing products pushed us to give up fishing for the fish trade and sales of smoked fish. Today we have a "smoked-fish joint venture" where we employ other former fishermen, most of whom belong to the Haoussa group of Nigeria. The cultivation of beans and potatoes is a personal initiative that my relationship with an Arab friend Shoas allowed me to get to increase my fishing business. It is also important to point out that it is the same Arab Shoas friend who gave me the space on which I set up my "company" of fish smoking.*

In fact, the dimensions that the war against Boko Haram took on, and the abuses of the latter in Lake Chad, the Haoussa language has almost lost its "importance" when used in other ethno-linguistic contexts. An essential communication tool (tinged with

pride and chauvinism for users) and a means of integration, the Haoussa language served to build and maintain exchange networks in order to facilitate the access and marketing of old and new lake resources. To date, the Hausa language remains the linguistic backbone of the lake.

However, belonging to this ethnic group and neighboring linguistic groups (the Kanuri and Buduma) and using the language itself come with a stigma linked to the identity of the Boko Haram fighters who till now are a mystery. New language mechanisms are useful for local residents to bypass open trading networks in Maiduguri, the capital of Nigeria's Borno State. There is a greater use of the Arab Shoas language which provides an opening to the N'Djamena market in Chad. This explains the surge in a set of new intermediaries (holders of the Chadian National ID card and the speakers of the language) mentioned by Zambé in the interview presented above.

What does it mean to be an Hausa today for Zambé? One thing is certain, with the dual nationality granted to him by Cameroonian and Nigerian national identity cards, his Muslim religion, his ethno-linguistic affiliations (Fulbe, Haoussa and to a lesser extent Bozo and Arab Shoas by descent) are elements of a cultural repertoire that he does not hesitate to use to give meaning to his life in Kinassarom, and exploit resources.

## Conclusion

Emerging identities against a backdrop of cultural assimilation of vulnerabilities are characteristic of the survival modes in Lake Chad. Environmental practices related to fishing are the key areas that enabled us to observe a relevant relationship between perceptions, resources and identities. Professional retraining arises from a true need to adapt to the competition for resources, but also, and especially from the fragments of identity reconstruction born of cohabitation and the desire to stand out socially, economically, politically and spiritually. This trend heightens and maintains tensions and conflicts. It is undeniable that residents manipulate their ethnicity, nationality and linguistic and religious affiliations to create new categories, and consequently new wealth. In fact, the endosemia of survival in Lake Chad consists in scrutinising the emergence of opportunistic socioeconomic identities that create new categories and social ranks. Beyond the struggle for resources, one should also see in it representations that are attached to its resources and push residents to act as such. New clauses and norms emerge and each individual uses them according to his social representations. The superimposition of “rights” and their applicability to the same resources (land, pasture, fish and water) generates tensions and open struggles in that the residents (constituted as individuals, groups and communities) each have their own conception of the notion of vulnerability that they integrate through awareness of the peremptory and volatile nature of the rights, space value and resources in Lake Chad.

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# Cross-Border Crime, Jihadist Terrorism and Trafficking in the Lake Chad Basin: Phenomenology of Threats and Outline Solutions

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## Introduction

For several decades, Lake Chad and its conventional basin face multiple security threats. The vulnerable factors of this lacustrine ecosystem, which justified the creation in 1964 of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC), seem overwhelmed by other risk factors. The most prominent security threats relate to cross-border crime, trafficking of all kinds and jihadist terrorism. The imbrication of several security threats in this setting indicates that several structural conditions contribute to the onset of illicit violence, while at the same time it is important to understand the phenomenology of the threats. With its fragile ecosystem, the weight of a secular history of conquering war and the current context of profitability of the disorder, Lake Chad stands as a medical laboratory for failed dynamics whose paths of actions are simply the manipulation of natural, identity and symbolic resources. Cross-border organised crime, trafficking and the rise of jihadist terrorism are phenomena that structure identity affirmation, socio-economic promotion and disorder production strategies, hence the importance to understand the paths and explore outline solutions.



This paper is an introspection into the increasingly competitive field of violence production in the Lake Chad Basin. It analyzes the structural soil that feeds threats' paths, captures threats' phenomenology, the best known of which are cross-border crime, trafficking and the rise of jihadist terrorism. Considering each security threat as a phenomenon, the study focuses on the area that shelters the main bed of Lake Chad with an anchor on exogenous territorial and dynamic extensions that ensure the prolongation of conflicts occurring in the lacustrine area. At the same time, the aim is to capture the common grounds that Lake Chad is a forgotten land in the global crime, disorder and violence corridor. Data used in this modest contribution are derived from the specialised documentation and numerous field investigations on various Lake Chad insecurity hotbeds.

## **Environmental mortgages and historical determinant in the vulnerability/violence cycle in the Lake Chad Basin**

The analysis of illicit forms of predation and accumulation in Lake Chad falls within a long-term perspective. This weaves the backdrop of an entrepreneurial constraint, structured around a structural mortgage: the fragile ecology of Lake Chad and a centuries-old tradition of violent conquest and predation, still influential legacy of a traumatic past.

The natural mortgage refers to successive ecological crises that are known to be characterised by uncertainties related to fluctuations in Lake Chad water levels, which have impacted communities' lives for several decades. These nature-based crises experience dramatic historical sequences, giving birth to crisis-generating mobility and competition dynamics. The analysis spectrum of the link between environment and violence could be extended to all countries of the Lake Chad Basin, for some countries like the Central African Republic represent a model of preemption and

predation of resources by local and external actors<sup>1</sup>. Focusing on Lake Chad, the analysis takes a more rigorous perspective to understand, on a given setting, the disintegration mechanism of the security context by the communities' need to use violence to control resources.

For several decades, the general decline in rainfall, the degradation of the plant cover and persistent droughts have changed the environmental conditions and the lives of the populations bordering Lake Chad<sup>2</sup>. The reduction of the lake is clearly observed since 1965. It has experienced a tragic development with the drought that occurred between 1972 and 1974, the effects of which had a long-lasting impact on the socio-demographic equilibrium and on populations to soils and resources' ratio. By isolating the northern basin that neither the low rainfall nor the irregular flow of the Kamadougou-Yobé have fed, encouraging the formation of a vast wetland area in the southern basin<sup>3</sup>, this ecological crisis has given rise to a massive population exodus to more flooded areas. In successive groups and in disregard of the nationality principle, people from Nigeria and Niger, coming from Kindjéria, Baga Kiskra and Malamfatori localities settled on the southern outskirts of the lake, riparian zones to Cameroon and Chad. It is against this background that Nigerian citizens settled on the Darak island.

As a result, successive crises in Lake Chad increase the vulnerability of populations. Between migrations, socio-professional reconversion and resort to illicit methods of accumulation, the populations of Lake Chad reinvent themselves a resilient life. Following the 1972-1974 drought, we observed new dynamics of occupation of settings exposed by agricultural and pastoral contractors on the southern outskirts of the lake,

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<sup>1</sup> E. Chauvin, B. Lallau et G. Magrin, "Resource control in a regionalised civil war (Central African Republic). A dynamic of decentralisation by weapons", in *Les Cahiers d'Outre-Mer*, n° 272, October-December 2015, pp. 463-608

<sup>2</sup> Read Saibou Issa, 2000, Conflicts and security problems on the southern outskirts of Lake Chad: Historical dimension (16th-20th century), Ph.D. thesis / Ph.D. in History, University of Yaounde I

<sup>3</sup> A. Chouret, J. Lemoalle, 1974, Hydrological evolution of Lake Chad during the 1972-74 drought, Ndjamena, ORSTOM

particularly in the regions of Hadjar Lamis, Lake and Kanem in Chad, as well as in the lacustrine and semi-lacustrine areas and localities of Logone and Chari in Cameroon. Fishing, the main populations' main production activity, is experiencing a territorial redistribution that is renewed based on water levels' fluctuations. Therefore, the pressure on insufficiently available resources derives from the combination of different production routes of individuals and communities. More and more restrained, excluded and deprived, populations and communities summon identity resources to affirm their existence. Identity resources such as nationality (Cameroon, Nigeria, Niger, Chad), ethnicity (Buduma, Haoussa, Kanembou, Choa Arab, Peul, Kotoko, Massa), corporatist identities (farmers, fishermen, breeders...) are instrumentalised. Through violent methods, relationships between individuals and between communities are determined by the opportunities they offer. Between depending on ecological hazards and resorting to violent predation, the life of Lake Chad populations is part of a global cycle of vulnerability that opens, among other things, two escape routes: conflict as an access and resource control mechanism; entrepreneurship of disorder as an alternative strategy to promotion and accumulation.

The vulnerabilities observed since the 1960s, the main features of which relate to low rainfall, lack of agropastoral productivity, renewal of regulatory strategies and re-appropriation of production settings, have inevitably reconfigured demographic profiles, influenced socio-economic mobilities, reinforced entrepreneurial roaming and produced a population / depopulation dynamic of islands and riparian localities, especially in the southern outskirts of the lake. From then, saturation, pressure and competition to access and control resources appear as new social regulation modes with, in addition, the appearance of new areas of vulnerability and wealth. The harsh competition that people and communities are engaged in leads to conflicts over resources in the context of the exploitation of identity affiliations. We thus understand at cycle end that the production, maintenance and profitability of disorder impose themselves as operative forms of identity affirmation and

promotion, individual accumulation and promotion or socio-professional reconversion.

This representative table of the dynamic vulnerability figures in which Lake Chad populations live is indicative of the processes in favor of a crisis-generating soil. It shows the non exhaustive development, more or less structured, of the stages that enclose lake riparians in a cycle of crises and opportunities. Since the drought of 1972 and with the absence of the welfare states, the harshness and uncertainties of the environment seem to have convinced people that the community, the village or the identity are the first sites of refuge. This communitarian idea has favored a preemption, the best-known form of which is the use of violence.

The different shades observed in Lake Chad, ecologically and humanly speaking, give it a new and growingly strategic vocation, at the scale of its conventional basin. Shall internal balances and dynamics be concentric, as resources are concentrated in specific points, Lake Chad, as a whole, is opened towards the world. Its median geographical position and its new environment make it a buffer zone, a link between the Maghreb and the Gulf of Benin, Western Sudan and Nilotic Sudan, a junction as a focal and expansion point for people, cultures and products from various backgrounds, a home of multiple experiences<sup>4</sup>. This dual exposure and vulnerability factor gives room for different political, ideological and criminal entrepreneurs. Security crises must therefore be captured in a holistic approach throughout the Chadian basin.

The second structuring factor is historical, reflecting major political entities' interest to control this setting through Islam and trade. The Lake Chad Basin is not essentially a contemporary geographical reality, it is also an ancient geopolitical entity. Located at the junction of the Niger Valley roads, the southern forest regions, the Nile Valley and the Mediterranean, it has been a major crossroads

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<sup>4</sup> Maïkorema Zakari, "*the security issue in the Chadian Basin: a historical approach*", communication at the *Seminar on the programming of security issues in the Lake Chad Basin*, Maroua, 14-15 September 2018

of sub-Saharan civilisations. The main kingdoms of Central Sudan made it a privileged place of conquest, a sanctuary-refuge or a protective fence. Long before the 8th century, the Zaghawa kingdom reigned there, then came the kingdom of Kanem, between the 8th and 14th centuries. The Kanem, Bornu, Baguirmi and Sokoto kingdoms successively exercised their authority over the lake. Using raids, men and property, the lake and its surrounding territories have been a zone of economic opportunity and a space for military and political conquest. Sultan Idris Aloma of the Bornu Empire delivered several military conquests from 1571, to secure the fertile lands and resources available in the lake and in neighboring countries<sup>5</sup>. The challenge was to continue to lead the slave trade, access to salt and natron mines as well as the profitability of the control of trade routes through Lake Chad.

The constituent elements of Bornou's hegemonic history seem to be reproduced nearly three centuries later, in the context of the emergence of the Sokoto caliphate. Once again, under the banner of Usman Dan Fodio, the conquest of the *fombina* (now North Cameroon) also extends around Lake Chad<sup>6</sup> known to be rich in natural resources and slaves. These Lake Chad annexation ambitions by the kingdoms of Central Sudan were intended to compensate the financial and food resources' deficits noted following poor harvests and frequent epizootic diseases. Violent and repetitive, the implemented conquest and predation strategies have shaped precolonial legacies, putting the socio-demographic dynamics of this semi-lacustrine setting in sequences of instability. Dynastic wars, rezzous, military conquests and various community conflicts provoked multiple population movements between the XIVth and XIXth centuries. This inclination to competition allowed a long tradition of banditry and raids. The raid thus constituted a form of parallel and quasi-legal economy as long as the perpetrator was not to use it against a member of the community<sup>7</sup>. Despite abundant water and resources, and a colonial

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<sup>5</sup> Y. Urvoy, 1949, *Histoire de l'empire du Bornu*, Paris, Larose

<sup>6</sup> M. Z. Njeuma, 2012, *Fulani hegemony in Yola (old Adamawa) 1809-1902*, London, African Books Collective

<sup>7</sup> C. Musila, 2012, "Cross-border insecurity in Cameroon and the Lake Chad Basin",

period initially violent, with the defeat of Rabah in 1900, then calm through “colonial peace”, the Lake Chad Basin remains a crucible of criminal entrepreneurship that nascent States fail to counter since decades.

This means that the ecological mortgage and socio-historic determinants that fit together constitute the depth of time and space elements in understanding the strategic modalities of the Lake Chad Basin. Successive traumas seem to have determined practices of violent competitions and ethnic claims. The Lake Chad Basin appears in this respect as a disorder production matrix, where conflicts, various uprisings, irredentism and extremism found a favorable breeding ground.

## **Cross-Border Crime, Trafficking and Jihadist Terrorism**

The Lake Chad Basin owes its reputation as a disorder setting to two factors: a sub-regional context of politico-military instability and endogenous logics of competition. Three major forms of illegal activity characterise cross-border organised crime in the Lake Chad Basin.

### **The phenomenon of highway robbers**

Cross-border military banditry refers to the spread of particularly hardy armed groups that roam the main roads. They lay ambushes on roads and rob passengers with an immoderate use of violence. This criminal practice is not new in the predation methods in the Lake Chad Basin. It is old, with historical springs structuring certain uses of accumulation<sup>8</sup>. Knowing that we can not accurately date the onset of rural banditry in the Chadian basin steppes and savannas, Saibou Issa shows that, under the tinsel of a practice perceived as a cultural tradition by European explorers in the XVIIIth century, ambush attacks on roads have been accelerating

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<sup>8</sup> Saibou Issa, 2010, Highway Robbers. *History of rural and cross-border banditry in the Lake Chad Basin*, Paris, Karthala

in the wake of the armed conflicts experienced by Chad and the Central African Republic<sup>9</sup>. The war in Chad between 1979 and 1982 had failing sequences of resolution, giving free rein to the circulation of arms. It was believed that the massive repression of criminals and defectors of the North Cameroon independence era had definitively established an era of security. Unfortunately no, by the end of the 1980s, armed gangs migrated between Cameroon, Chad and Nigeria. Until early 2000, the phenomenon of highway robbers affects the entire northern part of Cameroon, including the cross-border areas in Nigeria and Chad. The Kousseri-Maroua, Ngaoundere-Garoua-Maroua or the more commercial axes of Mayo-Louti, Mayo-Tsanaga, Mayo-Danay and Diamaré are besieged by cohorts of armed assailants.

When the Central African Republic enters an endless cycle of armed rebellions, the criminal activity of highway robbers finds a new setting whose annexation creates a vast criminal territory at the scale of the Lake Chad basin. Since then, the administrative region of eastern Cameroon incorporated the organised crime system, which turned towards kidnapping in the aftermath of the overthrow of Patasse regime in 2003.

Between the politico-military instability of Chad and regular uprisings in Central Africa, highway robbery emerge as a fashion phenomenon by its stakes and its complexity. First, the activity flourishes on an institutional fragility base, where Chadian and Central African soldiers and mercenaries, involved by contexts and their best interests in various internal conflicts of both countries, engage in the criminal economy. Secondly, the activity involves functional deficits observed at governance, protective role of borders and citizenship of opportunity levels. Highway robbers exploit the aporia of the political and socio-economic regulation systems, not without taking advantage of the geopolitical reconfigurations that now welcome the international channels of the organised crime in the Lake Chad Basin.

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<sup>9</sup> Saibou Issa, "Ambush on the roads of the southern outskirts of Lake Chad", in *Politique Africaine*, n° 94, June 2004



If the phenomenon is animated by military, paramilitary and mercenary actors, there are now new actors from the victim communities. Mbororo nomadic Fulani herders and peasants have migrated from victims to executioners. Even if they remain victims of highway robbers, many herders and peasants organise cross-border raids between Cameroon, Chad and the CAR to rebuild their stolen livestock. This new type of highway robbers, whose activities have endogenous effects, has become viral at Cameroon and CAR borders, with a strong influence in the Cameroon's Adamawa region.

### **Trafficking and Smuggling**

The strategic Lake Chad Basin exposure to international crime highways seems to have predisposed it to a more strategic role in the development of criminal activities. Trafficking activities like the illicit circulation of goods has experienced a worrying flowering, including in Lake Chad. Before the advent of Boko Haram, the traditional routes of traffic are organised around the Kousseri-Amchidé-Banki and Gambaru-Fotokol-Kousseri-Ndjamena axes between Nigeria, Cameroon and Chad. The trafficked products are fuel in tanks, cans and drums, parts of cars and motorcycles, drugs. It is worth noting that Lake Chad is gradually becoming a hotbed for all kinds of trafficking. New trafficking routes have been created, connecting Gambaru in Nigeria with Blagoua, Darak and Kofia in Cameroon, as well as Kinasserom, Guité, Mitériné and Bol in the administrative regions of Hadjar Lamis and the Lake. The new trafficking objects at the internal level are identity documents, livestock, sugar.

Due to its location at the junction of the Sahel, the Magreb and West Africa, Lake Chad has gradually connected to the more lucrative trafficking of luxury cars that feed Nigerian industries in which are involved the cities of Maiduguri, Yola, Kaduna, Abuja, Ndjamena, Garoua, Maroua, Bangui and Moundou. This network of several cities in the Chadian basin reflects an interconnection effort between organised crime sectors operating from the Gulf of Guinea to the Sahel. Tramadol is also one of the most popular



trafficking products in Lake Chad. From Nigeria where it is manufactured or packaged, tramadol is distributed in all countries of the Lake Chad Basin. It travels to the lake not only to feed the local population, but also to supply the Sahel markets. Although the border town of Fotokol is known as a crossing point for many seizures of tramadol<sup>10</sup> shipments, others are specialised in transit and distribution. The lacustrine or riparian cities of Baga in Nigeria, Blangoua and Darak in Cameroon, Baga-Sola, Guité and Kinasserom in Chad or Bosso in Niger are key distribution points of this narcotic.

Smuggling appears as a more complex phenomenon. There are two kinds of smuggling in the Chadian basin. Survival smuggling, implemented at small and local scale, especially in border areas. It involves a set of border practitioners, mainly carriers and smugglers by cars, motorcycles, donkeys or on foot, negotiators, relays, conveyors, manual exchange agents, informants, storekeepers and various intermediaries. The smuggling galaxy at borders is mainly composed of youths in the main squares of Amchide, Kerawa, Bardanke, Fotokol, Tourou, Blangoua, Darak, Kofia, Touboro, Mbaimboum, Garoua-boulai in Cameroon, Gamabaru, Banki, Kerawa in Nigeria, Baga in Nigeria, Baga solla, Guité, Kinasserom, Mitterérine, Bol in Chad. State services, especially customs, are careful not to be very fussy about all the goods that cross the border, at the risk of being overwhelmed and abused by young people.

In smuggling between Nigeria and Chad via Cameroon, the main entry point is Mahada, a locality opposite Blangoua. The main trafficked resource is sugar, with thousands of bags entering through Mahada, but also through other localities on the river's edge, particularly Nibeck, Douguia, Zafaya, Ambédane and even Mani via the relay towns in Cameroon ( Mada market, Douguia, Kobro, Goulfey-Gana, Hilere, Sérégabou). These fixed posts are complemented by a network of roads and tracks used by smugglers to cross borders. Smuggling combines a use of centuries-old

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<sup>10</sup> Several seizures of tramadol were made there. In figures, 15 tonnes in October 2017, 26 tonnes in May 2018 (L'œil du Sahel, October 2017 and May 2018)

practices of economic roaming and mobility dear to Kanuri and Haoussa since the XVth century, and also, a bid for survival against precariousness and vulnerability. Initially considered as a circumstantial alternative to unemployment, smuggling has become a profession in all border areas of the Chadian Basin.

As localised as it is to be seen, the cross-border areas of localised smuggling remain links of a more extensive smuggling, at the scale of the African Sahel. International smuggling is carried out by organised crime professionals. It also borrows the historic caravan routes of trade between black Africa and the Arab world. These trading routes were used by Arab traders in their trade with the kingdoms of Central Sudan, where Lake Chad is known to play a strategic role. The security crises in Libya, northern Mali, Niger and the Boko Haram insurgency in northeastern Nigeria have helped reshape this setting turned criminal. Inheriting these traffic lanes, international smuggling uses Lake Chad to mesh its distribution network between coastal countries (Nigeria, Cameroon, Benin, Ghana, Libya) towards hinterland countries (Chad, Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso, Sudan). Because cross-border local networks also serve the cause of international networks, several axes and smuggling relay stations are identified:

The axis Maiduguri-Gambaru (Nigeria) -Fotoko-Mada / Blangoua (Cameroon) -Mahada-Dandi, Karal, Tourba, northbound, especially to Faya-Fada-Mao-Moussoro via a logistic base at Massakory and the numerous traffic lanes flowing through Lake Chad and feeding criminal networks from the Central African Republic, North Cameroon, Nigeria, Niger, Sudan to Benin, constitute one of the thriving centers of organised crime in Africa. This large-scale smuggling is particularly flexible because it is at the heart of the trafficking mechanisms for products such as cigarettes, luxury cars, medicines, spare parts, drugs, light weapons, cosmetics.

### **Terrorist jihadism and cross-border armed groups**

As we mentioned earlier, the Lake Chad Basin saw the emergence

of numerous political entities that, at the pace of political and economic interests, had each made the lake a strategic setting. Historically, the political and socio-economic structuring of Bilad al Sudan (black people's country) is influenced by trade and Islam from the Xth-XIth centuries<sup>11</sup>. The relations between Central Sudan and the Arab world are centuries-old and lastingly influenced by Islam and trade<sup>12</sup>.

Islam played a decisive role in building an awareness of belonging and allegiance, while facilitating the conquest and submission of peoples. While the kingdoms of Baguirmi and Kanem primarily engaged in slave raids, the kingdom of Borno added a tinge of Islamisation that, over the centuries, emerged as a receptacle of disparate ideological currents. It was under Idriss Aloma that the Borno made the Islamic factor an element of rallying and power from the XVIth century. Later, Ousman dan Fodio's call for jihad, relayed by Modibbo Adama in the *fombina*'s savannas, resulted in the constitution of a vast political entity. At the heart of a reconfigured territory is Lake Chad, whose attraction of available resources positions Islam as a mode of regulation. All these pre-colonial states have kept a territorial anchorage to the lake. With its capital Koûka on the west bank of Lake Chad, the Bornou empire will position itself as a junction for the dissemination of Islam. In the XVIIth century, Ouadaï imposed alongside Baguirmi as strongholds of dissemination of Islam that European colonisation will spare under the black Islam. It is with the 1804 revolution by Ousman Dan Fodio that the surroundings of Lake Chad will experience the first Jihad<sup>13</sup>. Revolted against the actions

<sup>11</sup> Michel Brett, "Islam and trade in the Bilad al Sudan, tenth-eleventh century A.D.", *Journal of African History*, 24, 1983, pp.431-440

<sup>12</sup> C. Arditi, 1993, "Commerce, Islam et Etat au Tchad (1900-1990)", in E. Grégoire et P. Labazée (dir.), *Grands Commerçants d'Afrique de l'Ouest*, Paris, Orstom-Karthala, pp.175-220.

<sup>13</sup> In the Muslim tradition, there are at least two versions of jihad, namely the small jihad and the great jihad. The small jihad concerns the holy war, while the great jihad deals with individual combat to get closer to the divine purity. This second jihad, in fact, refers to the inner struggle that, in the vision of the Prophet, is more valuable and more difficult to achieve. It aims at surpassing oneself, controlling one's own passions. Read D. Jeffrey et al., 2016, *Jeunes et djihadisme. Les conversions interdites*,

of the Hausa leaders whom they consider contrary to Islam, the Fulani and other Hausa adhered to the call for Jihad. Successively, the caliphate of Sokoto is constituted, among others, on the borders of Lake Chad.

Since then, succeeding the defeated kingdoms of Central Sudan, the colonial powers tried to seize Islam through the opportunist power relations that, over the decades, will give rise to an Islam resisting to the Sufi order they will prefer. These historic territories around Lake Chad will retain, beyond independence, their potential for dissemination of Islam and especially a tendency to reformism. From the countries around Lake Chad, the idea of jihad flourishes under renewed models. As Lovejoy points out, contemporary manifestations of *jihad*, under the forms of *Boko Haram*, *al-Shabab*, the Islamic State in the Middle-East or the war waged by *al-Qaïda* and its allies, stem from a historical and political model, the forms of which can be identified since the end of the XVII<sup>TH</sup> century in the Senegal River Valley<sup>14</sup>.

This means that the Lake Chad Basin has always been a crucible for the expression of Islamic dissidence, especially with the contentious currents of the traditional Sufi order, observed as early as the 1970s in the sub-Saharan region, which resonate particularly in Nigeria and Lake Chad. Several dissenting Islamist movements born in Nigeria have generally influenced the socio-religious life of the Chadian Basin, particularly in the lake. Many Salafist and anti-sufi movements will spread in northeastern Nigeria, Chad, North Cameroon and Niger, namely *Jama'atu Izalatil Bid'a wa Iqamat al Sunna (Izala) et Ahl al-sunna wa'l-jama'a*. Although marginalized, the sects that have lastingly influenced the religious thoughts of communities bordering Lake Chad are the Maitatsine, Mahdiya or more recently *Jama'atu Ahlul Sunna li Da'awati wal Jihad* or Boko Haram<sup>15</sup>. From groups and sects claiming the *Izala*

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Laval, PUL

<sup>14</sup> P.E. Lovejoy, « Les empires djihadistes de l'ouest africain aux XVIII<sup>e</sup>-XIX<sup>e</sup> siècles », *Cahiers d'histoire. Revue d'histoire critique*, 128, 2015, pp. 87-103

<sup>15</sup> A.R. Mustapha & M. Bunza, 2017, « Contemporary Islamic sects & groups in northern Nigeria », in A.R. Mustapha, *Sects & Social Disorder : Muslim Identities & conflict in Northern Nigeria*, Abuja, Premium Times Books, pp. 54-97

movement to the Boko Haram sect, the atomisation of Islamic obediences was room for an increasingly rigorous, purist and reformist interpretation of Islam. There are also emerging frictions between the Goni tradition (Sufism and memorisation of the Koran) and new (reformist) Ulemas that reproduce ongoing frictions in Nigeria and other areas of the Lake Chad Basin.

Therefore, taking advantage of particularly deficient contexts in terms of State supervision, recurrence of ecological crises, competition turned bitter around resources, people adopt a double approach. First, they undergo the instrumentalisation of various gurus whose speeches ensure an identity and material resilience. At the same time, the population exploits all discursive initiatives, particularly of a religious nature with an impact on populations that renews the potential of populations to exist. The speeches and reformist religious practices appear as resources that ensure the rallying of the greatest number of people to an often exclusive cause.

In different localities of the Lake Chad Basin, there are many clues that reflect a proliferation of Islamic dissident thoughts. The socio-cultural routes of various religious actors develop on a soil shaped by the existence of a cross-border identity area within which ethnicities, languages, matrimonial exchanges, intellectual mobility, circulation of ideas and daily solidarity are sediments of a profitable geocultural identity that can be profitable depending on circumstances<sup>16</sup>. For example, mosques of the *Izala* movement developed in Lake Chad, promoted by Haoussa traders and are the seat for the dissemination of satirical speeches.

In this new complex context where stakes mingle with the diverging interests of different communities, the jihad around Lake Chad takes on a new meaning, no longer as a conversion effort of infidels to Islam, but rather as an outlet for affirmation, conservation and exclusion. By chanting all kinds of violent and

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<sup>16</sup> Saibou Issa, "Transfrontalité et diffusion du discours de Boko Haram dans le Bassin du lac Tchad : itinéraires socioéconomiques et socioculturels", communication at the experience-sharing meeting on de-radicalization, the fight against violent extremism and the fight against terrorism, 3 & 4 April 2017, Nouakchott, Mauritania

equivocal speeches, by producing violence to set up the most profitable ways of accumulation, the jihadists who are massively recruiting in communities angry by decades of spoliation, find in jihad a source of release. Like a “theology of liberation”, ethno-professional categories find in Islam necessary cognitive resources to gain access to and control over resources. Poorly paid transhumant shepherds participate in livestock raids known as “jihad contributions” that feed the markets. Indebted migrant fishermen fall into the ranks of jihadists, seizing the opportunity to retake possession of “their lake”. Trade brokers become local emirs in the pay of any liberating ideology. No surprise then seeing that mosques with a fundamentalist vocation, especially of the *Izala* movement, are flooding islands and, growing eccentrically, spread in other localities bordering the lake and its neighboring countries. They take advantage of the precarious environment to disseminate and maintain reformist speeches that *Madrasas* (of Wahhabi obedience) and Koranic schools (of tidjanese obedience) extend on the educational level. In this wake, the *Goni* (having memorised the Qur’an) are now seen as silent vehicles of the extremist doctrine of sectarian groups like Boko Haram, calling for a refoundation of the global governance of society to conform to the divine commandments<sup>17</sup>.

Boko Haram thus inaugurated a singular jihad in the Lake Chad Basin. Its speech took advantage of a cross-border socio-economic and socio-cultural configuration allowing the circulation of ideas and influences to spread a reformist discourse received and instrumentalised by each category of adherents in his own way. Thus, through hundreds of attacks, incursions and assaults on different front lines in the four States bordering Lake Chad, Boko Haram followers perpetrate their attacks in the name of jihad. Seven out of ten perpetrators of the N’djamena attacks claim they belong to the neglected classes of the lake.

Throughout the Lake Chad Basin, violent incidents are recorded, suggesting an appropriation of religion for political, economic or

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<sup>17</sup> Saibou Issa, 2017



identity purposes. In Chad, fundamentalist Islam is part of the fanatical modes of expression. The most tangible example is the macabre action of a suicidal guru who wanted to spread holy war to Denmark in June 2008. Aged 28, Sheikh Ahmet Ismael Bichara is a native of Sarh and originates from Guéra in central Chad. He initiated a violent Islamist demonstration during which 700 followers pledged to burn huts and churches in the town of Kouno, three hundred kilometers from N'Djamena. The Islamists burn 158 huts, 4 churches, the gendarmerie's office and the health center. Using poisoned arrows, followers of this sect face the security forces. The repressive action of the Chadian army caused 72 deaths, mostly among the followers<sup>18</sup>.

In Nigeria, several Islamist insurgencies have terminated the country's religious life with significant effects on Chadian Basin countries. Unlike Chad, they are dependent on the internal political life that tries to exploit it. Prior to the Boko Haram insurgency, whose violent modes of action have crossed Nigeria's borders, other similar, localised uprisings are taking place inside Nigeria. This type of collective jihad, more spontaneous and carried by charismatic gurus, is one of the major forms of Islamist radicalism in the Lake Chad Basin. Under control of the Islamic religious leadership of Nigeria, personalities, movements, sects and various orders have been competing since the independence of the country. In 1980, the rivalry took a decisive step with the uprising of the *Maitatsine* movement. From December 18 to 29, 1980, followers of the movement confront, weapons in hand, the Nigerian armed forces. In Kano alone, these uprisings resulted in the death of 4,177 civilians and more than 900 Maitatsine supporters were arrested. Muhammadu Marwa, leader of the movement, was killed in the clashes<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> Rfi, "Tchad: Carnage à Kouno", published on July, 3rd, 2008. Also read Mbarkoutou Mahamat, 2016, "The control of Islam and the prevention against violent extremism in Cameroon and Chad", in Saibou Issa (ed), *Muslims, schools and the State in the Lake Chad Basin*, pp. 223-246

<sup>19</sup> Ouba Abdoul-Bâgui, 2016, "Les Oulémas et l'instrumentalisation politique de l'islam au Nord Nigeria", in Saibou Issa (dir), *Les musulmans, l'école et l'Etat dans le Bassin du lac Tchad*, pp. 201-222

In line with Islamist dissident traditions, Boko Haram remains a singular organisation in the Chadian basin. Emerging in the 2000s in northeastern Nigeria, the group *Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'Awati Wal-Jihad* ("The Prophet's followers for the spread of Islam and the holy war") criticizes a corrupted political system that does not fully rely on the *sharia*. From 2009 onwards, the group switched to terrorism-jihadism and initiated violent actions throughout northeastern Nigeria, spilling over all neighboring countries. Boko Haram's insurgency and the counter-offensive by national armies left 20,000 dead, 2.6 million refugees and displaced, as well as 14 million people affected in northeastern Nigeria and neighboring countries around Lake Chad. The movement spreads out thanks to the conquests it assimilates to jihad. The declension of the still embryonic ideology of Boko Haram is represented in the notion of "fighter of faith". Appropriating "the work of God", Boko Haram is part of the tradition of the Caliphates who, by means of jihadist wars, makes Islam triumph or redress injustices. Through the application of *sharia* as an antidote to corruption and jihad as a legitimate method of action, Boko Haram defines a political-ideological system in which the use of violence and terror is expiatory of social wrongs and injustices. If the Boko Haram ideology is based on a set of borrowing of various Islamic thoughts and a rigorous and controversial interpretation of Wahhabi Salafism, it also rests, since it turned into a violent movement, on two major ideas: death and revenge<sup>20</sup>. As jihadism has a vocation of reincarnation, jihad is expressed in various forms: attacks, incursions, terror on civilian populations deemed disbelievers, suicide bombings, kidnappings, improvised explosive devices. In all countries bordering Lake Chad, Boko Haram's acts of terror have multiplied, making this sect a particularly deadly organisation.

According to Kalidou Sidibé, "there is an objective alliance between criminal networks and terrorist groups fueled by their

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<sup>20</sup> A. R. Mustapha, 2017, « Understanding *Boko Haram* », in A.R. Mustapha, *Sects & Social Disorder : Muslim Identities & conflict in Northern Nigeria*, Abuja, Premium Times Books, pp. 147-198



converging interests”<sup>21</sup>. Now, organised crime, rebellions and terrorism that share the same profits need security instability to evolve and maintain their presence in crisis areas. Hostage-taking helps fund terrorist groups, while arms trafficking feeds terror strategies of criminal and terrorist groups. An estimated 80,000 Kalashnikovs circulate in the Sahel. They come from several supply sources, such as the Mano Rivers region, Chad, Darfur, Sudan, and especially the dismantling of Gaddafi Libya’s arsenals. Weapon trafficking routes fuel AQIM, MUJAO and MNLA criminal and terrorist groups in the Sahel, with connection to Lake Chad communities and the Central Africa crisis<sup>22</sup>. The proliferation of small arms and light weapons is an aggravating factor of cattle rustling and agropastoral conflicts, especially in the drained Lake Chad Basin. As regards cattle rustling, according to the Nigerian herders’ association called *Miyetti Allah*, 322 shepherds were killed and more than 60,000 cattle were stolen in 2013 in the North and in the border areas of Nigeria<sup>23</sup>. In the North of Cameroon, according to the tax authorities, recurring cattle rustling caused a €13 million loss during two major operations in 2016.

Boko Haram is also involved in this collaboration with criminal groups to control traffic routes in the Lake Chad Basin with the support of communities. Since its allegiance to the Islamic State in 2015, Boko Haram has made sure to keep control of trafficking routes of heroin from Asia and weapons from Libya. To do this, Boko Haram, especially the Al Banaoui obedience, builds on the collaboration of the populations. The weapons and materials used by Boko Haram are acquired from traffickers who operate in the Lake Chad Basin. On Lake Chad waters, the wharves of Guitté, Mitériné and Kinasserom Island are perceived as areas for arms and various products trafficking, intended mainly for Boko Haram. Arms traffickers and local traders connected to Boko

<sup>21</sup> K. Sidibé, 2012, *Security management in Northern Mali : criminal network and conflict resolution mechanism*, Brighton, IDS

<sup>22</sup> S. Bamaba Gaye, 2017, *Connexions entre groupes djihadistes et réseaux de contrebande et de trafics illicites au sahel*, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Paix et Sécurité

<sup>23</sup> N. D. Daniibo, « Exploring Traditional Mechanisms for Combating cattle Rustling in the Lake Chad Basin », communication at the regional conference on livestock theft in the Lake Chad Basin, Yola, September 2017

Haram were arrested. In 2015, war weapons intended for Boko Haram were seized on traffickers between Zafaya and Kobro on the Cameroon bank of the Chari river.

## **An integrated perspective of solutions**

Given the complex insecurity phenomena observed in the Lake Chad Basin, which are due to the system of cross-border crime determinants, to trafficking and violent extremism, the responses to security crises in this area of Africa must converge in an integrated framework. The compartmented actions in each State are ineffective. Obviously, the membership of Lake Chad Basin States to two sub-regional organisations did not contribute to a more rational preparation of security responses aligned to economic or political integration mechanisms. The Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC), created in 1964 to ensure people's prosperity through a fairer management of resources, has scarcely been able to define a framework for concerted security action. Attempts to form mixed brigades between Nigeria and Chad, between Niger and Nigeria or mixed patrols between Chad and Cameroon have lacked sub-regional ambitions and were reduced to a few police activities on the islands of the lake. Even the numerous ECCAS initiatives seem to be split between a sub-regional ambition and the need for localised actions around Lake Chad.

The Boko Haram irruption into the strategic area of the Chadian basin forced member States to go beyond national borders to build a real sub-regional action. Despite its many successes that force optimism and a mandate limited to strictly controlled military operations against Boko Haram hotbeds, the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) also seems to remain faithful to national anchorage principle. After the military actions, the MNJTF seems helpless in front of the evolution of terrorism towards new forms, the rise of a social radicalisation, the recrudescence of armed bands' transmigration with its corollary of highway robbers, cattle rustling and various trafficking.

The integrated approach must, however, combine national and local initiatives. Arising from regional strategies and the phenomenology of security threats whose features are specific to

each setting and context, more localised measures are needed. The importance of localised actions is less in their operation than in their connection to regional mechanisms to build a more exhaustive response. The local response and sub-regional response continuum needs to be optimised to remain in the different anchorage points of the threat, namely local, national and sub-regional settings. The extension of the MJF mandate to other security threats would be justified, at the same time as national and local mechanisms ensure the continuity of sub-regional responses in a permanent quest for coherence. This would help avoid each State being a safe haven for criminal and terrorist groups, especially as the refuge country systems are not always prepared against threats coming from neighboring countries.

On the whole, several axes must be favored to outline the response to cross-border crime, trafficking and terrorist jihadism.

Define a common, harmonized lake basin strategy through the convergence of ECCAS and LCBC mechanisms and strategies to reduce the counterproductive effects of the stretch between two distinct entities

Extend the MNJTF mandate in order to address a wider range of security threats.

Articulate the MNJTF response to national and local mechanisms designed to prevent the use of borders by criminal groups.

Influence the springs of socio-political radicalisation and prevent violent extremism.

Provide strategic investments in riparian areas of Lake Chad in order to alleviate overcrowding in lake areas where power relations generate security crises.

## **Conclusion**

The Lake Chad Basin owes its reputation as a crossroads of international organised crime and sanctuary of Islamist jihadism to its dual geographical nature and historical causality that this

contribution has attempted to analyze. Confined in its internal contradictions which communities are forced to exploit and opened to the dreadful roads of international crime, Lake Chad is the epicenter of security risks experienced by the Chadian basin. In addition to the transmigration of armed bands favored by the instability in some States of the sub-region, the Chadian Basin also remains the seat of a new terrorist jihad, embodied by the violent face of Boko Haram. Between both threats which are not yet managed by the States, criminal groups develop on the plots of this distant Eldorado. Meanwhile, new groups adopt a criminal intelligence that combines jihadism, crime and trafficking of all kinds. There is, however, a risk that this combination of criminal approaches leads to territorial connections between criminal hotbeds in the Sahel, Lake Chad and the Gulf of Guinea or a growing trend towards radical Islam in the Lake Chad Basin.

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# Axis 2

**AXIS 2: The humanitarian-development-security continuum in the Lake Chad Basin: taking up the challenges of sustainability, security and development**





# Humanitarianism, refugees, IDPs narratives: Comparative study of Cameroon, Chad and Nigeria

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## Abstract

Being the humanitarian catastrophe that is considered to be one of the world's most neglected crises, the Lake Chad basin refugee and IDPs situation has been egregiously overlooked while affecting the security, economic, environmental and institutional integrity of, Cameroon, Chad and Nigeria. Military and political objectives in the fight against Boko Haram trumped humanitarian concerns in the region. The forms of the Humanitarian interventions its perennial impasses and systematic failures that it suffered, urgently call for reforms over social constructions and uses of the refugee category in institutional domains. The Lake Chad basin mass displacement crises - an almost humanitarian laboratory-like - tragically followed the universal politicised business as usual approach. Without being altruistic, the humanitarian intervention seems to have failed to address the root causes of the conflict that drove people out of their homes at the first place – despite the flow of money. The number of death, the psychological needs, the persistent fear, uncertainty of a bright tomorrow in addition to the rate of accurate malnutrition in Nigeria, the food insecurity in Cameroon and Chad remained on existential struggle in the cross border camps. The purpose of this study is to examine how conceptualisations of refugee

category in the region by international organisations are coping with the elaboration of normative expectations and definitions of them in the shadow of national and international law while conditioning long-term solutions. The present research argues that in order to break the assistance circle, the refugee category has object of concern and knowledge for the international community must change for greater humanitarianism. Through a comparative approach the present study examines humanitarian intervention, the social construction on refugee category has permanently assisted humanity within the international order of things. Thus, taking into consideration the humanitarianism alternatives to undemocratic, mercenary logic and better ways of conceptualising, designing and challenging international interventions vital concepts and practices for the insurgency conflict resolution and everlasting peace in the region.

**Key words:** humanitarianism, refugee category, addressing roots causes, alternatives, Lake Chad Basin

## Introduction

The humanitarian intervention, rehabilitation and peace restoration due to the outbreak of natural disaster or violent conflict that uprooted peoples outside their homes and countries has been repeated in the Lake Chad Basin. Basically, the present study espoused the fact that humanitarianism should not be offered in isolation, but should help prepare a refugee category affected by the Boko Haram insurgency and terror that brought them in a complex emergency situation to rebuild themselves and resume their home places for the sake of development. The Boko Haram crisis is seen as a disruption of a normal trajectory in which the humanitarianism fills the gap and restores the vehicle - in this case the affected States such as Cameroon, Chad and Nigeria could have gone back onto the track of self-propulsion. Peace is the norm. The Boko Haram Conflict and disruption are disruptive intervening variables. Humanitarianism be it aid or assistance is the emergency response, like a pit stop or an emergency centre in a major hospital which

receives accident victims. The objective is to get the patient back on the road to recovery so that the society can be put back to work and resume its pattern towards development. Cameroon, Chad, and Nigeria have multiyear humanitarian plans that support greater coherence with development frameworks.

The fact is that displacement, for example, like so many of the issues we face, is a long-term issue. On average, people are now displaced from their homes for 10 to 20 years. In these situations, humanitarians try to provide life-saving assistance and protection, such as emergency food, water and medical aid. This aid is vital, but it is not enough to address the long-term challenges. Time and time again what we hear from people in these situations is that they do not want to become dependent on aid.

This is where development actors also step in to help internally displaced people find jobs, ensure children have access to school, secure access to land and housing, as well as support the local authorities to provide both host communities and displaced people basic services such as water, electricity and healthcare. Development actors also help to build the resilience of host and displaced communities so they can cope better with future shocks, including; reducing poverty and, wherever possible, reinforcing rule of law, security and peace building.

Aside the military fashion of missions, field officers and operations, the humanitarian language started to add business and corporatist substances, such as ‘beneficiaries’, ‘clients’ ‘accountability’ and ‘brands’. The increasing trend of business terms adoption goes hand in hand with humanitarians embracing a wide array of business-like practices.<sup>1</sup>

The contemporary Boko Haram crises are causing a mass displacement especially in the Lake Chad Basin while offering an almost laboratory-like, tragic clarity of view into the larger question of humanitarian intervention. Our argument grows out of field research conducted with Minawawo, Bongor and Kuje

<sup>1</sup> Mac Ginty R. & Peterson J.H., *The Routledge Companion to Humanitarian Action*, Routledge, 2015; Same question asks Weiss T.G., *Humanitarian Business*, 2013

refugees from Nigeria living respectively in Cameroon, Chad and Nigeria. The essay moves through a comparison of the social construction and uses of the refugee category in different social and institutional domains. This paper aims to contribute to the ongoing debates on the implications of humanitarian to business shifting by exploring the theoretical and practical interferences into the humanitarian field on one hand and on the other, attempts to add to the critical reflections on the evolution of the humanitarian action by exploring to which degree, why and how business is imported into the non-profit humanitarian sector and the way out.

### **1. Theoretical and Conceptual approaches**

Humanitarianism is an abstract noun that gained wide currency during the high noon of neoliberalism. It connotes philanthropy and benevolence, a charitable impulse towards the unfortunate from those capable of alleviating poverty, disaster or war. It suggests a benign doctrine, even a profession of faith. Claims to humanitarianism are always heard most loudly after some spectacular act of inhumanity such is the object at stake: the Lake Chad basin refugee and IDPs situation. The end of the Second World War provided a particularly compelling example. After Europe had been laid to waste by the ideology of Nazism, a creed born in what had promoted itself for centuries as “the cradle of civilisation”, redemptive action was vital. Not only did the economy – the site of the breakdown – become the object of rapid rehabilitation, but “development assistance” to former imperial territories began; most of these had defected to “socialism”, and the west offered “development” as the alternative. In an age of globalisation, development has been superseded by a fitting successor – humanitarian intervention.<sup>2</sup>

Humanitarian, originally a theological term, referred to one who affirmed the humanity of Christ, while denying his divine existence. It came to mean the application of purely human action – without religious sanction – to the resolution of social problems. In this sense it first appears in the early 19th century; at that time

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<sup>2</sup> Bennett M., *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism*, 2011, p10

it carried ironic overtones, suggesting an excess of zeal or sentimentality in those who would change the world.

International commitment to humanitarianism grew out of imperial missionary and charitable activity. The abolition of slavery gave an impulse to a movement which did not yet call itself humanitarian; even though the principle has existed, in one form or another, in all human societies; and is, for example, according to Qur'anic and prophetic texts, an essential and obligatory element of Muslim religious practice.<sup>3</sup>

For Christian missionaries, medical advances in the 19th century made material healing an important adjunct to the spiritual work of evangelists; no doubt, tangible improvements in the material condition of the people also assisted the spiritual "healing" required in the conversion of the heathen; and the importance of the human often took precedence over a theoretical religious "mission".

A significant moment in this secularisation of humanitarian action came as a result of the battle of Solferino in 1859, when Swiss businessman Henry Dumant, passing through Castiglione, was appalled by the fact that soldiers on both sides had simply been left on the battlefield to die. His proposal for trained medical personnel to be present at such scenes of suffering led to the establishment of the International Committee of the Red Cross in 1863.

Despite the detachment of humanitarianism from religion, the idea still remains something of its otherworldly roots, since it is seen as a work of rescue, even of salvation, and produces a sense of reverential pity. "Humanitarian" aid is supposed to transcend all ideologies, cultures and beliefs. It is the essence of human fellow-feeling, not to be contested or questioned. In other words, it is an ideal vehicle for the monopoly of compassion often implied by its western promoters.

As soon as any belief or doctrine becomes an "-ism" we should be on our guard, for that is the sign that it is in the process of

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<sup>3</sup> Annex 2: Humanitarian system; ALNAP, The State of the Humanitarian System (SOHS), 2015, p20

hardening into ideology. Humanitarianism is what the west uniquely practices, bringing its kindness and goodwill to dark places of the world, where savagery and barbarism still rule (or have reappeared) at the heart of “primitive” or regressive cultures. It is significant that we hear much about “our values” when it comes to humanitarian help in places ravaged by war, particularly when the west has been instrumental in, or indifferent towards, the creation of strife, to which we must bring the urgent capacity for relief of a concerned “international community”.

In this way, even our “humanitarianism” is an old story, but with a contemporary inflection. It implies that love of humanity and compassion are defective in places that cry out for “our” intercession. Not only is it at the core of “liberal interventionism”, which topples dictators and dismantles dictatorships, but it is also called into being to support campaigns of violence as a lesser evil; notably in the arbitrarily established entities of the former Ottoman empire, created at the end of the first world war by powers who had not yet discovered their own humanitarian potential.

Humanitarianism, therefore, justifies all over again what “we” give to “them”.<sup>4</sup> Its supreme appeal is that it trumps all other systems and faiths, since it brings succour to those persecuted in the name of all ideologies, religious and secular. It is elevated over all other forms of giving. Dissent falls silent in the presence of such magnanimity, and we drop our coins into the great collecting box of conscience, satisfied we have done our duty. In such a context, it should not astonish us if humanitarian assistance is sometimes invoked even in the form of bombs, dropped to prevent greater wrongs – to protect innocent civilians or to halt the “cancer” of extremism.

Perhaps the most extraordinary example of humanitarianism in action may be seen in the recent appeal to help the afflicted, the mutilated and bereaved due to Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin. When the suicide bombers both male, female and akin blew out themselves among crowds, the bodies counted, the rubble

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<sup>4</sup> Slim H., *Marketing Humanitarian Space: Argument and Method in Humanitarian Persuasion*, 2003, p12

turned over, sorrowing people are invited to offer assistance to those whose lives have been ruined or abridged; but no one – including those who were in a position to do so – invoked humanitarianism to prevent the carnage from happening in the first place. Humanitarianism after the event savours of hypocrisy as much as of philanthropy. This suggests the humanitarianism of our age demands – Cameroon, Chad and Nigeria – flattened cities, heaps of corpses, strife and bloodshed in order to find its fullest expression. Should it surprise us if the imperialists of compassion themselves sometimes contribute to the supply of scenes of misery, which then call forth their exhibitions of altruism before a wondering world? We wonder if humanitarianism is human. Why the do the political and economical power behind humanitarianism do not yet address the root causes of the violence that sent people out of their home and countries rendering them vulnerable and everlasting assisted.

Internally Displaced Person (IDP) refers to persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violations of human rights or natural or man-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognised State border.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to the refugee definition in the 1951 Refugee Convention, Art. 1(2), 1969 Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Convention defines a refugee as any person compelled to leave his or her country “owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole of his country of origin or nationality”. Similarly, the 1984 Cartagena Declaration states that refugees also include persons who flee their country “because their lives, security or freedom have

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<sup>5</sup> (Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, UN Doc E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2.). See also de facto refugees, displaced person, externally displaced persons, uprooted people. Refugee: A person who, “owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinions, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country. (Art. 1(A)(2), Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, Art. 1A(2), 1951 as modified by the 1967 Protocol).



been threatened by generalised violence, foreign aggression, internal conflicts, massive violations of human rights or other circumstances which have seriously disturbed public order”.

The IDP are indeed refugees within their own countries. They are the invisible majority of displaced people. These men, women and children are among the most vulnerable people in the world. The term refugee officially means someone who has been forced to flee their country. But, just like international refugees, internally displaced people (IDPs) have lost everything to conflicts or disasters – their homes, communities, assets and livelihoods. Unlike refugees, because they have not crossed an international border, IDPs do not benefit from special international protection.

## 2. Refugee representation

The Lake Chad basin IDP and refugee category facilitate our effort of identifying certain key features in the constitution of the archetypal refugee at the more general level of humanitarian policy discourse. While taking as a starting point the observation that there has emerged after the Second World War a substantially and standardised way of talking about and handling “refugee problems”<sup>6</sup> among national governments, relief and refugee agencies, and other nongovernmental organisations. The standardising discursive and representational forms have made their way into journalism and all of the media that report on refugees. As a result, it is possible to discern transnational commonalities in both the textual and the visual representation of refugees. Such transnational mobile representations are often very easily translated and shared across nation-State borders. And because they are shared among the institutions that locate, fund, and administer refugee projects, these representations can reasonably be expected to carry significant consequences. One of the most far-reaching, important consequences of these established representational practices is the systematic, even if unintended, silencing of persons who find themselves in the classificatory

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/refugees/index.html>

space of “refugee”. That is, refugees suffer from a peculiar kind of speechlessness in the face of the national and international organizations whose object of care and control they are. Their accounts are disqualified almost a priori, while the languages of refugee relief, policy science, and “development” claim the production of authoritative narratives about the “refugees”<sup>7</sup> In what follows I attempt to look a little more closely at the systemic underpinnings of this form of silencing and speechlessness. I approach this phenomenon from several different directions, starting with a brief look at the complex effects of the visual representation of refugees, especially in the media of photography and documentary film.

The visual representation of refugees appears to have become a singularly translatable and mobile mode of knowledge about them. Indeed, it is not farfetched to say that a vigorous, transnational, largely philanthropic traffic in images and visual signs of refugeehood has gradually emerged from Boko Haram ashes in the region. Pictures of refugees are now a key vehicle in the elaboration of a transnational social imagination of refugeehood. The visual representation of displacement occurs in many arenas: among refugee administrators (as we have seen), in applied and other academic scholarship (ForbesMartin1992), among journalists (Drakulic 1993; Kismaric 1989), in the publications of humanitarian and international organisations (UNHCR’s Refugees magazine), in television fund-raising drives, and even in fashion advertising Children and women’s weekly magazine on the Lake Chad Basin refugee category entitled “The Refugee Look”, “the New terrible”<sup>8</sup>; Lac Chad the unseen crisis<sup>9</sup> .

This global visual field of often quite standardized representational practices is surprisingly important in its effects, for it is connected

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<sup>7</sup> From my experience, for example, in the Rwandan camps, it was astounding how the aid communities have selected texts that correspond with their image; having no other access to a wider range of discourse, and often dependent on their own interpreters for their impressions, they simply end up magnifying the very oppositions they claim to oppose-in a process that amount[s] to an excellent example of creating alterity.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.irinnews.org/feature/2016/08/03/%E2%80%9Cnew-terrible%E2%80%9D>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.rescue.org/resource/lake-chads-unseen-crisis-voices-refugees-and-internally-displaced-people-niger-and-nigeria>

at many points to the de facto inability of particular refugees to represent themselves authoritatively in the inter-and transnational institutional domains where funds and resources circulate.

The first thing to be noted about the mutual relationship between image and narrative, spectacle and self-representation, is that photographs and other visual representations of refugees are far more common than is the reproduction in print of what particular refugees have said. There are more established institutional contexts, uses, and conventions for pictures of refugees than for displaced persons' own narrative accounts of exile.



The Boko Hrama refugees in Northern Cameroon, Chad and Nigeria in their triple security, economic and political upheavals accelerated the movement of the “forced migrations” phenomenon that led them into the enclosures of the camps. A new category has emerged in the legislation of these countries: the refugees, to be differentiated from the much more romantic of the exile. The fate that is reserved today for many refugees and the representations that are given in both the media but also in certain political

speeches seems to exclude them from a common humanity. We can ask ourselves if, by dehumanising those who seek asylum, we do not destroy ourselves on the one hand.

All refugees are migrants, but not all migrants are refugees. Far from being synonymous, these terms often used indifferently refer to distinct legal status. The migrant makes a voluntary migration for economic, political or cultural reasons and are subject to national law. Refugees, on the other hand, fall under international law, their migration being considered constrained by the situation of their country of origin (violent extremism for instance). A person who has been granted asylum by another State is a refugee, in accordance with the Geneva Convention signed in 1951 and ratified by 145 member States of the United Nations. If the asylum application is normally individual, and must be supported by evidence that justifies it, then the UN recognizes groups of migrants as *prima facie* refugees, without any expected of them evidence beyond their bodies.

“In Chad, more than 2,800 people are placed in the host families of four localities in the region: Guelendeng, Moulkou, Bongor and Pont Karol. Originating from Cameroon and Nigeria nationalities, the inhabitants fled the abuses of Boko Haram in 2015. After this biometric operation, the refugees must be grouped together on an area already delimited by the local authorities located about 20 kilometers away, at the northern entrance to Bongor”.<sup>10</sup>

These men on the ground are nothing or less than “bodies without quality” (Bertho, 2009), cumbersome, too much, for those other men who maltreat them, authorised by the rest of the society. “excluded from the excluded” are only the extreme end of a neo-liberal system in which we are all taken and which affects us more or less alive (Tonda, 2005 and 2014; Breda et al., 2012).

These men on the ground, easy scapegoats of rulers in need of legitimacy and, especially, in search of answers to this “social breakage” in which they participate greatly (Pinçon and Pinçon-

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<sup>10</sup> - Aide alimentaire des organisations gouvernementales et la perpétuation de la vulnérabilité des populations bénéficiaire, Borgeard, P.89, 2017.

Charlot, 2013, Pignarre and Stengers, 2007).

Black bodies also, intrinsically carrying, visible and radicalised otherness. The body, “transfigured by migration”, is a frontier, “the place of materialisation of the relationship of otherness” says Schmoll (2011: 121). Body without quality, but also in connection with their place of origin, their skin color and their vulnerability, body carrying an impassable border since integral part of themselves.

Of course, this anonymous corporeality is not necessarily just a feature of mass scenes; it is equally visible in another conventionalised image of refugees: women and children. This sentimentalised, composite figure-at once feminine and maternal, childlike and innocent-is an image that we use to cut across cultural and political difference, when our intent is to address the very heart of our humanity. Elsewhere I have also suggested that the visual prominence of women and children as embodiments of refugeeness has to do not just with the fact that most refugees are women and children, but with the institutional, international expectation of a certain kind of helplessness as a refugee characteristic (Malkki 1995a:11).

Such representations of refugee category contradict humanitarianism sense drawn upon the way humanitarians are defining themselves through “the central aim” of their action which “is saving lives and alleviating suffering of people through action that is guided by humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence.”<sup>11</sup> It’s high time for change as difficulties are piling up at every step in the management of the refugee category in Cameroon, Chad and Nigeria. The overpowering philanthropic universalism, in their insistence on the secondariness and unknow ability of details of specific histories and specific cultural or political contexts, such forms of representation deny the very particulars that make of people something other than anonymous bodies, merely human beings.

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<sup>11</sup> World Humanitarian Summit, WHS Theme 1: Humanitarian Effectiveness, Initial Scoping Paper, p3

### 3. Addressing grassroots causes of IDP and refugee category

“Humanitarian organisations speak of ‘beneficiaries’, have offices that cultivate ‘clients’ and make use of their ‘brand’, aspire to increase their ‘efficiency’ and adopt modern ‘accountability’.”<sup>12</sup> Importing terms from other fields is not new for the humanitarians. From ‘mission’, to ‘field officers’ and ‘operations’, the military fashion of humanitarian language started to add business and corporatist substances. The emergence of business terms into the humanitarian vocabulary comes at a transformation time for the humanitarian field. As Barnett says, this transformation started in the 80’s within the midst of expanding scale, scope, and significance of the humanitarian action. A second stage followed in the 90’s, when the field became more professionalised and rationalised<sup>12</sup> Yet, did we enter a third stage? In the recent years voices like Hopgoods tell us about the growing marketing and commercialisation of the humanitarian practice.<sup>13</sup> Nowadays, humanitarians seek the expertise of advertisers, contract PR and communications agencies, and hire marketing consultants to promote merchandize or advocate for their work and cause. As Vestergaard puts it, “while the practices of commercial organisations are becoming increasingly ethicalized, the practices of non-profit organisations are becoming increasingly commercialised”.<sup>14</sup>

The spirit of self-criticism and self-flagellation is a founding element of humanitarian culture. The need to preserve the founding myth of humanitarianism is no longer sufficient to maintain an institution that turned to business: that of a moral supremacy of the ex-colonising West through the expression of a universal fraternity with a Judeo-Christian foundation that joins the commitment of Universalist solidarity inherited from the fallen communist ideal.

This myth is not only maintained with a general public asking for

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<sup>12</sup> Barnett M., *Humanitarianism Transformed* December, 2005, Vol. 3, No. 4, p723

<sup>13</sup> Chouliaraki L., *The Ironic Spectator: Solidarity in the Age of Post-Humanitarianism*, Cambridge, UK, Polity Press, 2013

<sup>14</sup> Vestergaard A., *Humanitarian Branding & the Media: The Case of Amnesty International*, *Journal of Language and Politics*, 2008, Vol. 7, Iss.3, pp471–493



a supplement of soul in a society dominated by materialistic values, but it is carried out by the States and the supranational authorities, then by the business world, in search of disinterested masks for their economic, political or military enterprises.

Several actors who are providing the financial support of the humanitarian action in the Lake Chad basin can be considered both as a stabilising agent for critical situations, but also as a smokescreen for more prosaic interests. In this sense, what is essential for these donors is not always the effectiveness of the aid or assistance to alleviate the suffering or to meet the needs of the beneficiaries, but to give a positive image of it. The external intervention that underlies their intervention is not addressing the core roots of the reasons that brought this humanity outside their home and home countries by solving the terrorist crisis while using their political pressure, financial might and military intelligence. This is a vicious circle. It is to be believed that the perpetuity of insecurity perpetuates sources of employment and humanitarian opportunities abroad.

In this sense, humanitarian action is presenting a smooth and unambiguous face, so as not to be challenged by the media or donors. They choose to base their action on institutional funding, that is on considerations that do not necessarily reflect the needs of beneficiaries. They seek various forms of return in exchange for their funding, among which the paramount image of altruism.

The trivialisation of the status of humanitarian associations that have become “like the others” companies, anxious to maximize revenues by reducing costs: recruitment with “voluntary” contracts for over demanding tasks in terms of competence is difficult to satisfy notoriously with inadequate remuneration levels. The competition in this area is tough with international institutions both from UN agencies and private sector to attract workers with the required skills. Thus within NGOs and vis-à-vis the outside, exist and tend to grow with the rejection of alternative or critical thoughts, a rise in self-censorship, a group culture closed to external views. The consequence is either a reluctance to intervene in the most difficult or risky situations, or, on the contrary, a

blindness to the actual conditions of an effective and successful intervention. The result is a growing gap between the reality of the operation and the contribution of NGOs and their perception in the public. Institutional donors who use humanitarian NGOs are not fooled by this gap that weakens the recipients of their budgets while forcing them to accept missions far from their vocation and which sometimes only serve the best interests of providers.

#### 4. Challenges and reforms

In the present scenario, humanitarian organisations are the best way to attract global support to neglected areas and vulnerable communities in chronic and lasting crisis situations like in the Lake Chad Basin. Although these organisations benefit from their field knowledge and experience in interventions in these areas, they lack effectiveness in reducing structural vulnerabilities, imposing policy solutions and implementing preventative measures to limit the escalation of these crises. In the considered regions, the increasing competition humanitarian organisations are facing with the networks of non-traditional actors that respond in a new way to humanitarian needs such as faith-based NGOs must be appreciated. This competition is challenging the management and processes of the humanitarian organisations, so they aim to adapt to fit into these new structures or be discarded. As funding for humanitarian action becomes more fragmented, competition increases dramatically. Non-traditional donors routinely allocate funds to targeted problems and areas of interest that is also the reason behind the funds reducing for the refugee categories in the Lake Chad Basin area. Daily commodities reduction in the Minawao and Jere passed from 3 to 2 or 1 meal a day.<sup>15</sup>

Cameroon, Chad, and Nigeria have multiyear humanitarian plans that support greater coherence with development frameworks. The fact is that displacement, for example, like so many of the issues we face, is a long-term issue. On average, people are now displaced

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<sup>15</sup> Oeil du Sahel

For more details on this issue also refer to: Drogin, Bob, 1994, Refugees Get Steady Diet of Propaganda. Los Angeles Times, July 27: A3



from their homes for 10 to 20 years. In these situations, humanitarians try to provide life-saving assistance and protection, such as emergency food, water and medical aid. This aid is vital, but it is not enough to address the long-term challenges. Time and time again what we hear from people in these situations is that they do not want to become dependent on aid.

This is where development actors also step in to help internally displaced people find jobs, ensure children have access to school, secure access to land and housing, as well as support the local authorities to provide both host communities and displaced people basic services such as water, electricity and healthcare. Development actors also help to build the resilience of host and displaced communities so they can cope better with future shocks, including by reducing poverty and, wherever possible, reinforcing rule of law, security and peace building.

In diverting humanitarian aid and assistance, governments are not the only ones involved. Occasionally, in the different camps, the victims of the conflict also resold donation that did not meet their needs in the black markets. The insurgents have sometimes attacked and looted IDP camps just after food distributions. A report mentioned three attacks on food convoys in Nigeria.<sup>16</sup> In the four countries bordering the lake, it is mainly the government authorities who have been accused of diverting international aid. In Cameroon, suspicions focused, for example, on the emergency plan announced in March 2015 to build schools and hospitals in the Far North. Testimonies gathered on the spot indicate achievements never achieved concerning the construction of schools and infrastructures intended to welcome displaced persons, remained in precarious shelters.<sup>17</sup> In Chad, more than \$ 157 million is needed for refugee victims of Boko Haram. But a refugee who requires anonymity said that no refugee received a penny of the funds collected.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> BBC [19 juin 2017], « “Half” Nigeria Food Aid for Boko Haram Victims not Delivered ». <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-40325043>

<sup>17</sup> Entretien de Charline Rangé avec un responsable sécurité d'une organisation internationale, Maroua, mai 2017.

<sup>18</sup> For more details Refer to: Géraud Magrin Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos (Sous la direction de), 2018, Crise et développement La région du lac Tchad à l'épreuve de Boko Haram

## Conclusion

Massive displacements of people due to violent extremism in the Lake Chad basin and the sight-on television and in newspapers of refugees' category as a miserable "sea of humanity" have come to seem more and more common. If these displacements, and media representations of them, appear familiar, so too does the range of humanitarian interventions routinely activated by such movement of people. We explore the forms typically taken by humanitarian interventions that focus on refugees as their object of knowledge, assistance, and management, and trace the effects of these forms of intervention at several different levels.

From the theoretical crossroads we examine how refugees become an object of knowledge and management suggests that the displacement of refugees is constituted differently from other kinds of deterritorialisation by those States and organisations, concerned with refugees. In order to contribute to the ongoing debates on the implications of humanitarianism to business shifting by exploring the theoretical and practical interferences of both challenges and reforms in this sensitive area on one hand and on the other attempts to add to the critical reflections on the evolution of the humanitarian action by exploring to which degree, why and how business is imported into the non-profit humanitarian sector. The humanitarianism reforms need to go beyond perpetuation of daily service and assistance to a sea of Humanity that deserve not to be parked in a delimited area and silently wait for the provider to decide what to eat and what to do. Putting an end to assistance circle must pass through addressing the reasons that uprooted refugee category out of their home and countries. Be it military, political or diplomatic resolution approaches, any long term consideration of the temporary lasting situation is opening up opportunities that are less altruistic and philanthropic.

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# Resolving Humanitarian Crises after the Cycle of Refugees, Displaced Persons and Decommissioned Structures : The Case of Humanitarian Crises in Darfur (Western Sudan), Northern CAR and South-East Niger

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## Abstract

Humanitarian crises are becoming increasingly recurrent in the world, especially in the Lake Chad Basin where riparian countries (Chad, Niger, Nigeria, Cameroon and CAR) are seriously affected.

*The year 2015 was marked by further escalation in the number of serious crises (the Ebola epidemic in Africa, the situation of Syria, DRC, CAR, etc.), which led to unparalleled levels in international humanitarian aid budgets, totaling 25 billion US dollars (about 14,425,000,000,000 de FCFA) ; “François Audet, 2014 in Understanding Humanitarian Organisations).*

Once a natural or prompted humanitarian crisis sets in, humanitarian organisations are deployed to “come” and help the victims by setting up a very heavy bureaucracy which is dismantled after a short time while parallel administrations and “endless” needs are created. This state of affairs perpetuates

“assistance” which eventually becomes a “business” between humanitarian organisations and aid donors.

The violation of the principle of neutrality by some humanitarian organisations exacerbates national, and even sub-regional conflicts.

“Civil war and humanitarian aid feed off each other” and “African conflicts are a source of profit for arms manufacturers, aid donors and the fighters themselves” (Vesely, 1998).

Since violence is a manifestation of grievances, there are no lasting answers but rather a lasting commitment to minimize these grievances by avoiding bad decisions. To this end political authorities must think critically.

**Keywords :** Grievances, Conflicts, Humanitarian Crises, Humanitarian Organisations, Donors, Political Authorities

## Introduction

The case of three humanitarian crisis situations involving various actors in different contexts, is presented in this contribution. The crisis situations in question are those of:

- Darfur (Western Sudan) with its refugee flow to Eastern Chad,
- Northern Central African Republic with its refugee flow in southern Chad
- Northeastern Nigeria with its refugee flow to South-East Niger.
- The choice of these three cases is the result of a personal experience:
- From 2008 to 2009, I was in charge of food security projects and served as Acting Base Chief for the French International NGO, ACTED, on the Bahaï Base set up for the benefit of Sudanese refugees of the Ouré Cassoni camp;
- From 2008 to 2009, I was in charge of food security projects and served as Acting Base Chief for the French International

NGO, ACTED, on the Gore Base set up for the benefit of Central African refugees of the three camps in Southern Chad;

- Since 2015, I have been a lecturer at the University of Diffa, and Head of the Peace and Development Unit, a UNHCR partner in the Sayam Camp that hosts Nigerian refugees.

What is common to all the aforementioned crises is that they receive support from, and are **managed by, the international community** under the banner of **the United Nations** through its specialised agencies (UNHCR, UNWFP or WFP, UNOCHA, UNICEF, etc.) and the **NGO “International Solidarity”**, with the consent of the **Host Countries**.

In principle, the similarities end at this point; as a matter of fact however, many virtually identical mechanisms aimed at perpetuating the management of refugees and other collateral victims (internally displaced, returned, stateless, etc.) are put in place.

This paper aims to analyze the three crisis (3) situations above, present their attendant care and management systems, and then discuss the possible mechanisms to reduce the duration of humanitarian interventions and hasten the transition to development.

## Concept origin

It is presently quite difficult to pinpoint a specific event that could be considered by everybody as the starting point of humanitarianism as we know it today. However, in relatively general terms, the origin of the concept of social activity practice is attributed to Henri DUNANT. Dunant was a Genevan Swiss man from a very pious family that practised charity. While on his way to seek Napoleon III's support to acquire documents necessary for his commercial activities in Algeria, he witnessed the Battle of Solferino (June 24, 1859). DUNANT was scandalised by the fact that the wounded French and Austrian soldiers were abandoned by their own armies.

Upon return to Geneva, he wrote his “A Memory of Solferino” which became the founding act of the Red Cross in 1863 to help war victims, in strict compliance with the principles of neutrality, universality and volunteerism. DUNANT continued by alerting the international public opinion and ensuring the success of the 1863 Geneva Conference. In 1864 came the drafting of the first Geneva Convention whose purpose was to improve the fate of wounded fighters based on the fact that a wounded soldier is neutral; so he can, and should, therefore be treated.

Thus, this convention generally recommended that all States should demonstrate their care and diligence by accepting that an injured fighter be considered a human being. In this light, the wounded no longer belongs to any of the different warring parties but to Humanity. All in all, the essence of humanitarian action lies in the distinction between combatants and non-combatants.

## **The Evolution of the Concept of Humanitarian Action**

Three (3) highlights marked the evolution of what could be termed humanitarian action.

### **1- From the Creation of the Red Cross to the Outbreak of the BIAFRA War**

The creation of the Red Cross in 1863 constituted the founding act of “modern humanitarianism”. Inspired by Henri DUNANT’s desire to help soldiers wounded and abandoned by their own troops during the battle of Solferino, humanitarian action gave rise to many international diplomatic conventions, including the 1864 Geneva Convention. This instrument urged all States to demonstrate their concern and humanity by considering a combatant wounded in a conflict as a human being belonging to none of the parties in the conflict. Therefore, the fighter has to be returned to humanity.

The distinction between combatant and non-combatant is at the very root of humanitarian action. The humanitarian born on the battlefields with the initial mission of treating wounded soldiers, took shape in Europe and for Europeans.

However, during the two (02) world wars and the socio-economic crises, humanitarian associations of a generally religion-inspired character, originating mostly in the Anglo-Saxon world, were created to assist European and American victims. These included Save the Children, International Rescue Committee (IRC), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Cooperative for American Remittances Everywhere (CARE), and Oxford Committee for Famine Relief (OXFAM).

At the end of the Second World War, the United Nations (UN) was created in 1945 to maintain peace in the world and uphold international humanitarian law (Geneva Conventions). In 1951, the UNO created the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the first truly international humanitarian institution (UNHCR).

All these organisations operate according to the original principles of humanitarian action promoted by the Red Cross, namely, neutrality, universality and volunteerism.

## **2- The Biafra Conflict or the End of Silence and Neutrality**

The Biafra conflict in the late 1960s marked a turning point in humanitarian action. However, to better understand the impact of the conflict on humanitarian action, it is necessary to situate the context of the actors at the time.

It should first be pointed out that the most important conflicts that marked the second half of the 20th century were internal conflicts. Given that these clashes involved non-state actors, they affected some of the border and neighboring countries.

Besides, in 1948, the ICRC proposed that the Geneva Conventions be



updated with a view to improving the situation of war-wounded and sick persons. Thus, war prisoners henceforth included not just State forces, but any captured combatant. However, the latter must belong to an organized armed force with a hierarchy and distinctive sign. Finally, another instrument, which in 1977 was extended to all internal conflicts, involved the protection of civilians during war.

In view of these upheavals, the *médecins français* or French doctors intervening in the Biafran conflict on behalf of the Red Cross where international organisations decided to break the tradition of neutrality and silence, decided to make their voices heard. They used public media to denounce what they believed to be genocide in the province of Biafra. By placing the “victimised” individual at the center of the debate, the humanitarian movement gradually moved away from political activism.

### **Outcomes of Past Humanitarian Crises**

*A humanitarian crisis is a situation in which people endure life-threatening distress that neither the State nor society provides, or can provide, solutions to.* (Reymond Philippe, Margot Jonas, Margot Antoine, 2006).

### **Analysis of the Humanitarian Crisis in Darfur (Western Sudan) and Eastern Chad**

Since 2003, Darfur has been at the center of a humanitarian crisis affecting more than 4.7 million people, including approximately 2.7 million internally-displaced persons<sup>1</sup>. The political and military situation that gave rise to the Darfur crisis had not improved by 2009, and the effects of the conflict, population movements and insecurity are still affecting Sudan. In this region of western Sudan, fighting had not stopped between armed opposition factions, the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), militias, and ethnic groups. According to the US cooperation mission as confirmed by the United Nations, these clashes displaced more than 137,000 new

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<sup>1</sup> USAID, BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA) (September 30, 2009) East and Central Africa Region Situation Report #2, Fiscal Year (FY) 2009

people into Darfur and eastern Chad between January 2009 and mid-May 2009.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, insecurity in Darfur still remained the cause of population movements creating new humanitarian needs.

Additionally, the crisis has an international character as well. ON March 4mars 2009, the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued an arrest warrant against Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir. The latter was accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity during the civil war in Darfur. ICC prosecutor, Luis Moreno-Ocampo accused the Sudanese State apparatus of being directly responsible for the deaths of at least 35,000 people killed in the Darfur region of Sudan and, at least, 100,000 others who died of hunger and disease. However, the Sudanese president had repeatedly expressed his country's "clear and categorical" refusal to cooperate with the ICC, arguing that Sudan did not sign the Rome Statute on the establishment of the institution, and therefore did apply in his jurisdiction.

The African Union, the Arab League and other regional and international organisations also expressed support for the Sudanese position.

This situation was risky from a humanitarian and security point of view, especially in Darfur. In fact, Sudan had warned that it "may" request the departure of UNAMID (UN force) which was being deployed in Darfur if the ICC issued an arrest warrant against the Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir for genocide in Darfur. The departure of this force could prompt an upsurge of violence in western Sudan and, consequently population movements, thereby destabilising the sub region.

In March 2009 when 13 international non-governmental organisations were expelled and three national NGOs were closed, humanitarian agencies had limited access to affected populations, especially in Darfur. The humanitarian organisations that were still present coordinated with the Sudanese Government to initiate

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<sup>2</sup> USAID, BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA) (September 4, 2009) Sudan – Complex Emergency Situation Report #12, Fiscal Year (FY) 2009

many short-term measures and expand their existing programs and areas of operation to avoid a deterioration of humanitarian conditions in the area.

The various movements of Sudanese armed opposition forces were increasingly politicised but also increasingly fragmented with different demands; this was also an obstacle to the success of negotiations with the Khartoum Government.

These Sudanese armed opposition movements had for the most part established a rear base in Chad, probably with the tacit agreement of the Chadian government which accused Khartoum of supporting Chadian armed opposition forces. This situation was a source of permanent tension between the two States and, in May 2008, led to a break in diplomatic relations between the two countries.

In May 2009, barely forty-eight hours after the signing of a reconciliation agreement between the two countries in Doha, four columns of hundreds of Chadian armed opposition fighters had crossed the border from Sudan, before being stopped by Chadian troops.

The Doha agreement of May 2009 was in fact only the umpteenth of a long series. The Dakar agreements of March 2008 during the summit of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) - those of Riyadh, May 3, 2007, Cannes, February 15, 2007, or Tripoli, February 8, 2006.

The Russian Government which has good relations with Sudan organised an international conference on Darfur on 6 and 7 October 2009 amid concerns about the deteriorating situation in Darfur, in view of finding conditions for a return to peace in the region. Delegates from the UN, the African Union, the Arab League, international mediators and government officials from Khartoum attended the meeting.

Irrespective of this normalisation in relations (albeit prolonged), internal conflicts in Sudan and Chad were not sufficiently resolved.

## **Management of the Humanitarian Crisis in Darfur (Sudan) and Eastern Chad, on Chadian Territory**

According to estimates and figures by UNHCR in February 2009, since the beginning of the crisis in 2003, eastern Chad had hosted 265,132 Sudanese refugees; thereby compounding the precariousness of a region devoid of resources.

The number of Sudanese refugees represents an increase of about 50 percent of the population residing in the region.

By the end of 2005, fighting between the Chadian National Army (ANT) and armed opposition movements, interethnic conflicts and cross-border incursions by Sudanese militias based in neighboring Darfur intensified, causing the displacement of more than 180,000 Chadians and further exacerbating humanitarian needs in the border area.

In addition to IDPs and refugees, the conflict is affecting host communities, impacting agriculture, livestock and other forms of livelihood. Besides, even though the population of eastern Chad has a pattern of socio-economic life that is quite similar to that of the farming or nomadic ethnic groups in Sudan and have welcomed refugees, this influx of people has put pressure on available natural resources (wood, the environment), and has fueled tensions between refugees and host populations. The latter have observed that the living conditions of the former under the direction of the international community are better than theirs.

Just like the indigenous people, refugees are the main victims of insecurity in the region. The main areas of concern about refugees are: recruitment of refugees by armed opposition forces, use of camps as rear bases and rest areas for armed opposition forces, arms' circulation, mines, increased banditry inside the camps targeting humanitarian workers, impunity of the perpetrators of these attacks, and precariousness of refugee camps which are all located near the Sudanese border.

In the case of Ouré Cassoni and in order to curb these problems, it

had been decided by the Government of Chad to relocate the refugees to the interior of the territory. The relocation site is still under study.

In addition, security concerns are no longer linked to attacks by Chadian armed opposition forces or Janjawid (pro-government Arab militia in Darfur). In fact, armed individuals have taken advantage of the security problems and are proceeding at an increasingly rapid pace to conduct robberies of houses and cars of non-governmental organisations and agencies of the United Nations System. These increasingly violent atrocities that sometimes result in the death of humanitarian workers were very rarely punished. The bandits, whose identity remained unknown, attacked cattle, stole vehicles, looted humanitarian convoys, and executed civilians and aid workers. Some humanitarian organisations had been forced to suspend their activities. And whenever activities are suspended, between 90,000 and 100,000 beneficiaries of humanitarian assistance operations are affected.<sup>3</sup> This state of affairs has limited the reach of humanitarian action.

Faced with this situation, the UNO had set up a rather original UN peacekeeping operation as it brought together two forces of different origins and nature which do not rely on any worthwhile political mandate. On the ground, the United Nations Mission for the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT), a UN police mission, militarily supported by a European Union force (EUFOR Chad-RCA), was, according to this resolution, “intended to assist the return of refugees and displaced persons and to contribute to the protection of civilian populations at risk on the one hand, and to promote human rights and the rule of law, on the other “. In this context, MINURCAT deployed in refugee camps and IDP sites, and provided training for the Integrated Security Detachment (DIS, formerly known as Chadian Police for Humanitarian Protection) under Chadian command. It also contributes to the monitoring and promotion of human rights, and

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<sup>3</sup> USAID, BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA) (September 30, 2009) East and Central Africa Region Situation Report #2, Fiscal Year (FY) 2009

assists the Chadian Government in strengthening its justice system and the rule of law. Empowered by a mandate under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, EUFOR worked to protect civilians at risk, especially refugees and displaced persons, facilitated the delivery of humanitarian aid and the free movement of humanitarian staff, and protected United Nations personnel deployed by agencies and MINURCAT. Its one-year term expired on March 15, 2009.<sup>4</sup>

In resolution 1834 of September 2008, the United Nations Security Council also expressed its intention to extend beyond March 15, 2009 the multidimensional presence established in Chad and the Central African Republic with a view of “creating conditions conducive for a voluntary return”. To this end, the deployment of a United Nations military component was authorised. It should also be noted that as part of the deployment of this international force, the Government of Chad had established a competent institution to support it; namely the National Commission to Support the Deployment of the International Force in the East of Chad (CONAFIT).

On March 15, 2009, the relay between the European (EUFOR) and the UN (MINURCAT) missions took place. Already present to support law enforcement in the refugee camps, MINURCAT has now taken over EUFOR’s mandate and must also provide security outside the camps.

Given the influx and rate of transfer of Sudanese refugees from border areas to camps, the initial planning figure of 65,000 was increased to 110,000 in early 2004; to 200,000 at the end of 2005, then to 218,000 in mid-2006, 233,700 in October 2007 and finally 254,979 to 30 June 2009, spread over 12 camps.

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<sup>4</sup> United Nations Security Council, Resolution 1778 (2007) S/RES/1778

**Table 1: Distribution of the Sudanese refugee population by gender and age group as at 30 June 2009<sup>5</sup>**

Age group	Men		Women		Total	
	Number	(In %)	Number	(In %)	Number	(In %)
<b>0-4</b>	22,985	50.18%	22,819	49.82%	45,804	17.96%
<b>5-17</b>	54,110	48.65%	57,110	51.35%	111,220	43.62%
<b>18-59</b>	29,878	33.87%	58,333	66.13%	88,211	34.60%
<b>&gt; 60</b>	3,959	40.63%	5,785	59.37%	9,744	3.82%
<b>Total</b>	110,932	43.51%	144,047	56.49%	254,979	100%

### **Management of the Humanitarian Crisis in Darfur (Western Sudan) on Chadian Territory**

Just like the indigenous peoples, refugees are the main victims of insecurity in the region. Issues of concern to refugees are mainly: the recruitment of refugees by armed opposition forces, the use of camps as rear bases and rest areas for armed opposition forces, the circulation of arms, mines, increased banditry inside the camps targeting humanitarian workers, the impunity of the perpetrators of these attacks and the precariousness of refugee camps all located near the Sudanese border. To address these problems in the case of the Ouré Cassoni camp, the Government of Chad decided to relocate the refugees to the interior of the territory. To date the camp has not yet been relocated.

Besides, security concerns are no longer linked to attacks by Chadian or Janjaweed armed opposition forces, but to existing impunity in eastern Chad, which encourages a wide range of criminal activities. Indeed, in 2009, Chad experienced only “one” attempt by Chadian armed opposition forces to take over power in May 2009. Unlike the attacks of February 2008, those of May 2009 were stopped in eastern Chad. This was aggravated by the utter decay of the Chadian judiciary and the government’s inability to

<sup>5</sup> UNHCR Chad, Unit for Environment, Abeche Environmental Action Plan 2010-2011



maintain law and order. In fact, armed individuals have taken advantage of the security problems and are proceeding at an increasingly rapid pace to conduct robberies of houses and cars of non-governmental organisations and agencies of the United Nations System. These increasingly violent atrocities sometimes result in the death of humanitarian workers but are very rarely punished. The bandits whose identity remains unknown, attack cattle, steal vehicles, loot humanitarian convoys, and execute civilians and aid workers. Some humanitarian organisations have been compelled to suspend their activities. And whenever activities are suspended, between 90,000 and 100,000 beneficiaries of humanitarian assistance operations are affected.<sup>6</sup> This state of affairs has limited the reach of humanitarian action.

Faced with this situation, UN Resolution 1778<sup>7</sup> set up a rather original UN peacekeeping operation as it brought together two forces of different origins and nature which do not rely on any worthwhile political mandate. On the ground, the United Nations Mission for the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) which is a UN police mission supported by a European Union military force (EUFOR Chad-RCA), is, according to this resolution, “intended to assist the return of refugees and displaced persons and to contribute to the protection of civilian populations at risk, on the one hand, and to promote human rights and the rule of law, on the other”. In this context, MINURCAT deployed in refugee camps and IDP sites, and provided training for the Integrated Security Detachment (DIS, formerly known as Chadian Police for Humanitarian Protection) under Chadian command. It also contributes to the monitoring and promotion of human rights, and assists the Chadian Government in strengthening its justice system and the rule of law. Equipped with a mandate under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, EUFOR worked to protect civilians at risk, particularly refugees and displaced persons, humanitarian aid delivery and the free movement of civilians, humanitarian staff,

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<sup>6</sup> USAID, BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA) (September 30, 2009) East and Central Africa Region Situation Report #2, Fiscal Year (FY) 2009

<sup>7</sup> United Nations Security Council, Resolution 1778 (2007) S/RES/1778



and protect UN staff deployed by agencies and MINURCAT. Its one-year term expired on March 15, 2009.

In resolution 1834 of September 2008, the United Nations Security Council also expressed its intention to extend beyond March 15, 2009, the multidimensional presence established in Chad and the Central African Republic with a view to “creating conditions conducive to a voluntary return”. To this end, the deployment of a United Nations military component was authorised. It should also be noted that as part of the deployment of this international force, the Government of Chad has established a competent institution to support it, namely the National Commission to Support the Deployment of the International Force in Eastern Chad (CONAFIT).

On March 15, 2009, the relay between the European (EUFOR) and the UN (MINURCAT) missions took place. Already present to support law enforcement in the refugee camps, MINURCAT has now taken over EUFOR’s mandate and must also provide security outside the camps.

### **Analysis of Humanitarian Crises in the North of CAR**

Since 2003, more than 55,000 Central African refugees have fled violence and insecurity in northern CAR to seek refuge in southern Chad in the Grande Sido and Nya Pende Divisions; to these are added between 6,000 and 10,000 Central African refugees in Salamat in Doha (south eastern Chad) who fled the CAR since February 2009.

The influx of Central African refugees into Chad began in October 2002 when General François Bozize’s rebels occupied the north of the Central African Republic (CAR) and continued until the Government of former President Ange Félix Patasse was overthrown by General Bozize on March 15, 2003.

In June 2005, Bozizé’s victory at the presidential elections followed by further retaliation sparked a new influx of about 15,000 refugees. In February 2006, renewed violence in the Pawa

region led to a third influx of Central African refugees.

Despite the hopes raised by the overthrow of President Ange Felix Patasse with the help of some Chadian armed forces known as “the liberators”, the situation in CAR, particularly in the northern regions of the country, is still very precarious in security and socio-economic terms.

The Central African Republic is now attempting to complete a peace process after years of rebellions, coups and atrocities attributed to government forces, rebels and “highway robbers”. Rebel groups are still active as they systematically drive people towards southern Chad. In June 2009, elements of the Union des Forces Démocratiques pour le Rassemblement [Union of Democratic Coalition Forces] (UFDR) attacked the city of Birao twice, claiming more than 3,000 victims (including refugees in Doha, displaced persons and others) with many houses burned. In this context of political and security instability, the return of Central African refugees is not feasible in 2010.

The mostly ethnic Kaba, Ronga, Peuhl and Arab refugees were hosted in southern Chad; more specifically in the Gore Sub-Division (with more than 30,000 refugees in three camps run by the UNHCR - to which are added about 500 refugees outside the camps- and 45,855 indigenous people), capital of Nya Pende Division in the East Logone Region about 40 km from the border with the CAR.

When the refugees arrived, the Chadian Government and the local population gave them land. With 800 to 1,000 mm of rainfall on average per year, the zone is conducive to agriculture (for both grain and vegetable crops), and offers many opportunities for food self-sufficiency for Central African refugees. However, the presence of refugees has led to the abusive exploitation of natural resources (gathering, hunting, fishing, etc.) and especially the woody ones.

## **Management of the Northern CAR Humanitarian Crisis in Chadian Territory**

Central African refugees were distributed in 3 camps, Amboko, Gondje and Dosseye:

- Located 7 km from Gore, the Amboko camp (which covers an area of 174 hectares), opened on June 11, 2003, had hosted 11,808 Central African refugees (UNHCR, July 2009). The Kaba are the majority ethnic group (51%) in this camp which is mostly occupied by farmers. Next are Arabs (32%), Fulbe (8%) and Salamat (4%). 46% of families here practise agriculture (source: UNHCR). The unexploited available land in this area is very small.

- Located 12 km from Gore, the Gondje camp (which covers an area of 620 hectares) was opened in December 2005, is home to 11,479 Central African refugees (UNHCR, July 2009). Just like in Amboko camp, the Kabas make up the majority (90%) of refugees here. The majority of the camp population also practices agriculture.

- The Dosseye camp, located about thirty kilometers from Gore, has a population of 9,352 refugees (UNHCR, July 2009). Here, the majority groups, Fulbe and Fulani (66%) are mainly cattle herders. Next are the Kabas (23%) and the Arabs (10%).

The Dosseye camp boasts an estimated 15,000 heads of cattle. In this area, farmland is still relatively available although in some places the lands exploited by refugees border those of host populations.

It should additionally be noted that the majority of refugees in the three camps were women (54.17%), and that the camp population was particularly young (over 60% of the population of the three camps are under 18).

It should also be noted that the refugee and indigenous populations in the Gore area are homogeneous. In fact, the two communities belong to the same ethnic groups (Mbai, Kaba, Fulani, Arabs, etc.) sharing similar socio-economic characteristics and sometimes

having cross-border family ties. Both groups are predominantly rural people who practice agriculture and cattle breeding, and have similar lifestyles.

However, tensions are growing because the negative effects of the presence of refugees are increasingly being felt; for example, the increase pressure on wood resources, land clearing, loss of arable parcels of land for the benefit of refugees, decrease productivity of farmlands, price hikes, etc.

It was therefore necessary to take into account the needs of the indigenous population that hosted the refugees.

**Table 2: Central African Refugees in Nya Pende Division**

Camp	Age Group	Men		Women		Total	By Age
		Number	Age Range percentage	Number	Age Range percentage	Number	Total Number percentage
Amboko	0-4	700	47,49%	774	52,51%	1 474	12,48%
	5-17	3 079	49,95%	3 085	50,05%	6 164	52,20%
	18-59	1 586	40,26%	2 353	59,74%	3 939	33,36%
	60 and above	126	54,55%	105	45,45%	231	1,96%
	Sub total	5 491	46,50%	6 317	53,50%	11 808	100%
Gondjé	0-4	818	50,00%	818	50,00%	1 636	14,25%
	5-17	2 811	50,48%	2 757	49,52%	5 568	48,51%
	18-59	1 671	40,49%	2 456	59,51%	4 127	35,95%
	60 and above	63	42,57%	85	57,43%	148	1,29%
	Sub total	5 363	46,72%	6 116	53,28%	11 479	100%

Dosseye	0-4	883	98,55%	896	50,37%	1 779	19,02%
	5-17	2 052	88,37%	2 322	53,09%	4 374	46,77%
	18-59	1 059	54,76%	1 934	64,62%	2 993	32,00%
	60 and above	110	114,58%	96	46,60%	206	2,20%
	Sub - total	4 104	43,88%	5 248	56,12%	9 352	100%
	Total	14 958	45,83%	17 681	54,17%	32 639	100%

Source: Source: PROGRESS Database, UNHCR, July 2009

### **Management of the Humanitarian Crisis in Northern CAR**

In 2010, the context of intervention in the Central African refugee camps was a post-emergency-type one; i.e. interventions were designed according to a medium/long-term approach in order to constitute a basis for future socio-economic development projects. The medium and long-term impact of the activities implemented had thus been integrated into the design of humanitarian interventions.

The proposed activities were intended to facilitate access to self-reliance, empowerment and gradual integration of refugees by taking into account the needs of both the refugees and local populations.

Humanitarian interventions were intended to provide both communities with the means to meet some of their food and non-food needs. This involved learning market gardening, agriculture and agro-ecology techniques that would enable the beneficiaries to consolidate their know-how.

In order to ensure the sustainability of the interventions, they must give particular importance to the transfer of knowledge and skills to the beneficiaries, and the appropriation of the activities. The knowledge acquired would thus enable the beneficiaries to reproduce them autonomously.

Promoting the participatory approach in the implementation of actions would enable the beneficiaries to take ownership of the activities and methodologies.

Unfortunately, the Central African Republic has been mired in a deadly conflict since 2013. The State controls only a small part of the national territory. Armed groups clash in the provinces for the control of diamonds, gold and cattle in this country which is one of the most destitute in the world.

At a press conference in Bangui in February 2018, UN Under-Secretary-General for Emergency Relief, **Ursula Mueller** said that *“we should act now to prevent a further deterioration”* of the humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic.

*“CAR is facing a large-scale humanitarian crisis We must act now to avoid further deterioration that would require a much greater response”*, said Mrs. **Mueller** after a four-day visit to the country in February 2018.

Mrs. Mueller visited Paoua in the north of the Central African Republic where fighting forced more than 65,000 people to flee their homes.

*“Violence is spreading rapidly across the country whereas there are increasing critical and urgent needs that should be addressed”*, said the UN official.

*Mrs. Mueller also added that “This disturbing situation has come at a time when funding for CAR’s humanitarian response has declined in the last three years.*

Funding for annual humanitarian response plans has fallen sharply from \$ 325.6 million in 2015 to \$ 192.6 million in 2017.

In 2017, renewed violence led to a sharp increase in the number of displaced people which nearly doubled in one year, reaching 694,000, according to the UN.

*“Humanitarian organisations, faced by a lack of resources, are struggling to meet new needs,”* the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said in a statement.

The same source indicates that the humanitarian response plan for 2017 was funded to the tune of only \$ 192.6 million out of an

estimated \$ 497.3 million in needs estimated by the UN.

According to OCHA, needs for the 2018 humanitarian response plan are estimated at \$ 515.6 million.

## **Situation of Ongoing Humanitarian Crises**

### **Analysis of the Boko Haram-related Humanitarian Crisis Affecting South-East Niger**

Boko Haram came into existence in 2002 on a sectarian platform, with a radical desire to break away from a world the founders perceived as unfair and doomed to evil. Over time, the sect attracted many fiercely loyal and fervent members. With its logic of revenge against distant, remote, and often brutal and predatory States, Boko Haram appealed to a significant number of citizens. However, it should be noted that many persons who today collaborate with Boko Haram in one way or the other mostly do so out of fear or necessity. As the conflict became more violent, collaborating with security forces or radical groups, depending on who controlled the area, became a matter of survival, and a means of protecting oneself in a situation of great uncertainty, (International Crisis Group, 2017).

But from 2009 when the first leader Mohamed Yusuf, died, Boko Haram's leaders espoused armed conflict following clashes with Nigerian security forces that had led to the death of 800 members.

The group became increasingly and rapidly radical, transforming its cause into open conflict, attacking Government structures, moderate Muslims, Christians and many others. The atrocities committed by the group and the Government's poor handling of the situation only made matters worse.

From 2011, this Islamist movement became uncontrollable and uncontrolled, characterised by assassinations of Christian and Muslim political and religious leaders. Civilian casualties spiked as well. The first targeted areas were the states of Borno, Yobe,

Adamaoua, Kaduna, and Kano in Nigeria, and the latter's neighbors (Niger, Cameroon, and Chad). As leader Aboubakar Shekau was raging in Maiduguri with even more determined followers, the group received support through the arrival of other Boko Haram top brass (along with their own factions) who had fled to Niger and Chad (Dr. Kodi Mahamat, 2015, citing De Montclos, 2012: 4).

The actions of Boko Haram thus extend outside its native territory, thereby becoming an international threat. Ever since Abubakar Shekau assumed command, the movement has allied itself to other international terrorist organisations. Moreover, the various terrorist movements operating in the Sahel have been working in synergy to defend their common goal. The security situation in the Sahel after the fall of Gaddafi served to provide human and military resources to Boko Haram supporters, with some of the men taking advantage of the occupation of Mali to acquire training in the vast African country.

The Boko Haram insurgency and its effects in the neighboring countries of Cameroon, Niger and Chad caused the displacement of more than 2.7 million people in the region, of which 2.1 million are internally displaced persons inside Nigeria, while about 155,000 Nigerian refugees applied for asylum in Cameroon, Niger and Chad. Refugee host countries also have a large population of internally displaced persons (Cameroon: 200,000; Niger: 127,208 and Chad: 110,000, Abuja Declaration, 2016).

Table 3: Population displaced by Boko Haram for, and in, the Diffa Region of Niger

Nigerian Refugees in the Diffa Region	IDPs in the Diffa Region	Nigerian Nationals Returned to Niger	Asylum Seekers
118,868	104,288	25,731	1,705

**Source: UNHCR, Government of Niger, June 30, 2018**

Just under a quarter (1/4) of a million people are displaced and hosted in the Diffa region of south-eastern Niger.



People feel trapped in an impossible situation between the threatening presence of Boko Haram and a too-often indiscriminate counter-insurgency conducted by the armed forces of countries of the Lake Chad Basin, with insufficient means and weak control of their territories.

**And yet, there is an urgent need to** distinguish core insurgents from the mass of civilians who find themselves helplessly dragged into a conflict for which lasting victory is impossible without them.

The insecurity resulting from Boko Haram attacks and the counter-insurgency, the massive population displacements, the bans issued by States of the region against various economic sectors from which the Boko Haram insurgents finance themselves and obtain supplies, have triggered a massive humanitarian crisis (International Crisis Group, 2017).

In south-eastern Niger, agricultural and fishery activities which are very profitable in the Lake Chad Basin and along the Komadougou River, are almost completely.

### **Management of the Boko Haram-related Humanitarian Crisis Affecting South-East Niger**

The first refugees from Nigeria were received in the region of Diffa from 2013. The international community quickly mobilised through the United Nations system and INGOs to provide humanitarian aid to the refugees.

In an effort to wipe out the Boko Haram insurgency and alleviate the humanitarian crisis, the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) that had been founded on March 21, 1994, to combat crime and organised crime in the region, under the auspices of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC)<sup>8</sup> was reactivated in 2012

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<sup>8</sup> The Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) is a permanent consultative body set up in Africa to coordinate the actions of different States that may affect the waters of the Lake Chad Basin, and peacefully resolve the problems and conflicts affecting the area.

The LCBC was founded on May 22, 1964, when the Heads of State of the riparian countries of the lake, namely Niger, Nigeria, Chad and Cameroon decided through the Fort Lamy Convention (now N'Djamena), to set up a permanent consultation structure called "Lake Chad

and its mandate extended to the fight against Boko Haram. The headquarters of this force was set up in Baga Nigeria.

In January 2015, the Baga base was destroyed by a Boko Haram attack; Chad and Niger withdrew from the MNJTF because of Nigeria's difficulty in tackling armed groups on its soil. Chad has redeployed its troops on two fronts: the Cameroonian and Nigerien borders.

After several waves of attacks, victories and defenses, five countries (Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria and Benin) agreed to "build a strong regional alliance to fight Boko Haram".

The establishment of the MNJTF in its current form to fight against Boko Haram was decided at the extraordinary summit of the heads of State and government of the member countries of the LCBC and Benin, which held in Niamey (Niger) on October 7, 2014. The African Union's (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) formally approved its establishment on November 25, 2014.

Although the MNJTF is an initiative of the LCBC, only four of the five<sup>9</sup> full member countries, namely Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria and Chad, are stakeholders; with Benin joining as a non-member country.

As a result, the MNJTF is in fact mainly a coalition of ad hoc States. Since the common threat is concentrated around Lake Chad, the LCBC was chosen as the institutional framework, even though this was rather a default choice. Thus, if the LCBC is supposed to ensure its political leadership, it does not play any role for the benefit of the AU which is responsible for the strategic management of the MNJTF. It is worth noting that financial contributions to the MNJTF are made via the AU.

The MNJTF deployment is made up of 8,700 soldiers, police and civilian personnel, with a military headquarters in N'Djamena.

In January 2016, Nigerian Major-General Lamidi Adeosun assumed command of the MNJTF (Wikipedia).

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Basin Commission". In 1999, a fifth member (Central African Republic) joined the Commission.

<sup>9</sup> The Central African Republic which has been a member of the LCBC since 1999 is not part of the FMM.

Each contingent of the MNJTF is deployed and operates as a matter of priority on its own national territory.

Four sectors corresponding to each of the countries bordering Lake Chad have been defined, namely:

Sector 1, with command in the town of Mora (Cameroon)

Sector 2, with command in the city of Baga-Sola (Chad)

Sector 3, with command in the city of Baga (Nigeria)

Sector 4 with command in the city of Diffa (Niger).

## **Management of the Boko Haram-related Humanitarian Crisis Affecting South-East Niger**

Since the first wave of attacks by Boko Haram in 2015, the region of Diffa in the south-east of Niger has been plagued by a security crisis and humanitarian emergency. Despite a recent relative reduction in the number of security incidents, the month of January 2018 saw a resurgence of Boko Haram attacks in the Diffa region. If refugees are under UNHCR's mandate in Sayam camp, then this permanent security threat may keep some 130,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in an extended displacement situation. Internal displacement has resulted in the loss of social protection networks, exposure to abuse, and other protection risks such as early marriage, gender-based violence, inter-community tensions, and disputes over land and property.

Affected populations and communities struggle to meet basic needs such as health and education. In addition, the combined effect of rudimentary emergency-related living conditions with temperatures approaching 45 degrees Celsius have caused fires at the displacement sites, thereby posing an additional protection risk.

## Specific Humanitarian and Human Rights Concerns of IDPs in Diffa

*I listened to disturbing accounts of the dire food security needs in the Diffa IDP camps from the IDPs themselves. Some of the IDPs I met said that they were hungry because of limited food distributions, and many of them had to share their meals, and depend on community solidarity. The protracted effect of the current conflict, combined with the effects of several years of state of emergency in the region have deprived IDPs of their traditional means of subsistence, including fishing, agriculture, animal husbandry and trade.*

*In addition, access to medical care is severely limited, and medical infrastructure needs to be immediately improved. Mobile clinics cannot work at night due to a curfew. This situation has a harmful effect on the most vulnerable IDPs, including pregnant women. Many IDPs, especially women and children, need urgent medical care, and some are severely traumatised by the violence that pushed them to flee, or by the violations they have suffered. The urgent psychosocial monitoring that this population needs is largely absent. Besides, promiscuity and lack of hygiene in the camps, especially in urban areas, could contribute to the outbreak of epidemics. (End of mission statement of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally-displaced persons in their own country, Cecilia Jimenez-Damary, following her official mission to Niger, 19-24 March 2018)*

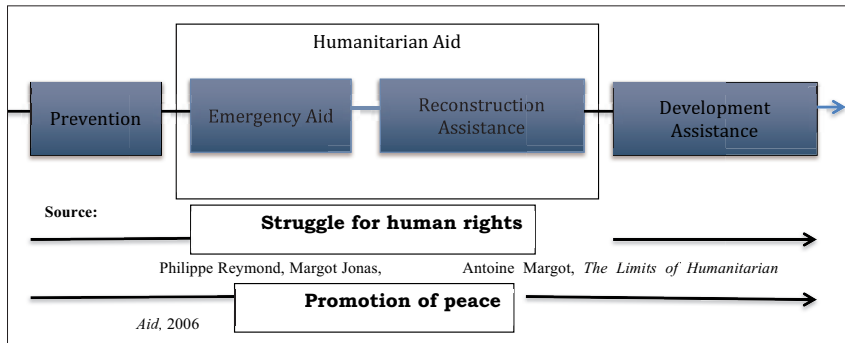
It should also be noted that if we pay attention to the south of Bosso in Nigerian territory where Boko Haram's bastion is located, it may also be necessary to look further north to all the islands of Lake Chad and its surroundings. There, tensions which existed before the insurgency have been worsened by the population displacement caused by the conflict, and are dangerously cozying up to the Boko Haram phenomenon. It should be mentioned that the Lake Chad Basin is a rich area that various interest groups or communities are fighting over. These are the: Fulani, Kanuri, Boudouma, Mohamid Arabs, Haoussa, and migrants from all over West Africa as well.

## Humanitarian Approaches and Practices that Could Help End the Migration Factors and Cycles

In all humanitarian crisis situations, the first responders are usually families, neighbors, the local or national communities. The financial, technical, and political limitations of these first “humanitarian workers” usually lay the groundwork for external support.

These external reinforcements are all the more important as the “catastrophes” are over-publicised.

Figure1: Humanitarian Aid and Development Assistance



**Source:** Philippe Reymond, Margot Jonas, Antoine Margot, *The Limits of Humanitarian Aid*, 2006

The analysis of the various crises have highlighted a common point, specifically that of political management of State affairs.

As pointed out by a police officer met in Las Vegas (USA) in July 2018, *Violence is the manifestation of grievances*. In the light of Diagram 1 above, it would be better to anticipate violence by listening to grievances and finding solutions. This is unfortunately not the strong point of the leaders of the countries in conflict.

According to this diagram, emergency aid and reconstruction assistance both constitute humanitarian aid. Therefore for each type of aid, there should be a period of passage to the next stage and an end of humanitarian aid; if not, the massive inflow of food or financial

resources can prolong the duration of conflicts and increase violence. Unscrupulous belligerent groups do not hesitate to use the population to appropriate aid through harassment, taking of hostages, looting of camps and warehouses or attacks on convoys (Perrin, 1998) as is the case with Boko Haram in South-East Niger. In many cases, this translates into better health for the troops and a significant contribution of resources to prolong the struggle.

The sooner development aid takes precedence over reconstruction assistance, the sooner the population concerned by humanitarian actions will come out of the situation of assisted persons requested by the greater majority.

### **Avenues for Reflection on How to Get Rid of Political and Diplomatic Practices that Promote Maintenance of Humanitarian Needs**

*The year 2015 was marked by further escalation in the number of serious crises (the Ebola epidemic in Africa, the situation of Syria, DRC, CAR, etc.), which led to unparalleled levels in international humanitarian aid budgets, totaling 25 billion US dollars (about 14,425,000,000,000 FCFA) ; “François Audet, 2014 in Understanding Humanitarian Organisations).*

Donor governments have their own political agenda as to which regions, disasters or conflicts they wish to intervene in. (Reymond Philippe, Margot Jonas, Margot Antoine, 2006).

In the case of Darfur, the interference of the International Criminal Court (ICC) while the crisis was at its peak hampered efforts to find a solution or secure the commitment of the Sudanese authorities in bringing peace and thinking of developing the region. Besides, the position of the AU, the Arab league, etc. could have strengthened the power of Khartoum to end the insurgency in this region.

Also, the cycles of conflict and reconciliation between the Chadian and Sudanese authorities either intensify or hamper the plans of armed groups on both sides of the border between Chad and Sudan,

thereby maintaining refugees and internally displaced people in an endless spiral.

In the CAR, the hunger for natural resources (gold, diamonds, etc.) seems to sustain a chronic state of instability and thus, a permanent need for humanitarian aid to the victims/perpetrators.

In both cases above, refugee camps set up since 2003 continue to accommodate new refugees and returnees; and the insecure populations are still compelled to be refugees in their own country.

The deployment of Boko Haram in Nigeria probably received support from “invisible hands” both internally and externally, and the blessing of the Nigerian political class, from North to South as they would never have hesitated to use the sect and its armed elements for electoral gains to either eliminate opponents or disrupt the conduct of electoral operations in areas that are unfavorable to them.

Candidates vying for local elections started financing unemployed young people from the streets in view of physically eliminating their political rivals. (International Crisis Group, 2017).

**Since violence is a manifestation of grievances, there are no lasting answers but rather a lasting commitment to minimize these grievances by avoiding bad decisions. To this end political authorities must think critically.**

Once a highly publicised humanitarian crisis sets in, United Nations systems and INGOs help the victims by setting up a very heavy bureaucracy which is dismantled after a short time.

Over time, a symbiosis is established between project managers of organisations and donors. Organisations struggle to distinguish their own mission and organisational culture from public policies of State funding agencies. This uncomfortably close relationship with the donors has led to a bureaucratic logic that is not conducive for linking with local partners. This is reinforced by the fact that employees are valued for only as long as they can seek funding. Indeed, organisations admit that they encourage and value business



development more than the strengthening of partners. Since they compete for resources, organisations encourage their employees to develop special relationships with donors. This situation even leads organisations to recruit professionals with business development skills. This behavior based on a close relationship with funding institutions is rooted in work habits and has become a routine.

In southeastern Niger, despite the eviction operations carried out to separate civilians from insurgents, the former often have no choice but to continue to frequent areas held by Boko Haram to try and gain access to their land or cattle, as they are attracted at the end of the dry season by the Lake Chad bed and Komadougou River banks. Current attacks do not take these factors into account and limit civilian casualties as much as possible.

This weakening of economies has undoubtedly weakened the financing and supply of Boko Haram, even though it has also rendered the populations very vulnerable. Attacks aggravate the disorganisation of the economic sectors and cause new population displacements.

In their fight against Boko Haram, States must anticipate and manage the humanitarian consequences of their actions. If not, the desperate population may rise up in anger against its purported protectors.

To prevent the emergence of conflicts that generate humanitarian crises, the struggle for the respect of human rights and the promotion of peace must be the leitmotif of the rulers.

Milan Vesely boldly states in the African Business magazine that “civil war and the humanitarian aid feed off of each other” and that “the African conflicts are a source of profit weapons’ manufacturers, aid providers, and the fighters themselves” (Vesely, 1998).



## CONCLUSION

It is easy to know when a humanitarian crisis begins, but never its duration or end. The utopian questions that humanitarians should ask themselves are (Mattei, 2005):

- How do we intervene to prevent further interventions?
- How can we ensure that local actors cope alone? Or at least without major humanitarian interventions?

Given the analyses of humanitarian crises which emphasize the political implications and corruption of "humanitarian organisations, these questions would hardly find adequate answers.

Prevention is less dramatic than emergency interventions; however, it is much more effective in saving lives.

In all the three cases examined (Darfur, North CAR and Boko Haram), the political authorities must think critically in order to minimize the grievances of people who have led them to an unending cycle of violence and acute humanitarian crises.

In East and Southern Chad, refugee camps were set up since 2003 and continue to host new refugees. In South-East Niger, the humanitarian crisis seems to be emulating the example of the other two crises.

Humanitarian aid alone will never solve all crisis situations. It acts more on the symptoms than on the causes. Therefore, if the major powers are willing to help; and there is increase observance of ethics in international relations, coupled with a better understanding of people and their cultures, then we can start dreaming of a better world; a world where crises could be resolved; in short, a world where many crises would not exist ...

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Source : RITIMO, 2006



# Prospects for the resilience of the people who are victim of the insecurity in the Lake Chad Basin.

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## Background information

For some years now, the Lake Chad Basin, the Sahel and the Sahara have been faced with insecurity imposed by some jihadist groups roaming this vast region. The insurgencies by these terrorist groups have seriously rocked socio-economic life and resulted in the mass movement of the population. The population of the Diffa region which stood at 591 788 inhabitants before the security crisis has increased and today totals above 896 040 inhabitants. The attacks have resulted in the movement of 118 868 Nigerian refugees into the Diffa region, 104 288 internally displaced in the Diffa region, 25 731 Nigerian returnees from Nigeria, 1705 asylum seekers. This situation of insecurity pushed the countries of the Sahel strip (Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Chad) to create the G5 Sahel to combine their efforts in the fight against violent extremism. The four countries of the Lake Chad Basin:

Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria and Chad as well as Benin, united their efforts to set up the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF). The relay is managed at the national level by bodies competent in diffusing and settling conflict between communities and wiping out infiltration plans by extremist groups. Such is the case of: (1) the High Authority for Peace Consolidation (HACP) whose mission is to promote the spirit of peace and permanent dialogue among the various communities of the country, and maintaining mutual trust, tolerance and respect under the will of living together; (2) the National Centre for Strategic Studies and Security (SCNESS) whose mission is to design the response to the concerns of the local population.

Military effort is currently being deployed through the different forces which helped weaken the Boko Haram sect. The Authorities call on their partners to carry out recovery actions by improving the resilience of the population, promoting income generating activities, family agriculture, cattle fattening and the empowerment of women's groups. It is pursuant to this recovery drive that the University of Diffa developed an incubator which it is promoting to its partners that support victims of persecution. According to the University of Diffa, these emergency actions must be completed by activities that empower the population, thus the idea to develop an incubator with 7 components: (i) a bee farm, (ii) an agro-pastoral farm, (iii) a poultry farm, (iv) an agricultural farm, (v) a wildlife conservatory, (vi) a fish farm and (vii) an ecological engineering farm. This incubator recorded its first use by the UNHCR for 12 000 Nigerian refugees of the Sayam Forage Camp through a fish farm and an agro-pastoral farm.

The project seeks to spread its agricultural production activities to other camps and villages of the Diffa region.

**Key words:** Improving the resilience of the population

# I. Analysis of the security situation

## 1. At regional level

For some years now, the Lake Chad Basin, the Sahel and the Sahara have been plagued with a series of security concerns. Several jihadist groups roam this vast region and Niger stands surrounded by 3 zones of chronic insecurity:

- the border zone with Libya and Algeria to the North with problems of migration and where smugglers operate,
- the border zone with Mali, Burkina Faso and the Algerian south west with attacks from several Islamist groups (Karembé, 2017):

**Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).** This is a group of jihadists which emerged from Algeria and is present, since 2003, in the North of Mali and the East of Mauritania. It appears to have links with the Nigerian Boko Haram Islamist movement. AQIM enjoyed an increase in weapons following the 2011 Libyan crisis.

**Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO).** This is an armed jihadist group formed following its break off from AQIM in 2011 and whose founder is from Mauritania. It seeks to impose the Sharia in West Africa (enrolment of youths from black Africa into the Jihadist wave).

**AnsarEddine:** Jihadist group formed by the ex-separatist, rebel, or leader of the NMLA, Iyad Ag Ghaly. Besides the Sahel-Sahara zone, this group has a branch in the Inner Niger Delta known as “*KatibaMacina*” led by a former peul preacher HamadounKoufa. There is also Ibrahim Salam Dicko’s group which terrorises the north of Burkina Faso towards the Malian border and the *Al-Mourabitoune* group of Abou Hassan Al Ansari, etc.

- the border zone with Nigeria where the Boko Haram sect is terrorising.

## **2. At the level of the Diffa region and the Lake Chad Basin**

The insurgencies by the terrorist groups seriously rocked the socio-economic life of the population of the Sahel countries and the Lake Chad Basin. This situation of insecurity pushed Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Chad to create the G5 Sahel to combine their efforts in tackling violent extremism. The four countries of the Lake Chad Basin: Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria and Chad as well as Benin, united their efforts to set up the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF).

The Diffa Region is one of 8 (eight) Regions of Niger. It is characterised by diverse landscapes comprising basins, sharp dunes like the Tal desert, woody shrub-steppes and valleys with high farming and fishing potential. Farming, breeding and fishing are the main activities of a proud and peaceful population. This Region is part of the Lake Chad Basin which has continuously been drying up since the 1970s and 1980s, as well as population pressure and global warming.

All these ecological issues lead to the recurrent vulnerability of the population in line with food security, health and access to education and the degradation of ecosystems. The situation is same in the other compartments of the Lake Chad Basin. The deep impoverishment of some segments of the population, the great marginalisation of disoriented youths in the countries concerned are among the factors for radicalisation. It is in this context that the Boko Haram sect found a vulnerable social strata favourable to the spread of its ideology. For 6 years now, the nebulous Boko Haram sect has violently been operating in the Lake Chad Basin. The acts of murder, abduction, rape, attacks of all sort on the innocent population comprising women and men are the day-to-day habit of the terrorist group.

The activities of the Sect in Niger have unfortunately attracted several youths of the Region (Sadou, 2015). Niger suffered attacks

in the towns of Bosso, Diffa and Karamga and many other villages in the region were hotspots for unprecedented violence, murder, rape of women, abduction of men, women and children of all ages (Saïbou, 2015; Souley, 2015). The population of the Diffa Region which stood at 591 788 inhabitants before the security crisis has today risen above 896 040 inhabitants as per the statistics of the Regional Directorate for the Civil Status. The attacks resulted in the movement of 118 868 Nigerian refugees in the Diffa region, 104 288 internally displaced in the Diffa region, 25 731 Nigerian returnees from Nigeria, 1 705 asylum seekers (MISPD/ACR, 2017).

## **II. Response strategy**

### **1. Mechanisms set up by the State of Niger**

In line with conflict resolution, the State of Niger created bodies competent in diffusing and settling conflicts between communities and wiping out infiltration plans by violent extremist groups. In this respect, the High Authority for Peace Consolidation (HACP) was created to promote the spirit of peace and permanent dialogue among the various communities of the country, and maintaining mutual trust, tolerance and respect under the will of living together (Boukary, 2015). On the same wavelength, the National Commission for the Control and Recovery of Illicit Weapons (CNCCAI) was created to identify, design and implement strategies to combat the proliferation of light weapons, thus mitigating security risks and supporting social and economic recovery actions (Mai Moctar, 2010; Hamit A. and Mohamed M. A., 2013). Similarly, the National Commission on Human Rights (CNDH) was created (Hamidou T. M., 2015). Its mission is to carry out studies and research on human rights, state its opinion and make recommendations to government authorities on issues relating to human rights and overseeing the holding of seminars and training workshops on human rights, peace, tolerance, etc.



Since the outbreak of the war imposed by the Boko Haram sect, the State of Niger has committed huge resources to face this unprecedented aggression. According to Maikoréma (2018) at least 10% of the GDP was allocated to defence and security related expenditure.

### ***The response of the State of Niger***

After the attacks on the towns of Bosso and Diffa on 5 and 6 February 2015, strict measures were implemented (Maikorema, 2017):

- deployment of DSF to the Diffa region;
- attendant measures (state of emergency in the Diffa region, creation of vigilante committees to prevent surprise attacks);
- activation of the MNJTF (Niger, Chad, Cameroon, Nigeria and Benin);
- *Boko Haram* weakened, yet still present.
- Moreover, Niger laid emphasis on preventing radicalism by:
- promoting intra and inter-religious dialogue,
- developing Islamic education and teachings;
- “De-radicalisation” by reconciling and integrating”ex-militants”. The aim is to work towards building a society of love, justice, peace and not obscurantism and prejudice which are a source of intolerance leading to violence, instability and conflicts.

## **2. Commitment of the University of Diffa to the population and Defence and Security Forces in the fight against violent extremism**

Following the attacks on the towns of Bosso and Diffa, several challenges emerged for the University of Diffa:

Tackling the hysteria created by the Boko Haram sect through bombings, killings, abduction, etc.

Relocating the University to secured Regions given that the sect considered Western Education a sacrilege.

The University chose to stand strong and not remain arms folded.

Mindful of this context, the Regional Authorities asked the question: **What could be the contribution of the University of Diffa in supporting the population in distress and supporting military success on the field?**

*Thereon, the University's Agenda, which centred on analysing ecological and environmental problems, evolved to consider societal problems.*

To strategise the University's contribution, scientific meetings were carried out with the aim of developing the skills of all stakeholders supporting the population.

Let us note that as the security situation gradually evolved, the University of Diffa adapted its strategy to provide relevant and effective contribution to the conflict management by the State of Niger.

### **Response strategy developed by the University of Diffa**

The University of Diffa understood early enough that the problems of the Diffa Region and the Lake Chad Basin generally required the mobilisation of all socio-professional and cultural segments. This is why all stakeholders of the Basin's socio-economic life were involved in the various reflections geared at creating national and international solidarity for the population of the Diffa Region and the entire Lake Chad Basin.

These reflections should, on the one hand, help consolidate the inner capacities of lead public figures in building and consolidating peace, and on the other hand, generating ideas for a local development plan.

## **2.1. Analysis of the security situation for recommendations to be implemented**

The University organised a 1<sup>st</sup> International Colloquium on the spirit of peace in the Lake Chad Basin. The aim of the colloquium was to analyse the problem of insecurity in the zone and make recommendations to end the crisis. It gathered more than 100 participants from 19 Universities, 14 national and international Institutions and 7 NGOs and national and international Associations from 11 countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Spain, United States of America, France, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Chad).

The analyses revealed that the Boko Haram sect had found favourable ground for their doctrine in: unemployed youths, illiteracy, lack of paid jobs, insufficient basic social services (schools, hospitals or health centres etc.).

### **Some suggestions were made:**

Maintaining military pressure and welcoming ex-militants,  
Strengthening the security mechanism within the country and at border level and involving the populations in crisis management,

Strengthening the skills and means of the defence and security forces to better carry out their mission with an effective sub-regional coordination,

Strengthening the civilian and military activities on raising awareness in the communities on the factors of identification of suspects of the Boko Haram sect and security briefings,

Strengthening oversight on the movement of narcotics and educating youths against this ill,

Developing strategies to identify potential authors of this movement and opening dialogue with these stakeholders,

Implementing integrated development programmes for border zones

Establishing a sustainable security mechanism at the borders.

### **At the social and economic level:**

Supporting victims in getting a normal life through proposed income generating activities,

De-radicalising Boko Haram extremists,

Strengthening collaboration among the judicial and military authorities and the population,

Integrating ex Boko Haram fighters into the socio-economic landscape,

Strengthening emergency aid at the camps of the displaced, refugees and population whose activities have been affected (feeding, health, education),

Creating jobs for youths who must be integrated to avoid negative influences,

Establishing development projects and enterprises capable of managing youths,

Equipping existing training schools with new equipment, many qualified trainers, training programmes adapted to modern and future needs of the labour market,

Creating more sub-regional training centres on agriculture, breeding and handicraft under the aegis of the LCBC,

Increasing the operational literacy centres mainly for illiterate women and social centres for young adults (young mothers, young widows, rejected youths)

Officialise Koranic schools and oversee religious teaching,

Organise training sessions for imams and regulate the exercise of this job,

Adopting a religious teaching programme to be use in officialised koranic schools.

## **2.2. Capacity building for stakeholders**

The international symposium on security in the Lake Chad Basin organised on the 14 and 15 May 2016 in Diffa, gathered more than 100 participants including traditional rulers, local elected officials and the command officers of the military detachments of the 4 countries of the Lake Chad Basin. The aim of the symposium was to develop the skills of the stakeholders directly involved in conflict management: Traditional authorities, Divisional Officers, DSF. Creation of information management networks.

At the end of deliberations, the following recommendations were made:

### **To favour de-radicalisation, the return of ex-militants and their re-integration, the participants recommended:**

Taking adequate measures to protect the social stakeholders working with the State to combat extremism (informants, committed leaders, self-defence forces, etc.), to improve good governance and social justice;

Creating a reception facility for ex-militants in the four countries of the Basin.

Developing, with the support of religious leaders, preaching and teachings on the spirit of peace to prevent erroneous interpretations of Islam.

### **To create conditions for social dialogue needed to eradicate violence:**

Under the watch of authorities, create operational platforms for consultation and dialogue with social stakeholders

(traditional leaders, populations, civil society organisations, local elected officials), for public decisions to be implemented with the trust and endorsement of the population.

Step up the role of community leaders, beyond the role of simply being informants, by making them the spokespersons of their communities.

### **For a quick end to the crisis and a gradual return to normalcy:**

Pending the establishment of conditions for the return of the displaced population to their territories of origin, create labour intensive income generating activities.

Facilitate the gradual return of the displaced population by paying keen attention to an implementation plan for the agricultural campaign and the Ramadan.

Create the conditions for a long-term return of the displaced population to their territories of origin, especially by: greatly securing, by positioning military units, the captured back from terrorist control; by learning from the experiences of different countries in post-conflict situation to create jobs and restore basic socio-economic activities (farming, fishing, breeding, trade) and explore the options for the geographical reintegration of ex-militants and the demobilised to manage the social cleavages caused by the insecurity from Boko Haram.

### **For a return and consolidation of basic public services:**

Capacity building for decentralised territorial units for ownership of the implementation of socio-economic activities.

Consider the effects of uncertainties on agricultural production prior to the advent of Boko Haram in

agricultural development programmes needed for a long-term resettlement of the population.

Develop and popularise scientific studies on the phenomenon of ideological radicalisation and the management of religious activities.

Increase access and the quality of government education, from primary to university.

Increase management of koranic education by the State and the society, pursuant to recommendations N°15 of the International Colloquium on the Spirit of peace and development in the Lake Chad Basin which held in Diffa in November 2015).

Put mothers at the heart of the basic education mechanism for children to better prevent the risks of radicalisation.

Technical and financial partners should provide the required resources for the safety of the population and their well-being in all the four countries (Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon and Chad).

The establishment of vocational training workshops and nurseries for micro projects to ease the professional integration of youths.

### **To prevent the risks of future reproduction of movements and violent ideologies by youths:**

Develop community living in the sub-region to grant youths access to information, knowledge, debates and discussions.

Encourage the commitment of youths in political parties, civic, secular and religious associations, clubs, visiting cultural and leisure centres, libraries, media, etc.

Ensure that restrictive measures and the abuse of their application do not lead to frustrations and civil disobedience among the concerned populations.

**The situation evolved in 2016, the Minister of State, Minister of the Interior officially launched the framework programme to manage ex-militants of Boko Haram on 27 December 2016 at Diffa.**

The administrative authority welcomed 55 ex-militants into a camp located at Diffa. With a rise in the number of ex-militants, the State set up a camp at Goudoumaria 200 km west of the town of Diffa.

Today, the Goudoumaria Rehabilitation Centre has 222 ex-militants.

**For the University of Diffa, there was need to support this new orientation by the State of Niger in the management of the crisis.**

### **2.3. De-radicalisation of youths and reintegration of former Boko Haram militants**

The idea to organise a symposium on the de-radicalisation of youths and the reintegration of former Boko Haram militants was supported by the political authority, thus enabling the Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation to present a paper on the said symposium during the **Council of Ministers on 23 March 2017**.

A preparatory workshop for local communities was organized for the population to master the new concepts of transitional justice and to express their expectations of the symposium. Therefore, 5 modules were explored: the true values of Islam, the role of youths in the consolidation of peace in Niger, de-radicalisation, forgiveness and reintegration.

During this colloquium, we provided content for all participants to better understand the need for a return to peace. In this respect we chose the example of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army (FARC), that of the Taliban in Afghanistan, the Shabab in Somalia and the examples of Sierra Leone and Liberia,



The symposium, organised from 15 to 17 May 2017 at Diffa, gathered more than 350 participants from around the world (picture 5). More than 50 conferences held and were moderated by acclaimed researchers from **Africa** (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, Chad), **Europe** (Belgium, France, Great Britain, Russia, Switzerland, Ukraine), **America** (Colombia, USA) and **Asia** (Afghanistan).

At the end of deliberations, several recommendations were made by the participants:

***To create the best conditions for forgiveness and reconciliation for a permanent return of peace in the region:***

- Create all conditions for an effective return of the displaced to their territory of origin;
- Develop the skills of traditional rulers whose role in managing and preventing conflicts as well as the socio-professional reintegration of ex-militants is very important;
- Ease the creation and training of vigilante committees in each village and support them with adequate resources to prevent the process of enlisting youths within the Boko Haram movements;
- Strengthen cooperation and collaboration of traditional rulers and their population with the DSF (Defence and Security Forces) stationed or passing through their zone;
- Increase civilian and military activities of raising awareness in the communities on security briefings;
- Identify the direct and indirect victims for compensation and speed up the process for rehabilitation and reintegration;
- Facilitate the socio-economic reintegration process for Boko Haram ex-militants;

- Consider the needs of the vulnerable population;
- Organise public sittings for forgiveness and reconciliation crowned with koranic sermon, by setting up a public space where victims can express themselves, lash out their anger in front of the ex-militants, authorities, communities (fairground audience);
- Ensure respect for local judicial procedures (reports, documentation, possibility to hear witnesses);
- Carefully handle the case of alleged prisoners of war linked to attacks by the Boko Haram sect.
- Decentralise criminal procedures to Regional level (posting a competent judge to rule on cases of terrorism at the level of local courts).
- Improve access to basic social services for communities;
- Elaborate and implement over-arching micro-projects for Lake Chad Basin communities for effective reintegration and the institution of sustainable peace;
- Advocate with Technical and Financial Partners to tackle idleness and unemployment among youths and women through income generating activities facilitating their socio-economic reintegration;
- Set up an effective programme to combat poverty, provide equal chances for citizens.

***For a peaceful cohabitation in a context of diversity and religious interpretation:***

- Reform the educational system to consider the socio-economic context and prevent the radicalisation of youths by officialising all koranic schools and by regulating the contents of pedagogic trainings;
- Regulate the preaching and sermons on Fridays and during Eids;
- Develop civic and moral instruction in schools and training centres.

***To create conditions for an effective involvement of all socio-professional segments in the process of de-radicalisation and reintegration of young ex-militants:***

- Speed up the process of de-radicalisation and reintegration of young ex-militants by involving all socio-professional segments;
- Begin the region's sustainable development process;
- Develop intense programmes on awareness, information and sharing of success stories of de-radicalisation in national languages on national and international media
- Develop actions geared at supporting victims especially women, children and the elderly;
- Tackle idleness and unemployment among youths who have not joined the Boko Haram sect movement by developing income generating activities for them;
- Monitor and evaluate the actions taken for de-radicalisation, reintegration of ex-militants and supporting the target population to oversee their effective implementation;
- Educate and develop the skills of local communities to accept and reintegrate the ex-militants.

### ***Develop the skills of stakeholders at Regional level:***

In this regard, it is necessary to:

- Ensure the involvement of direct and indirect victims in the reconciliation process;
- Strengthen the leaderships of NGOs in the implementation of support activities for the population;
- Strengthen the spirit of forgiveness and tolerance at the intra and inter-community scale, on the one hand, and among the leaders and the governed, on the other hand;
- Call on specialists in social sciences to design and implement de-radicalisation programmes;
- Involve the ex-militants in the awareness programme to discourage potential cases of adherence to the Boko Haram sect (counter radicalisation);
- Work on accepting the return of ex-militants to their communities;
- Create centres for re-education and de-radicalisation;
- Boost productive areas (green pepper, fish, gum arabic, citrus fruits);
- Increase investments to develop polders;
- Develop tourism infrastructure and promote handicraft;
- Rehabilitate and strengthen the network of community radios;
- Intensify preaching and counter radicalisation speeches;
- Organise collective prayers for permanent peace.

### ***Develop the skills of stakeholders at the divisional, council and community levels***

In this regard, it is necessary to:

- Strengthen the responsibility of parents in educating and controlling children;
- In detention centres, separate those detained on terrorism charges from those on common law charges;
- Use the management committees of ex-militants set up in each region to support the process;
- Focus preaching on well-selected koranic verses on jihad for young Muslims and non-Muslims;
- Construct health, sports and cultural infrastructure;
- Regularly bring together youths and women for awareness sessions on maintaining permanent vigilance for their own security and the safety of their goods.
- Strengthen and promote intra and inter-community dialogue in the conflict settlement process in general and the Boko Haram ex-militant reintegration process, in particular.
- Use the media, especially community radios to educate the population for a change in mentality, habit, and to adopt a spirit of tolerance and forgiveness towards Boko Haram ex-militants.

### ***Build the skills of traditional rulers, religious leaders and the population***

Conflict management covers several angles. The traditional rulers who are permanently in contact with the population, play a very important role in peace-making and the quest for social tranquillity. Thus, it is recommended to:

- Get them actively involved in the entire reconciliation process;

- Accept the public apologies of ex-militants;
- Support the State in its efforts for a return of peace and security;
- Accept diverse opinions and religious diversity;
- Ensure mutual respect and adopt a peaceful and tolerant attitude;
- Frequently recall that Islam is a religion of peace and tolerance;
- Develop a counter-speech for the young reformed,
- Actively participate in all actions for de-radicalisation and reintegration of the young reformed initiated by the State and its Partners;
- Educate youths so they avoid the movement.

### **III. Improve the resilience of the population which is a victims of the insecurity in the Lake Chad Basin.**

To support the framework rehabilitation programme defined by the Government of Niger, the University of Diffa drafted a paper on the project of an Agro-ecological incubator and the Promotion of Peace which complements vocational training activities proposed in line with the rehabilitation of Boko Haram militants. According to the University of Diffa, these emergency actions must be completed by activities to empower the population, thus the idea to develop an incubator with 7 components: (i) a bee farm, (ii) an agro-pastoral farm, (iii) a poultry farm, (iv) an agricultural farm, (v) a wildlife conservatory, (vi) a fish farm and (vii) an ecological engineering farm.

For the University of Diffa, Boko Haram militants are former breeders, farmers, fishermen, etc. and it would seemingly be easier to commit them to these activities.

The University made a wide publicity of this farm to its partners supporting the victims of persecution.

The aim of the incubator is to ease the creation of businesses and the maturity of development research projects. More specifically, it helps to:

- offer experimental fields to learners,
- improve the knowledge and know-how of learners,
- constitute a platform for the social integration of youths at the service of the society,
- contribute in promoting agricultural entrepreneurship,
- spread best practices,
- give job opportunities to idle, uneducated and out-of-school youths, and even Boko Haram reformed,
- increase the income of the local population which is a victims of violent extremism.
- train young farmers on techniques for agricultural production, breeding, etc.
- welcome cohorts of 20 youths from all rural development sectors to develop their skills.

This farm was initially used by the UNHCR for Nigerian refugees in the Sayam Forage Camp through:

(1) a fish farm (2) and an agro-pastoral farm.

(1) a fish farm

For the fish farm, 50 ponds were set up to breed 2 fish species: *Oreochromis niloticus* and *Clarias gariepinus*.



(a)



(b)



Picture 1 a and b: (a) pond and (b) handing of goats to refugees

2) an agro-pastoral farm.

For the agro-pastoral farm, 60 goats and 4 he-goats were distributed to 2 groups.

The UNHCR to the commitment to increase the number of beneficiary refugees.



Picture 2: handing of goats to refugees

## Conclusion

The University of Diffa shaped its contribution to crisis management related to the Boko Haram sect based on the guidelines from the State of Niger. Thus, it mobilised the local populations and the civil society at national and international levels to support the efforts of the Defence and Security Forces deployed at the front. It carried out capacity building for key stakeholders involved in conflict settlement (Traditional Authority and the Defence and Security Forces). According to the University of Diffa, emergency actions must be completed by empowerment activities for the populations, thus the idea of the Agro-ecological incubator and the Promotion of Peace through its 7 components. Lastly, the Boko Haram Islamist threat can only be tackled through a global response comprising military action, as well as political, economic, cultural, social and environmental action.

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# Adapting Africa's Collective Security Frameworks to Lake Chad Basin's Predictable Threats: a case for Prospective Strategy

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Mitigating, eliminating or significantly reducing the threats to peace and security currently pervading the Lake Chad Basin (LCB) requires adequate strategic thought and action on a number of key planes. One relates to the issue of useful force in contemporary conflicts and warfare amongst the population (Gray and Sloan, 1993; 2005; 2013; Smith, 2005), whereby force employment is indispensable but requires thinking outside the box because sheer force, force alone, or certain more or less classical uses of massive arsenalised force, have absolutely no chance of winning the day (Desportes, 2009).

This imperative is exemplified by the temporary failure to eradicate Boko Haram by Nigeria and Cameroon. Postures to be highlighted here include Nigeria's constant and continuing hesitation between force and dialogue without a definite decision to use both as needed, and Cameroon's spending of one billion euros in 2014 alone on heavy weaponry (Rogez, 2015), only to achieve a victory that ended the terrorist group's ability to wage frontline war, but not the war itself, whereas the heavy weapons became largely irrelevant for the next, truly asymmetric, longer and still ongoing phases of the war (Biem, 2014).

Another key plane is strategic intelligence for the topical application of force and power, hard and soft (Nye, 2011), in an approach that aims not only to resolve conflicts, but to prevent and deter the emergence or resurgence of threats in the future. In this sense, the predictable threats here considered refer to security threats and actual conflicts – along with their weapons systems taken as threats per se –, that both appear as most likely to occur or persist in the foreseeable future as a result of interactions between risks, vulnerabilities and instability factors, but also produce or worsen such interactions and their impacts on the security environment. Strategic intelligence thus entails ways of reading the security environment and applying thought and action generally but also differentially as required in space-time and communities, with relevant actors, in a coordinated and coherent manner. It involves a keen awareness and skillful activation of points of structurally transformative impact (Biem 2017) in an area of grey zones like the Lake Chad Basin (LCB) where conflicting nodes of supply and demand for statehood, State services and related identities take place and constantly develop in uncanny ways that must be understood and addressed.

Such transformative perspective in turn entails action, most needed in the LCB, on the most enduring plane: medium and long duration factors of instability and destabilisation, both human and natural. Amongst the latter, climate and environmental factors are paramount, despite the uncertainties in the literature on climate change trends, climate fragility profiles, and causal relations between climate change and conflict (Gleditsch, 1998; Hauge and Ellingsen, 1998; Homer-Dixon, 1999; de Soysa, 2002; Hendrix and Glaser, 2007; Roehrig *et. al.*, 2013; Magrin *et. al.*, 2015; Nagarajan *et. al.*, 2018;), especially in the Sahel at the centre of which sits the LCB.

Central to the reflection here attempted is thus how Pan-African security policy and strategy address the threats on such planes and, more importantly, how collective security policy frameworks are being adapted and can best be adapted for increased effectiveness and long-term stability in the Lake Chad Basin. The interrogation and its programmatic exploration are predicated upon the view that, in

general and in the case of the Pan-African construction of collective Defence and Security in particular, capacity building appears likely to be best accomplished and maximised by working with the existing frameworks. The suggestion then is about promoting, supporting and enhancing already adopted policies and their implementation. This is probably more useful than giving in to the false, often underinformed generosity of prescribing again and again what Africa and the African Union (AU) should do, and thus wastefully duplicating ongoing or completed efforts, including those steered by the Planning Elements (PLANELMS) at the AU Commission and Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) that foster the implementation of policies and initiatives.<sup>1</sup>

Given the transnational and increasingly transregional span of security threats and factors of instability in Africa, building on the existing and the ongoing is crucial in resolving coordination dilemmas and enhancing collective action within the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and with partners and other stakeholders. In that logic and in accordance with the editorial project that invited it, this paper both explores some key policy analysis perspectives and sketches a research programme in sustainable security strategy. It borrows its methodological concepts and approach in priority from prospective strategy (Poirier, 1983) that reduces uncertainty and projects ends, ways and means in a coherent whole articulated in three steps: 1) morphological analysis to survey the possible features and determine what the entity to protect and defend could most likely be up for or against; 2) determination of possibilities of action given the most likely forms of the future and the available capabilities, considering specifiable strategic goals against capabilities, and 3) decision on the course of action, among the possibilities surveyed in (2), to advance specified strategic goals.

<sup>1</sup> The AU and partners could certainly reinforce their mechanisms end efforts aiming at cutting down such duplication, while encouraging genuinely original initiatives capable of contributing to close the skills gap in the context of Africa's relatively lower stocks of human capital and correlated latent innovative capacity, as well as ensuing "ingenuity gap", as compared to more technologically innovative societies (Homer-Dixon 2000).

In this logic and without any claim at modelisation, the paper proposes to consider prospective security strategy for the LCB by defining and focusing on some of the most predictable threats. The emphasis is thus laid first on this issue of predictability and its determinants which form an archipelago of invariants most likely to remain in play for the next decades. This focus, it is implicitly and explicitly suggested, is in order to reduce or resolve the constant paradox of predictability and strategic surprise that has pervasively manifested itself in the destabilisation of the Sahel and Sahara in the last two decades, in particular following NATO's intervention in Libya that unleashed the forces of Jihad and transnational organized crime as was expected but obviously not anticipated enough.

Thus, the first section following the introduction analyses the dynamics of predictability, including what I referred to as an archipelago of invariants that work as factors causing or determining certain threats to be more likely. The second goes further to define and exemplify the notion of predictable threats for which we must prepare in Africa and particularly the LCB context of the next years and decades. Finally, suggesting a systematic confrontation of those with the existing collective security frameworks adopted and implemented by the AU, RECs/RMs and other relevant African collective action entities, and building on the frameworks' relative relevance and inadequacies, the third part lays down a few recommendations for further adaptation. Understood that the frameworks must keep and indeed enhance their relevance for all sub-regions, the considerations, it must be noted, are finally calibrated on more thought and action *from* the lessons learned and to be learned from the LCB, than *for* its exclusive benefits.

## **1. Threats and their predictability in the Lake Chad Basin**

“If the current trends continue without significant effort to mitigate them, climate change and its effects will increase conflict and civil wars in Africa by 34% toward the year 2030, especially in the Sahel area” (Shevel, 2015). This pronouncement is representative of the



doomsday scenario constructed by the deterministic outlook in strategic forecasting that has for a while dominated media and popular images of African future, particularly as regards the relation between security and the environment. This deterministic outlook, rooted in neo-Malthusian analysis, has been largely criticised in the literature as mentioned in the introduction for overestimating the centrality of environmental degradation to conflict.

Moreover, even assuming that its conventional and often too broad causal mechanisms are valid, the model is not very effective in identifying short-term causes working as immediate triggers of the outbreak of conflict. For the various predictions of conflict over access to resources to hold, the complexity of the causal mechanisms tends to be often underestimated, whereas it is extremely difficult to determine theoretical and empirical thresholds which trigger violence once crossed, given the very gradual nature of environmental changes (Hendrix and Glaser, 2007).

Nevertheless, these uncertainties on the environmental cause of conflict notwithstanding, structural analysis leads to the relationship whereby conflicts in the LCB in particular are nurtured by the most enduring factors of instability and insecurity. These factors are indeed linked to environmental challenges, including climate change, and political challenges, both of which contribute to the most significant configuration of fragility, State failure, which they also result from, in a vicious circle. As a threat multiplier that compounds existing risks and pressures, climate change converges and interacts with other environmental, economic, social, and political shocks and pressures, and can increase the likelihood of instability or conflict, particularly in fragile and conflict affected situations such as the LCB's, where governments and societal institutions grapple with security and equitable development. Simultaneously, conflicts and fragility here contribute to environmental degradation and undermine the ability to adapt to climate change, thus creating a vicious circle of increasing vulnerability and fragility.

Amongst others, the recent report on *Climate-Fragility Profile: Lake Chad Basin* (Nagarajan *et. al.*, 2018) use the term *climate-fragility*



*risks* to designate the complex and systemic risks arising out of the interaction between climate change and other environmental, economic, social, and political pressures. The report is of particular interest as it not only very aptly accounts for the current risk and conflict situation but it significantly contributes to the understanding of the climate-security linkage. Also, I refer to it because, as a first component of a climate-fragility Risk Assessment process for actors working in contexts affected by climate and fragility risks to understand the linked nature of these risks and plan, design, implement and evaluate programmes to respond positively to these risks, it is very relevant in terms of both predictability analysis and directions for further research. The authors contend that, contrary to the widespread view derived from misinterpretation of satellite images, crucial climate vulnerabilities do not derive so much from the shrinking of Lake Chad as from uncertainties over variability and, hence, future water availability at the seasonal, inter-annual, and multi-decadal timescales, and point at the need for more research to understand the variability of Lake Chad and the interaction between different forcing mechanisms.

Understanding climate change as a variable that affects pre-existing economic, environmental, political and social pressures, the profile identifies three key climate-fragility risks. The first is how conflict and fragility increase vulnerability, as the ongoing Boko haram conflict has significantly undermined community resilience, including the ability of the population to adapt to climate change, a development that will impede any future interventions and efforts to address conflict and climate risks. The second is that climate change is exacerbating natural resources conflicts, in particular over land and water, more visibly between pastoralists and farmers. The third is that Livelihood vulnerability has facilitated recruitment into armed groups that now have a history of offering financial incentives to join them, although how climatic variability and climate change will impact this dynamic is unclear and needs to be better understood.

Taken together, these climate-fragility risks create a self-enforcing feedback loop between increasing livelihood insecurity, climate change vulnerability, and conflict and fragility. Conflict and

fragility are steadily decreasing the resilience of communities, making them more vulnerable to climate change which at the same time is further undermining livelihoods and exacerbating the competition around scarcer natural resources. If this vicious circle is not broken in time, it will not only sustain the current crisis but more importantly take the region further down the path of conflict and fragility.

Proceeding from this, the report is highlighting a number of trends that are key to future conflict trajectories, confirming several previous studies (Ministère de la Défense, 2012; Biem, 2014, 2017, 2018; National Intelligence Council, 2017; Magrin and Pérouse de Montclos, 2018; etc.) First, the resilience of armed groups: they have proven capable of changing and adapting their identities, strategies, tactics and organisational structures. Second, the future of vigilante groups and other self-defense militias that have emerged as a reaction to armed groups: their role in stabilisation or future conflict and fragility dynamics is highly uncertain, particularly regarding their willingness to demobilise and disarm once the threat that prompted their formation is reduced to more manageable proportions.

A third trend involves increasing urbanisation and resettlement issues, the key challenge here being that of providing sustainable livelihoods in urban and semi-urban areas as well as facilitating return and resettlement, given the fact that movements of people prompted by the conflict and climate crisis have been primarily from rural to urban areas. A fourth trend is related to the role of humanitarian aid and development cooperation. Predictability and transparency of aid as well as a move towards better linkages to long-term development cooperation to address the root causes of the crisis will be critical, as conflict may be mediated, among others, by reducing the dependence of subsistence agriculturalists on rainwater – even as variability is not predicted to increase over time –, a task no government in the LCB and broader Sub-Saharan Africa is likely to accomplish in the near future without reinforced cooperation and assistance. The most likely threats derive from these trends and the aforementioned risks.

## 2. The most likely threats and conflicts

As mentioned in the introduction, the threats considered in their predictability include configurations, situations, security threats and actual conflicts and their prevalent weapons systems, that are highly likely to persist or occur in the foreseeable future as a result of interactions between risks, vulnerabilities and instability factors that they both result from and (re)produce. In the lake Chad basin, three such threats can be identified as principal: state fragility, violent conflicts and armed groups, and Transnational organized crime.

### State fragility

Of all the predictable security threats that compromise positive transformation in the Lake Chad Basin, State fragility or failure is the most important in structural terms. It has the full weight of a social configuration in the sense given by Norbert Elias (1978) to capture the interdependencies that rearrange the ensembles in which social beings and constructs are integrated, and a *dispositif*, understood as a certain provisional arrangement of relations of force and knowledge that produces the stability or lability of a policy at a certain point in time (Foucault, 1980; Agamben, 2009). State fragility does not only concern the aggregates on which the whole policy relies to survive or thrive as such, but also involves the parameters within which it is accepted, reproduced, developed or undermined, thus determining both the threats and capacities to face them for the said entity.

To go quickly and stick to the case, the 2019 State Fragility Index (Fund for Peace, 2019) shows that all four countries of the LCB are in alert status – the most fragile category, as opposed to sustainable, stable, and warning –, and following mostly worsening trends. In terms of indicators, very few show States capable of sustaining themselves in a medium term, let alone in a long run. Considering cohesion indicators, the Security apparatus in all four countries, especially Cameroon and Chad, is largely perceived as protecting the regime or the elite, rather than the country. In

Cameroon, the government is constantly accused of not dealing well with insurgency. In all four countries, the military and police are perceived as not maintaining proper use of force. There is a fairly high availability of small caliber and light weapons, and where stabilisation is considered, there is not yet an adequate working plan for demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration of former combatants.

Elites are generally fragmented and factionalized, often along ethnic lines. If the quality of elections has been improving, the results are still often contested and leaders are not always perceived as representative of the population and its interest. Group grievances and hate speech, long curtailed, are on the rise in Cameroon which has been the most stable country and stabilising force in the area from the 1970s to the 2000, with feelings and reports of ethnic or regional competition, grievances of groups claiming to be oppressed or marginalised, as well as others organising to get heard in their specificity in order not to be left out as irrelevant, whether in dialogue or conflict settlement. The factors of cohesion are consequently very weak and undermined all over the LCB. As a whole, the region displays societies on the edge, moving towards less stability and more liability, especially in Cameroon where they have been arguably the less fragile until recently.

Concerning economic factors, all four LCB countries have positive growth, both current and projected. However, the countries and their population are set to remain locked in the bottom billion dynamics (Collier, 2007), for at least another decade or a few more, unless the orientation of development pathways changes course dramatically, including through the adoption of more endogenously robust coordinates (Binam Bikoï and Biem, 2017). The two lead economies here (Nigeria and Cameroon) are medium-low income countries, and the two laggards (Chad and Niger) are low income countries in the World Bank's 2019 ranking. Formal economies and State finances in all four countries remain extremely dependent on exports of oil, uranium (Niger) and a few other raw materials. Despite the display of political will and advertisement of programs, the pace of diversification is very slow even in Cameroon and Nigeria. Growth is extremely uneven and harshly criticised as

such, both by lawful non-violent political opposition and civil society actors and by insurgent groups, including Boko Haram and violent separatists. All blame the hardship on corruption, nepotism, and cronyism, and as a result question the legitimacy of regimes and sometimes of States themselves.

Human flight and brain drain are also significant, especially from Cameroon and Nigeria to Western and increasingly Asian countries. Professionals and highly educated people making up a significant size of the technical and intellectual capital are leaving their countries or attempting to do so in numbers. Conversely, the proportion of the middle class beginning to return to the country is marginal at best, the will to return being discouraged by corruption, and nepotism, as the much blamed clan mentality prevents countries from tapping into the potential of its whole population. The co-option of elites through the distribution of State largesse, and the emigration of many educated young people that contributed to a certain relaxation of tensions in Cameroon for example (International Crisis Group, 2010) has now backlashed. Doubts on peaceful transfer of power at the help of the State are pervasive amongst both beneficiaries and sworn opponents of State largesse. There is a large amount of remittances coming to families from relatives overseas. A significant part was used to fund armed insurgency in the former southern Cameroon between 2016 and 2018, and has now dwindled as a result of measures taken by authorities working to prevent the funding of “Ambazonist” terrorism. Overall, while the diasporas have an impact on the home State economy, their demand for more influence on politics has often had less positive impact due to adversarial approaches and reactions on the side of both the governments and diaspora activists.

As far as political indicators are concerned, State legitimacy is very weak all across the board. The citizenry’s trust in institutions and political processes is very low. The basic State functions that serve the people are in higher demand than most States can deliver. None of the four countries can provide essential services, such as health, education, water and sanitation, to all its citizens power, and internet and connectivity. The State command is clearly more developed than the State’s protective capacities. The level and

maintenance of general infrastructure is improving but still negatively affects the country's actual and potential development.

Finally, social and cross-cutting indicators show demographic pressure amongst the highest in the world. With the population size of Nigeria, the greatest in Africa, and the fertility rate of Niger, the highest in the world, population growth in the LCB clearly absorbs and cancels out economic growth, leaving a massive youth in the ambivalent position of an asset in case the countries correct their development policies and trends, or a highly explosive security risk factor if the current population and economic growth ratios persists in the next couple of decades. Already, each of the four countries have refugees in and from at least one other country of the basin, and each has internally displaced people, with Cameroon having them caused by at least two conflicts since 2017. Table 1 below summarises instability on five dimensions (political, societal, economic, environmental and security, and ranks countries on a five levels scale: Very severe, severe, moderate, low and minor.

<b>Dimensions and levels of fragility</b>						
	<b>Political</b>	<b>Societal</b>	<b>Economic</b>	<b>Environ mental</b>	<b>Security</b>	<b>General status</b>
<b>Cameroon</b>	Moderate	Very severe	Severe	Very severe	Severe	<b>Alert</b>
<b>Chad</b>	Very Severe	Very severe	Severe	Very severe	Moderate	<b>High Alert</b>
<b>Niger</b>	Severe	Moderate	Very severe	Very severe	Severe	<b>Alert</b>
<b>Nigeria</b>	Severe	Moderate	Moderate	Severe	Severe	<b>Alert</b>

**Table 1:** Fragility in Lake Chad basin countries in 2018-2019<sup>2</sup>

Of course, fragility is first and foremost a political issue, and the

<sup>2</sup> Designed with information synthesised from different sources, including the OECD States of Fragility 2018 report, the Fund for Peace 2019 State Fragility Index, and the author's own research.

result of political issues. As I mentioned earlier, its seriousness as a threat culminates in the fact that it goes as far as defining political consensus and providing the matrix in which all policies get to be validated, which means that acceptance of fragility in many ways is part of a consensus of the elite that consequently oppose policy and strategy choices that would undo fragility. Prosperity and poverty, whether at the level of each country or in view of their relative levels in internal comparison between different areas such as the capital, extractive industry areas and grey zones in the same country, is first and foremost the result of a certain relationship between politics and institutions which is the ultimate key to why nations fail,(Acemoglu and Robinson, 2012), why renteer States (Hyden, 2012) such as those of the LCB predictably fail by constantly reproducing fragility through politics – particularly the politics of dependency to raw materials and neglect of many parts of national territory that are not relevant for their extraction which, ungoverned for decades, easily become areas of lawlessness and conflicting legitimacies controlled by non-state armed groups.

Prosperity, stability and sustainability as well as poverty, fragility and vulnerability are engineered by institutions, and institutions are engineered by politics.No stabilisation strategy in the lake Chad basin is significant or susceptible to yield decisive results if the structural issues of fragility and vulnerability are not addressed. This makes it extremely difficult for AU frameworks to yield the desired results in matters of stability in the short and medium term, as politics often prevent the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) from addressing fragility until it reaches the most critical levels, particularly until it yields State failure that necessitates Peace Support. The situation clearly calls for adaptation in the sense of further robustness, but the consensus appears to take the other heading. Even in the case of State failure, the policy of subsidiarity compels the PSC to wait until it is invited to intervene in a Regional Economic Community (REC) – the situation is further complexified in a context like the LCB which is under the overlapping jurisdiction of two RECs:ECCAS and ECOWAS. In the meantime, the collective security frameworks, including the early warning systems, seldom take the first step of actively



acknowledging fragility per se, and the AU mostly deals with some of its factors and consequences, namely conflicts, armed groups and, to a lesser extent, weapons systems.

### **Violent conflicts, armed groups and weapons systems**

These constitute the second predictable security threat in the area. Broadly speaking, there are three types of armed groups that represent immediate and in some cases pose daily security threats to the population and the state: terrorist armed groups (TAGs), political armed Groups (PAGs), and criminal armed groups (CAGs). These are present at different degrees in all four LCB countries, and Cameroon and Nigeria have violent separatist groups attempting to have one part of the country secede. In the case of Cameroon in particular, because of their methods, separatist fighter groups of the former Southern Cameroon are simultaneously TAGs, PAGs and CAGs. Overall, because the LCB sits at the center of the Sahel, it is a major crossing point for the Transnational Organised Crime highways crisscrossing the Sahel and Sahara.

Because of the fragmentation of groups and multiple emulations among entrepreneurs of violent extremism, these grey areas in which armed groups exercise more or less control are areas that have often become grayer after the departure of the State than at its approach. More importantly, when the State clears but does not keep control of them, they quickly become controlled by organised criminals. Moreover, transnationalisation is inevitable with regard to the socio-historical trajectories of trans-Saharan exchanges.

The threat appears ominous in theory, in light of some of the major trends in the global security environment affecting the LCB countries. Among those with greater impact here are the assaults launched simultaneously at the turn of the century against the Westphalian state by three global insurgencies: the global criminal insurgency of the disenfranchised of globalisation, the global plutocratic insurgency of tax fleeing elites of rich countries and kleptocratic elites of poor countries (Matfess and Micklaucic, 2016) such as those of the LCB, and the global Islamist insurgency (Kilcullen, 2008). These threaten the State both in isolation and



through the increasing porosity and mutability of the diverse types of armed groups, inducing the worst impacts which take the form of state capture by CAGs, or State failure which often is one of the results of victory by TAGS and CAGs.

Amongst the weapons systems and tactics, the one most likely to increase fragility and even trigger or facilitate State failure inducing success by asymmetric adversaries is Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs). Increasingly used by terrorists, extremists and criminal networks, it has predominantly been the object of a device-focused approach to countering it, an approach that prevents LCB countries from considering IEDs together with their broad strategic environment. This narrow approach gives LCB countries no chance to interdict IEDs until the outlook changes.

The relevance of IEDs is supported by many features. Because they are improvised, they can therefore easily be conceived, constructed and concealed through readily available materials. Very tactically effective, IEDs can be used both for targeted killing or assassinations, as well as indiscriminately, killing military, police and civilians, and destroying critical infrastructure. In terms of operational impact, the use of IEDs can hobble a conventionally superior force, destroying the moral of troops and population, and impeding force concentration, economy of means and freedom of maneuver for State forces and increasing them for terrorists, extremists and criminals, as has been experienced with Boko Haram by all LCB countries.

More importantly, IEDs have proven to be a tactical weapons system with strategic relevance and impact. Their use costs millions in resources, imparts a sense of hopelessness and fear within the defence and security apparatus and population. Ultimately, these strategic factors have a tendency to shift the initiative from the bigger and stronger State forces to weaker armed groups whose successes make them more motivated and patient. Compelled to react to the tactics, tempo and terrain chosen by asymmetric adversaries, States quickly realise that they have lost and are running behind to resume the strategic advantage in

asymmetry, and may lose altogether if they do not adjust, if they do not think otherwise (Desportes, 2009).

Such extreme prospects may seem remote in the LCB. However, it remains imperative and increasingly pressing, in view of the destabilisation of Cameroon which was for a long time the bulwark, that a coordinated response to these threats, which States and peoples will be grappling with for the foreseeable future, be put in place. It would ideally happen within the coordinates of pan-African peace and security frameworks.

### **3. Collective security frameworks: perspectives for strategy and policy adaptation**

Within the African Peace and Security Architecture, the major tool put in place to address conflicts and – more indirectly – the other violent threats to peace and security is the African Standby Force (ASF). This is basically a peacekeeping standby force. Yet, peacekeeping is not adapted to the fight against terrorism, as confirmed by the most conclusive evaluations, analytical literature and authoritative sources of Peacekeeping doctrine, including the 2000 Brahimi Report, the 2008 Capstone Report, the 2015 Independent High Level Panel Report, or the 2017 Cruz Report. Confronted with this challenge, the African Union chose the concept of Peace Support Operations (PSOs) that roughly corresponds to fourth generation peacekeeping, which includes a strong dimension of force employment and *peacebuilding* (Kenkel, 2013). In order to address the needs of the LCB in the fight against Boko Haram, the AU adapted this concept and authorised a peacekeeping fighting force: the Multinational Joint task Force (MNJTF).

This force is an unusual, even singular strategic-legal complex. Its four sectors are essentially Forces operating on their own territory, but with an international mandate. Moreover, its Concept of Operation (ConOps) specifies that the MNJTF acts in coordination with the Defence and Security Forces of the Member States of the LCB Commission and Benin in order to interdict terrorist groups in its Operation Area. This effectively allows Forces under national

jurisdiction and command to project themselves into the territory of the neighboring country for more or less punctual operations.

Cameroon applies this disposition with its Rapid Intervention Battalion' operation "Alpha" based in Maroua and placed under the direct authority of the Presidency of the Republic, and operation "Emergence 4" of the Fourth Joint Military Region which receives its orders from the Joint Army Chief of Staff. Alpha and Emergence simply inform the MNJTF if their penetration distance remains within the limit of 25 km. It is when they intend to go beyond that they must obtain authorisation from the MNJTF. From the point of view of full interoperability throughout the theater, everything happens as if the MNJTF and its area of operations extend beyond their spaces and troops, sometimes encompassing, sometimes encompassed by the National Forces. This is also suggested by operations such as Nigeria's "Final Push", which summarises the spirit of all sectors, while the Force's central command is seeking and preparing the means, including amphibians, in order to dislodge Boko Haram from the islands of Lake Chad which, with the forest of Sambisa, are part of its last major rear bases.

From the strict point of view of the action-results rapport, the MNJTF has been successful in applying the four Ds of the intervention phase: *Disrupt, Degrade, Destroy, Deter*. Of course, it is time to ensure the Force's success in stabilisation by finding a way to prevail on this type of conflict that epitomizes the likely conflicts of most predictable threats of the future in the LCB.

The MNJTF raises the most current issues of strategic thinking in Africa and in the world. In particular, there is that of innovation about the basics of action in the most recurrent and most likely conflicts within our transnational societies and population: the issues of doctrine; of Models, Forms and Formats of Forces; issues of training, military practice, refresher courses; and in deployment, numerical and logistical adequacy, coordination, complementarity, coherence and cohesion.

In the Pan-African construction of collective Defence and Security,

the biggest challenge is innovation in the projection of the Forces in two directions. The first is the spatio-dynamic direction mobilised by the Bush-Obama doctrine, which prescribes reducing the primacy of the arsenalized force and large campaigns to deploy, pre-emptively if necessary, the Forces in highly mobile special units often applying the principles of non-identification and endowed with all the firepower and all the logistic support available in mobility on the theaters where the adversities are preparing to unleash the threats, so as to neutralise them beforehand. The second direction could be qualified as perspective-systemic, referring to the anticipatory programming of the Forces. This implies the raising Forces as well as maintaining manpower and equipment necessary for the commands in strict relation with the most probable conflicts, and first of all for in the most sensitive areas and points.

In order to further put pan-African frameworks at work for the LCB, the following, strategy and policy measures could be considered, among others:

- 1 Increase the powers and capacities of the African Union in recognising and addressing states of fragility, including the provision of help and guidance to member States, individual RECs and RECs combination in the variable geometry required by the spatial span of threats.
- 2 To reduce political sensitivity, such an initiative may start with more technical issues such as harmonising and coordinating all stabilisation strategies, including those sponsored by bilateral and multilateral partners, from their very moment of incipient conception and implementation.
- 3 Formulate an endogenous pan-African strategy to handle climatic and environmental threats and opportunities beyond the reduction-adaptation framework, include already existing frameworks of RECs and inter-subregion such as the Lake Chad Integrated Basin Management Vision 2025, and harmonise implementation in RECs/RMs and AU member States.

- 4 Bolster the AU's peace and security mechanisms by further specifying the division of labor and responsibility among member states, RECs/RMs which remain unclear in the AU's Constitutive Act and guiding documents. In particular, although the principle of subsidiarity which gives RECs/RMs the lead on peace and security matters in their respective regions is key and was endorsed in November 2018, the principle of non-indifference which replaces old and inadequate OAU principle of non-meddling must be enforced. In conformity with the Peace and Security Council's powers under article seven of the 2002 Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the PSC of the AU, to enable the AU to step in when RECs reach an impasse on serious crises without having to wait to be invited to do so.<sup>3</sup>
- 5 Strengthen the framework for the coordination and harmonisation of analysis between the PSC and its regional counterparts, reduce distrust between the RECs and the AUC and promote collective action and decision-making at political and technical levels as needed for effectiveness.
- 6 Without prejudice of international support, decide on the

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<sup>3</sup> Article 7 of the Protocol provides for the following PSC's key powers:

Anticipate and prevent disputes and conflicts, as well as policies, which may lead to genocide and crimes against humanity;

Undertake peace-making, peace-building and peace-support missions;

Recommend intervention in a Member State in respect of grave circumstances, namely war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity;

Institute sanctions ;

Implement the AU's common defense policy;

Ensure implementation of key conventions and instruments to combat international terrorism;

Promote coordination between regional mechanisms and the AU regarding peace, security and stability in Africa;

Follow-up promotion of democratic practices, good governance, the rule of law, protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for the sanctity of human life and international humanitarian law;

Promote and encourage the implementation of conventions and treaties on arms control and disarmament;

Examine and take action in situations where the national independence and sovereignty of a Member State is threatened by acts of aggression, including by mercenaries.

necessity to adapt and transform the mandate and the ConOps of ad hoc coalitions such as the MNJTF and G5 Sahel in order to turn them into advanced integration force with exemplary role in the integration of African Forces within the frameworks of the ASF and the prospects of Africa Federal Armed Forces.

- 7 Add a Countering transnational organised crime (CTOC) component to the current MNJTF, and develop an African CTOC strategy, or at least national pilot strategies.
- 8 Design a pan-African strategy for countering Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) and Develop a harmonised training curriculum for countering-IED in Africa.
- 9 In order to guarantee effective interoperability capacity of all the African Forces at the national, sub-regional and continental levels, and whatever the combinations, harmonise at these diverse levels the aforementioned bases of action: Models, Forms and Formats of Forces; training and upgrading; adequacy in forces sizes and logistics; coordination, complementary, coherence and cohesion; continuous simulations.
- 10 To do so, transform the African Peace *Support Trainers Association* (APSTA) into an AU agency, or into an International Pan African intergovernmental Organisation under the authority of the AU PSC, and systematise its role as a strategic adviser to the African Union Commission and AAPS regional mechanisms for coordinating, harmonising and standardising ASF preparedness.
- 11 In line with the ASF Roadmap that prescribes the establishment of logistical depots in addition to the Continental Logistics Base(CLB) to enforce the Posture for the Rapid Deployment in Fourteen Days, temporarily Build on “tense flow logistics” solutions to set up a culture of maintaining depots and reserves for initial operational capabilities in the event of deployment (Udoaka, 2017). On this basis, overcome and resolve one of the major weaknesses of African Forces (logistics) by establishing the

CLB as a logistical Reference Training Centre for the elaboration of concepts for support at all levels, as well as the maintenance of equipment depots.

- 12 Ensure the harmonization of all pan-African defence and collective security instruments and make the provisions of the Non-Aggression and Common Defence Pact of the African Union binding through the signing of bilateral defence agreements between each African country and each of its neighbors, as well as other mechanisms to prevent the destabilisation of one African country by another.
- 13 In order to effectively and definitively eliminate the acts which the said Pact aims to interdict, work to reach a comprehensive agreement whereby any attack on any African country, whether from within or from without, is an attack on all African countries, prompting continental response or retaliation.



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# Lessons and prospects for a lasting stabilisation of the Lake Chad Basin

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## Introduction

After five years (2014-2019) of multiple deployment of the State, international partners, communities and civil society against the differential threat posed by Boko Haram, some strategic trends are beginning to emerge, while the mechanisms and effects of interventions in favour of the victims have already produced results, and in some cases called for adjustments. This paper first outlines some of the lessons learned with respect to measures of risk projection and rapid response to threats. Then it addresses the issue of lasting stabilisation of the sub-region, particularly the Cameroonian side affected by the conflicts. This second part includes two areas: the creation of suitable conditions for the economic recovery; managing people associated with armed groups, many of which are back from areas under Boko Haram influence. Instead of a text built around an academic issue, this text mainly wants a synthetic note of stakes and challenges arising from the crisis. It is based on a personal reading of the strategic environment and regional security risks as I observe for the last two decades.

## The risk approach and perception of the threat

The State of Nigeria just as its neighbours affected by the expansion of Boko Haram have seen the speech and claims the organisation of Muhammad Yusuf, from the perspective of “déjà vu”. The similarities with the Maitatsine movement that shook the major cities of northern Nigeria in the late 1970s<sup>1</sup> seem to have led to the adoption of the same repressive approach by the Nigerian army, namely decapitation, by attacking its leaders. All States were clearly surprised by the turn that the subsequent violence and insurgent resilience will take. This calls for some observations to be used to change the understanding of the threats that are growing in strategic basins surrounding Cameroon.

### A.1 The persistence of a ‘national’ perception of threats

- An indicator of the immaturity of the strategic foresight in the sub-region, despite the recurrence of conflicts: the risks in the Lake Chad Basin (LCB) are cyclical, convertible, repeatable and transferable. The recurrence of crises and environmental regeneration of disputes in times of competitions and political hyphenation underlying the frequency of instability and export through the mobility of researchers of socioeconomic opportunities, especially in border areas where the faults of governance have left the alternatives to the State to hatch and thrive. Next, weapons, fighters, smugglers and other illegal vectors feed various types of violence, regardless of their function (criminal, political, religious ...), mainly focused on the business. Factors and permanent inputs regularly transform conflicts that take the shape of the moment, with the actors of the

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<sup>1</sup> See Guy Nicolas, “Holy War in Kano,” *African Politics*, No. 4, 1981.

moment and the challenges of the moment. Because we manage more than we resolve conflicts, these constitute pending risks and may evolve into overt threats a decade or two later, provided it is reactivated by opportunistic entrepreneurs. Border threats are systemic; they are transmissible by the movement of actors, the overlapping transnational networks and the interaction between the types of insecurities that live there. Therefore, the denial policy of local sources (national) of a phenomenon of violence, should not obscure the risk analysis which, to be clear, must result from a monitoring system rather than an investigative post. Prospective seems to have lacked insight facing Boko Haram.<sup>2</sup> There are no indications that explores the paths of mutations of this threat that connects more to security issues in the Sahel as a whole.

- An indicator of bureaucratisation and contextualisation of aerologic thinking centred around negative peace (absence of conflicts, decreased aggression, inventory of the existing, etc.), few eloquent on positive peace (projection, planning, programming, favourable conditions for the maintenance of stability, social cohesion, conflict prevention, risk analysis), as well as in universities where thinking about the future remains superficial. The need for national social and strategic research programs against resolutely operational and motivated think tanks is imperative. Niger (recent creation of a national centre for strategic and security studies) and Nigeria (existence of the Nigerian Institute for Political and Strategic Studies for decades), structure forward thinking in the sense of decision support. Despite the range of work produced each year by the universities

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<sup>2</sup> Despite the rise of Jamatul Ahlis Sunnah Lidawati wal Jihad, aka Boko Haram through the sermons of its leader Muhammad Yusuf, no special provision has been made in Borno State to counter the rise of religious extremism. Politicians have, however, associated with the aura of Yusuf for electoral reasons.

and specialised Cameroonian schools, the coherence with State action remains a challenge in the absence of a dedicated mechanism for synthesising the results and consequent conception of proactive answers. The creation of a prospective centre at the Ministry of External relations is a step that remains to be implemented with ambition. Chad remains soft belly of this dynamic, while decades of various wars and a strong military figure on the continent, particularly in the face of the terrorist threat in the Sahel, instigates the country to develop a framework for the evaluation and projection of internal, regional or even international threats to which it is vulnerable. The regionalisation of conflicts at least through their effects and the accumulation of interregional risks incites the complementation of national systems of analysis by an interstate framework of reflection, which the LCBC could be the receptacle.

- An indicator of shortcomings in operational reporting mechanisms and synergy between States and between services. Various consecutive studies of the spread of weapons, cross-border mobility of elements affiliated with armed groups, gemstone trafficking, money laundering, terrorist financing and many other scourges of the corpus of Central Africa's instability<sup>3</sup>, revealed the effects of porous borders and weak sub regional cooperation on security facilitation of organised crime. Despite the existence of partnerships in the framework of police cooperation, COPAX, Interpol or mixed security commission reactivated in the context of the upsurge in cross-border crime, the exchange of information remains inadequately standardised and automated between national

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<sup>3</sup> See, for instance, Final Report of the Group of Experts on the Central African Republic established by resolution 2127 (2013) of the Security Council, October 2014.

services as well as between States. Although the Member States of the LCBC have set up the joint patrols in the early 1980s, their operation was not optimised because of a limited mandate and operational difficulties due to Lake Border conflicts. LCBC has been able to acquire a strategic measure from 2014 with the establishment of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) and the pooling of efforts between the four operational areas of the Force. The need for local management of common problems of the border areas has led countries affected by Boko Haram to establish the Forum of Governors of States and border regions.

## **A.2 The endogenous financing of violence and the reproducibility of criminality**

The current crisis confirms the resilience of armed groups and criminal gangs especially if they can secure their financing. Crime is a sustainable production in an open area, favourable to the emergence of new forms of illegalities and physical movement of funds and means of production (goods, livestock, fish, etc.).

- Loopholes in national mechanisms for the regulation and control of financial flows and economic production are frequently revealed by customs seizures, the invention of new forms of money laundering, the persistence of former bank hoarding, the involvement of terrorist networks in regional trade ... the sanctuary of border territories promotes the production of foodstuffs for survival through the exploitation of forced labour, as well as tolls and tithes. In this respect, the thickening of the so-called branch called Islamic State in West Africa (ISWA) in the Lake Chad<sup>4</sup> leans

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<sup>4</sup> The ISWA is now a separate organisation from Boko Haram both in leadership and in its links with other extremist groups. One should therefore consider that in the LCB, two terrorist groups operate, one at the Lake, the other between Sambisa and the Mandara Mountains.

on the delicacy of the lake environment as well as on economic productivity of a suitable space to provide insurgents with survival resources. This is not the case of the Sambisa forest dependent on external supplies and whose residents are likely to be hungry as is also the case for the deployment of successful operations of the MNJTF.

- Endogenous financing capabilities of the armed struggle through the criminalisation of capital mobilisation channels are now certified, arising both from poor control of cross-border trade as extortion, hostage taking, looting of financial institutions ...
- The indigenisation<sup>5</sup> of terrorism is revealed, reflecting the existence in the Chadian Basin and more fully in the Sahel, of people and groups associated with extremism and radical ideologies. Between Community radicalisation<sup>6</sup>, which increasingly exploits ideological struggles in the Sahel, and securing of local armed groups to religious extremism, we observe that the risks are growing from the soil. The recruitment of national elements or from the communities of the operating areas of extremist groups, favours their immersion and whose resilience capacity of insurgencies. Moreover, the renewed terrorist activities in the LCB (attacks, bombings, mine laying), provides information on the probable formation of local cells.

### **A.3 States besieged from within and experiencing the emanations of neighbourhood**

- The ambivalence of the perception of the State by border

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<sup>5</sup> It is the immersion of terrorism through the involvement of local actors capable of dissolving in the demographic environment. This facilitates the concealment, recruitment, financing and commission of terrorist acts.

<sup>6</sup> The tendency of the formation of so-called self-defence militias by victims of violence or communities develops a sense of exclusion. The most illustrative cases are Fulani and Dogon in Mali militias.

people who expect their needs for basic social services to be satisfied, even though daily, they mark their commitment to greater flexibility in cross-border transactions. Centripetal hopes and centrifugal attitudes characterise the quartering of border populations between national citizenship and State need on one hand, and on the other hand regional pragmatism dependence vis-à-vis trade with neighbours).

- A centrifugal eccentricity, which generates a parallel regionalisation risky to the integrity of States: the Lake Chad Basin tends to be like a 'virtual State' at the confines of real States.
- Abyss needs due to sustained accumulation of social demand bringing international responses to the basic level (health, education, water, sanitation ...), economic development later. Poverty, low education, unemployment, health problems, environmental distress ... were built for many decades in the LCB; therefore, superficial actions taken appear at the extent of accumulated needs.
- The primacy of the strategic autarky to respond collectively to the regionalisation of problems: in as much as national responses prove their effectiveness in the fight against terrorism, in this case the measures to prevent incursions and attacks, it is to sub-regional partnerships that most States faced with the new threats that are in effect transnational and multisectoral turn. However, the question of the sustainability of these measures whose funding is based primarily on the resources of States committed on several strategic and socio-economic fronts.
- The boomerang effect of aggregation and maturation of regional chrysogenous combinatorial: accumulated factors of conflicts, accumulation of risk categories, criminality



succession, reproduction and emergence of tension hubs at trans-border emanations, newly induced local antagonisms by new conflicts ...

#### **A.4 Statistics for what Action (s)?**

- The figure as a relevant determinant in the formulation of interventions in crisis areas does not lead to a proportional response to the basic indicators: the debate on the 'sprinkling' of part of the gap responses between the numbers of the needy and the number of people targeted by projects. Added to this is the fact that the concentration on quantitative indicators do not reveal the cognitive effects of interventions, so that all actions must contribute to raising mental barriers against extremism among vulnerable people.
- The comparative indicators of lethal violence of a week / month to another as state of conflict situation, are an assessment tool, but not for predicting mutations of operational modalities of armed groups. Governments and donors are especially reactive while criminals are proactive, changing procedure based on the effectiveness of measures against insurgency.
- An impression of 'overbilling young jeopardy': feelings of inadequacy answers with nature and extent of the expectations of young people, the latter shouted to the opportunistic stigma and a generalisation which rather breaths more radicalisation. It emerges the need to promote success stories to encourage emulation, involvement, participation of youth groups.
- Likelihood of confusion between declining humanitarian indicators and standards: what post-war approach as the conflict is ongoing? Thousands of internally displaced people still live in makeshift camps, especially in the

Logone and Chari and Mayo-Sava. Thousands of others have returned to their villages, at least what is left. However, despite the trench which significantly reduced the capacity of incursion of Boko Haram, the border villages are subject to risks of attacks. Deadly attacks such as Tchakamari (on Mora-Waza highway) in April 2019 or the placement of explosive devices on remote highways like between Kolofata and Gancé, suggest that the conflict is more internalised. For pending risks related to the presence of fighters and fold areas (especially in the Mandara Mountains), there is the increased activity of the folded branch to the Lake Chad, known as the Islamic State in Africa West (ISWA). This indicates a shift in terrorist intensity zone, without the central front (opened to the Sambisa and vicinity) and the southern front (Mandara Mountains) are effectively extinct. Several concurrent concerns characterise a crisis that challenges interpenetrating trends: continuing humanitarian needs; resettlement of returnees and servicing villages; fight against attacks and risk monitoring of attacks; Treatment of factors of conflict and radicalisation; implementation of the DDR ...

- A necessary consolidation of socio-economic data at the local, State and regional level for utility sector syntheses. The resumption of trade on a few strategic areas (Amchide, Bourha, Fotokol) under the protection of the MNJTF is an indicator of the beginning of normalisation in border areas heavily dependent on trade to occupy young people, they generate income, reduce their vulnerability to recruitment, boost the markets. But what follow up is done to evaluate the day to day effects of stabilisation? At the same time, how are similar initiatives operationalised in other border areas affected by the crisis? The same is true of the pastoral

economy heavily dependent on livestock mobility within the country and border transhumance. Between vector agro pastoral conflicts, terrorist financing source and socioeconomic balance factor, livestock is a plural challenge that the crisis caused by Boko Haram gave an interregional safe tone. As with the LCBC has had to readjust its priorities to be more open to strategic issues of the basin, it is the place for the Economic Community of Livestock, Meat and Fish Resources (CEBEVIRHA) to appropriate posed ecocides, transhumance and the transmigration of nomadic agro-pastoral conflicts, cattle rustling, the taking of hostages among the farmers, the local regional security. Just note that the resilience of the ISWA in the Lake depends in part on control of fishing areas (access to a source of income and food, allegiance of fishermen). The search for data should also apply to the new conflicts generated by the crisis and enrol in a rehabilitation program that can sometimes involve shares of intra-community reconciliation.

## **Perpetuate the border areas securing device**

### **B.1 Need for a thorough reflection on the strategic multilateralism**

- The urgency of a thorough reflection on the strategic multilateralism in the Lake Chad Basin: the establishment of the MNJTF has been reactive in the sense that it is the context that imposed the regionalisation of the response. However, the question of the sustainability of this system and its adaptation to the military criminal threats in an area exposed to the renewal of attacks. There is also the issue of inter-regionalisation, two member countries, in this case the

Niger and Chad, belonging to the MNJTF as well as the strength of the G5 Sahel, without there being an operational bridge between the two forces. Added to this is the stretch of each country on a number of strategic basins - apart from the LCB - in which its defence and security forces are engaged.

- A necessary formalisation of the strategic tasks of the LCBC: since 1983, clashes between Chadian and Nigerian soldiers to Lake Chad leading to the demarcation of borders and the establishment of joint patrols, the LCB has continued to go from a phenomenon of insecurity to another. The introduction of the MNJTF should be an opportunity to expand the LCBC's remit in making peace and security missions more visible in the organisation and the strategic plan of the organisation. This, however, is in tune with the times, as most inter-African organisations have adapted their agenda to the security challenges that undermine the implementation of their usual economic or environmental projects.
- The specialisation of forces and strengthening their capacity of being deployed against creative, adaptive, migrant and fixed term threats. Which could lead to consider measures other than the stationing of forces, at least more flexible additional mechanisms. Wars of territorial or political conquest gradually succeed occasional fixed term wars, brought more to the economic and identity functions of second generation. The second generation of identity war proceed thickening community pressure groups, through community networks, intellectual, economic and infiltration of dominant segments of the State, will be able to build irredentist dissent, postures influence within the State, partial sovereignty over resources ... These attitudes are certainly already observable here and there in Central and

West Africa. The complexity of border violence makes the perpetration of political interests, ideological, financial and sometimes local and international business now possible. Identities will be more positioned compared to what they can offer players more opportunistic.

- Coordination of border services and the establishment of early warning systems as a forecasting mechanism and rapid response to the emergence of new risks. The integrated border management is now an imperative for public services responsible for regulating all forms of cross-border mobility, as well as manage the daily life of the communities who live there. The ability of armed groups to use the networks of legitimate trade and trafficking, identity, intellectual and religious fraternisation and all other support channels to income generating illegalities, shows that the flaws in the coordination and the mutualisation of intelligence are the game of criminal entrepreneurs and politico-military groups surrounding border areas. These faults facilitate border poaching, trafficking of arms, ammunition, and precious stones, supplies of food, fuel and essential spare parts to the survival and activities of armed groups. Hence, the interest, alongside the coordination of information, local early warning systems that can keep watch and promote rapid reaction. If the vigilance committees play that role against Boko Haram, it will be convenient for communities to gradually be in ownership and perpetuate through local mechanisms of citizen participation.

## **B.2 Breaking the cycle of criminality and conflict**

- The recurrence of such predatory violence as a prevention factor of socio-economic development and individual mobility: the efforts of border traders are frequently broken by the succession of violence that inhibit trade. Because of

highway robbers, kidnappers, Boko Haram, the Central African crisis, border closures, etc., we recorded an infinite number of bankruptcies among traders, transporters, farmers ... The stop period of cross-border trade impacts the market supplies, retail activities and all workers in the affected areas. It is therefore necessary to continuously sensitise communities on the impact of violence so that they are more involved in prevention activities. Administrative and traditional authorities and the national associations affiliated to local development programs and citizen supervision should be taken care of.

- The victimisation of the welfare and relocation of traders faced with extortion, threats, kidnapping ...: targeting economic and other relatively wealthy individual operators in peripheral areas, have led most of them to change their place of residence and to relocate their assets. This is the Mayo-Sava traders resettled in Maroua or those targeted by kidnappers in Adamawa. The impact on the viability of rural areas is evident, with implications on the spatial distribution of development.
- In addition to the fight against poverty, which specialised administrative institutional measure can be implemented in border areas? It is clear that the increase in border frailties calls a specific administrative coordination mechanism both in terms of profile command staff to deploy it, in human and material resources. Beyond initial training, the ability to identify strategic and geopolitical stakes of an unstable neighbourhood and transversal understanding of local identity and socio-political stakes are prerequisites to consider or construct among administrators who combine tact, reactivity and prospective. Thus will we also establish a body of elders whose experience in crisis management

can help to equip generations of incoming directors called to serve in environments increasingly demanding to discern conflicting articulation issues that can sometimes exceed the threshold of their command unit. In this regard, the Departments affected by the crisis caused by Boko Haram should be better equipped with analysts, all-terrain vehicles, boats, community networks, communication systems, information resources of contextual analysis, etc. to better establish the coordination mechanism or proactivity of the State in areas of prevention must be central as a strategy of consolidation of peace and anticipation of risks.

- The need to permanently resolve land disputes and those related to the exploitation of resources (agro, silvopastoral, etc.) to break the cycle of conflict and vulnerability to crime: the link between crime and conflict is evident in this case when the accumulation and renewal of poorly resolved conflicts legitimise dissenting attitudes due to feelings of permanent victimisation. These are perceptions that may be unfounded, but in areas of interpenetration of agriculture, livestock and fishing, the practice of each of these activities is embedded in a position of belonging and legitimisation of property rights or access confronting customs, regulations, games of influence ... To competitions around the useful area, there is the struggle for social and political land, the boundaries of traditional chiefdoms marked on the floor being constantly challenged by anthropological claims which want to correlate traditional command grip on the ground and ethnic belonging. Recurrent around the lake for decades, land issue stretches elsewhere, notably in the South of Chad with the conquest of areas grazed by pastoralists from the East, or in Adamawa with the reflux of Mbororo nomads hunted by Central African crises since the early 2000s. Young people or families who believed in the

opportunities for access to property and land in areas under the influence of the terrorist organisation consider land exclusion as a source of frustration and search for alternatives to armed groups. The latter, as noted above, using the fishery resources and access to the potentialities of Lake surroundings as a means of blackmail and extortion of local residents.

- Breaking the profitability of organised crime to reduce its attractiveness, loot and its currency convertibility being at the heart of the proliferation of armed groups: since the late 1980s, criminal gangs have multiplied to the point of getting States to establish specialised units (GPIG and BIR in Cameroon, Operation Flush in Nigeria; RAID in Chad; OCRB in the CAR ...) in an all-repressive logic. Targeted operations of these units have shown, in each of these countries, some spontaneous social mobility was made through crime: trafficking in stolen vehicles; ambushes; robberies at home; cattle raids, etc. Various studies and reports have reported the criminalisation of accumulation modes both in town and in the border areas. The private security market has drawn great benefits. Banditry has even been militarised through the professionalism of trans migrant criminal gangs and complicity among some elements of DSF whose complicity was established. In Cameroon, before GPIG and BIR, special operations were conducted into certain cities and regions particularly affected, namely the Logone and Chari where organised crime has surpassed the policing requirements to make hiring national defence challenges facing seasoned groups from neighbouring countries and equipped with sophisticated weapons. The phenomenon of highway robbers weaned the road users and ranchers sums of money,



ruining many traders.<sup>7</sup> In turn, hostage taking has mobilised billions of FCFA as ransoms.<sup>8</sup> Through several fundraising mechanisms, Boko Haram is able to finance itself.<sup>9</sup> The fight against the laundering of proceeds of crime and against the financing of terrorism must be organised cooperatively between States and between departments, and within a similar organisation dedicated to the International Coordinating Committee of the fight against maritime piracy. The low banking penetration and the physical movement of funds, the non-systematisation of reports of suspicious transactions by banks and other subjected professions, low control of non-profit organisations<sup>10</sup> The informal operation of most cross-border traders, the extent of private financial flows to charity works, the diversity of contraband and smuggling, infiltration of the legal economy by criminal actors to fund armed groups through silver blackening mechanisms constitute a non-exhaustive list of factors that promote productivity and therefore the durability of the crime. National systems (NAFI, financial, customs, banking supervision ...) are no longer sufficient to track multiple segments of financial crime in a porous sub-region in many ways.

### **B.3 From the occupation of the area and the profitability of local potential**

- A reflection on the (re) settlement of border areas for housing and economic exploitation supplant rangelands and sanctuary armed groups for three decades, these are the same areas that are at the heart of conflict and criminality.

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<sup>7</sup> See Saïbou Issa, cutters road. History of highway robbery in the Lake Chad Basin, Paris, Karthala, 2010.

<sup>8</sup> The Mbororo community in Cameroon reported in a concertation of forces of the Adamawa Region in Cameroon in January 2019.

<sup>9</sup> GABAC, the financing of terrorism in Central Africa, in 2016.

<sup>10</sup> GABAC, Vulnerability of non-profit organisations to finance terrorism in Central Africa, in 2015.

The Darak area lake with fish, fertile and rich pasture, densely invested by West African migrants, especially Nigerians, until that following its occupation by Nigerian troops in 1987, Cameroon is looking for a solution within the LCBC before bringing the matter to the International Court of Justice. The same area is now threatened by the ISWA; after the attack Bargaram in July 2014 that killed a dozen Cameroonian soldiers, it is in Darak in June 2019, that the Army suffered its greatest losses with 17 soldiers and 8 civilians killed. In the Mayo-Sava, the Waza-Dabanga highway on the National # 1 leading to Kousseri was the epicenter of ambushes by highway robbers; the risk of attacks are ongoing between Mora and Dabanga despite the patrols of Operation Alpha and the MNJTF. Hence, the sometimes very close Nigerian border, the villages were emptied of their population, agriculture and trade are resumed timidly, hundreds of people seem to have joined the ranks of the insurgents. These are also the same rangelands of criminals (areas Belel, Nyambaka, Ngahoui) and agro pastoral conflicts (banks of the Logone) that record the episodes of violence. These areas share the under-population and vacancy vast tracts of land suitable for concealment and withdrawal of the attackers after the attacks. This is the place to be to create public and private agricultural exploitation, including corn agro poles, rice, sugarcane, citrus and many other commodities whose productivity is proven. This is also the place to better assert the control and exploitation of the fisheries resources of the Lake, develop fish farming by nationals, and make trade towards the Nigerian market, which greatly demands for food profitable.

- Complementary distribution of utilities along the border with Nigeria in synergy: the cross border nature of factors

and actors of the crime must be answered by the cross border prevention mechanisms. Many communities facing each other on both sides of the border, intertwined in markets, places of worship, social ceremonies. The stabilisation of integrated border areas could also be strengthened through the mutualisation of basic social services: a Cameroonian health centre, a Nigerian side school, a vocational training centre here, recreational areas there, etc. so that people have their own interests to maintain tranquillity in their area of interaction.

## **Operationalising sensitive DDR policy to the interests of victims and communities**

### **C.1. Continue the surrenders of ex-combatants and operationalise the NCDDR in the Far North Cameroon**

- Each of the four countries affected by Boko Haram recorded surrenders. The number varies from country to country, without this being an indicator of enlisted personnel. It does not seem to have estimates on the extent of recruitment in the LCB; leaving intact the perception of risk that recruits represent their country. After an initial period marked by frequent return, we note since the beginning of 2018, stagnation or escapes from the headquarters of Sector 1 of the MNJTF where they are retained. Various sources indicate, however, that there could be many roaming cross border areas, who wish to turn themselves in, but waiting to be reassured by the management of those who return. In addition to these discounted advances, it is likely that the involvement of communities, especially traditional leaders in the incentive to surrender mechanisms could help revive the process.

- Created on 30 November 2018, the National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration has regional centres in the Northwest (Bamenda) and Southwest (Buea) for ex-combatants from armed groups operating in these regions and in the far north of Cameroon (Mora) to those of Boko Haram. Seven months later, the outlines of the operation remain embryonic, while about a hundred ex-combatants await since October 2017 at the base of the MNJTF in Mora. The definition of a legal framework governing eligibility for DDR and conditions for its implementation, the host and rehabilitation centre for eligibles, staff and equipment, the platform for action by national and international actors concerned, etc. are prerequisites to meet as soon as possible.

## **C.2. Specify the management logic of other categories of former associates of Boko Haram**

- Although there are regional consultations between institutional actors involved in the management of people who have been under influence of Boko Haram and common guidelines contained in the Regional Strategy of stabilisation and economic recovery adopted in Abuja in 2018, as of now, DDR is done in variable geometry. Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria and Chad still do not have the same approach nor the same level of implementation of the DDR. Discussions and actions are focused on the ex-combatants, while other categories of people who are more numerous, and have returned, and according to UN standards and guidelines of the Regional Strategy, have to pass through a profiling mechanism to distinguish those who will go through a reconditioning stage before joining their families and those who will be directly admitted to return.
- There are dozens of women and children of former

combatants or insurgents still active in the villages, and only widows who returned alone or with their husbands. They were “relieved” by community leaders and are in their respective families. No monitoring system or reintegration mechanism or evaluation of the risks they represent only ensures their supervision. Others are unexpectedly returned and are discrete in the villages where they are tolerated

- The “alleged former hostages” of about 1500 in May 2019 that passed through a park to the Municipality of Mozogo before being transferred to the Zamai IDP camp near Mokolo. Men, women, children of all ages from several families are as abductees to their villages and subjected to forced labour on behalf of Boko Haram in Nigeria. Their number is growing day by day while decreasing resource support by humanitarian organisations. Will sorting process determine those who were actually involved in the operations of Boko Haram to let the victims return within the community? Will they be resettled elsewhere, at the risk of being ghettoized? Will transitional justice mechanisms be able to remove bitterness and rebuild the community fabric in the villages of Mayo Tsanaga most of whom return?

### **C.3. Considering the expectations of the communities in the reintegration strategy**

- When the time comes to take over the former partners through reintegration, rehabilitation or other support for their needs by the government and partners, it would be wise to conduct parallel socioeconomic measures for communities that welcome them and are affected by the crisis that some of their own nationals participated. Expectations concern in particular the rehabilitation or construction of basic social services and housing, the

revitalisation of farming activities on the areas invaded by bushes (development, extension, inputs, small equipment, new value chains ...) and construction warehouses, support for the resumption of income-generating activities (IGAs), rehabilitation of roads, electrification.

- Set a corridor for the management of vigilance committees in permanent security mechanisms of communities and reintegration. There are thousands of people who are associated with measures of prevention of attacks and explosions in the villages of the Logone and Chari, Mayo-Sava and Mayo Tsanaga. Some were killed in various circumstances, leaving women and children. As long as the threat persists, support in information and village surveillance is essential. Reflections on the axes reintegration led to suggest some may integrate municipal police and others receive support to strengthen IGA they were already practicing or create. But the issue of municipal police is disputed, especially by those who are sceptical about the ability of municipalities to ensure wage costs. Still, communities do not seem to design the subsequent reintegration of ex-combatants, especially young without the monitoring of the vigilance committees will be consolidated or that the protection of DSF is guaranteed for many years after potential returns this category of risk.
- Clarify the concept of victims: several seminars, studies and reports have stressed the need to build a sustainable peace strategy on DDR taking into account the rights of victims. But the concept is vague because they believe they can navigate: people being subjected to physical or material damage, communities whose villages were destroyed, IDPs, women and children embarked on the adventure by the heads of families who have decided to join the abducted persons, suspects imprisoned for several years before a

court decision releases them, etc. Clarification and contextualisation of the notion of victim may help prevent disputes with the government and within communities.

## Conclusion

This text attempted to draw some lessons of security crises, which Cameroon is facing today, and especially the fight against Boko Haram in the Far North of Cameroon. It was also to explore the socioeconomic and strategic perspectives, one interlocking in the other because of the influence of the economic factor in the production and vulnerability to violence. It follows from the foregoing that the vulnerability of strategic northern basin is built over time. The weak State presence and the weaknesses of traditional production systems have allowed informal networks and circuit exchanges based on men rather than the public institutions and services to flourish. A cross border solidarity in areas adjacent the Lake Chad has been built. All things that the armed groups operate in a regional stretch. The economy remains the cornerstone of crisis prevention in the Lake Chad Basin. Because it is the main source of violence, whether in the form of conflicts (including access to relevant areas) or they come in-border Crime extortion. Pooling development, defence and security together is essential to the stabilisation of the border areas and thus the Lake Chad Basin.

## Closing Remarks For Rasi Maroua

**NGOBO Annick ép TAYOU**  
Diplomate

Five main requirements tend to separate themselves from readings grids, which are both differential and additional, proposed to insecurity dynamics at work in the Lake Chad Basin.

They are:

- 1 The inclusion of the cross-border nature of security stakes in the Lake Chad Basin, given the extra limnique mobility of perpetrators of insecurity due to the porous borders and the interpenetration of national interests of surrounding States ;
- 2 The consolidation of a base of common reflection in a context that disqualifies fact exclusivist and individualistic postures due to the diffused and trans border nature of threats;
- 3 The extension of the territorial field of research by integrating West and East Africa as key variables for the referral of security stakes in the region;
- 4 The integration of wildlife crime in the research field due to the exploitation of natural resources by armed groups operating in the politico-military domain, in addition to terrorism which causes a quantitative and financial inflation of armed groups in defiant stance vis-à-vis the riparian States;
- 5 The development of a lexicon for the construction of a common discussion on paradigms, concepts and operating notions in the domain of research on terrorism and its avatars.

In addition, structuring an important source of intelligence devoted to research enabling a trilogical synergy between the levels of those who lead the action, daily life and the empirical, it goes through:

- Capitalisation of knowledge about security enabling to take stock



of terrorism, radicalisation and violent extremism in sub-Saharan Africa in general and in the Lake Chad Basin in particular;

- The filing of the above-documented scientific contributions and their formalisation in a document on the *continuum-Security-Humanitarian Development in the Lake Chad Basin* and made available to the public;
- The establishment of a specific network for monitoring research and especially the implementation of the resolutions taken during the Maroua meetings.

These are the tasks amongst others that EIFORCES, through its Research and Documentation Centre (RDC) and its national and international partners have committed to achieve. Anything that justifies, if need be, this first publication of the African Journal of International Security (RASI).-

**A**mong the research activities in the third project supported by the Government of Japan through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) at the International School for Security Forces (EIFORCES) with **"Support for EIFORCES for building African capacity for peace intervention and security"**, the research seminar in Maroua on 24 and 25 August 2018 on the theme **"The security issues in the Lake Chad Basin"** appeared as structuring for several reasons.

First was that in the immediate safe environment to map out priority areas to be covered in the studies to be conducted in EIFORCES in the coming years. Then, it was important to define and conceptualize for extensive further research, the most compelling security issues, particularly regarding the humanitarian-security-development continuum. Finally, it would allow, from the selection of the most relevant contribution of proposals in this exploratory reflection, to initiate the formation of a pool of highly skilled researchers, both in terms of knowledge of the stakes and field dynamics than mastering the advanced concepts, theories, methodological approaches and most relevant epistemological options for the consideration of phenomena constituting the decisive variables of security and insecurity, the current instability and stability to build in this space temporarily confined to countries bordering Lake Chad.

Also, the ongoing structuring of a specific research program and production of this collective work from the work of the said seminar that they attest that the meetings of Maroua organised by EIFORCES and UNDP via Japan have accomplished their mandate!



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