



**World Food
Programme**

GENDER & MARKETS:
VAM Case Study –Lake Chad Basin

WFP RBD VAM Gender & Markets Initiative

REPORT

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List of Acronyms

ACF	Action Contre La Faim
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
FEWS Net	Famine Early Warning System
FFA	Food For Assets
GAM	Global Acute Malnutrition
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GPI	Gender Parity Index
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IGA	income-generating activities
LCB	Lake Chad Basin
LCBC	Lake Chad Basin Commission
NGP	National Gender Policy
OPHI	Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative
P4P	Purchase for Progress
RBD	Regional Bureau of Dakar
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SWERP	Strengthening the Resilience of Rural Women and Girls in the Sahel Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
USAID	U.S Agency for International Development
VAM	Vulnerability Assessment & Mapping
WEAI	Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index
WFP	World Food Programme

Acknowledgements

The World Food Programme (WFP) Bureau for West Africa (RBD) Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) team would like to thank Stéphanie Brunelin, Paige Enfinger and Simon Renk for their research which accounts for the larger part of this report. This case study report is built on, and incorporates extracts from, the: i) *Lake Chad Basin Regional Market Assessment*, conducted by WFP and ACF, with other partners, and for which Brunelin and Renk developed the final report; and the *Lake Chad Basin Desk Review Socio-Economic analysis of the Lake Chad Basin Region, focusing on Regional Environmental Factors, Armed Conflict, Gender and Food Security Issues*, conducted by Enfinger. Thanks also to the early research conducted by Enfinger on developing survey tools to support gender analysis and women's empowerment, and the work done by the regional VAM team responsible for the final adaptation and implementation of the piloted data collection tools, in alphabetical order: William Olander (Information Management Specialist), Analee Pepper (Gender Specialist), Simon Renk (Market Advisor), and Matthieu Tockert (Market Analyst). Gratitude is also extended to Aïcha Ba, regional VAM Gender and Markets Consultant, without whom, the development of this case study report would not have been possible.

Finally, a special thanks goes to the teams and partners at country and regional levels who contributed, either directly or indirectly to the successful completion of the LCB Regional Market Assessment.

Executive summary

The purpose of this report is to outline the experience of piloting a set of developed survey questions meant to assess gender dynamics and women's empowerment in markets, in the Lake Chad basin Regional Market Assessment (WFP, ACF, et al. 2016). It should be used as a historical overview of lessons learned and good practices in developing tools to assess and monitor gender and empowerment in humanitarian crises.

Since 2012, the security situation in North Nigeria has dramatically worsened leading to massive displacement of population, not only within Nigeria but also in neighboring Cameroon, Chad and Niger. The ongoing conflict strongly affects food security in the northeast as people suffer from serious restrictions to their livelihood. Considering this situation, the WFP Regional Bureau for West Africa (RBD), in collaboration with ACF and other partners, launched a regional market assessment in the Lake Chad basin in 2016.

During the same time that the LCB regional market assessment was being prepared, the WFP RBD Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) team was conducting a gender and markets pilot study to strengthen the collection and analysis of gender-informed data on the roles of women and men in markets in the region, their challenges, and their empowerment. At the request of the Regional Director for West Africa, the responsible team supported the LCB Regional Market Assessment by contributing a set of survey questions to the market questionnaires to be implemented in order to assess gender dynamics and women's empowerment in markets. This set of questions was piloted for the first time in the LCB regional market assessment.

These questions built on the work of Paige Enfinger, who conducted her Master's thesis research with alongside the Gender and Markets pilot study. As part of her research, Enfinger designed a set of adapted questions, drawn from the IFPRI/OPHI/USAID Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI). The objective was to integrate aspects of empowerment around making decisions on strategic market choices into traditional WFP questionnaires looking at price fixation, salary management, and time spent on the job, etc.

Key results from data collected showed that men were often wholesalers and women retailers, and that women played a limited role in supply chains of cereals, but a larger role for perishable commodities like fruits and vegetables. Lack of own capital and insecurity were the main constraints for traders in general, but more so for female market traders. Among other challenges, the key issues which arose during the study were misunderstanding questions on empowerment by local populations, lack of sufficient qualitative analysis, and a singular approach to assessing empowerment by looking only at decision making.

Based on identified and experiences challenges and constraints to assessing gender dynamics and women's empowerment in markets in high insecurity humanitarian contexts, key recommendations include:

1. Accountability for assessment teams to analyse and report on gender-responsive data and information
2. Translate qualitative information into operational/programmatic recommendations
3. Introduce supplementary enumerator training module(s) on how to deliver questions
4. Integration of all dimensions of empowerment in markets

Introduction

In September 2015, the World Food Programme (WFP) Regional Bureau for West and Central Africa (RBD) Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) team launched a gender and markets study to strengthen the collection and analysis of gender-informed data on the roles of women and men in markets in the region, their challenges, and their empowerment. Following a desk review of current practices and available information in the region, the second phase of the study is made up of case studies to test and build on findings across a range of contexts and sub-regions. The primary objective of this phase is to develop a set of practical examples of common gender and market information needs and constraints, and tools to respond to these.

All case studies which make up the regional Gender and Markets Initiative are conducted according to a standard research protocol¹ and seek to respond to key research questions established by the RBD VAM Markets team. The research questions are as follows:

- What are the roles and responsibilities of women and men in food markets?
- What specific challenges do women face for economic inclusion in food markets?
- What are the current gaps in WFP gender lens market-based assessments and responses?
- What are the current gaps and challenges in gauging and tracking women's empowerment in markets?
- What are potential programmatic solutions to address the identified challenges and gaps?

Le présent rapport est axé sur le contexte du Bassin du Lac Tchad, comme le PAM RBD y a contribué à une évaluation régionale de marché. The report focuses specifically on the process of piloting a set of questions designed to assess women's empowerment in markets in the Lake Chad Basin (LCB) Regional Market Assessment, conducted by WFP and partners in 2016 to assess the impacts of the on-going emergency on markets in the region.

Considering the recent humanitarian crisis and the increased displacement in the region, the Vulnerability Assessment and Mapping unit of the WFP Regional Bureau for West Africa, in collaboration with ACF and other partners (including National Early Warning Systems and Markets Information Systems), launched a regional market assessment in the Lake Chad basin. The assessment was conducted in ten regions in Chad, Niger, Nigeria and Cameroon, in the surrounding zones around the LCB. The main objective was to address urgent information needs to support the national and regional humanitarian response, and strengthen market baselines across the four countries. This assessment relies on secondary data analysis and primary collection.²

This report covers general assessment findings, reviews to what extent the adapted data collection tools and analytical approach meet gender analysis standards, and provides recommendations for further improvements.

Objectives

The objective of developing this report is to outline the experience of piloting a set of developed survey questions meant to assess gender dynamics and women's empowerment in markets, in the Lake Chad basin Regional Market Assessment (WFP, ACF, et al. 2016). It should be used as a historical overview of lessons learned and good practices in developing tools to assess and monitor gender and empowerment in humanitarian crises.

¹ See Annex I for standard research protocol.

² *Lake Chad Basin Crisis Regional Market Assessment* (WFP RBD June 2016)

The report further supports comparison-making across contexts, where surveys conducted in the northern parts of Cameroon reflect a different picture of gender dynamics in markets than do survey results from Diffa in Niger, for example. Finally, the report concludes by offering identification of lasting gaps in the WFP VAM approach to gender analysis in market assessments beyond the application of adapted data collection tools, and recommendations for improvements.

Context³

Since 2012, the security situation in North Nigeria has dramatically worsened leading to massive displacement of population, not only within Nigeria but also in neighboring Cameroon, Chad and Niger. The ongoing conflict strongly affect food security in the northeast as people suffer from serious restrictions to their livelihood. Considering this situation, the WFP Regional Bureau for West Africa (RBD), in collaboration with ACF and other partners, launched a regional market assessment in the Lake Chad basin in 2016.

During the same time that the LCB regional market assessment was being prepared, the WFP RBD Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) team was conducting a gender and markets pilot study to strengthen the collection and analysis of gender-informed data on the roles of women and men in markets in the region, their challenges, and their empowerment. At the request of the Regional Director for West Africa, the responsible team supported the LCB Regional Market Assessment by contributing a set of survey questions to the market questionnaires to be implemented in order to assess gender dynamics and women's empowerment in markets. This set of questions was piloted for the first time in the LCB regional market assessment.

These questions built on the work of Paige Enfinger, who conducted her Master's thesis research with alongside the Gender and Markets pilot study. As part of her research, Enfinger designed a set of adapted questions, drawn from the IFPRI/OPHI/USAID Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI),⁴ the second phase of the pilot study was made up of case studies to test and build on findings across a range of contexts and sub-regions. The primary objective of this phase was to develop a set of practical examples of common gender and market information needs and constraints, and tools to respond to these.

During the course of the regional Gender and Markets Initiative, and to provide a venue to share findings and results with partners, the RBD VAM team engaged in the initiative organized the regional workshop 'Gender Analysis, Women's Empowerment and Humanitarian Action'. The overall objective of the workshop was to bring together diverse actors from the region engaged in gender analysis to discuss and share good practices, lessons learned and steps forward using the WFP West Africa Gender and Market Initiative as a starting point. This was the opportunity for all of the participants to seriously address gaps/risks and identifying response strategies to strengthen gender analysis for humanitarian action in West Africa. During the workshop, VAM Regional Market Analyst, Matthieu Tockert, presented on the Lake Chad Basin case study.

Methodology and Limits

The methodological approach adopted to support the piloting of questions intended to assess gender dynamics and women's empowerment in markets in a humanitarian crisis can be broken into 4 parts:

1) Background research and development of proposed adapted-WEAI questions to assess women's empowerment

³For a detailed overview of the general context in the LCB, the gender context and its relationship with armed conflict, displacement, food insecurity, and climate change, see Annexes II and III.

⁴See: Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) Resource Centre (IFPRI) <<https://www.ifpri.org/topic/weai-resource-center>>

As part of her Master's thesis research, Paige Enfinger, from Roma Tre University in Italy, joined the WFP RBD VAM team engaged in the Gender and Markets Initiative to carry out an investigation into the possibility of how WFP might better integrate gender and women's empowerment into VAM analytical frameworks. The key outputs of Enfinger's research were first, the identification of the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) as a promising model to build on, and second, the development of a set of questions adapted from the WEAI to fit the humanitarian and market contexts. Enfinger's research and set of proposed questions to assess gender dynamics and women's empowerment in markets initiated the conversation at management level of how WFP West Africa could strengthen gender analysis, and already begin integrating questions into on-going and planned assessments.

2) Adoption, adaptation, and integration of proposed questions in market questionnaires

Following the conversations initiated by Enfinger's work, the RBD VAM team committed to integrating these questions into the planned, and high-profile, regional market assessment to be conducted in the LBC with ACF and other partners. Using WEAI guidance, the VAM Gender Specialist further adapted the questions proposed by Enfinger to fit into market questionnaires for key informants, traders and transporters. The proposed changes were then presented to the Regional Markets Advisor, Regional Markets Analyst, and Regional Information Management Specialist, and over the course of multiple high-output meetings between the four, a final set of questions were decided on and integrated into the final data collection tools.

In addition to the proposed questions, the questionnaires were also improved to be more gender sensitive and to generate information which could be more thoroughly disaggregated by sex and age during the analysis phase.

To support colleagues and partners engaging in similar activities, a technical note was developed thereafter to provide an overview of the additions and adjustments made to the traditional market questionnaires. The Technical Note on use of gender- and empowerment-integrated market assessment surveys (March 2016) and the improved data questionnaires are available in English and French on the Gender section of the VAM Resource Centre.⁵

3) Analysis and reporting of data collected using adjusted questionnaires

Following the completion of the data collection phase of the regional market assessment in LCB, an expert consultant was recruited to conduct the analysis and reporting phases. The consultant was also instructed to also undergo a gender analysis using the information collected, and particularly to assess to what extent the revised data collection tools adequately supported a thorough gender analysis and assessment of women's empowerment in markets.

To support analysis of quantitative data from the regional market assessment in LCB, a desk review was conducted by Enfinger to provide a deeper qualitative and anthropological perspective using socio-economic analysis of the LCB region. The review covers regional environmental factors, armed conflicts, displacement, and food security issues, as well as gender. Most importantly for this report, the review provides a comprehensive background of the situation of markets in the LCB and allows for a better understanding of how the gender situation in the region influences the roles and responsibilities of women and men in market activities and the challenges those traders face according to their sex and age, among other distinguishing characteristics.

4) Evaluation of results

Upon receipt of the first draft of the regional market assessment report for the LCB, the regional VAM team began a cycle of providing technical gender analysis capacity support to the expert consultant, in order to

⁵[VAM Resource Centre: Gender Analysis in Markets; WFP. Technical Note on the use of gender- and empowerment-integrated market assessment surveys. WFP RBD VAM Gender + Markets. March 2016.](#)

strengthen the analysis on gender dynamics and women’s empowerment and to understand better the experiences and possible lessons learned in using the piloted questions. While the report sufficiently disaggregated data on trader preferences, practices and challenges, there are gaps in terms of qualitative analysis to explain identified patterns. There was also little analysis conducted on the results collected using the piloted questions, and no engagement with enumerators to assess their experiences using the questions.⁶

Finally, to gain a comprehensive understanding of the piloting process, adopted methodology, limitations and identified good practices and lessons learned over its course, the Regional VAM Gender Specialist was consulted and provided inputs. This was then reviewed and agreed on with the other contributing members at the regional levels, specifically, the Regional Market Advisor, Market Analysis, and Information Management Specialist. Enfinger was also consulted for her inputs, considering her influential role throughout the process.

Limitations

One of the major limits of the survey results collected is the overrepresentation of men in the survey sample. The share of women in both samples (traders and transporters) is low, with the exception of the sample in Cameroon, where women account for 48 percent of the traders, followed by Chad (23%), Nigeria (11%) and Niger (<1%). Women are almost entirely absent from the transportation sector, where fewer than two percent of the surveyed transporters are female. The authors of the assessment conceded that the small share of female traders in the sample does not necessarily reflect the true situation in the market as the survey is not representative at market level. Having a representative sample of traders at village or market level is very challenging in developing countries where relatively little information is available on the number and type of traders working on the market throughout the year. The sampling approach could be improved if the local authorities collecting market taxes had a record of the market actors present in the market each week.⁷

Table 1: Number of actors interviewed by country and region

	Region	Number of towns surveyed	Traders		Transporters	
			Total	Female share (%)	Total	Female share (%)
Cameroon	Extreme Nord	20	296	44	22	5
	Nord	4	62	65	4	0
Nigeria	Adamawa	9	153	21	20	5
	Borno	4	243	16	45	4
	Yobe	17	338	2	60	2
Niger	Diffa	22	157	1	130	0
Chad	Lac	8	107	29	8	0
	Hadjer-Lamis	7	98	20	6	0
	Bahr El Gazal	6	83	17	6	0
	Kanem	5	82	23	5	0
Total		104	1619	21	306	2

Source : Lake Chad Basin Crisis. Regional Market Assessment, June 2016

⁶This is likely due to the fact that the expert consultant was not involved in the data collection phase and was thus significantly challenged to assess the success or difficulties experienced during that period.

⁷Lake Chad Basin Crisis Regional Market Assessment (WFP RBD June 2016)

Another limitation is that this is the first piloting exercise of adapted WEAI questions in WFP data collection. This means that no guidance on enumerator training or analytical approach was available to support the assessment team. Furthermore, there was a technical gap in terms of the assessment team's capacity to conduct a thorough gender analysis and gender-responsive evaluation of the data collection process using the piloted questions. The regional VAM team, with support from the Regional VAM Gender Specialist, endeavored to fill such gaps by providing support during the analysis and reporting phases, to the extent possible.

Assessing Gender & Markets in the Lake Chad Basin Region

Nigeria is the first producer of cereals in the region followed by Niger, Cameroon and Chad, and is the world's leading producer of cassava. Nigeria's production of cereals reached 20.7 million in 2015 (USDA, 2016) with maize accounting for 34% of the cereal production followed by sorghum (30%) and millet (23%). According to the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Yobe, Borno and Adamawa made up 18 percent of the production of sorghum (millet) in 2013, 8 percent of the maize production and 5 percent of the rice production, with Borno being the largest producer out of the three regions. Although these three regions are not the grain basket of Nigeria, they represent an important share of the production of traditional grains. The assessment team did not manage to get access to the most recent production data at regional level, but Boko Haram insurgency is reportedly likely to reduce the production of sorghum and millet in these regions by forcing farmers to leave. Niger ranks second in the cereal production of the four countries, with a cereal production of 4.5 million tons in 2015 divided between millet (70%) and sorghum (30%) (Figure A2a to A2d). Maradi and Zinder are the main grain producing regions of Niger whereas Diffa face structural food deficit as the region accounts for only one percent of domestic grain production. Maize is an important traditional food crop in Cameroon, ranking first—before sorghum and rice—in terms of annual production. The production of cereal in Cameroon was about 3 million tons in 2015, with 58 percent being maize followed by sorghum (38%). Grain production in Chad in 2015 totalled an estimated 2.4 million tons, down 11 percent from 2014 (2,748,668 MT) and 9 percent from the past five years average (2,687,408 MT). Sorghum is the main food crop contributing to more than 45 percent of grain production followed by millet (33%) and maize (20%). Among the four Chadian regions considered in the survey, only two provide more than one percent of cereal production: Hadjer Lamis and Lac. They respectively contributed to 3 and 4.6 percent of domestic production of cereals in 2015. Hadjer Lamis is a producing region of millet and sorghum while Lac is the first region for maize, accounting for 30 percent of domestic production.⁸

In terms of food availability, Millet and sorghum are the staple diet in Niger and Chad and to a lesser extent in Nigeria and Cameroon. According to the latest available data (FAO, 2016), millet and sorghum are the main source of calories in Niger and Chad where these two crops account for respectively 54 and 34 percent of the total energy consumption. In Cameroon, sorghum is the third source of calories behind maize (13%) and cassava (11%). In Nigeria, rice, cassava, maize and sorghum account for a similar share in the Nigerian diet (about 10%). We expect some differences to be found by region but no disaggregated data were available. North Cameroon, North Nigeria, Chad, Niger share a very similar cultural calendar. The regions surrounding the LCB are located in four different countries but they share a very similar cultural calendar centered on the grain harvest that starts in October and lasts until December (Figure 2). Farmers sell a share of their production at harvest to meet their financial needs and the rest is stored on the farm until the next season. The wholesalers hold grain stocks for generally short periods, not more than six months. The public authorities also manage food stocks that are built up at the beginning of the year (January to March), and which are intended to be sold on the market in the following months.⁹

Figure 1: Calendar of a typical cereal marketing year in the Sahel

⁸ Extracted from: *Lake Chad Basin Crisis Regional Market Assessment* (WFP RBD June 2016).

⁹ *Lake Chad Basin Crisis Regional Market Assessment* (WFP RBD June 2016)

Harvest			Off-season harvest					National food security stock released		Harvest	
Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept
Large supplies of locally produced cereals on markets							Pastoral lean season		Agricultural lean season		
		Peaks levels of institutional demand							Markets in the Sahel supplied by large trader stocks		

Source: FewNet

1. Roles and responsibilities of women and men in agricultural value chains

To assess the different roles, capacities and vulnerabilities of female versus male traders and other market actors, the LCB regional market assessment integrated gender analysis throughout the process. Primary data shows that the place of women in agricultural trade varies between countries. Women account for almost half of the traders surveyed in Cameroon whereas they make up less than 20 percent of traders in the other countries. Overall, women are more likely to be retailers than wholesalers and are less likely to have employees.¹⁰

Many markets and trading structures reflect traditional authority systems, which are characterized by the prestige of men in their community. According to the Lake Chad Basin Commission, the main economic activities in the region are related to agriculture, fishing, livestock rearing and regional trade. The primary sector employs more than 80 percent of the working population. Connectedness of markets and trade flows represent a major economic challenge. Traditional trade routes are lifelines sustaining the LCB's expansive and arid environment. Demand typically exceeds supply and buyers represent a wide range of tribes. For example in Nigeria, the sale of smoked and dried fish, middlemen, or "belbela" engage with specific traders, on behalf of fishermen. Typically, local experts on fish prices, or "Fatoma," assist buyers by assessing belbelas for trustworthiness in trading.¹¹

Gender divisions in market activities reflect general gender disparities existing in the four countries of the Lake Chad Basin. According to assessment results, female participation in agricultural trade appears to be low and women are more often found to be retailers than wholesalers. Women account for a small share of traders, especially in Niger where only one female trader is included in the survey. Although we cannot draw conclusions about the whole population based on this survey that is not representative at the market level, the data still suggest that women take a more active part in agricultural trade in Cameroon than in the other countries surrounding the Lake Chad basin. The timing of the survey may play a role in the low participation of women in trade. Women have typically low access to finance (IFC, 2011) and then are more likely to sell agricultural commodities only seasonally, following the harvest that typically start in September. Additionally, the role of women in trade is shaped by social norms. In Niger, women typically sell condiments and meals to other women (De Sardan, 2011), as women are in charge of buying condiments. In North Nigeria, women role varies by ethnic group but women are often involved in post-harvest activities such as cleaning and sorting grains as it contains impurities.¹²

¹⁰Lake Chad Basin Crisis Regional Market Assessment (WFP RBD June 2016)

¹¹Lake Chad Basin Crisis Regional Market Assessment (WFP RBD June 2016)

¹²Lake Chad Basin Crisis Regional Market Assessment (WFP RBD June 2016)

Table 2: Traders' type by selling point*

		Cameroon		Chad		Nigeria		Niger	Total	
		Total	Women's share (%)	Total	Women's share (%)	Total	Women's share (%)	Total	Total	Women's share (%)
Retailers	Nb	245	65	275	29	500	12	116	1136	27
	%	67.87		66.75		60.02		61.05		
Wholesalers	Nb	114	11	124	3	332	7	69	639	6
	%	31.58		30.10		39.86		36.32		
Assembly trader	Nb	2	50	13	8	1	0	5	21	10
	%	0.55		3.16		0.12		2.63		
Total	Nb	361	48	412	21	833	10	190	1796	19
	%	100		100		100		100		

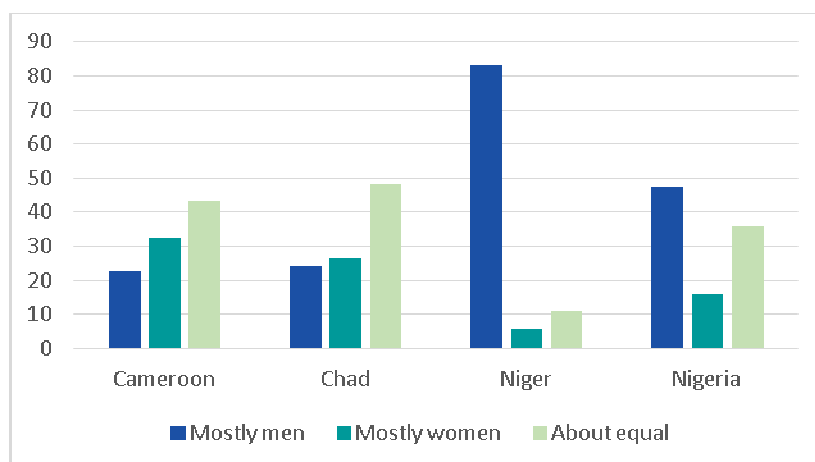
Source: Lake Chad Basin Crisis. Regional Market Assessment, June 2016

Note: *A trader who is both retailer and wholesaler is counted twice in the table. We consider in this table the number of shops selling in retail/wholesale rather than the number of traders. Source: Traders survey

As shown in the table above, a strong gender imbalance is found between retailers and wholesalers (Table 2). Women involved in agricultural trade are more likely to be retailers, even in Cameroon where women make a large contribution to trade. Women account for only 11 percent of the wholesalers in Cameroon whereas 65 percent of the surveyed retailers are female. The small number of assembly traders on the markets is due to the period of the regional market survey, which was conducted several months after the grain harvest period. Female traders are less likely to have employees and most employees are male. More than half of the traders employ people in their business but the differences between countries are large. Nigeria is by far the country where the largest share of traders have employees (79%) followed by Niger (53%), Chad (47%) and Cameroon (13%). Women are less likely to have employees, which is consistent with the fact that most women are retailers. Only 23% of female traders have employees compared to 63% of male traders. The gender gap is the largest in Chad where 55 percent of male traders employ people compared to 19 percent for women. Most of the traders' employees are male. The share of female employees range from 3 percent in Niger to 16 percent in Chad, reinforcing the idea that women do not take an active part in the grain business in the regions surrounding the Lake Chad basin.¹³

Figure 2: Gender of customers

¹³Lake Chad Basin Crisis Regional Market Assessment (WFP RBD June 2016)



Source: Lake Chad Basin Crisis. Regional Market Assessment, June 2016

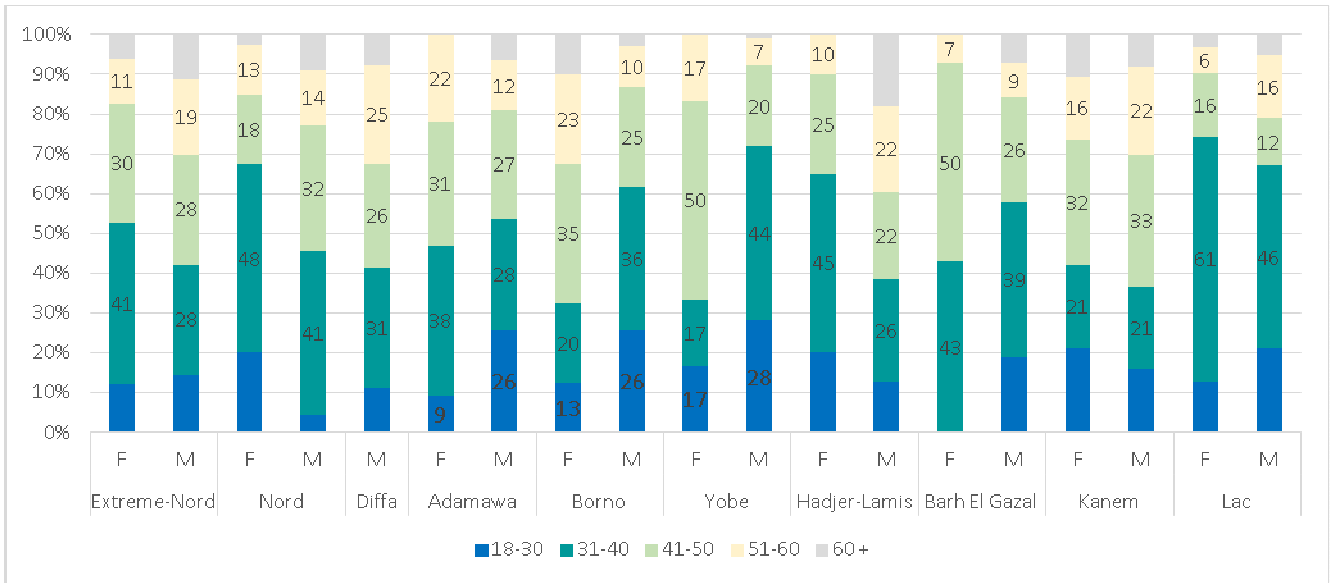
In Niger, participation rates of women as traders, employees and customers are the lowest of the four countries. By contrast, the reported repartition of customers between “mostly male” and “mostly female” in Chad and Cameroon is almost equal, and the most commonly reported case for the two countries was an equal balance between female and male customers (Figure 3). Reasons behind the low participation of women in agricultural trade in the region are multifaceted. One important constraint is the prevalent conception that women’s reproductive and domestic responsibilities constitute their main role. A second constraint is that women face financial access barriers that prevent them from expanding their businesses. According to a report published in 2011 by IFC, access to finance for women is limited by nonfinancial barriers. The legal and regulatory environment, the quality of available infrastructure, education, and social norms shape women’s need for capital and their ability to obtain it.¹⁴

In terms of age, most traders surveyed are between 30 and 50 years old. The share of traders below 30 is higher for retailers than wholesalers and about a third of female traders in Borno state are above 50 years old. In Nigeria, the share of traders below 30 is higher than in the other countries but they are mostly men and retailers. The share of female traders younger than 40 years old is higher than 50 percent in Cameroon and in two regions of Chad (Hadjer-Lamis and Lac) but only a third of female traders is below 40 years old in Borno and Yobe (Figure 4). In Borno, 33 percent of female traders are older than 50 reflecting the fact that it is more socially acceptable for older women to work as traders than for younger women.¹⁵

¹⁴Lake Chad Basin Crisis Regional Market Assessment (WFP RBD June 2016)

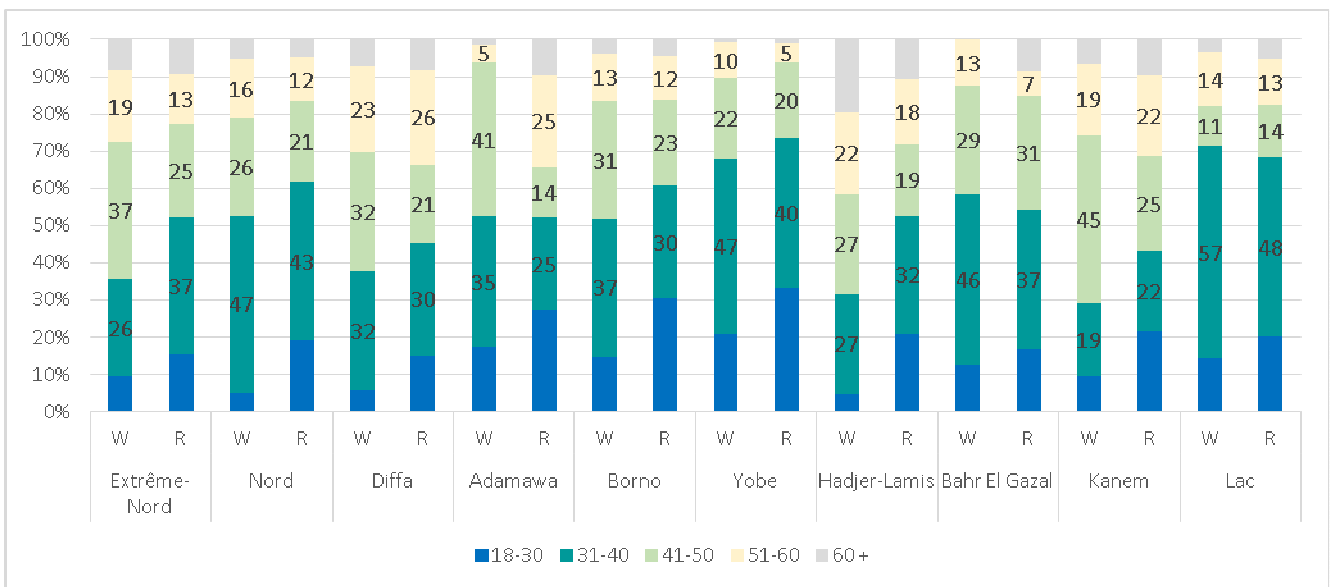
¹⁵Lake Chad Basin Crisis Regional Market Assessment (WFP RBD June 2016)

Figure 3: Traders' age by gender



Source: Lake Chad Basin Crisis. Regional Market Assessment, June 2016 Note: F refers to female and M to male. Source: Trader survey

Figure 4: Traders' age by type of traders

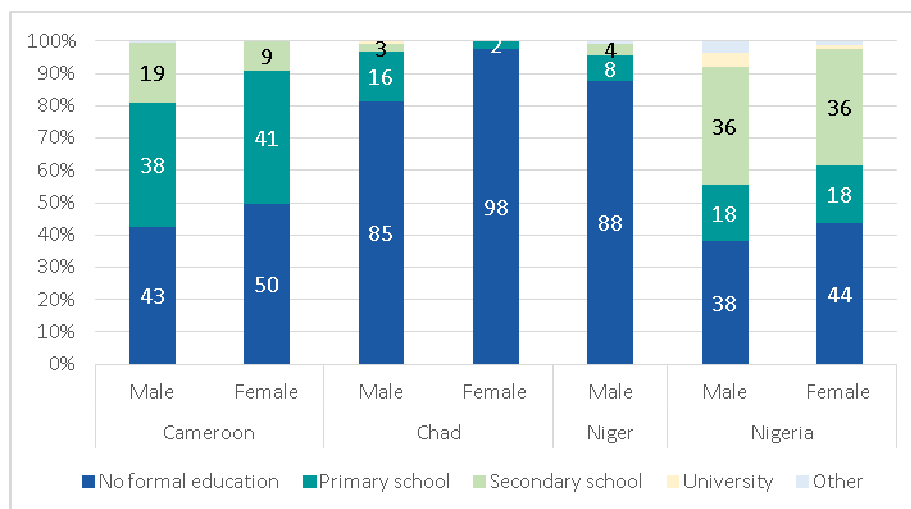


Source: Lake Chad Basin Crisis. Regional Market Assessment, June 2016 Note: W refers to wholesalers and R to retailers.

Traders have very low level of education in Chad and Niger compared to Cameroon and Nigeria. The level of education among traders is low, especially in Chad and Niger where respectively 85 and 88 percent of the traders have never been to formal school. Cameroon and Nigeria stand out, with more than half of the surveyed traders who have attended at least primary school. In Nigeria, 4 percent of traders have attended university (Figure 6). In Chad, access to formal school seems limited for women as only two percent of female traders attended primary school compared to 16% of male traders. The country in our sample with the greatest gender inequity in primary education— measured by a gender parity index (GPI) is Chad

(UNESCO Institute for Statistics). Koranic schools play an important role in Niger and Nigeria, especially for men, as respectively 48 and 25 percent of male traders attended koranic schools in these countries.¹⁶

Figure 5: Level of education among traders



Source: Lake Chad Basin Crisis. Regional Market Assessment, June 2016

2. Specific challenges and constraints for women and men for economic inclusion in markets

The Regional Market Assessment of the Lake Chad Basin brought to light the main constraints and specific challenges for men and women for economic inclusion in markets. This is supplemented by information drawn from the UN Women Strengthening Women’s Economic Resilience in the Sahel Programme (SWERP) documents. In Chad, stakeholders consulted during the primary data collection for the SWERP Programme confirmed that rural women also have limited access to markets. This is partly explained by lack of appropriate post-harvest handling facilities such as storage, processing units, lack of cooling rooms, product packaging and transport facilities. Rural women’s organizations in the agriculture sector suffer from poor leadership and organizational capacities needed for their management and effectiveness. Consultations at country level identified this as a legitimate need for support to rural women. Women’s workload at household level is heavier due to domestic chores like water fetching, collecting firewood, taking care of children, and also food cooking. Lack of alternative sources of water and energy restrain women to be productive in other income generating activities. Additionally the majority of women are also affected by other structural factors including poverty, heavier workload, and limited access to foundational services such as health, limited access to production resources (e.g. inputs, credits, and extension services). The increase of domestic workload for women in the Lake Chad Basin due to the scarcity of resources such as water for household survival is at stake whereas women and girls could spend reduced time on economic activities. All these factors limit women’s capacity to deal with effects of climate change and food insecurity.¹⁷

Lack of capital

Globally, the lack of own capital is the main constraint for traders, and lack of own capital is massively reported by traders as their first constraint followed by insecurity. Female traders seems to suffer more than

¹⁶Lake Chad Basin Crisis Regional Market Assessment (WFP RBD June 2016)

¹⁷United Nation Integrated Strategy Flagship Project (UN Women 2016) - *Economic Resilience of Rural Women and Girls in the G5-Sahel Region- Accelerating Economic Resilience of Women and Girls in Rural Areas Most Affected by Drought and Climate Change in the Five Priority Countries of the Sahel (SWERP)*

male from the lack of capital and the lack of credit. Indeed, 67 percent of female traders reported lack of own capital and the lack of credit. Female traders seem to suffer more than male from the lack of capital and the lack of credit suggesting that women disproportionately face financial access barriers that prevent them from participating in the agricultural trade. By contrast, women are less concerned by the low margins and the decrease in customer purchasing power than men are. In Cameroon, lack of capital is the main constraint of 71 percent of traders whereas only 41 percent of Nigerian and Chadian traders cited lack of capital as their first concern. This difference comes from the fact that insecurity is felt as the main difficulty by only 7 percent of Cameroonian traders against 12 and 17 percent of the traders in Chad and Nigeria. Lack of own capital is a constraint especially for retailers while lack of own capital is felt by wholesalers as their main constraints, it seems like a bigger constraint for retailers (Table 8). By contrast, wholesalers seem more concerned by insecurity. For instance, 22 percent of wholesalers in North Nigeria cited insecurity as their main constraints compared to only 11 percent of retailers. As wholesalers are in the business of buying in large quantities and selling them to resellers, they rely greatly on transporters for their supply and as shown in figure 22, transporters' activities are limited by insecurity and harassment. Similarly, poor road infrastructure and lack of transport services are constraints mainly felt by wholesalers. In Nigeria and Cameroon, insecurity ranks second in terms of business constraints for wholesalers whereas insecurity appears only in fourth position in Chad and Niger.¹⁸

Table 3: Top 10 constraints faced by traders by gender (%)

	Cameroon		Chad		Niger		Nigeria		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Lack of own capital	64	80	37	56	49	40	50	44	67	
Insecurity	12	3	10	17	6	15	18	13	10	
Lack of credit / credit overpriced	3	6	8	7	5	7	13	6	8	
Customer purchasing power failed	4	4	8	2	4	8	4	7	4	
Margins too low	2	1	4	1	9	7		6	1	
No refund payment of customer debts	1	1	0		1	7	6	4	2	
Poor road infrastructure	2		10	5	8	1		4	1	
Lack of transport services	3		8	5	2	2		3	1	
Insufficient or irregular amount of product	2	2	6	4	4	2	1	3	2	
High taxes or charges	2		2		2	1		1		

Source: Lake Chad Basin Crisis. Regional Market Assessment, June 2016

Table 4: Top 10 constraints faced by traders by trader's type (%)

	Cameroon		Chad		Niger		Nigeria		Total	
	W	R	W	R	W	R	W	R	W	R
Lack of own capital	54	80	28	48	35	59	31	50	35	58
Insecurity	10	7	11	12	6	7	22	11	16	10

¹⁸ Lake Chad Basin Crisis Regional Market Assessment (WFP RBD June 2016)

Margins too low	3	1	4	3	13	6	9	4	8	3
Customer purchasing power failed	6	3	8	6	3	5	8	6	7	5
Lack of credit / credit overpriced	6	3	7	8	4	5	7	8	6	7
Poor road infrastructure	4		12	8	16	1	1	1	5	2
Lack of transport services	3	1	14	4	1	2	1	2	4	2
Insufficient or irregular amount of product	4	1	8	4	6	2	2	2	4	2
Poor or variable quality of the product	1	1	2	1	3	1	2	0	2	1
Lack of storage structure	4			0	1	3	1	1	1	1

Source: Lake Chad Basin Crisis. Regional Market Assessment, June 2016

Market access/trade flows

The position of women in the agricultural value chain (crops, livestock and fisheries) remains a major challenge, especially in terms of access to productive resources, processing and marketing (inside and outside the country). Women and girls suffer more shocks related to food insecurity because of their limited access to production factors suited to more hostile environments. According to the World Bank, women's access to factors of production and reduction of inequalities in rural areas could increase between 10-20% of food production in sub-Saharan Africa. Adequate use of market opportunities has also been identified as a major constraining factor for women's economic resilience. Other issues identified include lack of access to market information, limited capacity to identify profitable value chains, lack of entrepreneurial skills, and limited capacity to linking their cooperatives to potential agro-dealers and export markets. In Chad for instance, one of the women's organization visited (SWERP Programme) has some market links to the US for the Shea Butter "Beurre de karité" although the supply is now exceeding the demand. This is a potential value chain that can benefit most of the rural women in the region of the Lake Chad Basin since the "karité fruit / tree" can still be found in most of the surrounding countries. The Shea Butter can be used for multiple purposes and more actions can be done to link women's organizations to more regular markets so that the production is absorbed by the markets.¹⁹

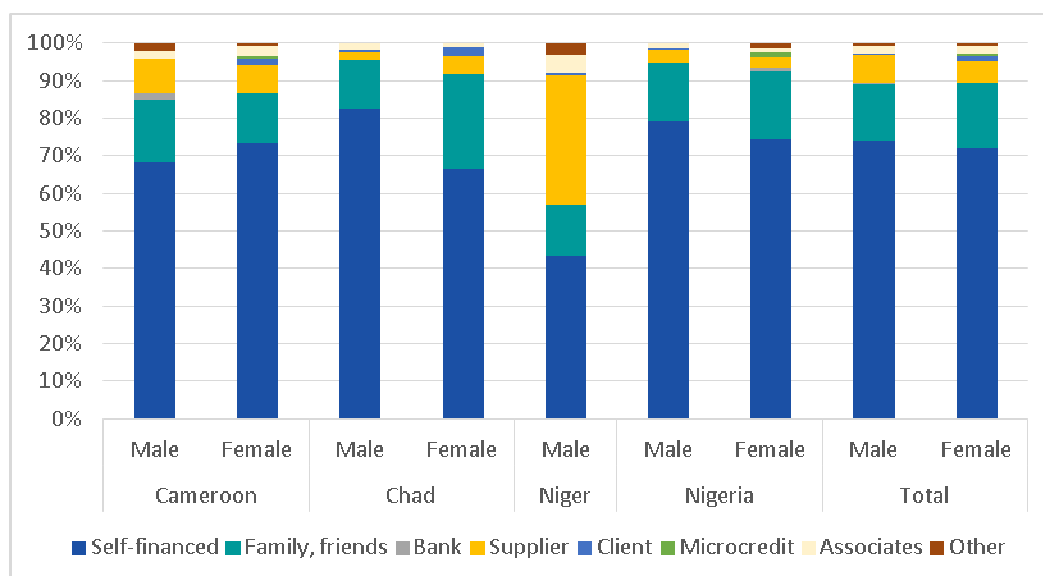
Access to funding and credit access

Self-financing is the main funding source for traders. In each country, traders are mainly self-financed. The second source of funding is usually family and friends except in Niger where 34 percent of traders depend on credit line from their suppliers (Figure 24). In Niger, social networks and ethnicity play an important role in credit provision (Aker et al., 2010). In Chad, female traders rely more on family and friends as a source of funding, as they seem not able to self-finance their activities. While half of the Nigerian traders have a bank account, almost none of them have access to formal credit. Data shows no gender gap in Nigeria in access to bank account: 52 percent of female traders reported having a bank account against 54 percent of male traders. In the remaining countries, less than 10 percent of traders have a bank account and gender imbalance is found in Cameroon with only 5 percent of women having a bank account against 12 percent of men.²⁰

¹⁹Lake Chad Basin Crisis Regional Market Assessment (WFP RBD June 2016)

²⁰Lake Chad Basin Crisis Regional Market Assessment (WFP RBD June 2016)

Figure 6: Main source of funding for traders by gender



Source: Lake Chad Basin Crisis. Regional Market Assessment, June 2016

Purchasing stocks on credit is common practice in Niger and Nigeria where traders' networks play a big role in agricultural trade. In Niger and Nigeria, a large share of traders purchase their stocks on credit. They are respectively 78 percent in Niger and 68 percent in Nigeria. As mentioned earlier, interpersonal networks, ethnicity and credit are closely linked in Niger and North Nigeria. This practice is less common in Cameroon and Chad where only 37 percent of traders buy stocks on credit. The repayment terms vary between countries. While in Niger, Nigeria and Cameroon, the vast majority of traders does not pay any interest on the credit they get to buy stocks, only 39 percent of Chadian traders said that the interest rate was zero. Usually, traders are asked to repay their debt either after sales (56%) or within a week (28%). Traders typically make themselves the choice of taking out credit to finance trade activities. Data does not show any significant difference between male and female (Table B1). Traders in Niger and Nigeria provide more credit to their customers than in Chad and Cameroon and the provision of credit to customers is more common among male traders. Customer credit is practiced more frequently by men than women. One possible explanation may be that female traders have less access to credit and are therefore more reluctant of taking the risk of unpaid debts. The share of traders offering a credit line to customers has slightly decreased between January 2015 and January 2016. The share of traders granting credit to their customers is higher in Niger and Nigeria than in Cameroon and Chad, which may reflect a higher level of competition between shops in Niger and Nigeria. Credit supply may be a strategy used by traders to retain clients and deal with high competition.²¹

Table 5: Share of traders selling products on credit (%)

	Cameroon		Chad		Niger	Nigeria		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Male	Female	Male	Female
janv-15	58	55	50	39	71	91	86	75	58
janv-16	51	49	45	36	67	86	77	70	52

²¹Lake Chad Basin Crisis Regional Market Assessment (WFP RBD June 2016)

Change in percentage point between 2015 and 2016	-7	-6	-5	-4	-5	-4	-9	-5	-6
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Source: Lake Chad Basin Crisis. Regional Market Assessment, June 2016

Incompatible bank services that respond to the socio-economic conditions faced by the majority of women is highlighted as a major constraint for accessing the finances needed to carry out their income generating activities. This implies that most existing banks have their loan products that are not customized to agriculture as the main source of income for the majority of the population. While agricultural loans are limited, they are also supposed to finance the production, processing and marketing of enterprises specialized in agriculture. Banks are also reluctant to provide credits due to the difficulties faced by some traders to reimburse their loans and bad historical experience of non-reimbursement of credit. Lack of identity registration documents can also hamper access to credit. Consequently, traders and mostly women emphasized the high interest rates and lack of collateral. For both the formal banking system and microfinance, the interest rate remains high. This makes it difficult for women to access finance for their business activities. The interest rate varies between 8% and 25%. . Interest rate varies in Niger between 20 and 25% whereas it reaches 23% in Chad. In addition, women generally lack collateral due to the fact that men mainly own land, and women do not have land titles that they can use as bank guarantees to apply for loans. Furthermore, it was observed that the loans traders receive are often insufficient to use for large-scale investments for income generating activities. There is also limited awareness of the existing bank and micro-finance products that can be used for women to access finance. The payback period for the banks or micro-finance do not consider the best period for women traders to sell their produce and have the ability to pay back the loan.²²

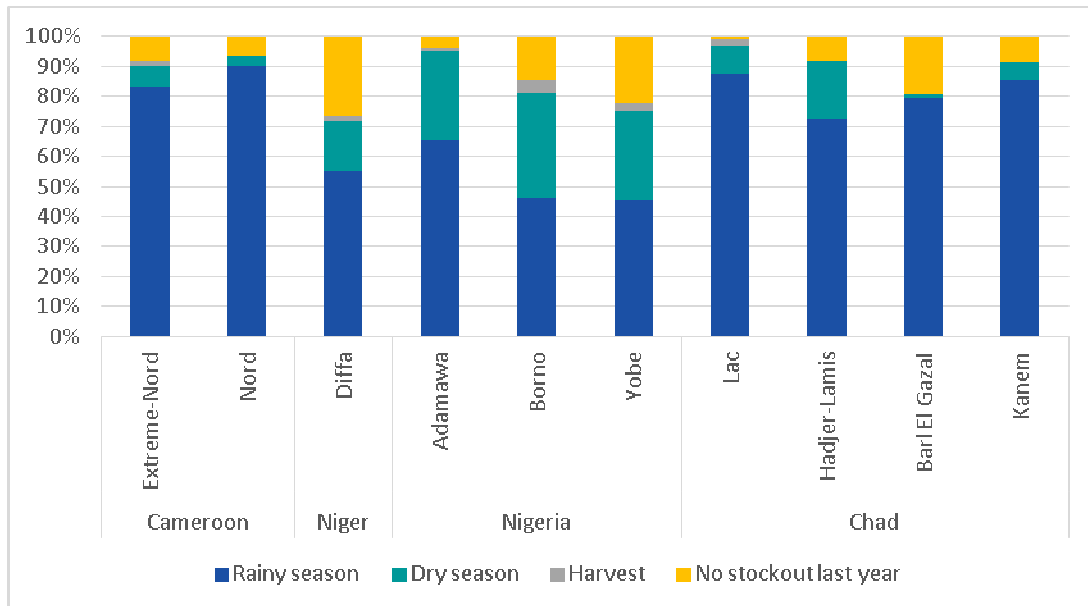
Stock strategy

Food shortages can occur during the rainy season. The rainy season is the time of the year when most traders experience food shortages, especially in Cameroon and in the regions of Lac and Kanem in Chad (Figure 23). Reasons behind this may be that some roads became impassable during the rainy season and that prices go up because grain harvest is still months away. In Nigeria, food shortage can occur even in the dry season. The survey does not enable us to know the type of commodities affected by stock out but they are likely to differ between the rainy and the dry season. As outlined earlier, traders in Chad, Niger and Cameroon sell a small variety of products, implying that shortages can have stronger impact on food security and prices in this context compared to Nigeria where the offer is larger.²³

²²Lake Chad Basin Crisis Regional Market Assessment (WFP RBD June 2016)

²³Lake Chad Basin Crisis Regional Market Assessment (WFP RBD June 2016)

Figure 7: Time of the year when traders experience stockout



Source: Lake Chad Basin Crisis. Regional Market Assessment, June 2016

During the harvest period women sell their products at lower prices as they cannot conserve these until the peak period when the prices are equitable and can cover the production costs with a margin of benefit. For example 1 kg of tomatoes can cost 300 CFA Francs after the harvest and the same kilo may cost 2000 CFA Francs during the dry period, making this more a gap of price information, production and commercialization strategy regarding the existing.²⁴

3. Gaps and challenges in gender analysis and tracking women's empowerment in WFP approach to market analysis

A review of literature and WFP guidance reveals gaps in terms of how the organization assesses and monitors empowerment in a meaningful way. This is particularly true for market-based approaches, which are increasingly applied in WFP humanitarian assistance.²⁵ Market-based approaches to programmes such as Purchase4Progress (P4P) and modalities like cash and vouchers have increased the need for stronger tools and a clear framework for assessing and analyzing women's empowerment (and disempowerment) to inform interventions and achieve WFP and United Nations gender equality goals.

Lake Chad Basin Regional Market Assessment²⁶

LCB Regional Market Assessment was the first case in which adapted WEAI questions were integrated into an ongoing WFP assessment. Following this exercise, the same questions were integrated into other market questionnaires, including in the 2016 Ghana Emergency Food Security Assessment (EFSA). The below table reflects the final questions integrated into the LCB assessment trader questionnaires.

Question	Optional responses
Who decides whether you will take out credit to finance trade activities most of the time?	(1=self; 2=partner/spouse; 3=other household member; 4=self and other

²⁴ Lake Chad Basin Crisis Regional Market Assessment (WFP RBD June 2016)

²⁵ WFP. Annual Reports—Agenda Item 4. 2015, page 11.

²⁶ WFP. Lake Chad Basin Crisis – Regional Market Assessment. June 2016.

Who decides how much of your generated income will be spent on food for your household most of the time?	household member (s); 5=partner/spouse and other household member(s); 6 someone (or group of people) outside the household; 7=other)
Who decides whether you will sell most of the time?	
Who decides what price you will sell at most of the time?	
Who decides whether you will give away most of the time?	
Who decides from whom/where you will purchase most of the time?	
What will be the biggest challenge/obstacle for your business in the future?	(Open response)
Do you feel comfortable speaking up in public to help decide on marketplace issues?	(1=no, not at all comfortable; 2=yes, but with a great deal of difficulty; 3=yes, but with a little difficulty; 4=yes, fairly comfortable; 5=yes, very comfortable)

The developed questions and revised questionnaires are meant to serve as good practice for country offices which intend to design gender- and empowerment-integrated market assessments, either for WFP or cooperating partners. The gender- and empowerment-integrated market questionnaires aim to capture information on the gender dimensions of food markets and empowerment in markets, particularly for women. This supports better targeting of WFP market-based activities and those of WFP partners, and contributes to the design and monitoring of more gender equitable interventions, including those directly aimed at promoting women’s empowerment.

In spite of the positive aspects of these questions which offer the possibility of significant improvements in collected information, challenges persist. Survey results do not show any significant gender disparities, which is concluded in the report to indicate most women and men have decision-making power over their business activities. In every country surveyed (with the exception of Niger, where less than 1 percent of respondents are female), approximately three quarters or more of surveyed traders, both female and male, reported making decisions independently on credit, use of generated income to purchase food for household consumption, whether they will sell products, from whom and where to purchase products, and product price most of the time. However, of the gender analysis conducted in the assessment pertaining to other areas of empowerment, the result is grimmer. For example, female respondents listed access to own capital for women as a top constraint to their business activities significantly more than di men. Access to own capital is a fundamental dimension of empowerment, according to the five WEAI domains, and is similarly important for empowerment in markets and value chains.

Furthermore, female traders are not well represented among surveyed respondents in the data collection phase of the regional assessment. Only in the North region of Cameroon do female traders make up more than half of those surveyed (65 percent), and in the Extreme North of Cameroon, they make up 44 percent. However, the surveys conducted in Chad, Niger and Nigeria reflect a maximum of 29 percent female traders in the Lac region of Chad, and a minimum of 1 percent in the Diffa region of Niger. Of the total traders surveyed in the region, female respondents make up only 21 percent, making it difficult to assess gender dynamics and disparities in survey results.²⁷

Based on the evaluation of results, the key recommendations for improvements based on lessons learned from the piloting are:

²⁷ WFP. Lake Chad Basis Crisis – Regional Market Assessment. June 2016.

1. **Stronger accountability for assessment teams** to analyse and report on data and information gathered pertaining to gender dynamics and women's empowerment
2. Improved capacity to **translate qualitative information into operational/programmatic recommendations**
3. Introduce supplementary **enumerator training module(s) on how to deliver questions** so that respondents and enumerators are clear what the objective of the question is. A critical feedback received from assessment teams on the piloted questions focused on challenges for enumerators in understanding the information objectives of questions at times.
4. Ensure **integration of all dimensions of empowerment in markets**, and not solely decision-making power.

Following the piloting of the adapted questions in the LBC regional market assessment, the questions were also integrated into the market assessment included in the 2016 Ghana Emergence Food Security assessment (EFSA). Based on findings from that later process, the following main gaps were identified:

- ✓ Decision-making and control are not alone sufficient indicators of empowerment;
- ✓ Empowerment is not a universally understood term and to analyse it, contextual and linguistic adaptations are often necessary, and sufficient training of enumerators is essential;
- ✓ Empowerment varies between productive/income-earning activities and household/reproductive activities;
- ✓ Economic improvement (i.e. increased profits) does not necessarily lead to empowerment;
- ✓ Empowerment varies depending on the stage of the value chain; and
- ✓ Empowerment is intersectional, meaning assessing it involves the consideration of gender, age, class, ability, ethnic group, and other social stratifiers which influence or determine an individual's role and status in certain stages of agricultural value chains.

4. Potential programmatic solutions and recommendations to address identified gaps and challenges

Based on the gaps and challenges identified over the course of this piloting exercise, certain initiative and quick-fix solutions can be recommended.

- Incorporate qualitative research, including secondary sources, to support understanding on identified gender disparities. An anthropological approach can be beneficial as studying the targeted population on a micro-level unveils aspects that must be taken into account to guarantee a holistic strategy. This approach also allows an analysis free of bias.
- Regarding the reporting process, it should be made standard practice to disaggregated figures by sex and age, and to include findings from gender analysis throughout the report. Gender is a crosscutting dimension that needs to be included throughout a market assessment, including in the report executive summary and conclusion/recommendations sections.

Further investigation is necessary to understand the larger issues and challenges hindering stronger gender analysis and assessment of women's empowerment in markets in humanitarian crisis environments. The other case studies which make up the regional Gender Initiative and which followed this exercise, provide some of this necessary research and allow for more pointed recommendations in terms of specific programmes and actions. In addition, the next phase of the regional Gender and Markets Initiative focuses specifically on five research themes which warrant further investigation, one being how to best assess gender dynamics and women's empowerment in markets in high insecurity and armed conflict contexts.

Conclusion

The LCB Regional Market Assessment was the first case in which adapted WEAI questions were integrated into an on-going WFP assessment. The complex social-ecological nexus of development crises and the multidimensional humanitarian crisis in the Lake Chad Basin are factors that justify WFP optimizing its intervention and advocate for strategic national human development objectives in relation to key underlying vulnerabilities.²⁸

As the first effort of WFP RBD to integrate gender and empowerment aspects into a regional market assessment, this initiative reflects the willingness to reinforce the capacities of either vulnerable or marginalized groups (or both) in the context of market activities in the region of the Lake Chad Basin. The VAM team designed the regional Gender and Market Initiative from the assumption that improving market access and control over resources and income for women could galvanize the productivity of households and benefit the economy in general in the target areas.

The WFP RBD VAM team developed this summary and synthesis to share with partners and colleagues the experience and process of piloting a set of developed survey questions meant to assess gender dynamics and women's empowerment in markets, in the Lake Chad basin Regional Market Assessment (WFP, ACF, et al. 2016). In addition to providing the information included herein on gender dynamics in markets in LCB, this report can also be used as a historical overview of lessons learned and good practices in developing tools to assess and monitor gender and empowerment in humanitarian crises.

²⁸ WFP RBD, Paige Enfinger) *Lake Chad Basin Desk Review Socio-Economic analysis of the Lake Chad Basin Region, focusing on Regional Environmental Factors, Armed Conflict, Gender and Food Security Issues*

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WFP - Gender Policy

WFP Burkina Faso - *Etude de Cas « Genre & Marchés »*, (June 2016)

WFP – *Situation Report Lake Chad Basin* <https://www.wfp.org/Situation-Reports/Lake-Chad-Basin>

Lake Chad Basin Commission, World Bank - *Lake Chad Development and Climate Resilience Action Plan* (November 2015)

Annex

Annex I—COUNTRY CASE STUDY PROTOCOL

1. Background/ Literature Review

- a) Compile and review secondary literature, gender assessments of WFP and partners, and any secondary databases containing relevant gender-sensitive information on the country;
- b) Identify and meet with key partners in the country to discuss study objectives, obtain additional secondary data and information, and potentially identify areas for collaboration in conducting study (i.e. IFAD, World Vision, FAO, FEWSNET, national universities, etc.);
- c) Assess to what extent the main research questions can already be addressed by using secondary data and information;
- d) Identify data information gaps to focus study design.

2. Design

- a) Work with RBD, CO and partner agencies to identify whether the case study should be single-case or multiple-case and embedded or holistic designs, and show the logical links between these and the research questions;
- b) Describe the objective of study (e.g. building on the general objective to obtain information on gender and food markets in West Africa, by taking into consideration CO programme concerns);
- c) Identify any propositions or sub-questions derived from each research question and the measures to be used to investigate the propositions.

4. Case Study Procedures and Roles

- a) In addition to case study researcher, specify roles of other WFP staff (should additional CO capacity be provided) or additional support staff.

5. Data Collection

- a) Identify the data to be collected;
- b) Define a data collection plan (specifying scope, duration, collection tools, survey/interview questions, etc.);
- c) Define how the data will be stored.

6. Analysis

- a) Identify the criteria for interpreting case study findings (Analysis Plan);
- b) Identify which data elements are used to address which research question/sub question/proposition and how the data elements will be combined to answer the question;
- c) Consider the range of possible outcomes and identify alternative explanations of the outcomes, and identify any information that is needed to distinguish between these.

7. Reporting

- a) Provide a final report summarizing all findings and analysis;
- b) Include all data collection materials (i.e. surveys, interview questions) in Annex;
- c) Include datasets in Annex;
- d) Include list of partners and nature of partnership in Annex;
- e) Include additional materials in subsequent annexes.

Annex II—Overview of the Lake Chad Basin

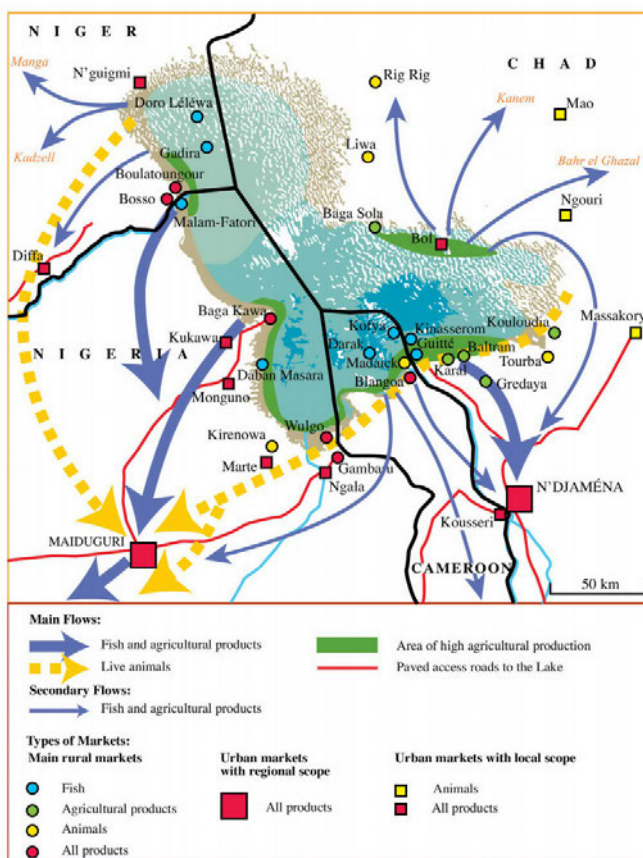
The Lake Chad Basin has long been a nexus of conflict, driven by competition over scarce natural resources. Moreover, acute water scarcity is increasingly affecting the livelihood and security of populations living around the lake. Pastoralists, farmers and fishermen all compete for the same limited resources. The widespread violence in Northeast Nigeria and neighboring countries has caused massive population movements in the four Lake Chad Basin countries, resulting in destruction of livelihoods and assets, and in a sharp increase of population movements in recent months in already chronically poor and food insecure areas.²⁹

Considering the recent security crisis and the increase of displacements in the region, WFP’s Regional Bureau for West Africa, more specifically the Vulnerability, Assessment and Mapping (VAM) unit, has decided to expand its monitoring and assessment activities in the four affected countries. ACF and other partners are also expanding their monitoring activities. The main objective aimed at addressing urgent information needs, to support the nation and regional humanitarian response, and strengthen market baselines across the four countries.³⁰

The on-going conflicts perpetrated by Boko Haram disrupted trade flows forcing traders to change trade routes. While this interruption is primarily intended to prevent the entry of undesirable and the smuggling of illegal goods, cost of trucking has been raised and delays are likely to be generated. Most traders in Niger, Nigeria and Chad estimate to have the capacity to respond quickly to a 100 percent increase in demand but a large share of traders reported being unable of doubling their sales to meet an important increase in demand.³¹

The Lake Chad Basin, a semi-arid hydrological system in West Central Africa comprising significant parts of Niger, Chad, Cameroon, and

FIGURE 2: LAKE CHAD’S CONTRIBUTION TO FOOD SECURITY IN THE REGION



Source: Magrin, Lemoalle, Pouttier, 2015. Atlas du lac Tchad.

Nigeria, is one of the poorest and drought-prone regions of the world. Described by the World Bank as “a productive yet poor and vulnerable socio-ecosystem,” Lake Chad Basin is a dynamic region, which is home to some 50 million inhabitants. The lake’s waters, banks, and islands serve as major sources of livelihoods for fishing, farming, and livestock rearing. Hence the Basin is a major food-exporting hub (see Figure 2, adjacent), which typically accounts for the food security of about 13 million people in the hinterland of the Basin. However, the ability for the Lake and its productive systems to satisfy regional food security needs has been increasingly compromised by environmental challenges, as well as the recent onset of crisis erupting at the interface context of systemic development problems and unmanaged environmental disaster, which

²⁹Lake Chad Basin Regional Market Assessment, 2016.

³⁰Lake Chad Basin Regional Market Assessment, 2016.

³¹Lake Chad Basin Regional Market Assessment, 2016.

compounded over time to cumulate social unrest and violence, eventually spreading civil conflict and insecurity throughout the region.³²

Low regional human development indicators reflect poor social protection. Quality health and education systems are imperative to enable human development and food security. However, poor infrastructure and social protection in the Lake Chad Basin reflects a lack of investment in rural development, which, in turn, undermines livelihoods and food security of people of those who depend on the Basin system. High rates of HIV/AIDS, low school enrollment and adult literacy have spillover effects other aspects of wellbeing such as nutritional status, which perpetuates inequalities and further infringes upon food security. Indicative of poor national education systems, widespread illiteracy, due to low school enrollment, is a major hindrance to development in the Lake Chad region; furthermore, there are sharp disparities between education of girls and boys (Odada, 2006). Considering the case of Nigeria, while gender gaps and educational attainment are not wide in most of the country, Nigeria's Northeast region is marked by significant differences by gender as 56 percent of young³³

³²Enfinger. Desk Review of Lake Chad Basin. WFP, 2016.

³³Enfinger. Desk Review of Lake Chad Basin. WFP, 2016.

Annex III—Gender overview in LCB

The category of women is the most affected section of the population that is exposed to these crises, especially those in rural areas. Women and girls are often excluded from household and community decision-making, which impedes the abilities of households and communities to mitigate and recover from disturbances. Women and girls are also often exposed to additional, gender-specific barriers – due to socially constructed gender roles and power relations – that consistently render them more vulnerable to the impacts of disturbances. For example, drought and erratic rainfall increase the workload of women and girls on family farms because they must walk longer distances and spend more time securing water for cooking, household sanitation needs, and caretaking of animals. Additional time spent on resource collection means less time available for education, income generation, or household food production – all of which are cornerstones for resilient individuals and households. Chad rural women are mostly illiterate and as a result, their participation and influence in key decision-making positions in cooperatives and associations is very limited. Subsequently their needs and interests are not adequately considered and addressed. According to the Chadian Ministry of Basic Education and Literacy, 86% of Chadian women are illiterate, as compared to 69% men (2013). This is due to various factors ranging from heavy domestic workload, early pregnancy, or forced marriage that prevent girls and women to devote enough time to education and productive chores. Regarding heavy domestic workload,). Women in Niger devote between 16 to 18 hours a day out of 24 hours. Those women’s workload reduce the time to take care of their children which is said to be one of the indirect causes of malnutrition. The FAO estimates that Chadian rural women, who constitute about 40% of the total population, work more than rural men along the agricultural value chains. Generally, the role of men is to plow the land while women do the rest of the work both in production and in processing: sowing, transplanting, harvesting, sorting, milling, etc. Heavy domestic workload combined with agricultural workload leave very little time for women to rest and/or strengthen their capacities through literacy programmes, access to information, community and association meetings. Cognizant of this problem, the Government of Chad has developed a National Gender Policy (NGP, 2015) that aims to promote equality and equity between men and women of different social groups for a participatory, human and sustainable development. Equal access to productive resources and benefits by men and women and promoting initiatives to meet the specific needs of girls and boys, men and women is among the pillars of the NGP.³⁴

The socio-cultural background is a decisive factor for constructed gender roles and power relations impacting women’s access to factors of empowerment. Women’s lack of land tenure security is historically related to inadequate or discriminatory legal and policy frameworks and social as well as cultural norms, such as male preference in inheritance, male privilege in marriage and so-called secondary land rights through male family members. When the law guarantees women and men the same rights to own, use and control land; customary, traditional and religious practices discriminate against women and undermine the full implementation of national legal codes. This is the case in the majority of countries of the Sahel. In Niger, the low representation of women in elective (15%) and nominative (25%) positions may explain the lack of gender-sensitive laws that could otherwise dramatically improve the situation of women in the country. National policies and initiatives for increased women’s representation in decision-making platforms have been adopted but their enforcement is not effective yet. Though, considerable efforts have been put into supporting girls’ education, the majority of girls drop out from school at primary level. Only an estimated 4% of girls complete secondary school although education is seen as central for women’s transformation and economic resilience. Evidence of gender-based violence (GBV), especially rape and domestic violence faced women are well documented but the practice and impunity persist mainly due to socio-cultural factors. Women have limited platforms where they can share their experience and seek for advisory services or any help related to the multifaceted types of violence they are forced to endure. Early marriage and early

³⁴ United Nation Integrated Strategy Flagship Project (UN Women 2016) - *Economic Resilience of Rural Women and Girls in the G5-Sahel Region- Accelerating Economic Resilience of Women and Girls in Rural Areas Most Affected by Drought and Climate Change in the Five Priority Countries of the SAHEL (SWERP)*

pregnancy are two common issues in Niger and this explains partly the phenomenon of school dropouts of girls.³⁵

I. Humanitarian Situation and Gender

The current Lake Chad Basin regional humanitarian crisis appears as an eruption of cumulative interconnected national and regional socioeconomic development crises, from corrupt federal governments and institutions, to the incidence of climate change and environmental degradation, and lack of infrastructure and social services, which inhibit human development. Human development indicators in Lake Chad areas are stuck below national averages, which themselves are low relative to international standards (Lemoalle and Magrin, 2014; Magrin et al., 2015). These measurements denote the general privation of basic social services and infrastructure such as education, health, water, roads, and electricity limit, which thereby limits the development prospects of individuals, communities, and, ultimately, the sustainable functionality of the entire Basin. Hence, such persistent development challenges set the stage for more devastating impacts of civil conflict, which currently present physical barriers to local livelihoods, regional networks, and systems of food security. Looking past emergency relief efforts, WFP aims to cultivate an all-inclusive view of the humanitarian and development crises to formulate long-term integrative strategies to address the roots causes of regional instability. Beyond the current socio-political context and imminent threats of armed conflict, the current regional humanitarian situation can be traced to systemic, fragmentary development crises. Thus, framing the current humanitarian crisis from the longstanding development crisis is crucial for understanding the complex regional dynamics and identifying long-term solutions to problems faced by people in the Lake Chad Basin region.

Besides sharing the Lake's natural resources, all four countries also experience steep population growth, particularly in the Basin's rural areas, which puts increasing pressure on environmental health and poor social protection systems. Forecasting demographic growth from current rates, the Lake Chad Basin's population is expected to double over the next 30 years. According to a 2004 UNEP report, climate change, further water development projects, increased demographic pressure, oil development, and rising use of agro-chemicals are among the pressing regional concerns impeding sustainable development.

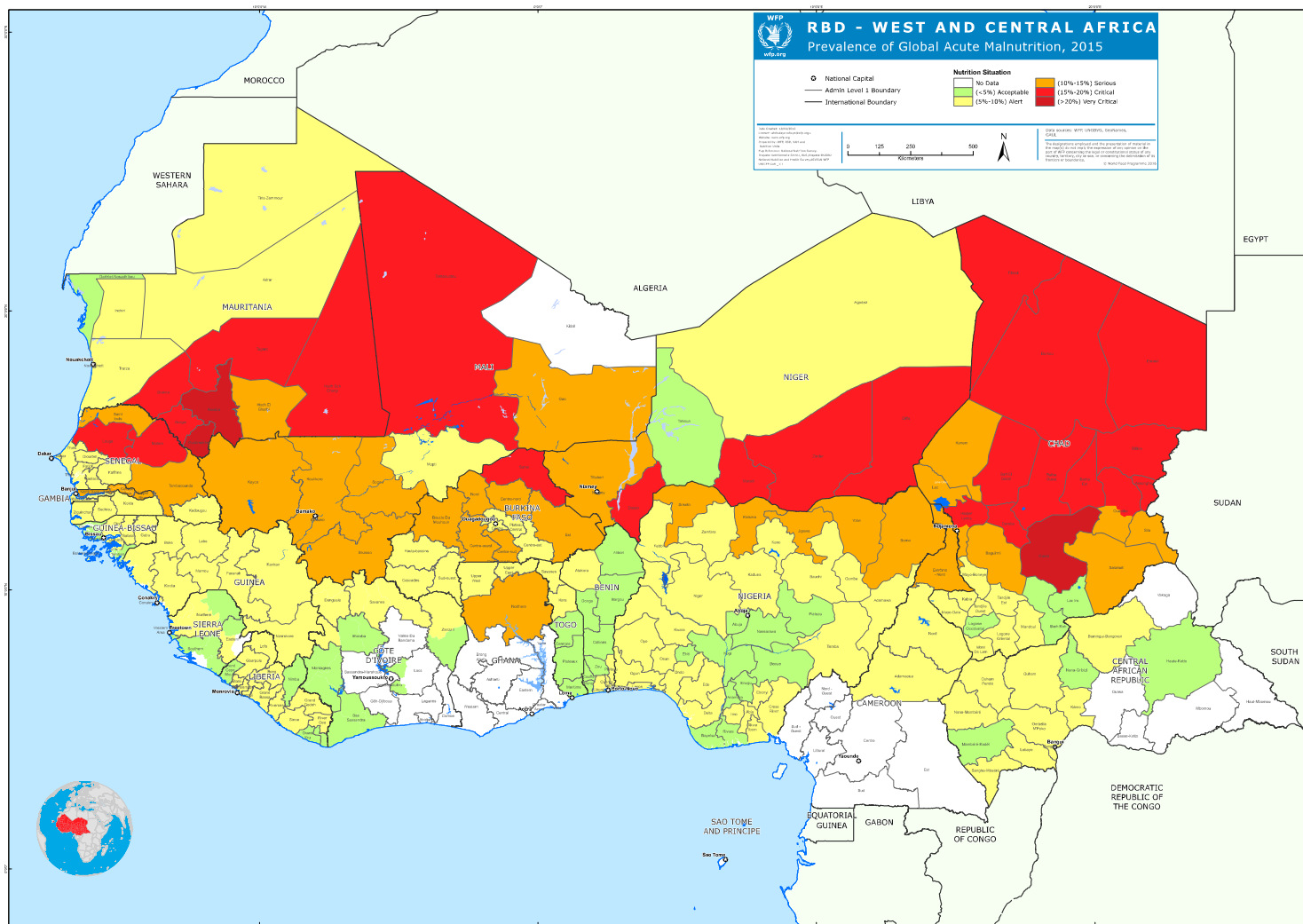
II. Food insecurity and gender

Productive activities, including agriculture, fishing, livestock rearing, and the trade of the respective products, have been interrupted by episodes of Boko Haram's insurgency and systemic violence. Furthermore, community assets and food reserves have been destroyed, which contributes to an already severe problems of food security and prevalence of Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) (please refer to Figure 1, below, for a regional mapping of the recent nutrition situation). Within a previously heightened nutrition situation due largely to outstanding food shortages from environmental challenges affecting production, the incidence of conflict and regional insecurity beyond pre-existing disasters of drought and desertification, which steadily damage natural capital, appear as overlaying causes and effects of regional crisis. Hence, the protracted conflict-induced humanitarian situation appears as prolonged shock to a regional system already dealing with a prevalence of local food and nutrition insecurity for decades. Therefore, interruptions to daily life and routine coping strategies employed within areas of poor economic and low human development have generated compound impacts, drastically affecting people throughout the region in one way or another and reducing their already constricted strategies for coping in a harsh environment. In many cases uprooting them from their homes, thereby losing social and physical capital, and in other cases, drastically altering their networks, activities, and previous sources of income, which may undermine financial and human capital.³⁶

³⁵Enfinger. LCB Desk Review. WFP, 2016.

Source: Lake Chad Basin. Desk review, April 2016

FIGURE 1: Map of GAM prevalence in West & Central Africa WFP 2015



Food security and nutritional development are mostly negatively affected by extreme climate change shocks faced by the Lake Chad Basin and long term conflict as well as the effects of terrorism in the cross border area. As a result of aggravating impacts caused by climate change, such as flooding and prolonged drought periods, populations are at greater risk of being subject to natural disasters with the rural population that primarily depends on agriculture are the most affected. In this context, women and children belong to the most vulnerable section. Estimates by UNDP concur that in terms of flooding about 55% of victims are women and children and that women and children are 14 times more likely than men to die during a disaster.³⁷ Since women are predominantly employed in agriculture (approximately 60-80% across Africa) and are responsible for 70-80% of the agricultural production, their output and income generation levels are particularly at risk, given that their agriculture produce is rain fed dependent and hence more vulnerable to extreme climate change. In event of natural climate change disasters women are also obliged to migrate, thereby making them more fragile to other challenges such as gender-based violence.

Climate shocks and chronic food crises in the region of the Lake Chad Basin also continue to weaken women's coping mechanisms and their economic resiliency capacities as the limit income and assets. Women, especially those living in rural areas, are the most affected category given their reduced access to appropriate coping and resilience capacity. Additionally the majority of women are also affected by other structural factors including poverty, heavier workload, and limited access to foundational services such as health, limited access to production resources (e.g. inputs, credits, and extension services). Therefore, climate change is adding more pressure and severity on female poverty in the Sahel region, both qualitatively and quantitatively.

The households most affected by food insecurity depend on precarious activities with children under five years old at risk of malnutrition. Those who depend on precarious sources of income such as aid, money transfers/ donations, manpower, the harvesting of straw, gathering and small businesses are particularly affected by food insecurity. These households are often poor, uneducated, some of them are headed by women, sometimes with fewer active people than food-secure households. Households engaged in farming have a food insecurity rate of 46 percent against 43 percent among those who do not practice it. These, for the most part, depend on the sale of livestock products. Early pastoral welding and the weakening of their livelihoods may explain the precarious food and nutrition situation of the agro-pastoral households. In the department of Mamdi in the Lake region, households moved on sites present a food insecurity rate of 15 percent against 8 percent among resident households. The movements have greatly contributed to the deterioration of food insecurity in this department. Households that depend on fishing, although the practice of this activity is very limited, are less vulnerable to food insecurity, it is particularly of households living in the departments of Mamdi and Fitri. The sale of agricultural products (48%) and livestock products (14%) is the main source of household income. On average 60% of farm households no longer have stocks from the rainy season, five months after the harvest. In departments where households able to achieve agricultural activities against season (berbéré crops and gardening), 60% consider that production is below average. In the most affected departments, counter-season stocks may only cover an average of one month of consumption. This decline in production, mainly due to poor rainfall, causes premature dependence in the face of markets for cereal needs. About 64% of households report that the cereals consumed come from the markets, while in the majority of markets of the Sahelian band, grain prices are rising. In the Lake Chad

³⁷ UNDP *Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction*

<http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/gender/Gender%20and%20Environment/PB3-AP-Gender-and-disaster-risk-reduction.pdf>

region, at Bol and Ngouri, corn prices rose 22% and 31% respectively compared to the average of the past five years. At Mao in Kanem, the price of sorghum increased by 19% compared to the five year average. (source: FEWS Net). Due to poor agro-pastoral season, counter-season and declining terms of trade, households have resorted to survival strategies that will, over the long term, hinder their ability to preserve their assets and access to adequate food. Emergency strategies are frequently adopted by households in departments that are the most affected by food insecurity, especially in the severe form. The sale of females is more developed in the departments where the sale of livestock is an important source of income. The reduction of health spending is highly developed in households. Moreover, the unusual migration of household members has significantly expanded. In all departments, households report an increase in the use of casual labor as an alternative source of income. The atypical search of termite mounds for foraging, was more widely reported in certain departments.³⁸

III. Armed Conflicts, Displaced Persons and Gender

“Attacks in markets and the stopping of cross-border trade, including key activities of the informal sector, further limit access of women and young people to resources.” UN Women³⁹

Since the 1970s, armed conflicts and rebel activity have escalated on the Lake's islands. Beyond clashes over natural resources and the Lake's decline, the mounting conflict is historically rooted in a series of civil wars in Chad as well as the migration of Nigerian fishermen to the Southeast Basin. For example, following record peak fishing yields, rebel activity was especially prevalent on the Lake in 1979 with over 15 cases reported of fishermen being held for days at a time, their nets and catches stolen. In 2003, the controversial Chad-Cameroon oil pipeline World Bank project was completed to develop capacity of oilfields near Doba in southern Chad and transport oil to a floating offloading and storage vessel off the coast of Kribi, Cameroon. Funds allotted for the pipeline ended up being spent by Chadian and Cameroonian governments to buy arms to subdue resistance in neglected areas (Gilbert, 2007). With ventures like the pipeline, oil companies and governments prioritized their cash economies over significant social and environmental impacts. Rather than investing in infrastructure and social services such as the provision of quality health care or education programs, government expenditures have been increasingly dedicated to national militaries, in order to subdue oppositions and prepare for armed conflict.⁴⁰

Religious extremism has evolved as a tool to harness people's frustration and desperation within the context of inequitable distribution of natural resources. Out of the confusion of failed states, social inequality, and lack of education, Boko Haram lashes out and captures discontent. Failing to address the factors behind social unrest and radicalization, regional governments have festered grievances following decades of political corruption (Guéhenno, 2016). Given poor access to basic social services, people have grown deeply angry and alienated from national ruling parties and their failed public systems. Compounding the insurgency and reciprocal political violence, ever-intensifying demographic growth and environmental degradation have driven social tension and migrations. Boko Haram, has cultivated a fierce rejection of the kleptocratic state powers and the weak social systems neglected by these political bodies in rural areas, which they attribute to Western models of life. Calling for the creation of an Islamic state, Boko Haram is not solely ideology-focused, but instead is interest-and strategy-based as it capitalizes on people's frustration to mobilize resources. Despite its basis on extreme religious values, Boko Haram's attacks are usually strategic and in retaliation to state-impositions, disrupting traditional networking and trade systems. For example, in attempts to gain regional control, Boko Haram blocked Chad's oil pipeline going through Cameroon, thereby

³⁸ United Nation Integrated Strategy Flagship Project (UN Women 2016) - *Economic Resilience of Rural Women and Girls in the G5-Sahel Region- Accelerating Economic Resilience of Women and Girls in Rural Areas Most Affected by Drought and Climate Change in the Five Priority Countries of the SAHEL (SWERP)*

³⁹ UN WOMEN (JANUARY 2016) *Situation of Women and Girls Facing the Humanitarian Crisis Generated by Boko Haram in Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon*

⁴⁰ Enfinger, LCB Desk review. WFP, 2016.

earning attention by disrupting regional market systems. Focused on its resource-base, Boko Haram uses religion as a tool to mobilize deprived people for larger causes of exploiting local trade routes and gaining control in the absence of social protection and capable state rule of law. People rely on cross-border trade in order to access basic resources that are not available within own countries. Trafficking everything from arms and cattle to cigarettes, people, and food, Boko Haram exploits local knowledge, representing long traditions of cross border trading activities, within a regional context that has long been contested. Their use of violence can be understood as a provocation to national and foreign government failures to manage and provide for the growing needs of the region.⁴¹

Hitting international radars in 2013, the current humanitarian crisis of the Lake Chad Basin region is characterized by massive displacements, food insecurity, and incidents of civil conflict. Violence continues to displace people within Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria. In communities hosting IDPs, refugees, and returnees, the presence of additional families is straining local resources and exacerbating food, relief commodity, shelter, livelihood, and protection needs, among others (USAID, 2015). Official data differs in tracking ongoing migrations and displacements, with reports estimating some 4.7 million people displaced, mostly women and children, having fled their homes since May 2013. Still, such numbers, mere approximations of forced migration, are unable to qualify the chaos of daily life within the Basin, which has lost many types of security.⁴²

Capturing the sporadic threats within Lake Chad Basin, OCHA reports⁴³ the following on the situation as of March 30th, 2016:

“Insecurity continues to prevail in the Lac region, where the state of emergency ended on 22 March 2016. Several incidents have been reported in the recent weeks. On 7 March, an armed attack on Bigram Island killed two civilians and wounded three. On 2 March, some 60 civilians were reportedly abducted by armed groups who crossed the Nigerian border, according to security sources. They were probably internally displaced Chadians living in Baga – Sola who attempted to return to their native islands to fish, despite the official ban and several other attempts to return recently stopped by local authorities (50 youth arrested in Fourkouloum on 10 February). The same day, some 200 cattle were stolen on the Chad/Niger border [...]”

Beyond those taking refuge outside of their home countries, the number of internally displaced people has surged. In August 2015, IOM reported 2.15 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Nigeria. OCHA cited 66,400 IDPs in Niger and 81,700 IDPs in Cameroon, and 60,000 IDPs in Chad in October 2015. The impacts of armed conflict, including the subsequent humanitarian crisis and hunger situation in the region, poses immediate security threats that aggravate pre-existing vulnerabilities due to serious structural development challenges. With the onset of armed conflict, related displacements have amounted to over 4.7 million people across the region. As people flee escalating violence, individuals and families leave behind their productive assets, which disrupts agricultural production. As a result of this unprecedented regional displacement of people within and across countries of the basin, displaced peoples are being sheltered by host communities that count among the world’s most vulnerable, residing in areas long-lacking investment in basic services. Without access to fundamental social protection, such as basic health and education services, environmental degradation (a contributing factor to livelihood challenges, vulnerability, and indirect cause of crisis), is not prioritized amid the crisis.⁴⁴

It goes without saying that those 4 countries already experienced severe disparities in terms of gender inequalities before Boko Haram’s exactions. According to the Human Development Report, it varies from 0,7

⁴¹Enfinger, LCB Desk review. WFP, 2016.

⁴²Enfinger, LCB Desk review. WFP, 2016.

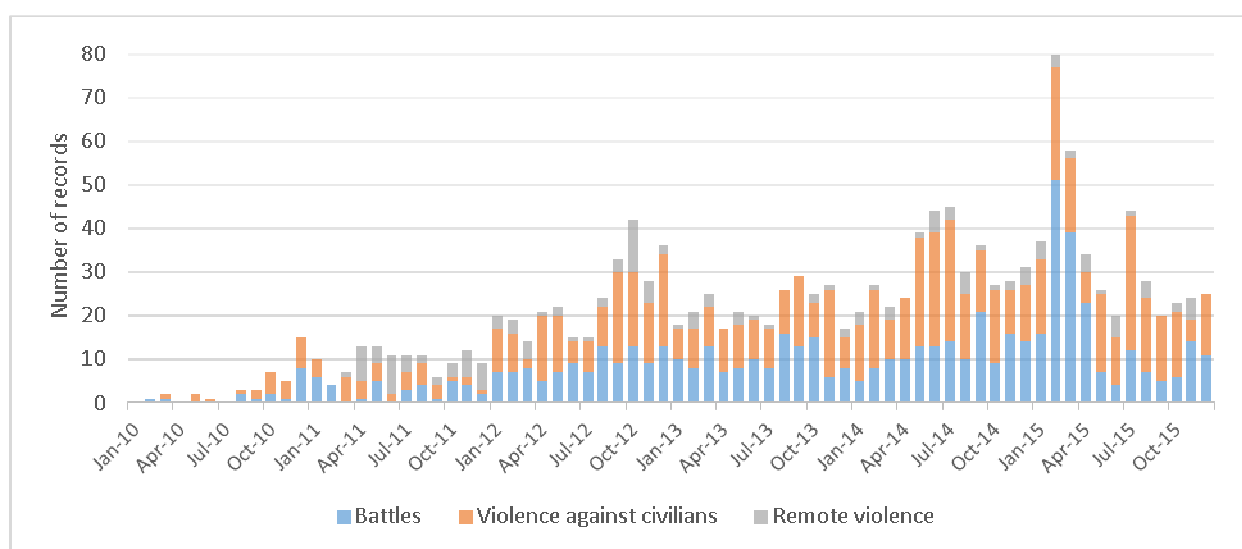
⁴³OCHA (2016, March 30). Chad: situation in the Lake region and the impact of the Nigerian crisis – Situation Report n° 12 (30/03/2016).

⁴⁴ (WFP RBD, Paige Enfinger) *Lake Chad Basin Desk Review Socio-Economic analysis of the Lake Chad Basin Region, focusing on Regional Environmental Factors, Armed Conflict, Gender and Food Security Issues*

in Niger and Chad to 0,6 in Cameroon. In terms of gender-based violence (GBV), terrorist activities led by Boko Haram caused a disruption of the weak but existing social and legal protection system, exacerbating the vulnerability of women and girls. More than 2/3 of women and girls who are IDP reported deprivation of freedom and severe trauma. Some 56% of interviewed women reported acts of verbal and psychological violence while 35,5% of them stated having blows and wounds from acts of physical violence.⁴⁵

In terms of economic rehabilitation, the victims admitted that the harsh conditions and acts of violence forced them to sacrifice economic goods. 79,3% of refugees and IDPs households lose their house and 62,8 % lose animals (cattle, sheep, etc.) Moreover, 59,5% lost one/many members of the family. In this way, the main needs expressed were farmland (94,3%) and food assistance (81,2%). In the context of such crisis, opportunities for income-generating activities (IGA) are scarce. However, in most households surveyed women contribute as much as men to the household expenses. Health and education of women and girls are the fundamental rights targeted by Boko Haram's ideology. In the affected areas, 87,8% of refugees and IDPs have malaria and only 35,4% of girls aged between 6-15 years old are educated. It emerges that decision-making process and participation of women to community life is somehow restricted and not consensual.⁴⁶

Figure 2: Violent activity by type in North Nigeria (Yobe, Adawama and Borno)



Source: ACLED

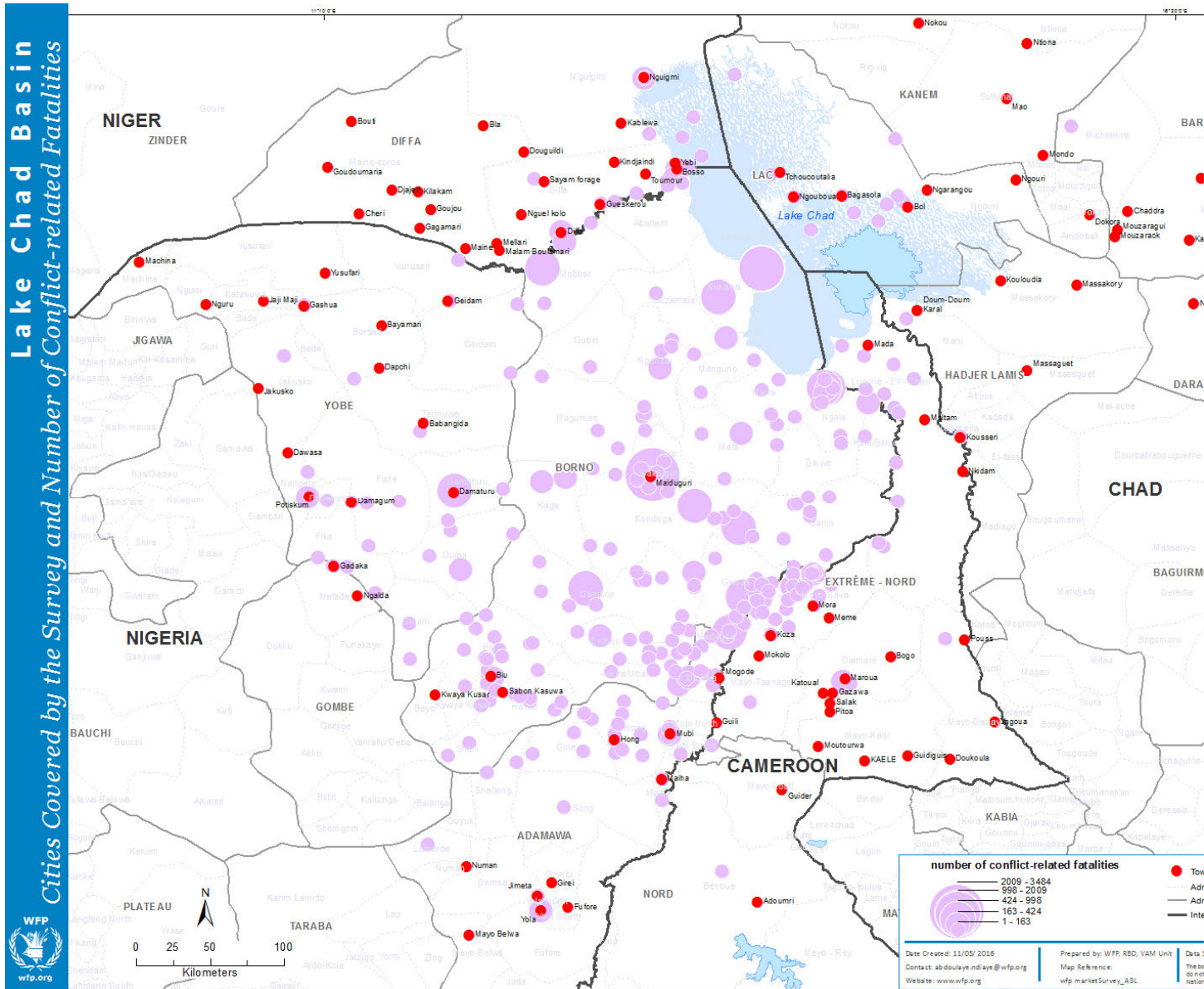
The value of the Nigerian naira has depreciated by more than 30 percent between December 2015 and February 2016 due primarily to reductions in oil sector revenues in 2015 (FEWS NET, 2016). This depreciation will reduce the purchasing power of Nigerian traders for imported goods, such as rice, wheat, and livestock and cash crops from the Sahel.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ (WFP RBD, Paige Enfinger) *Lake Chad Basin Desk Review Socio-Economic analysis of the Lake Chad Basin Region, focusing on Regional Environmental Factors, Armed Conflict, Gender and Food Security Issues*

⁴⁶ UN WOMEN (JANUARY 2016) *Situation of Women and Girls Facing the Humanitarian Crisis Generated by Boko Haram in Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon*

⁴⁷ Lake Chad Basin Regional Market Assessment, 2016.

Map 1: Number of conflict related fatalities between 2010 and 2015



Map produced by WFP/VAM Regional Bureau Dakar. Source: ACLED and trader survey

IV. Environmental Challenges and Gender

As one of the largest bodies of water in Africa, Lake Chad is a crucial ecosystem and vital water resource between the Sahel and Sahara deserts. The Lake's natural resources long served as a sort of oasis within neighboring arid landscapes. Today, continuing to retreat as it has done drastically over the past 40 years, the shrinking lake reveals new land for cultivation, but less and less water to irrigate growing agricultural areas. Even outside the confines of the Basin, particularly in Niger, Chad and Cameroon, millions of people depend on the lake's resources, for example as a springboard for agricultural production and other commodities (Odada et al., 2006). Hence, the ecosystem services are invaluable to the subsistence livelihoods of people throughout the region. Meanwhile increasing pressure on the soil and diminishing water sources have increasingly threatened the sustainability of these vital economic activities as the Basin's natural capital has been degraded. Colonial legacies, leaving the region carved into four political states forced to negotiate shared natural resources, inevitably set the stage for complicated public administration of territories surrounding Lake Chad. In addition to local political divisions, the geographic location exposes the basin to unique environmental pressures and international political influences. Despite the regional nature of the Basin's environmental issues, the status of conservation and development in the basin region depends on the practices and policies of Member States rather than on shared human and natural resources (Odada et al., 2006). Lake Chad is a dynamic body of water, constantly changing size, shape and depth, in response to even slight fluctuations in annual precipitation. Linked to three main drainage systems, the Lake's water sources have been modified under increasing competition.⁴⁸

Expanding desertification contributes to sources of social conflict, adding to obstacles to the livelihoods of local populations and their ability to ensure food security for their families. Lack of public evidential data, linguistic and cultural barriers, and poor institutional on hydrological issues of the Lake and impacts of climate change have generated widespread confusion and obstacles to communication regarding impacts on ecosystem health and natural resource management. The resulting blurred images of the underlying crises situation were reflected by ineffective public policy for environmental regulation and regional development planning. Despite dramatic drops in lake levels, collaborative political action was prohibited by lack of comprehensive information in the region. Rather than addressing water usage, the issue of lake water recession and scarcity in the Basin is treated with engineering solutions such as the Ubangi basin project, proposed in 1980 with the aim to control the hydrological systems by transferring water from the Ubangi River to "save" Lake Chad.⁴⁹

Today, with greater data availability and understanding of the impacts of climate change, the regional challenge remains to mobilize stakeholder capacities for strategic action planning. Natural rainfall variability, unsustainable water use, and climate change continue contributing to the drying of the lake, which catalyzes the shrinking of water. Hence, people of the Lake Chad Basin are denied sustainable access to vital water and protein resources despite having almost no responsibility for the activities contributing to human-induced climate change. This is a true story of global environmental injustice. The

⁴⁸ (WFP RBD, Paige Enfinger) *Lake Chad Basin Desk Review Socio-Economic analysis of the Lake Chad Basin Region, focusing on Regional Environmental Factors, Armed Conflict, Gender and Food Security Issues*

⁴⁹ (WFP RBD, Paige Enfinger) *Lake Chad Basin Desk Review Socio-Economic analysis of the Lake Chad Basin Region, focusing on Regional Environmental Factors, Armed Conflict, Gender and Food Security Issues*

remote inland location and arid climate make the Lake Chad Basin a difficult living environment where information deficit and neglect from policy makers complicate the poor economic situation. Given threats of climatic changes and desertification, unsustainable water management of Lake Chad can be seen as product of classic environmental economics phenomena of tragedy of the commons. Scientific literature is abundant on ecological disasters in the Basin, such as drought and desertification, dating from the 1970s, however water exploitation has intensified due to greater demographic pressures and competition from increased water scarcity, as well as from regional policy failures. As the size of the lake diminishes, so does the size, number, and variety of its fish. Biodiversity loss has continued despite national fishery conservation projects. These environmental challenges stresses are further obstacles to human development and food security. With the onset of humanitarian crisis, especially, ecosystem health is not prioritized before human survival. On the contrary, the crisis puts extra pressure on limited resources in the face of severe scarcity and chaos from the onset of regional conflict. Hence, environmental degradation appears both self-perpetuating and inevitable. Many reports link⁵⁰ environmental change, vulnerability and insecurity in the Lake Chad Basin, as competition and conflicts over the use of resources have increased in accordance with degradation within the Lake area. Gender-based vulnerabilities, such as gaps in access to resources and services, often define power relationships between men and women throughout West and Central Africa. According to the 2015 High Level Panel of Experts' report Water for Food Security and Nutrition problems of water scarcity tend to disproportionately affect poor and marginalized women, men and children, due to existing power imbalances, skewed access to resources, structural discrimination and gender inequalities. Furthermore, "[g]ender and other markers of identities continue to mould water allocation and access among users" (HLPE, 2015). Hence, the Lake Chad Basin's development crises, related to mismanagement of the Lake and its resources, exacerbate inequalities and issues of access associated with pre-existing gender-based vulnerabilities.⁵¹

The climate change effects on rural women are particularly severe, since women are traditionally responsible for fetching water as well as charcoal and wood. Endemic droughts restrain them from gaining easy access to these basic resources. In addition, women are the most vulnerable to food crises resulting from climate change effects as they are the ones taking care of children. For example the last food crisis of 2012 affected 3.6 million Chadians and during the same period the WFP estimated that 64% of households headed by women were food insecure.⁵²

⁵⁰See: (Okpara et al., 2015) *Conflicts about water in Lake Chad: are environmental, vulnerability and security issues linked?* <http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/91926/2/repository3.pdf>

⁵¹ (WFP RBD, Paige Enfinger) *Lake Chad Basin Desk Review Socio-Economic analysis of the Lake Chad Basin Region, focusing on Regional Environmental Factors, Armed Conflict, Gender and Food Security Issues*

⁵²United Nation Integrated Strategy Flagship Project (UN Women 2016) - *Economic Resilience of Rural Women and Girls in the G5-Sahel Region- Accelerating Economic Resilience of Women and Girls in Rural Areas Most Affected by Drought and Climate Change in the Five Priority Countries of the SAHEL (SWERP)*