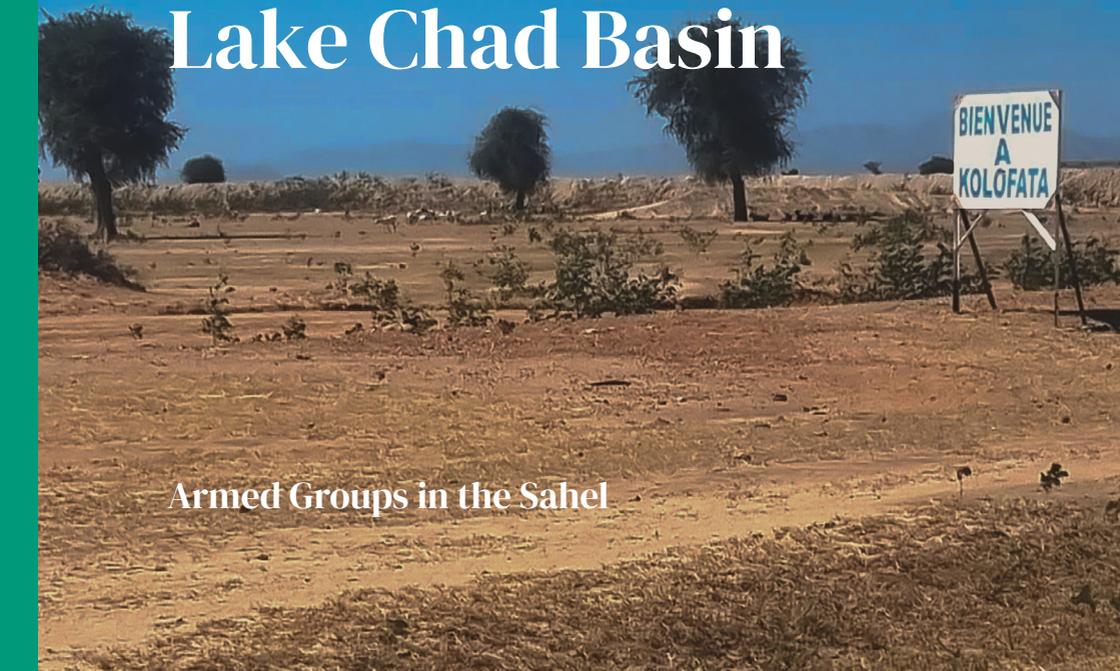# bicc report

*Milena Berks, Claudia Breitung, Oyewole Oginni,
Boubacar Haidara, Mustapha Alhassan, Adama Ousmanou,
Allah-Kauis Neneck, Allioum Tondandi, Amelie Philipsenburg*

Maximising Impact of Defection Programming in the Lake Chad Basin

Armed Groups in the Sahel

The role of women is not sufficiently recognised in the existing defection programming which generally limits their access to reintegration support. This is a fundamental flaw and testament to the misconception of female agency in the crisis.

Externally "imposed" reintegration measures put lives at risk—with irreversible and long-lasting consequences—and destroy prospects for lasting reconciliation.

Contents

"

Conflict analysis and defection programming focus on the Lake Chad Basin without taking sufficient account of key linkages among armed actors across national borders beyond the Basin—including, for instance, the Central African Republic, Sudan and Libya, contexts where DDR programmes have been or are being implemented.

"

Summary

Despite efforts by the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) over the past decade to address the protracted conflict involving Boko Haram and its splinter groups in the Lake Chad Basin, common integrated approaches to dealing with armed groups are lacking among member states. This *bicc report* focuses on several aspects that are promising for maximising impact.

Adopting a regional lens for conflict analysis in and around Lake Chad is paramount. At the time of writing, conflict analysis and defection programming focus on the Lake Chad Basin without taking sufficient account of key linkages among armed actors across national borders beyond the Basin—including, for instance, the Central African Republic, Sudan and Libya, contexts where disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programmes have been or are being implemented. Actors leading these efforts should coordinate, juxtapose and interlink programming to make it comprehensive and enhance regional impact to make it sustainable.

Political momentum around the revised regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko Haram-affected Areas of the Lake Chad Basin Region (RS-SRR) provides a window of opportunity for greater regional integration, with new priorities for community-oriented engagement and transitional justice. While transitional justice efforts provide an opportunity to support long-term reintegration and potential reconciliation, communities should be in the driving seat for these processes, as they often are not. Externally "imposed" reintegration measures put lives at risk—with irreversible and long-lasting consequences—and destroy prospects for lasting reconciliation. Defection programmes should take into account communities' different stages of recovery (some are still under frequent attack by armed groups while others have had time to start the healing process) and address their concerns about the reintegration of former Boko Haram associates, while prioritising community-based approaches and reparations.

In line with the new priorities of the revised RS-SRR, our research supports the need to enhance and prioritise community perspectives in conflict assessment and programming. Our findings suggest gaps between the perspectives of various stakeholders with implications for policy processes and debates on how to deal with those leaving armed groups. The perspectives of community members, traditional leaders, administrative authorities, and international actors in the field diverge

significantly. Transparent impact assessments that focus on the needs and perspectives of communities will help to develop more concrete and inclusive responses with greater impact on conflict-affected people.

Disappointed reintegration expectations are a driving force for re-recruitment into armed groups. Reintegration support that benefits former associates of armed groups alongside communities is crucial. Attempts to disengage from armed groups do not necessarily sever the ties between those who wish to leave and armed groups. Armed groups, such as Boko Haram, use former associates for intelligence and other activities, which increases mistrust of these individuals in receiving communities. Our research in Nigeria's Borno State, for instance, reveals that re-recruitment is ongoing and partly linked to disillusionment with the rehabilitation and reintegration process, unmet expectations and difficulties for former Boko Haram associates in sustaining their livelihoods after defection. To incentivise defection, there needs to be frequent rotation in and out of the rehabilitation centres, otherwise, the risk of stagnation (due to prolonged stays in the centres) may push former associates back to the armed groups they left.

Greater focus on women and girls is needed in defection programming. They are key actors at various stages of the insurgency. Effective programming must take into account their pathways into and out of armed groups, their role in facilitating defections and reintegrating former members into communities and wider reconciliation efforts within and among communities. The role of women is not sufficiently recognised in the existing defection programming which generally limits their access to reintegration support. This is a fundamental flaw and testament to the misconception of female agency in the crisis. ●

"

Despite the increased emphasis on community-based and community-centred engagement in crisis responses in the Lake Chad Basin, including defection programming, gaps remain.

"

Introduction

The challenge of disengaging individuals from armed groups is a pressing issue in the Lake Chad Basin and other parts of the Greater Sahel. The ongoing conflict involving Boko Haram and its splinter groups—Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'adati wal-Jihad (JAS) and the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP)—has destabilised the region and led to large-scale violence, displacement and humanitarian crises.

Although Boko Haram's[1] military capabilities and territorial control have been significantly degraded in recent years, the insurgents continue to

---

[1]   Boko Haram was founded in 2002 by Mohammed Yusuf in Maiduguri, Nigeria. Following Yusuf's death in 2009, Abubakar Shekau became the new leader. In 2015, Boko Haram pledged allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) leading to the rebranding of Boko Haram as the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) (International Crisis Group, 2020; Foucher, 2024). This prompted internal rivalries and led to the creation of a new faction called Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'adati wal-Jihad (JAS) led by Shekau. In this *bicc report,* we use Boko Haram as an umbrella term for all factions formed since 2002. The group and its splinter groups have been designated as terrorist organisations by the United Nations Security Council. The terminology of armed groups designated as terrorist organisations (AGDTO) will also be used throughout this *report*.

pose a major security threat. The degradation of Boko Haram's military capabilities is due to the military pressure from the armies of the region but most importantly to Boko Haram's leadership struggle and subsequent split into ISWAP and JAS and the in-fighting between the groups that occurred after Shekau (former Boko Haram leader) died in 2021. While JAS in particular attracted recruits before 2021, in part because it offered food security and socio-economic incentives, these factors have become less relevant. JAS, like many communities in the Lake Chad Basin, is struggling to feed its members and has resorted to looting and stealing from communities using banditry tactics. Reduced military capacities have created a window of opportunity, but it might soon close.

The insurgents continue to carry out attacks, above all, in remote borderlands. Northeastern Nigeria (Borno State) and areas around Lake Chad continue to suffer from Boko Haram's activities. In recent months, Islamist militants have frequently carried out attacks, kidnappings and thefts targeting rural farmers and villages (Foster-Collins, 2025). The insurgents' evolving tactics, such as the use of drones, and their persistent attacks on military installations in Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon and Niger highlight their remaining operational capabilities and resilience (Eboh, 2025).

As a result of these ongoing threats to peace posed by Boko Haram, the governments in Cameroon, Chad, Nigeria and Niger have developed and implemented various defection programmes to encourage and manage the disengagement, disassociation, reintegration and reconciliation (DDRR) (IOM, 2021) of individuals exiting these groups. DDRR approaches recognise that in contexts of violent extremism, one or more of the preconditions for disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) are missing, that is, the signing of a ceasefire or peace agreement, confidence in the peace process, willingness of the parties to the conflict to engage in DDR and minimum security guarantees for the implementation of a DDR programme. For this reason, we refer to DDRR throughout this *bicc report.* When the term of "defection

programming" is used, it serves as an umbrella term for DDRR programming and is used in synonym.

DDRR programmes complement the individual defections of former Boko Haram members that take place at an informal level managed by community stakeholders in border villages (Mbarkoutou & Barka, 2018), referred to in this *report* as 'self-demobilisation'.

After years of engagement, efforts by international, regional, national and local actors to support the defection of former members from armed groups designated as terrorist organisations (AGDTO), such as Boko Haram, remain fragmented and face significant legal, institutional, logistical and community-related challenges. Communities bear the brunt of the crisis; they are the first to be affected by armed violence and its aftermath, and they are also at the heart of long-term reintegration and reconciliation efforts. Despite the increased emphasis on community-based and community-centred engagement in crisis responses in the Lake Chad Basin, including defection programming, gaps remain. A deeper understanding, analysis and inclusion of community perspectives—particularly in the remote borderlands covered by our research—are central to improving the impact of defection programming.

We, therefore, examine the challenges of current defection programming by zooming in on community perceptions of defection processes, which we measured through empirical research in 20 border provinces in Nigeria, Cameroon and Chad[2]. Participants in the research included

---

2 The project followed a mixed methods approach with data being collected between March and November 2023. The primary data collection method included 316 expert and semi-structured interviews and a large-scale survey reaching 4,575 people in 20 border provinces and more than 40 border localities.

ex-combatants and former associates of armed groups[3], members of conflict-affected communities and individuals living in communities where former associates/ex-combatants have integrated, local authorities (traditional and governmental), civil society representatives, members of religious denominations, international and local organisations (non-governmental and community-based organisations, United Nations funds and programmes), research institutions, security providers (including the military and police) and local entrepreneurs and people in business.

Our research provides important insights for current policy debates on the effectiveness, current limitations and possible improvements of defection programming across the Lake Chad Basin. We begin our analysis in Chapter 2 with a comparative overview of the different policy frameworks and operational strategies that aim to support defections from Boko Haram in Chad, Nigeria and Cameroon. To complement our analysis of national-level defection efforts, Chapter 3 then focuses on current crisis responses at the regional level. This part highlights how efforts at the national and regional levels are coordinated and how this affects defection programming in communities. Chapter 4 discusses community attitudes and perceptions towards defection programming in the Lake Chad Basin borderlands (local level). Based on the preceding analysis, Chapter 5 presents a series of recommendations on how to increase the impact of defection programming in the region by addressing the community, national and regional dimensions. ●

---

[3] Whether the terms "ex-combatant" and "former associate" are used makes an important difference as they refer to the different levels of engagement within armed groups designated as terrorist organisations (AGDTO), which has direct legal implications for the individuals concerned. While "ex-combatant" implies an active role within the group that is subject to prosecution in the absence of other legal provisions (ineligibility for DDRR processes and programmes), "former associate" refers to a person who was previously associated with an armed group. The determination of association and ex-association is contingent on a screening process. The screening process and identification of an ex-associate establishes eligibility for rehabilitation and reintegration in a non-prison custodial or prison setting. This is not a legal status, as it is determined by the State (IOM, 2021).
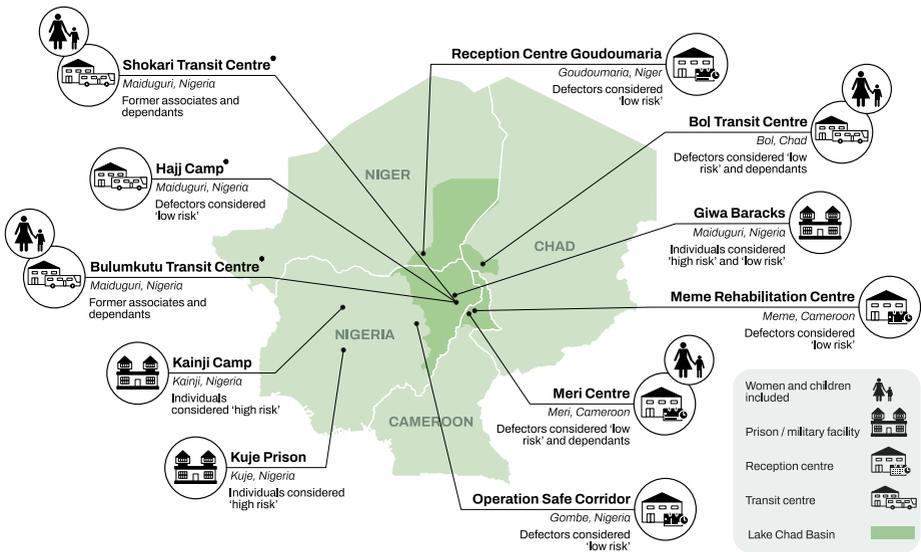
Defection Programmes in the Lake Chad Basin

A particularity of defection processes in the Lake Chad Basin is that the two main Boko Haram splinter groups, JAS and ISWAP, are armed groups designated as terrorist organisations by the UN Security Council.[4] Defections from these groups are subject to different legal frameworks and guidance than, for instance, those for groups that are not designated as terrorist organisations.

---

[4] Important UN Security Council Resolutions to consider regarding the disengagement from armed groups designated as terrorist organisations (AGDTO): S/RES/1373 (2001), S/RES/2178 (2014), S/RES/2396 (2017), S/RES/2349 (2017).

Cameroon, Chad, Nigeria and Niger have adopted national strategies to counter violent extremism and programmes to deal with those defecting from Boko Haram, recognising the urgent need to develop strong policies to address the defection processes of former Boko Haram members (see Map 1).

MAP 1: LOCATIONS OF DEFECTION PROGRAMMES IN THE LAKE CHAD BASIN

Shokari Transit Centre
Maiduguri, Nigeria
Former associates and dependants

Hajj Camp
Maiduguri, Nigeria
Defectors considered 'low risk'

Bulumkutu Transit Centre
Maiduguri, Nigeria
Former associates and dependants

Kainji Camp
Kainji, Nigeria
Individuals considered 'high risk'

Kuje Prison
Kuje, Nigeria
Individuals considered 'high risk'

Reception Centre Goudoumaria
Goudoumaria, Niger
Defectors considered 'low risk'

Bol Transit Centre
Bol, Chad
Defectors considered 'low risk' and dependants

Giwa Baracks
Maiduguri, Nigeria
Individuals considered 'high risk' and 'low risk'

Meme Rehabilitation Centre
Meme, Cameroon
Defectors considered 'low risk'

Meri Centre
Meri, Cameroon
Defectors considered 'low risk' and dependants

Operation Safe Corridor
Gombe, Nigeria
Defectors considered 'low risk'

NIGER
CHAD
NIGERIA
CAMEROON

Women and children included
Prison / military facility
Reception centre
Transit centre
Lake Chad Basin

Data: Natural Earth Dataset

•the Borno Model includes transfer of former associates through this transit centre

However, defection programmes vary significantly from country to country (see Table 1 for an overview). In an environment such as the Lake Chad Basin, where combatants move relatively freely across borders, this is problematic because differences in the treatment of defectors may further fuel instability. For instance, if defection policies are not coordinated regionally, combatants may move to areas with more favourable surrender or amnesty conditions. This may also allow them to more easily

conceal their identity and past involvement in the conflict. It also often leads to and encourages 'double-dipping', whereby former members of armed groups may defect in one place, collect benefits, and do so again in another process across the border. Some of our respondents have participated in three different processes. Close coordination and information sharing is key to preventing this dynamic. Indeed, there are still significant differences in the strategic and programmatic approaches of Boko Haram-affected countries to defections: While some countries

TABLE 1: COMPONENTS OF DEFECTION PROCESSES IN LCB COUNTRIES

Components of defection process	Cameroon (Far North)	Chad (Bol)	Niger (Goudoumaria)	Nigeria (Operation Safe Corridor)	Nigeria (Borno model)
Eligibility criteria established based on risk category (high/low)	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
Specific national institution newly established to deal with the process	yes	yes	no	no	no
Specific legal framework for the process in place	yes	yes	no	yes	no
Process strategy document available	no	yes	yes	yes	yes
Strictly centre-based approach	yes	no	yes	yes	partly
1st entry point of defectors with national security forces	yes	yes	partly	yes	yes
Transparent disarmament process of defectors and Weapons and Ammunition Management (WAM) procedures	no	no	no	no	no
Detailed screening procedures	yes	yes	yes	yes	partly
Separation of women and children in the process	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Structured rehabilitation process	no	no	yes	yes	no
Prosecution or other legal processes	no	no	yes	yes	partly
Long-term reintegration support	no	no	no	yes	no
In-depth follow-up monitoring and evaluation	no	no	no	no	no

Strategic / Institutional
Programmatic / Operational
yes
no
partly

have the necessary strategic documents and frameworks to guide defection programming, others still lack them. There are also differences in the programmatic approaches (centre-based or not) that influence the security dynamics in borderland communities and the activities of armed groups. We turn to this issue after presenting the different models in Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon.

In Niger (see Annex 1 for a visualisation of the process), the national programme for the support of former members of Boko Haram (2018) was revised and extended in 2021 (*Programme national de prise en charge de la reddition au Niger,* PNPCR).

KEY FACTS: PNPCR

Location	Goudoumaria, Diffa region, Niger
Programme launch	2018 (with a revised and extended orientation in 2021)
Institutional framework	High Authority for Peace Consolidation, Ministry of the Interior; other ministries included (pan-government approach); Central Service in the fight against terrorism; international partners (IOs and NGOs)
Target group/ eligibility criteria	Former associates that voluntarily surrender and have not committed war crimes and crimes against humanity; specific categorisation system based on acts committed in the group (e.g. voluntary and involuntary accession to the group; holding weapons and committing crimes during time in the group)
Caseload	Centre capacity of 500 individuals (~ 1,500 as of 2018)
Strategic approach	Centre-based rehabilitation support followed by (limited, short-term) reintegration support in communities
Programme duration	Planned to not exceed 6–12 months (individuals, however, stayed much longer)

The programme stipulates that any person who has voluntarily surrendered is eligible for a rehabilitation and reintegration programme if he or she has not committed war crimes or crimes against humanity. Under national law, voluntary surrender exempts individuals from prosecution if they have not committed such crimes. The reception centre in Goudoumaria has a capacity of 500 people. It offers rehabilitation through psychosocial support, deradicalisation and vocational training, including literacy classes. This centre-based approach faced significant challenges in terms of the length of time beneficiaries stayed at the centre. The first group was unable to leave the centre for over two years. Subsequent groups stayed for shorter periods but faced similar challenges regarding the sustainability of their reintegration activities. Monitoring and evaluation activities were difficult to implement due to lack of funding. In Nigeria, a defectors programme called Operation Safe Corridor (OPSC) (see Annex 2 for a visualisation of the process) for "low-risk" former associates of JAS and ISWAP located in Gombe State, was established in 2015 on the initiative of the president.

KEY FACTS: OPERATION SAFE CORRIDOR (OPSC)

Location	Mallam Sidi, Gombe State, Nigeria (location of rehabilitation centre)
Programme launch	2016
Institutional framework	Led by the Nigerian military, supported by government agencies, international agencies and partners, NGOs
Target group/ eligibility criteria	Repentant low-risk male Boko Haram members who have voluntarily surrendered/ defected (initial screening for high-risk vs. low-risk)
Caseload	Over 2,000 former associates (as of February 2025)
Strategic approach	Centre-based rehabilitation support followed by (limited, short-term) reintegration support in communities
Programme duration	6–12 months (in rehabilitation centre)

Although reported figures vary, OPSC is said to have profiled and trans-ferred over 2,000 former associates to Borno State for further reintegration support. Led by the Nigerian military, OPSC includes strong screening mechanisms and is based on the core distinction between "low risk" and "high risk" individuals. This is determined by a Joint Investigation Center where interviews with community members and vigilante group members from the respective areas determine who falls into which category. In a context of extreme distress where intra and inter-community rifts run deep, this process has raised questions among respondents about its level of accountability. This illustrates the challenges of con-ducting reliable investigations that adhere to do-no-harm principles in active conflict settings. The same is true of exhaustive screening proce-dures that lack reliable information and options for robust investigation and fact-finding. This is not to say that this should not be aspired to and worked towards, but a clear perspective on its limitations is essential so as not to derail processes that need urgent pragmatic action without encouraging outright impunity (Oginni, 2023; Routley & Idayat, 2022).

Beyond the categorisation of who could and could not enter OPSC, the programme's location in another state (Gombe) also poses logistical challenges, with most beneficiaries coming from Borno or Adamawa states. So-called "graduates" have also remained in the camp far be-yond the time initially foreseen for them and have faced significant chal-lenges in reintegrating (back) into communities. Despite the limitations in case processing and the financial burden, interviewees highlighted the positive differences of individuals going through the process compared to shorter and less structured programmes such as the Borno Model.

To deal with the so-called "mass exits" in the northeast since 2021, Borno State has developed the 'Borno Model' for managing the mass surrender situation (see Annex 3 for a visualisation of the process).

KEY FACTS: THE BORNO MODEL

Location	Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria
Programme launch	2021
Institutional framework	Led by the Borno State government, supported by government agencies, international agencies and partners, NGOs
Target group/eligibility criteria	Former Boko Haram members and associates, including women and children, IDPs who fled Boko Haram-occupied territory
Caseload	> 93,000 (early 2023)*
Strategic approach	Centre-based rehabilitation support followed by (limited, short-term) reintegration support in communities
Programme duration	6–12 months (in rehabilitation centre, time varies)

*Data on the caseload varies. This is official data communicated in the 'One UN offer'.

The programme is state-led and focuses on managing those who have exited the insurgency on a larger scale approach with a stronger community-based reintegration element than, for instance, OPSC. The Borno Model aims to intervene through five integrated processes, from the moment of exit to the reintegration at the community level and deals with a caseload reportedly exceeding 93,000 people (status early 2023), including those in the hands of the authorities (around 4,000) and those already categorised as farmers (around 35,000 men and 22,000 women and children) living in the areas controlled by the insurgents in need of support to return to their communities. The large number of defectors has overwhelmed the capacity of national authorities. Most of those who return are said to be farmers from occupied territories who are not eligible for any kind of DDRR assistance. The model remains opaque in terms of its screening processes, which have been largely impossible given the sheer size of the caseload. It is also unclear at the time of writing how the model intersects or will intersect with OPSC.

Chad and Cameroon have had less structured approaches over the years. Cameroon established a National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (CNDDR) in November 2018 and opened a temporary transit centre in Meri, Mayo-Tsanaga Division (see Annex 4 for a visualisation of the process).

KEY FACTS: CNDDR PROGRAMME IN CAMEROON'S FAR NORTH REGION

Location	Meri, Mayo-Tsanaga Division (temporary transit centre), Meme, Mayo Sava Division (rehabilitation centre), Far North Region, Cameroon
Programme launch	2018
Institutional framework	Led by the CNDDR, supported by international agencies and partners, NGOs
Target group/eligibility criteria	Former Boko Haram members/ associates, including women and children
Caseload	Approx. 5,000 (as of January 2025)*
Strategic approach	Centre-based rehabilitation support and reinsertion assistance
Programme duration	Not determined (time varies)

*The number varies once again according to different sources.

Former associates interviewed in Meri expressed concerns about the lack of rehabilitation support, which has prompted individuals to return to Boko Haram. To address these shortcomings, the CNDDR inaugurated another centre in Meme, Mayo Sava Division, in December 2024 which has a capacity to receive more than 1,000 individuals.

In Chad, an interministerial committee and a piloting committee have been set up to deal with the disengagement, disassociation, reintegration and reconciliation (DDRR) of former associates of Boko Haram.

The National Committee has made progress since 2022 in developing a national DDRR strategy, which was validated in 2024 (see Annex 5 for a visualisation of the process). It also includes an emphasis on a centre-based approach, mainly requested by national authorities, for the Lac region in Bol and Bagasola, where a transit centre is planned. However, no concrete funding has yet been identified.

KEY FACTS: DDRR IN CHAD

Location	Bol & Bagasola, Lac Region, Chad (planned, not yet operational)
Programme launch	2019
Institutional framework	Led by the DDRR-Steering Committee established by Decree N°149; the committee includes 13 representatives of different ministries (interministerial approach). In 2024, Chad adopted a national DDRR strategy
Target group/eligibility criteria	Individual risk categorisation in collaboration with the judicial and security services
Caseload	Approx. 2,500 former associates*
Strategic approach	Open community-based approach
Programme duration	Short initial support provided to former associates; no long-term support

*Reported defection numbers vary according to different sources.

The above overview of national defection programmes shows that there are significant differences in the strategic and operational approach to the problem—differences which we now examine in more detail.

The existence of a strategic document and the relevant legal framework on defections has a strong impact on the implementation of relevant activities at the operational and programmatic levels. In Cameroon and Chad, either one or the other is lacking, creating obstacles to subsequent programme implementation. Given the legal and strategic clarity in Nigeria and Niger, the PNPCR and OPSC have made it easier to

leverage support from international partners and donors than other approaches. A clear roadmap helps to guide joint action and can build confidence in the process among (international) partners. It also helps to increase accountability for action in contexts of violent extremism where counter-terrorism frameworks lack transparency. We will return to this aspect when we address the disarmament component. Linked to the strategic approach is the question of eligibility, that is who can and cannot participate in a defection process. Depending on what the eligibility criteria are (e.g. amnesty or no amnesty, high risk and low risk, etc.), former associates will choose where to defect. This may make it easier for them to hide their identity and past involvement in the conflict. It also often leads to and encourages the phenomenon of 'double-dipping', whereby former members of armed groups defect in one place, collect benefits and do so again in another process across the border. Some of our respondents have participated in three different processes. Exchange among programme managers at the regional level is key to avoiding this dynamic.

The existence of a strategic document and the relevant legal framework on defections has a strong impact on the implementation of relevant activities at the operational and programmatic levels.

The type of strategic approach (centre-based or non-centre-based) also plays an important role. The centre-based nature of the two defection programmes in Niger (Goudoumaria) and Nigeria (OPSC) also provided programmatic clarity within a well-defined framework, but the comparatively small caseload and high maintenance costs represent the bottleneck of such centre-based approaches.

There are other difficulties with centre-based approaches besides the high cost of maintaining them. Particular challenges arise when the length of time people stay in the centres is unclear or undefined. For instance, in Meri, the temporary transit site in Cameroon, former associates stayed at the centre for several years with very uncertain prospects of future reintegration. This dynamic is similar to the experience of former Boko Haram associates at OPSC, as well as at the Goudoumaria reception centre in Niger, where individuals spent up to several years

before being reintegrated into communities. This period of ambiguity is dangerous, as Boko Haram can use the camps specifically for re-recruitment. Another challenge in the reintegration process arises when women and children are not separated from men in the centres. While some countries/ programmes have clear regulations in this regard (e.g. Chad, Niger and OPSC in Nigeria), other programmes have lax rules regarding the separation of women and children from men. There is a separate facility for women in Maiduguri (Bulumkutu camp), but in Hajj camp (also in Maiduguri), former Boko Haram members are allowed to stay with their wives and children. In Meri (Cameroon) transit centre, inhabitants also live in a mixed-gender environment. This is particularly problematic as women, especially those who have experienced gender-based violence (GBV) during the conflict, may feel unsafe. Separation helps to provide a secure space for their recovery and reintegration.

Furthermore, 'disarmament' and 'demobilisation'[5] are both mentioned in the Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko Haram-affected Areas of the Lake Chad Basin Region (SR-RSS) adopted by the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) and the African Union (AU) in 2018. Yet, at the time of writing, they are not part of any defection programming in the Lake Chad Basin. In the absence of a peace agreement that outlines clear steps for the disarmament and demobilisation of combatants, defections in contexts involving AGDTO take place in an ad hoc and less transparent or controlled manner. Boko Haram members often defect to national authorities without their weapons.

---

[5] Demobilisation as part of a traditional DDR programme is the separation of members of armed forces and groups from military command and control structures and their transition to civilian status. The first stage of demobilisation is about the formal and controlled discharge of members of armed forces and groups in designated sites. Reinsertion, the second stage of demobilisation, is transitional assistance provided for a period of up to one year, prior to reintegration support (United Nations, 2021). In the context of voluntary exits, individual 'demobilisation' is often referred to as 'disengagement' and 'disassociation' (terms may vary across countries while reflecting the individual's transition to civilian life).

However, transparent disarmament processes are crucial for achieving peace and sustainable reintegration. It helps build trust when ex-combatants transparently hand over their weapons, which are sometimes publicly destroyed. At the time of writing, in the Lake Chad Basin, neither consistent individual nor collective disarmament is part of the defection processes. Rather, sporadic individual disarmament takes place when the military of each Lake Chad Basin country or the MNJTF captures Boko Haram fighters or receives individuals who surrender with weapons. A new standard operating procedure (SOP), which sets out the principles and the procedures for the MNJTF's management of recovered weapons, is in place and aims to reduce the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) within the MNJTF area of operations. Despite the MNJTF's efforts, national authorities, the Lake Chad Basin Commission but also international actors, such as the United Nations have not sufficiently prioritised the management of weapons and ammunition of those who have left Boko Haram in the past years (ODA, DPO & LCBC, 2022). Many of our interviewees indicate that weapons of defectors are either not handed over to the security forces or are even buried underground for later use. This lack of transparency in the disarmament process is counterproductive to sustainable reintegration, as communities fear that defectors may return to the armed group at any moment.

> **In the Lake Chad Basin, neither consistent individual nor collective disarmament is part of the defection processes.**

As the comparison above shows, despite progress, government efforts to reintegrate former Boko Haram members in Niger, Nigeria, Chad and Cameroon, still face significant challenges. Niger's PNPCR and Nigeria's OPSC provide structured rehabilitation, but funding, prolonged stays in reception centres and accountability concerns hinder effectiveness. The Borno Model prioritises community reintegration but struggles with transparency and capacity. Cameroon and Chad's DDRR initiatives face financial and implementation setbacks. Divergent national legal frameworks on AGDTO pose additional challenges to joint regional approaches to the common security threat posed by these groups. ●

A Regional Lens

One of the main regional initiatives to support disengagement from Boko Haram is the Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko Haram-affected Areas of the Lake Chad Basin Region (RS-SRR). It structures interventions around nine pillars.

Pillar 3 on "Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation, Reinsertion and Reintegration of Persons associated with Boko Haram" puts forth a regional approach to harmonising "screening, prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration", while keeping it "context-specific" and "tailored to the specific needs" of the conflict situation and different armed groups, including women and children (LCBC & AU, 2018).

The first implementation phase of the strategy ended in August 2023, after which the Lake Chad Basin Commission launched a comprehensive review, which was completed in late 2024. The revised version of the RS-SRR strongly emphasises community-based approaches and strengthening regional cooperation and governance in the countries of the Lake Chad Basin. The newly adopted Community-Based Reconciliation and Reintegration (CBRR) policy (2024) will play a central role in enhancing reintegration efforts across countries in a coordinated manner.

While the revised version of the RS-SRR emphasises "a common approach [at the regional level] to the handling of Boko Haram-associated persons involv[ing] shared standards, tools, and protocols [and including] youth-sensitive screening, profiling, categorisation, centre-based rehabilitation (outside of criminal justice), community-based reconciliation, and transitional justice processes" (LCBC & AU, 2018, p. 29), present programming, as outlined above, shows fundamental differences at the strategic and operational levels.

Beyond coordinated approaches among countries in the Lake Chad Basin, other disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) processes in the wider region have an impact on DDRR efforts in the Lake Chad Basin. Our research shows that considering armed group dynamics and DDR programming in countries such as the Central African Republic (also a member of the LCBC Commission since 1998), Libya (which joined the LCBC in 2008) and Sudan is critical to developing durable solutions in the Sahelian borderlands, an argument also supported by previous research (Chauvin et al., 2020; Kurtz, 2024; Tubiana & Gramizzi, 2017).

For example, since the signing of the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic (APPR-RCA) between the Central African government and 14 armed groups in early 2019, the dynamics of armed groups in the Central African Republic have changed significantly. At the time of the first research visit (end of 2023), there were violent clashes between the Central African Armed Forces and members of the rebel Coalition of Patriots for Change (CPC), which was formed in 2020 in direct violation of the peace agreement. The CPC is led by former Central African President Bozizé, who until recently was exiled in N'Djamena, Chad, along with other key rebel figures, as part of the Luanda Joint Roadmap for Peace, an initiative to try to restart peace talks with key rebel groups after the failure of the APPR-RCA. The coalition includes central armed groups, such as the FPRC and

> Some armed groups have a large stake in the lucrative regional cattle market, their main source of livelihood, and link armed actors regionally across countries in Chad, Sudan, Cameroon and Nigeria.
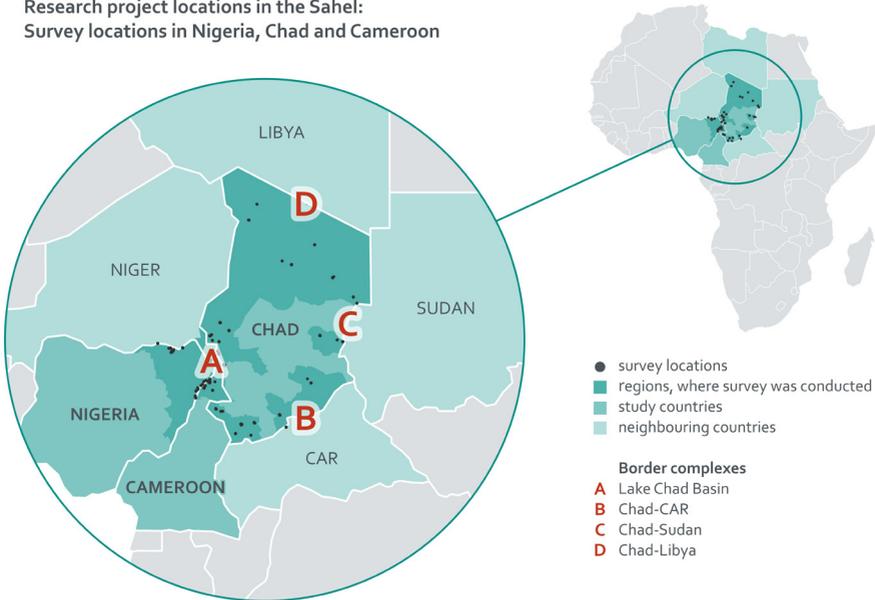

Cattle market in Maiduguri, Nigeria. Over eight different breeds of cattle from Chad, Cameroon and Nigeria, as well as livestock from Sudan, could be found here that day. The price of the cattle on the left was 1,200,000.00 FCFA (~ US $2,000). Picture: ©bicc/ Milena Berks, January 2025

MPC, as well as the Fulani-based armed groups UPC and 3R. These armed groups have a large stake in the lucrative regional cattle market, their main source of livelihood, and link armed actors regionally across countries in Chad, Sudan, Cameroon and Nigeria.

In 2023, 3R launched a campaign to persuade herders who had fled to Cameroon or Chad to return to CAR (Beevor & Bish, 2024). Interviewees in Gore, southern Chad, told us of frequent attacks by 3R. This was mentioned again during recent fieldwork in December 2024 on the Chad–Cameroon border (see Map 2).

MAP 2: FIELD RESEARCH LOCATIONS

Research project locations in the Sahel:
Survey locations in Nigeria, Chad and Cameroon

- survey locations
- regions, where survey was conducted
- study countries
- neighbouring countries

Border complexes
A Lake Chad Basin
B Chad-CAR
C Chad-Sudan
D Chad-Libya

Ben Buchenau, Oyewole Oginni, bicc. March 2024. Sources: Own field study, Natural Earth, 2024; OCHA HDX, 2022.

Adopting a regional lens for conflict analysis in and around Lake Chad is a prerequisite for understanding central linkages between armed actors across national borders. It is therefore critical for the design, planning and implementation of defection programming at the national level, as armed groups and combatants operate across borders and impact conflict settings regionally. The lack of coordination, exchange and linkages between defection and DDR programming across regions enables the 'recycling' of combatants from conflict to conflict, contributing to the prolongation of conflict rather than its resolution. Actors who lead these efforts should coordinate, juxtapose and interlink programming to make it more comprehensive and increase its impact at the regional level. This would also make a difference to border communities affected by armed group violence. ●

"

Respondents saw fewer obstacles to reintegration if there was a sufficient level of trust that former Boko Haram members had completely disengaged from the group and its ideology and would not resort to violence again.

"

Community Perceptions

Communities in the Lake Chad Basin are bearing the brunt of the crisis: They are the first to be affected by armed violence and its consequences and they are also at the heart of long-term reintegration and reconciliation efforts. Despite a greater emphasis on community-based and -centred engagement in crisis response in the Lake Chad Basin, including in the context of defection programming, there remain fundamental gaps in the integration of affected communities' perspectives into such programming. A deeper understanding, analysis, and inclusion of community perspectives—particularly in the remote borderlands covered by our research—are central to improving the impact of defection programming.

Visibility or awareness of DDRR programmes is low in all borderland communities studied for this research. Only 17 per cent of our survey respondents in Chad said that they were aware of such programmes, compared to 41 per cent and 47 per cent in Cameroon and Nigeria. Given that many countries have strategic communication strategies in place (Chad, Niger and Nigeria), and that sensitisation and awareness-raising activities are among the core activities of many programmes, this raises central questions about the effectiveness and impact of these community engagements.

TABLE 2: ARE YOU AWARE OF ANY PROGRAMMES IN YOUR AREA THAT HELP COMBATANTS TO LEAVE ARMED GROUPS AND REINTEGRATE INTO SOCIETY (E.G. DDRR)?

	Region	Country		
Response	LCB	Nigeria	Chad	Cameroon
Yes	43%	47%	17%	41%
No	57%	53%	83%	59%

Despite their lack of awareness, respondents in all the LCB countries covered by our research (Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon) indicate that DDRR programmes should be prioritised over a military response[6] (see Table 3). Eighty per cent of respondents in Chad, 57 per cent in Nigeria, and 65 per cent in Cameroon agree. The relationship between the state security forces (the military) and communities is particularly relevant when interpreting these results. In Chad, the relationship remains challenging, and there are trust issues, which may partly explain the positive assessment of non-military approaches such as DDRR.

---

[6] As a military response, we consider counterterrorist efforts and combat operations.

TABLE 3: DO YOU THINK DDRR-RELATED PROGRAMMES SHOULD BE PRIORITISED OVER A MILITARY RESPONSE?

Response	Region	Country		
	LCB	Nigeria	Chad	Cameroon
Yes	54%	57%	80%	65%
No	46%	43%	20%	45%

In line with the large majority of respondents indicating that DDRR programming should be prioritised over military engagement, over 87 per cent of respondents in the Lake Chad Basin believe that DDRR initiatives should be strengthened. When broken down by county, communities in Nigeria are particularly supportive of DDRR (with 84 per cent in favour of strengthening DDRR initiatives), while respondents in Chad (8 per cent) and Cameroon (19 per cent) were more cautious, which may be partly related to their level of exposure to these programmes.

TABLE 4: DO YOU THINK DDRR INITIATIVES SHOULD BE STRENGTHENED?

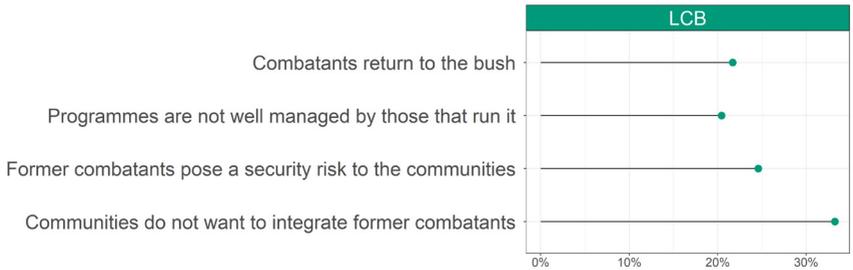| Response	Region	Country		
	LCB	Nigeria	Chad	Cameroon
Yes	87%	84%	19%	8%
No	13%	16%	81%	92%

Despite the overall support for DDRR programming, communities also identified several challenges in reintegrating former Boko Haram members into communities. Almost 40 per cent of respondents in the Lake Chad Basin said that communities do not want to integrate former Boko Haram associates, partly because they are seen as a security risk, which is more than one-third of respondents. This contradicts frequent statements by representatives of international or local organisations,

as well as local authorities, who have repeatedly stated that community acceptance of former Boko Haram associates in the Lake Chad Basin would not be a challenge. This is also in line with previous research that found that the failure to address the concerns of local communities in policy and defection programming severely undermines the prospect of successful and effective reintegration of ex-Boko Haram associates (Ugwueze et al., 2022; Ogunnubi & Aja, 2022).
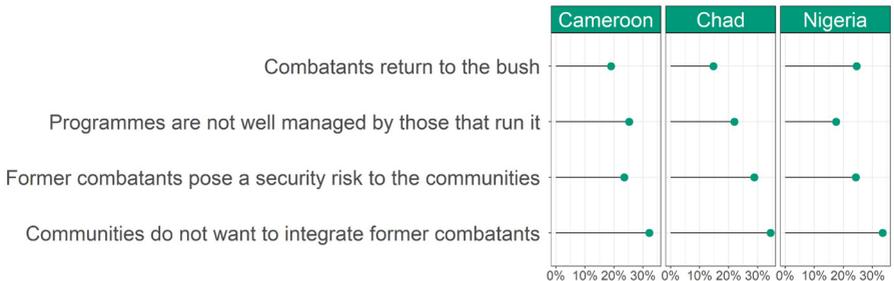
Nevertheless, it is important to note that around two-thirds of respondents did not see the reintegration of ex-combatants into their communities as a major challenge. Community members identified socio-economic interactions between ex-Boko Haram and community members (easier if they speak the same language) and socio-economic support for both the community and former Boko Haram members (hence the need to focus on community-based reintegration in defection programmes) as factors that positively influence reintegration. Respondents also highlighted sensitisation activities to prepare communities for the return of former Boko Haram members as a key tool to increase acceptance. The extent to which community members supported the reintegration of ex-combatants also depended on the type of defection programme they had been through.

Another important aspect to consider in the relationship between communities and former Boko Haram members is the extent to which members have disassociated themselves from the group. Respondents saw fewer obstacles to reintegration if there was a sufficient level of trust that former Boko Haram members had completely disengaged from the group and its ideology and would not resort to violence again. Interviewees highlighted the lack of trust as a key factor and challenge to the success of defection programmes and sustainable reintegration. As our qualitative research shows, links with Boko Haram are not necessarily severed when people (claim to) exit, allowing the group and its splinter factions to use former associates for intelligence gathering and other activities which increases mistrust in receiving communities.

FIGURE 1: GREATEST CHALLENGES TO THE REINTEGRATION OF FORMER COMBATANTS (LCB COMBINED)

FIGURE 2: GREATEST CHALLENGES TO THE REINTEGRATION OF FORMER COMBATANTS (BY COUNTRY)

The reintegration of former Boko Haram members is further compli-
cated by the unresolved lack of food security, social service provision
(e.g. access to water, healthcare and psychosocial support) and
socio-economic reintegration opportunities, as well as ongoing security
challenges in areas of return. Persistent Boko Haram attacks near

the Cameroon–Nigeria border and Lake Chad have displaced many ex-associates who are unable to return to their homes or safely access farmland (see also UNIDIR, 2024). Women and girls are particularly affected by the lack of livelihood opportunities in these areas.

> They [ex-associates] go back to the bush or change their area, when the date of food distribution [by NGOs] is approaching. They would come back to collect and then go back to the bush (interview with a respondent in Maroua, Cameroon, September 2023).

Women and girls are key actors to consider at different stages of the insurgency, including their pathways into and out of Boko Haram, their role in facilitating defections and reintegrating former members into communities, and wider reconciliation efforts within and among communities. However, the existing defection programming does not adequately recognise these roles as our interviews with communities have revealed. For example, women and girls are still largely seen as passive victims, despite ample evidence of their active role in the insurgency. As our research shows, women took on diverse and changing roles within the group, with varying, sometimes higher, levels of agency than in their communities of origin. They have reportedly been captives, 'slaves', wives of fighters, food providers or forced/voluntary fighters. Our field research shows, for example, the use of women in Quranic schools run by Boko Haram, in the production of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), or for domestic work in the group's camps while fighters are on the battlefield. Despite their varying degrees of agency, target beneficiaries of government defection programmes are overwhelmingly male. This not only neglects the active role women play in the insurgency but also limits their access to reintegration assistance in general. This is a fundamental oversight and evidence of a misconception of women's agency in the crisis. ●

Women and girls are key actors to consider at different stages of the insurgency

Improving Defection Programming

Based on our research, we propose the following to increase the impact of defection programming in the Lake Chad Basin.

Ensure protection and rapid rotation in and out of reception centres during rehabilitation. As noted above, former associates spend a long time in the reception centres (longer than originally planned) which affects their prospects of successful reintegration into civilian life. Stigma increases the longer individuals remain in the reception centres without regular contact with family and/or community members. In addition, space in the centres is limited, and most are full or overcrowded. Respondents also reported protection concerns and cases of gender-based sexual violence, which need to be thoroughly addressed. To incentivise defection, there needs to be frequent rotation in and out of the centres, otherwise the risk of stagnation may push former associates back to the armed groups they left.

Ensure protection and rapid rotation in and out of reception centres during rehabilitation.

Strengthen weapons and ammunition management components in future defection programmes.

Strengthen weapons and ammunition management (WAM) components in future defection programmes. Our research highlights the need to prioritise the transparent and systematic management of weapons and ammunition surrendered by disengaged Boko Haram combatants. An important entry point would be to strengthen the implementation of the MNJTF's standard operating procedures (SOP) for recovered weapons and its adoption by all Lake Chad Basin countries to prevent the further illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW).

Elevate community perspectives in conflict assessment and defection programming.

Elevate community perspectives in conflict assessment and defection programming. Our findings suggest gaps between the perspectives of different actors, with implications for policy-building processes and debates on how to deal with those who leave armed groups designated as terrorist organisations. According to our data, the perspectives of community members, traditional leaders, administrative authorities and international actors in

the field diverge significantly. Political and financial interests play a role in driving discussions, distracting from the initial needs and priorities expressed by the communities. To overcome these divergent views, rehabilitation and reintegration programming must include transparent impact assessments that focus on community needs and perspectives. This will help to develop more concrete and inclusive responses with a greater impact on conflict-affected people.

Adopt a regional lens and strengthen coordination of efforts. As outlined above, despite regional efforts to coordinate defection programming in the Lake Chad Basin, greater coordination efforts are needed among countries, but also within countries, as armed groups exploit loopholes. At the time of writing, initiatives appear to be fragmented at best, even in contexts where different DDRR initiatives co-exist rather than go together (such as OPSC and the Borno Model in Nigeria). It remains unclear how different pro-grammes with and among countries communicate with each other or if they even have this ambition. At the time of writing, different national strategies rarely intersect to form a regional framework for addressing common security challenges. While international partners have sup-ported frequent exchanges among countries through costly study visits for country officials, the degree of cross-fertilisation and harmonisation leading to common approaches and strategies is limited.

Adopt a regional lens and strengthen coordination efforts

Place greater focus on women and girls. Misconceptions about women's agency in the context of the insurgency lead to potential security threats (women immediately sent back to communities regardless of their role, etc.) and fewer prospects for sustainable reintegration (lack of adequate support). There is a need for defection programmes to adopt a more gender-inclusive approach, which recognises the multiple roles that women and girls play in the insurgency and recon-ciliation efforts. Policies should expand support for female ex-associ-ates, recognising their agency as well as their victimhood and ensuring access to tailored reintegration services.

Place greater focus on women and girls

Ensure that communities drive transitional justice efforts. While transitional justice efforts provide an opportunity to support long-term reintegration and potential reconciliation, communities should be at the forefront of these processes. Reintegration measures which are or are

Ensure that communities drive transitional justice efforts

perceived as externally driven and imposed not only put lives at risk—with irreversible and long-lasting consequences—but also destroy prospects for lasting reconciliation. Our findings highlight the different stages of the crisis in which communities find themselves. Some are still subject to frequent attacks by armed groups while others have had time to begin the healing process. Reintegration support as part of DDRR programming needs to consider these different stages in which communities find themselves. Community concerns regarding the reintegration of former associates must be taken seriously. Years of centre-based approaches have increased demands for community reparations and community-based approaches, which should also be addressed when designing programming. ●

Conclusion

Our findings highlight the complexity and challenges of defection processes from armed groups designated as terrorist organisations such as Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin. While national strategies and rehabilitation programmes exist in all countries surrounding Lake Chad, structural and programmatic weaknesses and inconsistencies persist, limiting the effectiveness of long-term reintegration efforts.

Lack of transparency in disarmament, prolonged stays in transition centres, and inconsistent screening mechanisms undermine confidence in these programmes and create obstacles to sustainable reintegration.

Fragmented national and regional approaches hamper the coordination and the effectiveness of defection programmes. By analysing borderlands thousands of kilometres apart, our research has shown that conflict systems in these borderlands are intimately linked through the people who navigate these spaces at multiple levels: political, historical, social and economic. Thinking about solutions for the Lake Chad Basin without considering the conflict dynamics in the Central African Republic, Sudan or Libya will not produce the desired results. Cross-border movements of goods and people require a regional perspective, coordination, cooperation and integration. Adopting a regional lens for conflict analysis and defection programming in and around Lake Chad is therefore paramount. It is a prerequisite for understanding the key linkages between armed actors across national borders. Actors leading these efforts should coordinate, juxtapose and interlink defection and DDR programming to make it comprehensive and increase regional impact. Going forward, a more harmonised, coordinated, transparent and community-inclusive approach is essential to ensure that defection programming contributes to long-term security in the region. ●

Fragmented national and regional approaches hamper the coordination and the effectiveness of defection programmes

Acknowledgements

This *report* has been prepared in the context of a project conducted jointly by bicc – Bonn International Centre for Conflict Studies, the African Union (AU) and the Department of Peace Operations (DPO) in consultation with the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) and relevant stakeholders. The project has received generous funding from

Acronyms and Abbreviations

3R	Return, reclamation, rehabilitation (armed group CAR)
AGDTO	Armed groups designated as terrorist organisations
APPR	Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation (CAR, 2019)
AU	African Union
CNDDR	National DDR Commission
CPC	Coalition of Patriots for Change
DDR	Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration
DDRR	Disengagement, disassociation, reintegration and reconciliation
DPO	Department of Peace Operations
FPRC	Popular Front for the Renaissance of the Central African Republic
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
ISWAP	Islamic State in the West Africa Province
JAS	Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'adati wal-Jihad
LCB	Lake Chad Basin
LCBC	Lake Chad Basin Commission
MNJTF	Multinational Joint Task Force
MPC	Patriot Movement Patriotique for Central Africa
OPSC	Operation Safe Corridor
PNPCR	Programme National de Prise en Charge de la Reddition au Niger
RS-SRR	Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko Haram-affected Areas of the Lake Chad Basin Region
SALW	Small arms and light weapons
SOP	Standard operating procedure
UPC	Union pour la Centrafrique
WAM	Weapons and ammunition management

Bibliography

Accord Politique pour la Paix et la Réconciliation en République Centrafricaine. Signed on 6 February 2019. Available at appr_-_fr_0.pdf.

Beevor, E., & Bish, A. (2024). *The Tri-Border Tangle. Arms trafficking, crime and violence in the borderlands of Chad, Cameroon, and Central African Republic.* The Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime.

Berks, M., Oginni, O., Breitung, C., Alhassan, M., & Tondandi, A. (2024). *Risky Business: Engaging Vigilante Groups in the Lake Chad Basin* (bicc policy brief). bicc - Bonn International Center for Conflict Studies. https://doi.org/10.60638/kzmh-yv63

Chauvin, E., Langlois, O., Seignobos, C., & Baroin, C. (Ed.). (2020). *Conflits et violences dans le bassin du lac Tchad : actes du XVIIe colloque Méga-Tchad.* Institut de Recherche pour le Développement.

Department of Peace Operations (DPO)/ Office for Disarmament Affairs (ODA)/Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC). (2022). *Weapons and Ammunition Dynamics in the Lake Chad Basin.* Available at weapons_and_ammunition_dynamics_in_the_lake_chad_basin_final.pdf.

Eboh, C. (8 January 2025). Nigerian troops repel Boko Haram ambush in Borno, kill 34 insurgents. *Reuters.* Available at https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/nigerian-troops-repel-boko-haram-ambush-borno-kill-34-insurgents-2025-01-08/

Foster-Collins, L. (13 January 2025). Boko Haram Attack kills 40 farmers. *Newsweek.* Available at https://www.newsweek.com/boko-haram-nigeria-farmer-attack-2013983

Foucher, V. (2024). *Boko Haram: Mapping an Evolving Armed Constellation.* MEAC, UNIDIR.

International Organization for Migration. (2021). *Disengagement, Disassociation, Reintegration, and Reconciliation. Transitional Rehabilitation.* IOM.

International Crisis Group. (2020). *Dealing with the Islamic State Franchises in Africa* (Africa Report No. 295). ICG.

Kurtz, G. (2024). *Machtbeziehungen in Sudan nach dem Fall Bashirs. Von der Revolution zum Krieg.* Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik.
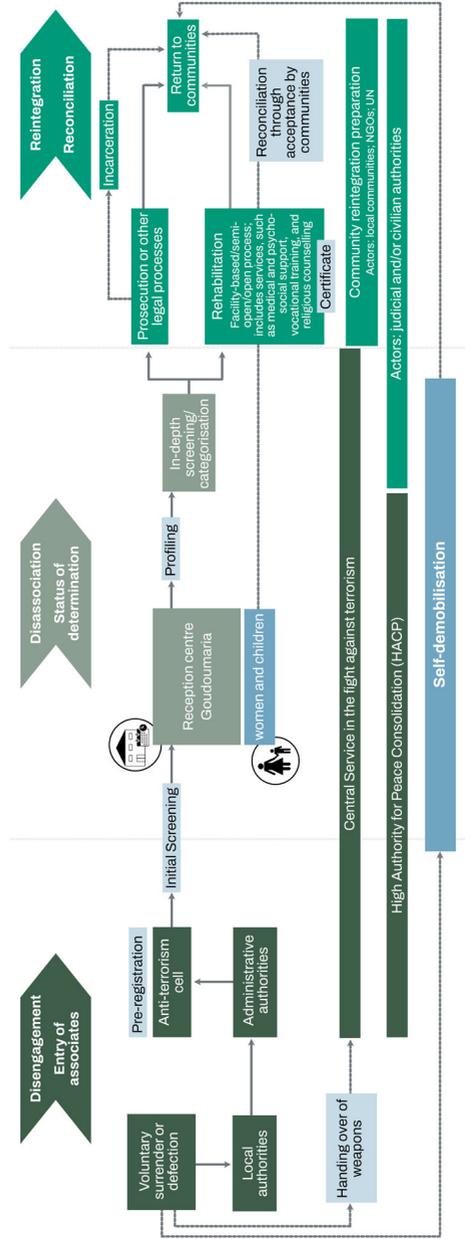
Lake Chad Basin Commission & African Union Commission. (2018). *Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery & Resilience of the Boko Haram affected areas of the Lake Chad Basin Region.* Available at regional-stabilisation-recovery-and-resilience-strategy-rss-.pdf

Lake Chad Basin Commission. (2024). *Community-Based Reconciliation and Reintegration Policy.* Lake Chad Basin Commission.
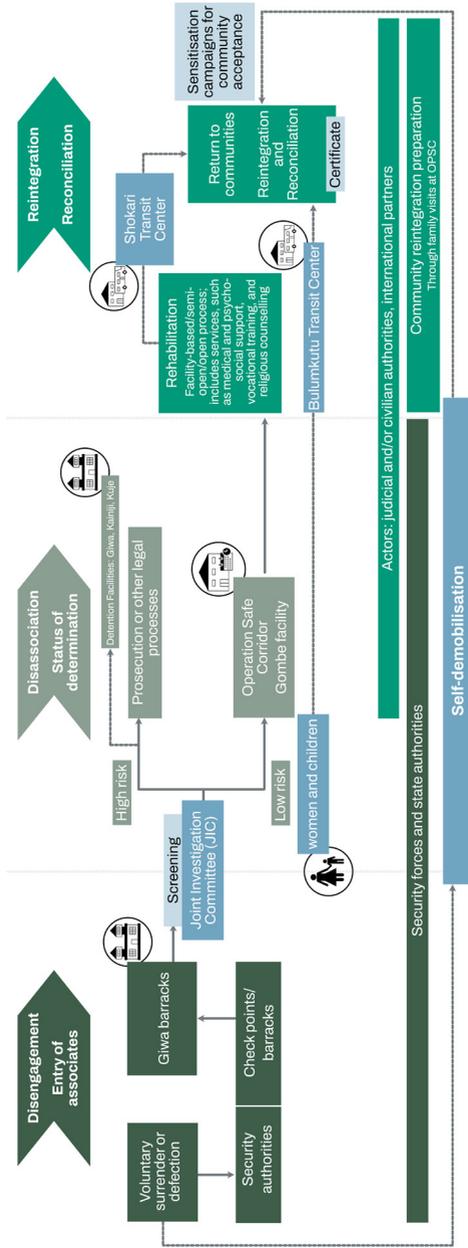
Mbarkoutou, M., & Barka, B. (2018). *Understanding Boko Haram Reintegration in Cameroon.* USAID.

Oginni, O. (2023). Return to normalcy: Transition and futures in insecure spaces. *Futures, 153.* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.futures.2023.103239

Ogunnubi, O., & Aja, U. A. (2022). The de-radicalisation, rehabilitation and reintegration project in Nigeria's counter-terrorism strategy: Operation Safe Corridor in context. *African Identities, 22*(3), 811–827. https://doi.org/10.1080/14725843.2022.2125365

Routley, L., & Idayat, H. (2022). *Operation Safe Corridor: The Deradicalisation and Reintegration of ex-combatants.* https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.33549.82408

Saeed, S.A. (2024). *Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Initiatives in Sudan. A brief summary.* International IDEA. Available at https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/2024-05/disarmament-demobilization-and-reintegration-initiatives-in-sudan.pdf

Tubiana, J. & Gramizzi, C. (2017). *Tubu Trouble. State and Statelessness in the Chad-Sudan-Libya Triangle.* Small Arms Survey.

Ugwueze, M. I., Ngwu, E. C., & Onuoha, F. C. (2022). Operation Safe Corridor Programme and Re-integration of Ex-Boko Haram Fighters in Nigeria. *Journal of Asian and African Studies, 57*(6), 1229–1248. https://doi.org/10.1177/00219096211047996

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2023). *Journey to Extremism in Africa. Pathways to Recruitment and Disengagement.* Available at https://journey-to-extremism.undp.org/content/v2/downloads/UNDP-JourneyToExtremism-report-2023-english.pdf

United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) (2024). *The Current Needs of Former Boko Haram Associates and Their Communities of Return. Key Takeaways from Cameroon, Chad, and Nigeria.* MEAC, UNIDIR. Available at https://unidir.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/UNIDIR_Needs_Former_Boko_Haram.pdf

United Nations Security Council. (2001). Resolution 1373. U.N. Doc. S/RES/1373 (2001).

United Nations Security Council. (2014). Resolution 2178. U.N. Doc. S/RES/2178 (2014).

United Nations Security Council. (2017). Resolution 2396. U.N. Doc. S/RES/2396 (2017).

United Nations Security Council. (2017). Resolution 2349. U.N. Doc. S/RES/2349 (2017).

United Nations Department of Peace Operations (UNDPO). (2021). *The Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS).* Available at https://www.unddr.org/the-iddrs/
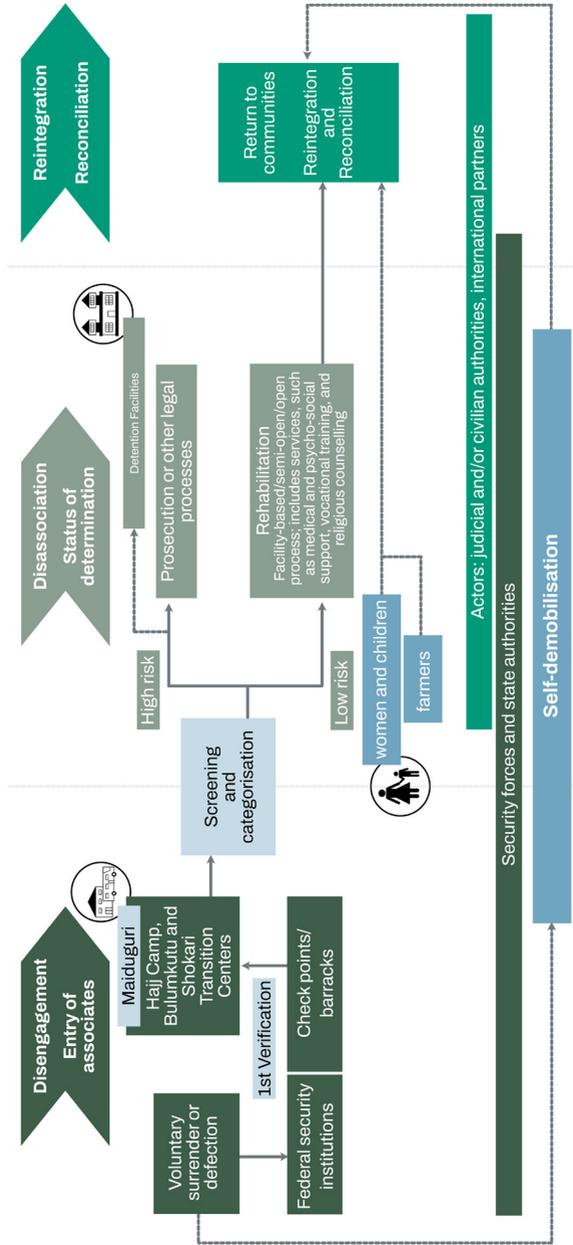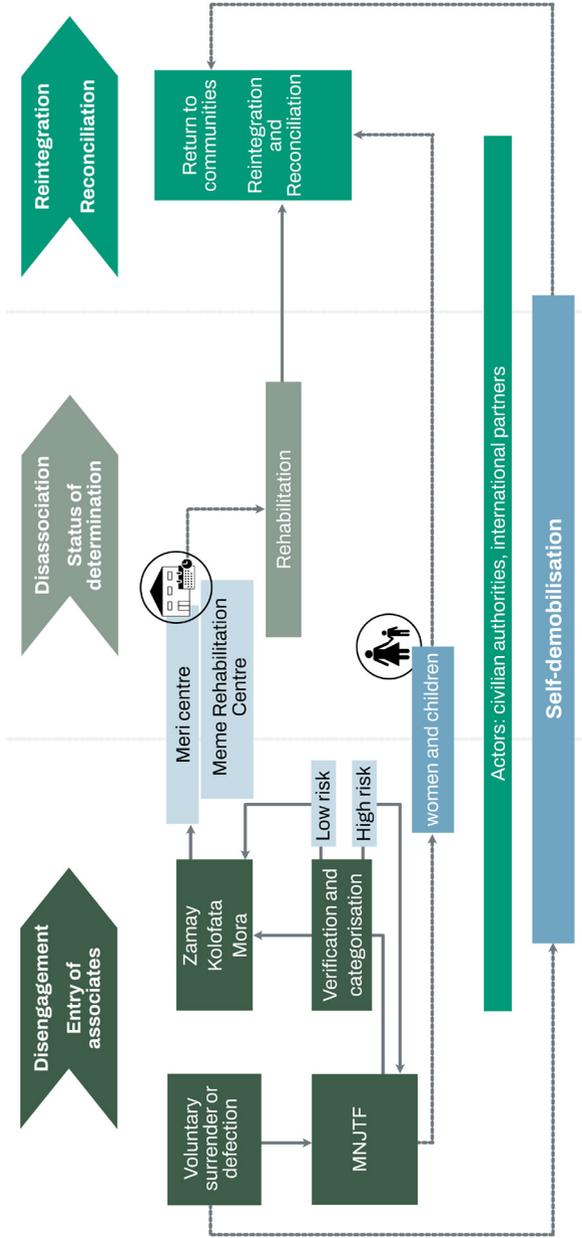
Annex

ANNEX 1: PNPCR NIGER

A flow diagram of the PNPCR Niger programme with the following stages:

Disengagement / Entry of associates
- Voluntary surrender or defection
- Local authorities
- Pre-registration
- Anti-terrorism cell
- Administrative authorities
- Handing over of weapons
- Initial Screening

Disassociation / Status of determination
- Reception centre Goudoumaria
- women and children
- Profiling
- In-depth screening/categorisation

Reintegration / Reconciliation
- Prosecution or other legal processes
- Rehabilitation: Facility-based/semi-open/open process; includes services, such as medical and psycho-social support, vocational training, and religious counselling
- Certificate
- Incarceration
- Return to communities
- Reconciliation through acceptance by communities
- Community reintegration preparation — Actors: local communities; NGOs; UN

Central Service in the fight against terrorism
High Authority for Peace Consolidation (HACP)
Self-demobilisation
Actors: judicial and/or civilian authorities

ANNEX 2: OPERATION SAFE CORRIDOR

Disengagement
Entry of associates

Voluntary surrender or defection

Security authorities

Giwa barracks

Check points/ barracks

Screening

Joint Investigation Committee (JIC)

Disassociation
Status of determination

High risk

Prosecution or other legal processes

Detention Facilities: Giwa, Kainji, Kuje

Low risk

women and children

Operation Safe Corridor Gombe facility

Reintegration
Reconciliation

Rehabilitation
Facility-based/semi-open/open process; includes services, such as medical and psycho-social support, vocational training, and religious counselling

Bulumkutu Transit Center

Shokari Transit Center

Return to communities

Reintegration and Reconciliation

Certificate

Sensitisation campaigns for community acceptance

Actors: judicial and/or civilian authorities, international partners

Security forces and state authorities

Self-demobilisation

Community reintegration preparation
Through family visits at OPSC

bicc report   49

ANNEX 3: THE BORNO MODEL

Disengagement
Entry of associates

Disassociation
Status of determination

Reintegration
Reconciliation

Voluntary surrender or defection

Maiduguri
Hajj Camp, Bulumkutu and Shokari Transition Centers

1st Verification

Check points/ barracks

Federal security institutions

Screening and categorisation

High risk

Low risk

women and children

farmers

Detention Facilities

Prosecution or other legal processes

Rehabilitation
Facility-based/semi-open/open process; includes services, such as medical and psycho-social support, vocational training, and religious counselling

Return to communities

Reintegration and Reconciliation

Actors: judicial and/or civilian authorities, international partners

Security forces and state authorities

Self-demobilisation

ANNEX 4: DISENGAGEMENT, DISASSOCIATION AND REINTEGRATION IN CAMEROON'S FAR NORTH

MEMBER Johannes-Rau-
OF Forschungsgemeinschaft

JRF