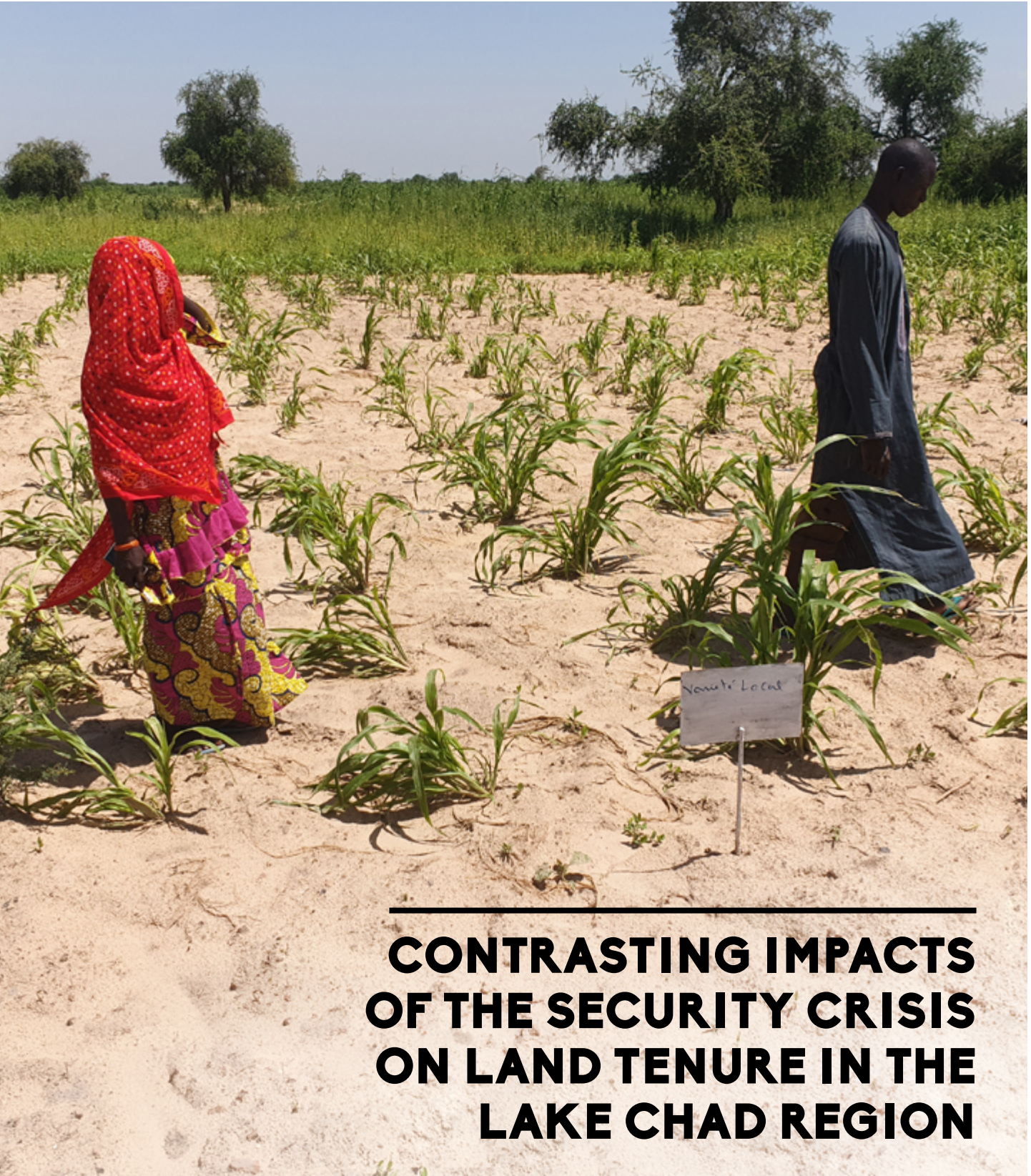


RESILAC*

*LAKE CHAD INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC
AND SOCIAL RECOVERY



CONTRASTING IMPACTS OF THE SECURITY CRISIS ON LAND TENURE IN THE LAKE CHAD REGION

OCTOBER 2020

**CONTRASTING IMPACTS OF THE SECURITY CRISIS ON LAND TENURE
IN THE LAKE CHAD REGION**

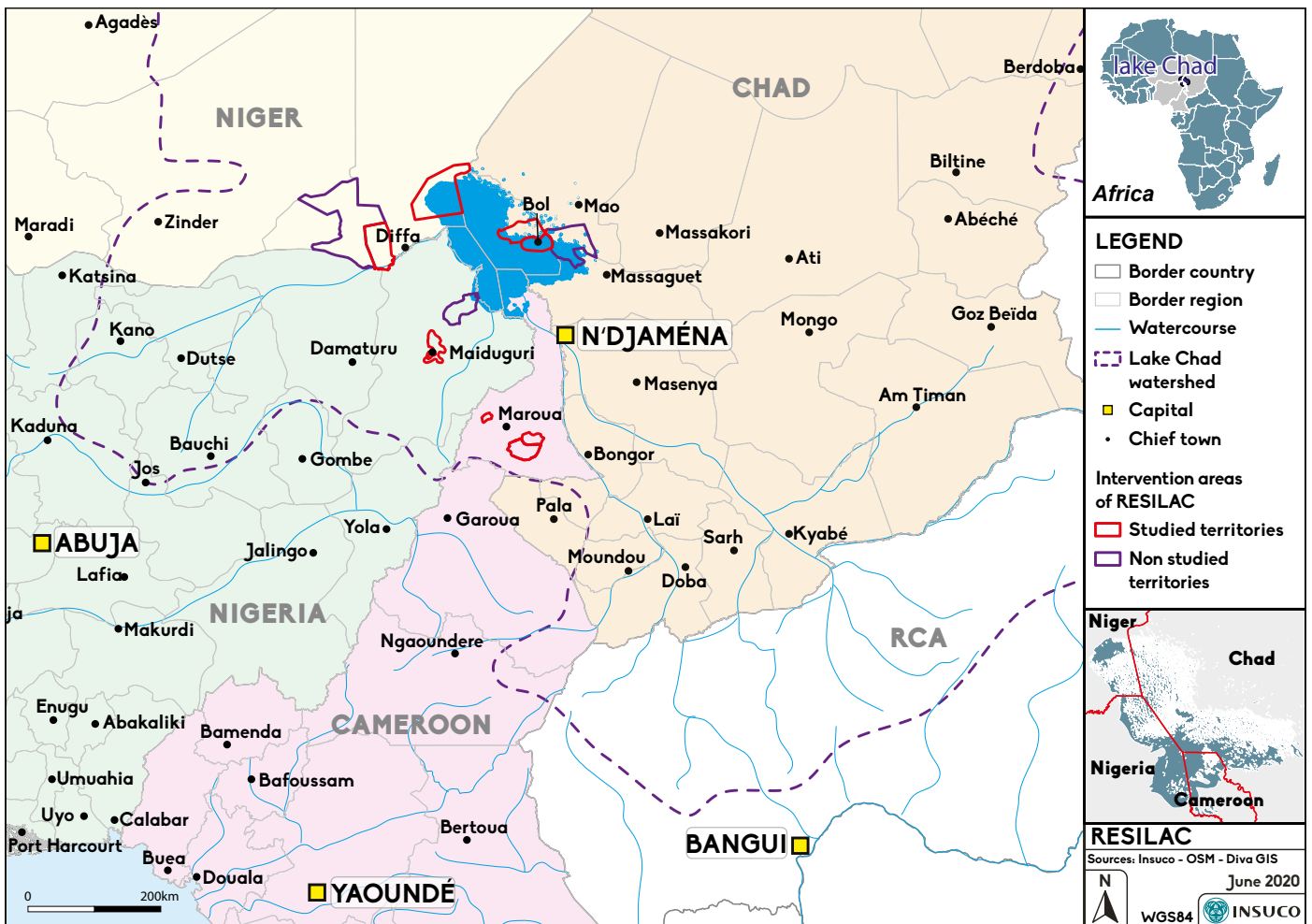


Study

Carried out between January and July 2020, the objective of this study is to identify approaches and practices that are effective in building resilience and to formulate recommendations with regard to the activities implemented in the field. In this sense, the study analyzes the impact of the security crisis on land tenure dynamics in the Lake Chad Region (Chad, Niger, Nigeria, Cameroon), in order to specify the frameworks, local land tenure situations and impacts according to the proximity to the epicenter of the crisis. The territories observed in the RESILAC intervention areas included the periphery of Maiduguri, the LGA of Jere, the rural communes of Chétimari and N’Guigmi, the canton of Nguelea (in the rural commune of Baga Sola) and the rural communes of Bol, Koza, Mindif and Dargala.

The full report of the study is currently available upon request.

RESILAC - Land location map of territories



CONTRASTING IMPACTS OF THE SECURITY CRISIS ON LAND TENURE IN THE LAKE CHAD REGION



Research Team

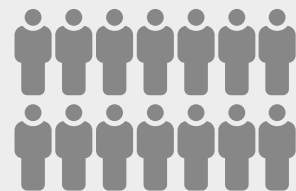
The study was conducted by the international research firm INSUCO, under the direction of Dr. Christine Raimond, by a multidisciplinary team composed of Vincent Basserie, Dr. Ngarmbatedjimal Alexis, Dr. Félix Watang Zieba, Pr Souley Kabirou and Dr. Jerome Gefu. Géraud Magrin, a geographer specializing in natural resource governance, Philippe Lavigne Delville, an anthropologist specializing in land tenure, and Hubert Ouédraogo, a socio-anthropologist specializing in land tenure, participated in the scientific committee.

Methodology

The study is based on the analysis of land tenure systems at national and local scales in the territories selected for the study, from a literature review and field investigations. A survey was carried out between February and May 2020 with 496 people spread over 9 territories in the 4 countries of intervention, supplemented by interviews with the main actors in land management. The results are therefore based on localized, precise and contextualized information derived from first-hand data.

496

PEOPLE INTERVIEWED



9

TERRITORIES
STUDIED

4

COUNTRIES



Results

The security crisis that has been raging in the Lake Chad region for the past 10 years has profoundly altered the distribution of the population and is precipitating changes that were already at work in the Sahel region. For example, it has locally doubled population densities in a few months, increasing pressure on communities and accelerating the commercialization of access to natural resources. It is also causing unexpected developments, such as the change in specialization of wetlands, where anthropic pressure has dropped considerably, and their takeover by NSAG that tax access to resources and exclude or accept certain actors. The results analyzed in the light of a regional perspective show :



1. Localized nature of the security crisis

The consequences of the security crisis on local land tenure situations are contrasted in the Lake Chad region. These impacts are measured in terms of the extent of population displacements, abandonment and changes in activities, constraints on access to natural resources and the multiplication of conflicts. Thus, the territories closest to the epicenter of the crisis, which have been suffering from insecurity for the longest period of time, appear to be the most affected by the extent of restrictions on access to resources and the resulting restructuring of activity systems. Conversely, the most remote territories appear to be less affected and their land governance is less affected. In the various sites studied, directly or indirectly, the presence of NSAG (Non-State Armed Groups) is a major factor:

- recomposes, where they are established, the authorities controlling access to resources, by establishing themselves as the central actors for resources that are strategic for them ;
- recomposes, where they are implanted, the activity systems, making some of them impossible, sometimes favouring others;

- induces sometimes massive population influxes – whether concentrated or not – in certain areas, which raises the question of the capacity of these internally displaced persons to ensure their livelihoods, the share of agricultural activities (in the broad sense) in these livelihoods, and the modalities of access to the resources in question ;
- thus recomposes the stands on a regional scale, through induced mobilities ;
- and thus modifies, directly or indirectly, as a result of these population movements, the systems of activities, the pressure on resources, and the modes of access to resources, both in the areas of departure and in the areas of settlement.

2. Reinforcement of inequalities in access to land resources

NSAG's presence in the Lake Chad region is causing a major shift in access to land and other natural resources through the concentration of populations in certain areas and the loss of control over certain resources by state and customary au-

thorities. This situation has led to a sharp increase in pressure on resources as well as a reinforcement of inequalities. Most of the rural actors in the territories controlled by the NSAG have become considerably impoverished. Many farmers face the risks of occupation of their land by new occupants or its recuperation by returnees. Conversely, merchants are moving into juicy markets and wealthy actors take advantage of the abandonment or sale of plots to acquire large areas.

In the wetlands (Komadougou Yobé, Lake Chad), which are inaccessible to farmers due to insecurity and state of emergency measures, even relaxed in 2019, the insurgent NSAG impose various taxes for access to pastoral resources, which are vital for some livestock dependent on green pastures all year round, and to fishing resources. These taxes are generally very high, discriminatory and illegal from the point of view of national and international legislation. Because of the opportunities for access to natural resources proposed by the insurgent NSAG and prohibited by the measures of the state of emergency, alliances are observed between some NSAG, transhumant herders and the most vulnerable populations who no longer have access to their plots.

A concentration of land in the hands of a few actors is a feature of Nigeria, and is accompanied by decapitalization for the most vulnerable farmers who leave by selling their land to seek safety. With the upcoming departures and returns of IDPs, today's winners may not be tomorrow's winners. The rules governing the fate of abandoned plots of land will be crucial. In the meantime, growing land inequalities are making many households precarious and are also fuelling the crisis.

3. Exacerbated inequalities for disadvantaged population groups

Displaced persons carry out fewer activities related to land resources than people from their new village of residence; they also farm less land, more often in indirect tenure mode and on small areas, usually on the basis of short-term agreements (one season or one year). Analysis by territory, however, shows divergent reception modalities, open to

free loans in the territories of Niger where land is not limited in the exempt zones, more constrained in the more densely populated territories.

The study also shows the existence of a strong inequality of access to land resources between men and women, a situation that is reinforced in areas directly impacted by the security crisis where the rate of women's multi-activity is particularly low. The land base of women in agriculture is much weaker than that of men. Inheritance is the main mode of access to land for women despite customs that oppose it. However, it is especially noteworthy that most of the plots farmed by women are plots that do not belong to them, farmed on the basis of renewable agreements of very short duration.

4. High level of conflict and perception of crisis

The results on the rate of conflict and the impact of the crisis are particularly revealing of a deterioration in local territorial governance. Conflictuality is all the more pronounced in territories where land conflicts were already significant before the beginning of the security crisis. In territories where customary authorities remained in place and were well respected before the security crisis (the case of Niger), the perception of conflicts related to natural resources is lower than in territories where land tenure insecurity was already high before the crisis and where the power of customary authorities was circumvented by certain powerful actors to control developed land (the case of Chad). In the southern basin of Lake Chad, NSAG also rely on Boudouma land claims and thus exacerbate intercommunity conflicts. This particular situation, marked by a very strong sense of crisis in territories indirectly impacted by the NSAG, could, by backlash, fuel the crisis. There is also a recomposition of power at the local level, not only in those areas controlled by the NSAG but also in those where displaced populations are concentrated and where rapid and uncontrolled readjustments have major consequences on the terms of land transactions.



Recommendations

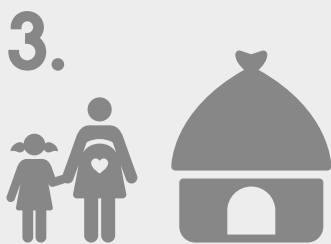
These changes require us to think in terms of land governance, to manage the diversity of powers and interests in a context of diversification of actors, including NSAG. In this sense, several actions could be put in place in the short term and within the time frame of the Resilac project.



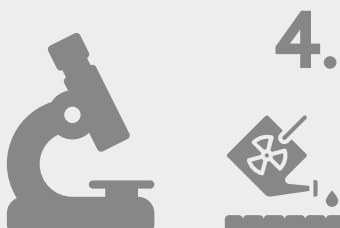
1. Promote multi-stakeholder debates at the local level leading to local conventions on the rules of access to natural resources in the terroirs. These democratic debates should make it possible to decide collectively on territorial organization, to manage the increasing pressure on resources and the inclusion of new actors in the territory, to manage the most delicate cases before they degenerate into conflict, and to think of collaboration in terms of coordination and not competition between authorities.



2. Monitoring conflict in the territories: the results of this study resonate with those of the initial baseline survey, in particular the indicator developed on community social capital. However, the typologies of conflicts (object, protagonists, modes of resolution and severity typology) should be refined to have a solid basis for comparison.



3. Develop an advocacy strategy in favor of access to land for the most vulnerable people, especially the displaced, to be adjusted according to local realities and aimed at local authorities.



4. Continue to generate knowledge on other key issues not explored in depth in this study. In particular, the implications of rising water levels on land tenure, the **implications for land tenure of the increasing use of pesticides, the role of militias, the fate of abandoned land, and the contracts and terms of land transactions.**

RESILAC* The RESILAC project «Inclusive Economic and Social Recovery of Lake Chad» aims to contribute to the economic recovery and the strengthening of the resilience and social cohesion of the territories of the Lake Chad Basin most affected by the security crisis and climate change. The project works to promote economic development, preserve social cohesion and strengthen the institutional capacity of the authorities in Niger, Nigeria, Cameroon and Chad. Cofinanced by the European Union (Emergency Trust Fund for Africa) and the French Development Agency (AFD) for a 4-year period (2018-2021), RESILAC is implemented by an international consortium (Action Against Hunger - lead partner, CARE and Groupe URD) in partnership with the CCFD network - Terre Solidaire, Search For Common Ground and local organizations in the four countries of intervention. The project embodies in a single large-scale initiative the multi-country, multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder approach to strengthening the triple nexus of «humanitarian aid, development and peace». RESILAC is structured around four intervention axes with the following objectives:

- ▶ **Pillar 1 :** Strengthen human capital, social cohesion and the collective and sustainable management of natural resources in the targeted territories ;
- ▶ **Pillar 2 :** Promoting economic recovery in the targeted territories and the resilience of the most exposed populations, particularly youth and women, through access to employment and intensified agro-sylvo-pastoral production systems adapted to climate change;
- ▶ **Pillar 3 :** Valuing and consolidating the actors of the targeted territories by promoting dialogue and commitment, and by reinforcing their capacities according to the skills and roles of each one;
- ▶ **Pillar 4 :** Produce knowledge useful for the quality of project activities in a crisis context and for decision-making by local actors.

In particular, the project aims to strengthen human capital, social cohesion and the collective and sustainable management of natural resources in the targeted territories. To contribute to this, activities to promote and enhance the democratic governance of access to and management of resources are implemented, as well as specific support to dialogue and mediation bodies for the development of rules of use / negotiated agreements. From an economic point of view, the project contributes, through medium or long-term actions, to a sustainable improvement of agricultural production systems, in particular through the development of hydro-agricultural infrastructures, the development of arable land and the improvement of access to it, as well as the intensification of production systems.

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