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Food Aid in Protracted Crises

The Humanitarian Crisis in the Lake Chad Basin

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The Noragric master thesis is part of the fulfilment requirement under the Noragric Master programme "International Environmental Studies", "International Development Studies" and "International Relations".

Declaration

I, Sare Marie Hovland Kjeldsberg, declare that this thesis is a result of my research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

Signature:……………………………………………………

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Abstract

Recent findings suggest the world is becoming less peaceful. We are now experiencing more violent conflicts and consequently, more humanitarian suffering. Over the last decades, an increasing number of conflicts have been defined as protracted. Protracted crises can last for years, leading to a long-term disruption of livelihoods and food security. The international humanitarian community acknowledges that protracted crises require a deeper understanding and attention. They are substantially different from acute emergencies, which dictates a different approach in terms of aid interventions. Moreover, they usually occur in fragile states where government authorities fail to protect their citizens from humanitarian suffering. As a result, humanitarian interventions seeking to improve food security in protracted conflicts in fragile settings need to take an integrated approach. They must combine short-term relief with long-term solutions in order to facilitate a transition out of protracted crisis and towards peace, development and long-term food security.

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1. Introduction

Background and problem statement

The latest report on *the State of Food Insecurity in the World* from 2015, determines that 795 million people are undernourished on a global scale. Although the number has declined over the last decades, it still remains a major threat to human health and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Over the last decade protracted crises are a contributing factor to increased vulnerability to food insecurity. They are more often than not present in fragile states, where political instability combined with human-induced and natural disasters result in long-term crisis. Since the 1990s, crises characteristics have changed from predominantly acute and short-term to becoming extended. More crises are now characterized as protracted than in the past; it is becoming the new norm (FAO et al., 2015). Furthermore, many of them are driven mainly by violent conflict. Recent data now finds more violence in the world, and consequently more human suffering.

Humanitarian aid and food aid are the primary tools for assisting people in both acute and long-term crises. However, international responses seeking to improve food security and livelihood opportunities for people under protracted situations have proven to be very difficult. The prolonged nature of unrest causes a significant divergence from other crises, as they require a diverse approach when it comes to aid. Moreover, when a crisis is also placed in the context of fragile states and violent conflict, the situation becomes even more complex for interventions. In the current aid architecture, there is still a significant division between short-term efforts of humanitarian assistance and development assistance in the long-term. This gap has been a subject of debate for decades, and is also a significant area of critique towards humanitarian assistance. All evidence suggests that short-term responses are not sufficient to support development in protracted crises. Protracted crises last over several years, and extended disruption of livelihoods requires a long-term response. Immediate needs must be met, but also the structural causes behind the crisis. Unfortunately, such interventions have been largely underfunded. Only by addressing underlying causes, focusing on building local capacities and resilience, and contributing to state and peacebuilding can humanitarian interventions facilitate a transition out of protracted crisis and towards stability and development.

The main objective of food aid interventions is to save lives, improve food security and nutrition, and enhance livelihoods. To have enough food is a precursor for development and stability. Hence, food aid can play an important role in building the basis for long-term food security. Food aid must be provided in a matter that supports the ability of governments, communities and individuals to supply their own food in the future. They should also focus on resilience by strengthening local capacities to be able to deal with future food shocks.

Despite food aid's primary focus on food security, it must contribute to addressing underlying causes of crisis in order to improve food security in the long-term. This study seeks to identify challenges and opportunities of food aid in protracted conflict situations, and how it can contribute to long term food security, taking into consideration the changes in approaches of humanitarian assistance and food aid in recent decades. Thereafter, it seeks to explore and investigate these findings in relation to the food aid interventions implemented by the UN agencies (WFP, FAO) in the context of the humanitarian crisis in the Lake Chad Basin, and to what extent this can potentially lead to long term food security.

Method and field of study

The method used is a qualitative literature study. It is a desk study based exclusively on analysis of secondary sources. This is considered both a time and cost-effective method. Literature was collected in order to get an understanding of the field, including challenges and opportunities of aid. It is also based on a case study design, where these findings were related to the specific crisis in the Lake Chad Basin, using extensively operational reports published by the respective aid organizations.

The thesis analyzes the food aid interventions implemented by the principal UN agencies, mainly World Food Programme (WFP) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). This was a necessary limitation, all the while humanitarian aid organizations exist in the hundreds. Furthermore, the area of attention is the current humanitarian crisis in the Lake Chad Basin. Characterized as the most neglected of all current crises, it is a highly relevant area of focus. Besides, it is a complex crisis occurring in a fragile conflict setting. Located in West-Central Africa, Lake Chad borders to Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon. It is considered one of the poorest and most drought-prone areas in the world. For that reason, underlying issues of ethnicity, religion, and political instability characterize the management of the area. Lately, the area has mostly been associated with the Boko Haram insurgency beginning in 2009. As a

result, it is now one of the biggest displacement crisis exposed to violent conflict. Needless to say, the humanitarian needs are tremendous. Therefore, this is a situation where humanitarian operations must address underlying causes in a complex situation in order to facilitate a path to recovery and stability.

Objectives and Research Questions

In line with the thesis statement, the objectives are two-fold. Firstly, they seek to address food aid in protracted crises mainly characterized by violent conflict. Secondly, to address food aid interventions in the Lake Chad Basin.

Objectives and RQs:

1. **To identify challenges and opportunities for food aid to promote food security in protracted, conflict and fragile settings**
   - What characterizes these situations and how does it relate to food insecurity?
   - In what ways do these circumstances require special attention in terms of interventions?

2. **To discuss approaches and principles to food aid in protracted crisis, conflict and fragile settings and changes in recent years**
   - How is food aid provided in protracted crisis?
   - In what ways have approaches to food aid changed under these settings?

3. **Investigate the use of food aid in the Lake Chad Basin and identify how it can contribute to long-term food security, stability and development**
   - What are the underlying causes behind the crisis?
   - What are the causes for food insecurity?
   - How are local livelihoods disrupted and how does this impact food security?
   - What kind of food aid interventions have been provided?
   - Does food aid complement other humanitarian interventions to improve food security?
   - How, and to what extent, does food aid address the underlying causes of crisis and food insecurity in the region?
   - How is food aid contributing to food security in the long term through capacity-building and resilience?

Thesis outline

Chapter 1 of the thesis begins with an introduction, giving a brief background for the thesis and a statement of the problem to be discussed. A thesis statement is provided here. The introduction also gives a short description of the study method and the field. Thereafter follows the objectives of the study and associated RQs.

Chapter 2 provides background information to the study. It outlines a theoretical framework, explaining the concepts of food security, humanitarian aid and food aid. Also, it addresses the gap between humanitarian aid and development. Types and ways of providing food aid are addressed. Furthermore, it explores the use of food aid in protracted, conflict and fragile settings, as well as describing relevant frameworks for humanitarian action in these situations.

Chapter 3 outlines the methodology of the study. Here research method and data collection procedure is explained. If further describes the study area of the Lake Chad Basin in greater detail and provides some limitations to the method, scope, and analysis of the study. Lastly, it gives some comments on the quality of the study in terms of reliability and validity.

Chapter 4 discusses the situation in the Lake Chad Basin based on the background chapter and provides findings in relation to this. It introduces the case, explores the root causes of the humanitarian crisis, and investigates impacts on livelihoods and food security. Thereafter, it explains how the crisis is affecting the humanitarian situation and the needs associated with this. Lastly, it analyzes and investigates the interventions under WFP and FAO, and addresses how these can contribute to long-term food security, stability and development.

Chapter 5 concludes the analysis and findings of the study and provides recommendations for areas of importance.

Chapter 6 provides a list of references used and bibliography consulted throughout the study.

2. Background

Theoretical framework

Food security

Definition of food security

The most widely accepted definition of food security is that first developed by the World Food Summit 1996, stating that: "Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs, and food preferences for an active and healthy life" (WFP, 2009, p. 22).

This definition is based on four pillars, which are the key elements of food security: Access, availability, utilization and stability. It also includes two different ways of considering access to food, both through physical and economic access. In other words, when food is available, people must also have the resources to obtain it and use it in a safe way (*The Food Security Learning Framework*, 2013).

Components of food security

Based on the four pillars mentioned above, the following figure can be used to explain the various factors determining food security at different levels.

Figure 1: *Components and factors determining food security* (UNICEF, n.d.)

Food availability	Physical and economic access to food
• Domestic production	• Purchasing power
• Import capacity	• Income of population
• Food stocks	• Transport and market
• Food aid	infrastructure
Stability of supply and access	**Food utilization**
• Weather variability	• Food safety
• Price fluctuations	• Hygiene and manufacturing practices applied
• Political factors	in: primary agricultural production, harvesting
• Economic factors	and storage; food processing; transportation,
	retail, households
	• Diet quality and diversity:meeting needs in
	terms of energy, macro- and micronutrients

Food availability

Food availability can be defined as "the physical presence of food in the area of concern through all forms of domestic production, commercial imports and food aid" (WFP, 2009, p. 23). It tends to apply to availability at regional, national, district and/or community level, and implies that should be enough for inhabitants to live a healthy and active life. Food availability is determined by production in the area, food brought in through trade, food reserves and transfers of food supplied by the government and/or aid agencies.

Food access

According to the World Food Summit, access implies both physical and economic access to food. WFP (2009, p. 23) defines access as "a household's ability to acquire adequate amount of food, through one or a combination of own home production and stocks, purchases, barter, gifts, borrowing and food aid." Food availability does not necessarily imply access if a given household is unable to acquire sufficient amounts of food through these mechanisms.

Food utilization

Food utilization implies that a household with access to food is able to safely use the food, and that individuals are able to utilize the nutrients. It includes various aspects such as the ability to store and prepare the food safely and feeding practices of individuals with various needs.

Food stability

According to the World Food Summit, food stability implies that the availability, access and utilization aspects of food security must be present "at all times" (Napoli et al., 2011).

Food insecurity can be both acute and chronic. Chronic food insecurity is a persistent and long-term lack of access to food, generally related to extreme poverty. Acute food insecurity describes temporary lack of food, which may be seasonal or weather related in the case of drought or crop failures or natural disasters, or due to conflict which disrupts the food system. Events such as these may affect various aspects of food security. Droughts, flooding and crop failure tend to imply a drop in the aggregate production and overall availability, hence increasing acute food insecurity. Conflicts my also disrupt production, but also physical access through destruction of infrastructures and markets (Hendrix & Brinkman, 2013).

Humanitarian aid can broadly be defined as providing assistance in the form of food or material aid as a response to natural and human-induced disasters. The aim is to prevent casualties and provide access to basic necessitates for survival; water, sanitation, food, shelter and health care. Such interventions can be found throughout the history, and it was once mostly related to military conflict, seeking to provide aid to soldiers and civilians during battle. The modern concept of aid evolved as late as the 1990s. At this point the intended efforts involved short term provisions, but the more recent idea involves an increasing focus on development goals as well. Today there are hundreds of international and regional organizations, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and others providing aid. The biggest actor is the United Nations and its various agencies (Branczik, 2004; Rysaback-Smith, 2015). Nonetheless, four basic principles should always underpin humanitarian actions. These principles include: Humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence. The UN General Assembly formally established these concepts in 1991, thereby setting an international standard for modern humanitarian assistance. The implication behind the principles can be explained as follows (Rysaback-Smith, 2015):

> Humanity refers to the provision of aid to all who are in need, wherever the need exists, with the purpose to protect and respect all human beings. Neutrality is the responsibility of aid organizations not to choose sides in conflict or to favor a particular political, religious or ideological bent. Impartiality demands aid be given based on need alone and based on any other distinctions including gender, race, nationality, ethnicity, class, political party or religious belief. Finally, independence refers to the requirement that aid organizations are autonomous from any political or military objectives or with those goals in mind. (p. 6)

Over the last fifteen years, the global aid assistance has expanded twelvefold. Today around 125 million people worldwide receive a total amount of US$ 25 billion. Although this increase sounds tremendous, it has never before been so insufficient, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). A report by the OCHA panel estimates the gap between needs and actual funding to be US$ 15 billion (WHS, 2016). Furthermore, "the scale of human suffering is greater [today] than at any time since the Second World War" ("World Humanitarian Summit," 2016). The reason is the growing amount of conflicts and natural disasters over the last years. These rather recent developments in the aid environment led to the

World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) to be convened in 2016 for the first time in the history of the United Nations.

The OCHA report intended to inform and shape the objectives of the 2016 WHS. The panel established three significant findings and recommendations guiding the summit: reducing the needs, mobilizing additional funds and improve the efficiency of humanitarian assistance. This is concerned with how to address the root causes behind humanitarian needs and thereby obliterate the needs altogether. In this context, peacebuilding and conflict resolution as well as disaster risk reduction and resilience becomes vital. Moreover, the report points out the importance of redirecting official development assistance (ODA) to fragile and protracted crisis resulting from conflict or natural disasters. "Eight out of every ten dollars of humanitarian funding is accounted for by conflict, and most of the demand is generated by protracted crises," according to OCHA (2016, p. 6). The panel acknowledges the need to "leave no one behind", and further recognizes that people subject to conflicts and all manners of disasters are the ones at most risk. If further predicts that if current trends continue, 62 percent of the poor could be living in fragile and conflict-affected countries by 2030. Furthermore, climate-related disasters are adding to the problem, implying a complex setting for aid interventions (WHS, 2016).

Bridging the gap between humanitarian aid and development

The debate on the gap between humanitarian aid and development has been ongoing for decades. Particularly the concept of linking relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD) in the 1990s marked a turning point for attempts to address this. The international aid community recognized the need to link relief and development programs. It also reflects an understanding of how "humanitarian need, poverty and state fragility are inter-related and often occur concurrently" (Hinds, 2015, p. 1). Some of the challenges here are related to institutional problems, funding gaps and coordination issues. Firstly, institutional problems occur because of different working principles; donors often make a clear division between the delivery of humanitarian and development aid. As a result, aid donations suffer from conceptual and strategic gaps. Some potential solutions include decentralized planning, joint humanitarian and development offices, and incorporate long-term perspectives in humanitarian work. Secondly, there are funding gaps. Particularly fragile states that do not receive necessary support. Potential solutions include long-term funding based on multi-year funding options and strategic partnerships. Thirdly, there are coordination problems. Some organizations may have trouble coordinating responses if they lack strong partnerships, and hence it becomes difficult to link

humanitarian aid and development. Evaluations indicate how local engagement and local partnerships on the ground have a greater potential of managing this. More recent mechanisms for coordination includes a cluster approach, but unfortunately many of them do not adequately support coordination between humanitarian and development actors. Additionally, refugees and displaced persons have not been incorporated sufficiently. It is important to acknowledge how a focus on relief provision to these people can delay the benefits of sustainable solutions. In protracted displacements, this is particularly important to avoid dependence on aid (Hinds, 2015).

The World Humanitarian Summit of 2016 further builds on these principles. It is concerned with how to address underlying causes of crisis and obliterate needs. The OCHA report further acknowledges how development is the best resilience builder and should therefore be incorporated into life-saving assistance. The necessity to bridge the gap between humanitarian needs and development is clear, as this allows for vulnerable people to become self-reliant through supporting economically viable activities. Humanitarian interventions should build on the strengths of both relief and development. In a crisis situation, aid agencies have the main responsibility of providing assistance and safety nets for people and communities. However, in protracted situations, this need can potentially go on for years or even decades. But the funding instruments in use are mostly designed for short-term response, implying a drive of spiraling costs. Moreover, donor governments are most likely to have separate humanitarian and development interventions. Nonetheless, interventions should take advantage of aid's ability to engage in crisis quickly and to be present in volatile and insecure environments, combined with the long-term sustainable capacity-building strategies of development (WHS, 2016). On that note, strategies of development assistance include reconstruction of property and infrastructure, of food systems and rebuilding the economy. Transition to more secure environments, strengthen capacities of governance and local institutions and support economic development. Frameworks for action for humanitarian aid are now incorporating elements previously associated with development assistance. Hence, to the extent possible humanitarian efforts should build on these principles to ensure stability and capacity-building (Branczik, 2004).

Food aid

Definition of food aid

There are many ways of defining food aid in the literature, and no consensus has been reached as to an official definition. FAO (2006, p. 11) base their work on the following explanation; "… food aid can be understood as all food supported interventions aimed at improving the food security of poor people in the short and long term".

Forms of food aid

Food aid can take different forms, but are typically divided into three types: program, project and emergency.

Program food aid is basically a foreign aid flow in the form of food, which is meant for sale on local markets. This is delivered directly between governments, and donor countries may impose various conditions in return for program food aid. It may involve military or diplomatic matters, or to invest the profits from the sale of food aid in development interventions. Program food aid is mostly in-kind direct transfers, which entails the distribution of donated food items.

Project food aid is offered to governments through a multilateral development agency (e.g. WFP) or NGOs for use in development projects. Such projects may include establishing grain reserves, school feeding, food for work programs and feeding centers. Today it can be difficult to distinguish between program and project food aid, and both categories are sometimes referred to as non-emergency or developmental food aid.

The final type is emergency food aid, a major part of humanitarian relief efforts following natural disasters, economic shocks or wars. In such cases many people are not able to meet their daily food requirements and relief food aid aims at providing acute and short-term relief (Barrett & Maxwell, 2005).

According to WFP report of Aid Flows, there are three main modes of delivery of food aid (WFP, 2012, p. 4):

- Local purchases: Transactions whereby food aid is purchased, distributed and utilized in the recipient country.
- Triangular purchases: Food that donors purchase in a third country for use as food aid in a recipient country.
- Direct transfers: Transactions whereby food aid is delivered from donors to recipient countries.

Over the last decades, emergency food aid accounted for an increasing part of total food aid flows. Until 1990 program food aid was the dominant form, but more recently we have seen a shift towards emergency food aid instead. In accordance with this shift also the distribution channels have changed. USA accounted for the majority of food aid up until the 1970s. They provided most of this aid on a government-to-government basis in terms of program food aid. Since the 1980s however, up to 1/3 of global food aid has been delivered through WFP, with the US remaining its largest donor (Barrett & Maxwell, 2005, p. 14). Following the shift from direct transfers in the form of program aid, local or triangular purchases now dominate.

History of food aid: The shift from food aid to food assistance

The early history of food aid can be traced back to the 1950s. Since the end of the Second World War, concerns grew as to how to deal with surpluses of commodities such as cereals accumulating in North America. At the same time, FAO acknowledged the possible and likely issues with dumping food surpluses on markets in developing countries. Most notably it would interfere negatively with international trade and disrupt normal patterns of production. To combat these concerns, FAO recognized the need for sustainable measures in order to move surpluses into consumption. Over the next decade and a half, FAO pioneered new ways to use food surpluses for humanitarian needs. This marked an important shift in the role of food aid to eventually play a vital role in food security outcomes (FAO, 2005). At this point, US and Canada accounted for 90% of global food aid due to their accumulated commodity surpluses (Shah, 2007).

The multilateral system of food aid we see today began with the establishment of the UN World Food Programme in 1962. Over the following years, unified efforts were made to involve more countries as donors. The Food Aid Convention (FAC) came into being in 1967 in order to facilitate responses by the international community to humanitarian needs, and create an even supply of food aid. Food aid relies on donors and international institutions, and the FAC framework now offered explicit policies for donor countries. An important objective of the FAC is to use food aid to assist people in crisis, but not to displace domestic trade (i.e. not affect commercial imports and local production) (FAO, 2005; Shah, 2007).

Over the last 15 years, we have experienced a shift from using the term food aid to the term food assistance. More and more official documentation now prefers this term instead. It comes largely as a response to the changes in crisis context over recent years. An increasing amount are defined as complex crises evolving from multiple contributing factors such as extreme

weather, conflict, migration, rapid urbanization, and food price volatility. A number of donors as well as aid agencies (i.e. WFP), talk about a shift from being a food aid to a food assistance agency. In all simplicity, this basically implies a change from focusing on in-kind aid to other purposes such cash-based transfers or food for work/assets. The goal is to focus more on practices procuring sustainability, self-reliance and development. Additionally, the change comes partly as a response to negative disincentives associated with food aid, such as dependency. Food aid has primarily been used as an important tool for immediate relief efforts. However, WFP and US (a major donor of aid), find that food assistance is important also in a development context and should not be treated separately (Harvey et al., 2010).

The Food Assistance Toolbox

There are a range of instruments of intervention associated with food assistance, with the objective to improve food consumption and nutrition, but also support self-reliance. This chapter will discuss cash and vouchers, school feeding and public works.

Cash and vouchers: In the context of food assistance, the terms "cash" and "voucher" usually refer to the provision of assistance to individuals, households and communities, rather than governments or state actors. European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) define cash transfers as "the provision of money to individuals or households, either as emergency relief intended to meet basic needs for food and non-food items, or services, or to buy assets essential for the recovery of their livelihoods", (ECHO, 2013, p. 2). Cash transfers can be either conditional where beneficiaries have an obligation upon receiving a transfer (i.e. attend school, building a shelter or plant seeds). Cash for Work may be a type of conditional transfer. However, transfers can also be unconditional and beneficiaries may spend the funds as they see fit. As opposed to cash transfers, vouchers "provide access to pre-defined commodities and services […] denominated either in cash, commodity or service value", (ECHO, 2013, p. 2). Examples of necessities they may provide access to include food, seeds or livestock.

In recent years, there has been a growing understanding of the potential for cash and vouchers to either complement or replace food aid such as in-kind assistance. Cash and vouchers are now to a lager extent incorporated within the broader sense of food assistance. Particularly after the tsunami in the Indian Ocean in 2004, the WFP as well as other NGOs have increased their use of cash transfers. Cash transfers can be a useful response when markets have recovered, assuming that goods are available for purchase. Additionally, cash and vouchers are considered to be very cost efficient compared to in-kind assistance. In-kind assistance often

faces delays and logistical challenges, particularly in more remote areas. There are several guidelines for cash transfer programming, for example WFP has developed a policy framework for designing, implementing and monitoring such projects. It also provides guidelines for when these responses are appropriate, depending on market conditions and food availability. However, the goal remains to provide cash to meet basic needs for the household. But cash transfers can meet a variety of priorities, from household goods to debt payment, health care and education. Moreover, cash transfers eliminate the need to sell in-kind assistance on the market to afford other necessities. Although the total provision of cash is smaller compared to in-kind food assistance, we see a growing support for cash projects among donors (Harvey et al., 2010).

School feeding: Another potential use of food assistance is through school feeding. It is a way to use donors' agricultural surpluses that also addresses development goals on primary education and hunger reduction. The immediate goal is to improve nutrition and health of school children and reduce short-term hunger. However, school feeding also brings potential long-term benefits, such as increased attendance, fewer drop-outs and a higher academic level in schools. Moreover, it can address underlying issues such as gender and social inequality as sending kids to school becomes more profitable for families. Additionally, it can protect children from violence and exploitation. Depending on the circumstances of the situation, school feeding includes in-school meals, fortified biscuits and take-home rations in exchange for participation. WFP is by far the largest promoter of school feeding, while others (i.e. ECHO), question the efficiency of such interventions compared to direct cash transfers to the same vulnerable households. Nonetheless, evidence suggests that school feeding plays an important role in terms of short-term hunger relief, also in protracted crisis (Jaspars & Maxwell, 2009, p. 41).

Public work: The last important instrument for providing food assistance is through public work such as food or cash-for-work programs, or food assistance for assets. According to Jaspars & Maxwell (2009, p. 41), "the objectives of cash and food for work are often both to provide resources to the most economically vulnerable and to create community assets that promote food security (dams, road, wells, etc.)." Consequently, these projects are very comprehensive and require substantial funding in order to get the technical and management support needed. Lack of proper funding can prevent the establishment of institutions to maintain assets created, which has been a recurring issue. WFP has also pointed out the necessity of sufficient tools and

technical skills to secure the quality of the assets. For instance, in a dam construction project in Kenya, basic tools for soil excavation were lacking. Similar issues can limit the potential for asset creation in developing countries unless proper funding is in place (Jaspars & Maxwell, 2009).

Food assistance efforts not only save lives, but it can also be an investment in the development of a country by strengthening assets and livelihoods that form the basis of future stability. If used with cash and vouchers seeking to support local purchase of agricultural goods, it can potentially contribute to long-term food security. Cash and vouchers are of particular interest in a prolonged crisis, because markets tend to re-establish themselves over time. As described, there has been a significant shift from food aid to food assistance also within protracted crisis contexts. Food assistance can still mean providing families directly with food items, but if markets are in place, cash or vouchers can allow recipients to buy local food at selected shops. Such efforts are important in order to avoid disincentive effects and aid dependency that can arise from prolonged assistance. WFP attempts to buy food for distribution through local and triangular purchases, rather than direct purchases. In 2009, as much as 80 percent of their purchases were made in developing countries, including in several countries in protracted crisis (FAO & WFP, 2010).

World Food Programme (WFP)

The WFP is an external body within the UN system for distribution of food aid. It started out in 1963 as a 3-year operation with the purpose of bringing acute relief following several major international crises. An earthquake had just hit Iran, a hurricane hit Thailand and millions of refugees were resettling in Algeria. The humanitarian catastrophe demanded acute supply and distribution of food aid ("About-History," 2017). But the efforts of the WFP did not end there, and it is today the dominant humanitarian agency in the world and the principle UN framework for food aid and food assistance. Objectives include disaster relief, agricultural development and improving food and nutrition security. The WFP has become an important element in any humanitarian relief operation following emergencies or protracted crisis due to natural or human-induced disasters. It is funded by donations from member states that can either be monetary, physical or infrastructural (LIMUN, 2015)

As mentioned, WFP is the major agency channeling global food aid, as well as being the world's largest humanitarian agency. Their strategic plan evolves around four objectives presented on WFP's official website ("Our work," 2017):

1. Save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies
2. Support food security and nutrition and (re)build livelihoods in fragile settings and following emergencies
3. Reduce risk and enable people, communities and countries to meet their own food and nutrition needs
4. Reduce undernutrition and break the intergenerational cycle of hunger

WFP also incorporates the shift from aid to assistance in their strategies. The WFP Strategic Plan 2008-2013, and the latest one for 2017-2021 mark a strategic change in operation. The shift entails a move from providing food directly to households, to supporting nations and communities as well in improving nutrition and food security. Three important developments dictated this change. For one, WFP focus on incorporating interventions into national policy as a response to a collective international emphasis on national ownership and country-led approaches. This is an important step towards a country's development and self-reliance. Secondly, the fuel and food price crisis of 2008 forced a rethinking of current methods, as the structure of food markets changed. Lastly, a growing amount of literature evolved based on the evidence that food aid had disincentive effects on markets and production in recipient countries. As mentioned, the shift from aid to assistance entails moving from in-kind to cash-based transfers (i.e. cash, vouchers, public works). Increasing contributions in the form of cash from donors has made this operational shift possible. WFP now work to prevent starvation during humanitarian crisis by filling food gaps in the short term, but also in ways to promote long-term development and thereby breaking the intergenerational cycle of hunger (Burbano de Lara et al., 2013).

Protracted crises are defined by the WFP and FAO as "those environments in which a significant proportion of the population is acutely vulnerable to death, disease and disruption of livelihoods over a prolonged period of time" (FAO & WFP, 2010, p. 12). It can result from a conflict, but also from environmental, climatic or economic factors. Nonetheless, most protracted crises are usually subject to certain characteristics. There is a certain duration of crisis, some have lasted over several decades. Additionally, the state governance is usually weak with limited abilities to respond to a crisis or protect the affected population. This again leads to the breakdown of local institutions as a result of the state fragility. Moreover, a protracted crisis is likely to experience poor food security outcomes due to unsustainable livelihood systems. Breakdown of livelihoods does not necessarily result from the crisis, in other words it can be both a cause and consequence of protracted crisis (FAO & WFP, 2010).

The previous paragraph described some of the characteristics of protracted crises, however it's essential to establish a set of measurable criteria for definition purposes. Reports by WFP and FAO rely on three criteria (FAO & WFP, 2010, p. 12); the longevity of crisis, aid flows, and the economic and food security status. Longevity is based on how many years a country has been in crisis. This implies both natural disaster, human-induced disaster or a combination "that required external assistance". For disasters after 2001, a crisis must have been reported for at least 8 years. Aid flows are determined by "the proportion of humanitarian assistance received by the country as a share of total assistance". If 10 percent or more of the official development assistance (ODA) was given as humanitarian aid since year 2000, a country is by definition in protracted crisis. Lastly, economic and food security status it determined by whether or not the country appears on FAO's list of low-income food-deficit countries (LIFDCs). In 2010, 22 countries met all of the three criteria, and 17 of them were located on the African continent (FAO & WFP, 2010, p. 13).

Furthermore, it is necessary to establish the concept of "fragile" or "failed" states because most protracted crises fall within this category (Alinovi et al., 2008; Maxwell et al., 2012). Additionally, all the four countries now under protracted crisis in the Lake Chad Basin are defined as fragile states under the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

(OECD)'s States of Fragility Framework. According to OECD, "fragility is the accumulation and combination of risks combined with insufficient capacity by the state, system, and/or communities to manage it, absorb it, or mitigate its consequences," (OECD, 2016, p. 37). By their definition, examples of risks can be economic shocks, unemployment, climatic or health risks, corruption or social inequality. The OECD use five dimensions (described in Table 1 below) in order to measure and identify fragility: economic, environmental, political, security and societal. Relevant risks as well as coping capacities are used to evaluate a country's performance within these dimensions. In other words, the framework can be used to indicate not only exposure to risks, but also the ability to manage negative events in the future. The OECD report *State of Fragility 2016* also notes that the "situation of exposure to risk can lead to negative outcomes, including violence, conflict, protracted political crises, and chronic underdevelopment," (OECD, 2016, p. 6). In 2016, 56 countries were identified to have fragile situations within one or more of the five dimensions.

On a further note, violent conflicts are strongly related to the state of fragility within a country. The OECD report finds that in 2016 there is more violence in the world, and it has increased over the last decade. Violence is becoming more complex and has a "contagious" relationship with fragility. Other trends in violence show that it is increasingly a regional problem, and the transnational violence in the Lake Chad Basin is a standing example. Violence is also regarded a driver of mass displacements further exacerbating spillover effect to neighboring countries. Furthermore, violence is to a larger extent driven by domestic political instability, a typical characterization within a fragile state. Other trends indicate how gender is of particular significance in the case of violence. Not only are civilians in general at great risk, but women, youth and children are disproportionately affected. One last major trend of particular relevance indicate how violent extremism and terrorism are on the rise. Islamist extremism is growing on the global scale and terrorism is a common characteristic in such violent conflicts.

In terms of international interventions and humanitarian aid, the current dynamic trends of violence within fragile states require a diverse approach. The OECD calls for more informed decisions as drivers and impacts of violence overlap. In the context of a violent protracted conflict affected by fragility, aid should seek to address development, prevent crises and build resilience (OECD, 2016).

Table 1. *Five dimensions of fragility* (OECD, 2016, p. 37).

DIMENSION	DESCRIPTION
Economic	Vulnerability to risks stemming from weaknesses in economic foundations and human capital including macroeconomic shocks, unequal growth and high youth unemployment
Environmental	Vulnerability to environmental, climatic and health risks that affect citizens' lives and livelihoods. These include exposure to natural disasters, pollution and disease epidemics
Political	Vulnerability to risks inherent in political processes, events or decisions; lack of political inclusiveness (including of elites); transparency, corruption, and society's ability to accommodate change and avoid oppression
Security	Vulnerability of overall security to violence and crime, including both political and social violence
Societal	Vulnerability to risks affecting societal cohesion that stem from both vertical and horizontal inequalities, including inequality among culturally defined or constructed groups and social cleavages

Food insecurity in protracted conflict situations

A protracted crisis may have several and complex underlying causes, but many of them are related to state fragility and conflict. Generally, an important characteristic of any protracted crisis is severe food insecurity. In protracted situations, crisis leads to severe disruptions of livelihoods, production and markets over an extended period of time. Around 20 percent of the undernourished people in the world lived in countries under protracted crisis in 2012. In terms of food insecurity indicators such as undernourishment and mortality rate of children, the situation is considerably worse under protracted crisis compared to other developing countries (FAO et al., 2015). Moreover, two-thirds of the food-insecure people in the world live in only seven countries, where six of them have experienced civil conflict in the past decade (Hendrix & Brinkman, 2013). The 2014-2015 Global Food Policy further state that "food and nutrition insecurity are becoming increasingly concentrated in conflict-affected countries," (Breisinger et al., 2015, p. 2). Analysis also show that factors of undernourishment are highly related to

changes in income, government effectiveness and corruption (FAO & WFP, 2010). In other words, protracted crisis, conflict and state fragility are all determinant factors in terms of foods security outcomes.

The causal linkages between conflict and food insecurity can be very complex. Food insecurity can both be a cause and a consequence of violent conflict. In recent complex conflicts, we also see environmental impacts restrict access to resources, which further creates tensions between various groups. Experiences from Mali indicate how weather patterns and changing desert boundaries can lead to deadly conflicts between agricultural farmers and pastoralists. Nevertheless, causes of conflict can be a combination of various sources like political, institutional, economic, social and climatic stressors (Breisinger et al., 2015). Lack of food might motivate people to engage in violent acts in the first place, combined with political and economic marginalization or other social grievances. A rebel group can promise to provide protection, food and shelter for recruits, using both material incentives in combination with ideological and political appeals as motivators of participation. However, food insecurity can also have an inhibiting effect on conflict. This is supported by evidence, because it is usually not the poorest or most food-insecure who participate in conflicts. For one, people without enough food must invest all their time and energy in order to obtain it, and may have reduced interest in pursuing political or ideological goals. Secondly, lack of food leaves little resources for the rebellious groups to exploit. They often depend on contributions from supporters or looting because they have no production of their own (Hendrix & Brinkman, 2013).

Food insecurity may or may not be a driver of conflict in the first place, but conflict itself is a significant cause for food insecurity. Conflict will affect many aspects of the overall economy, personal economies and livelihoods. It interferes with livelihoods by separating people from their productive assets such as homes and land, inputs, or livestock. As a result, production and basic availability of food is reduced. Trade, markets and infrastructures are further disrupted, whereby physical access to food is restricted. Moreover, conflict is known to lead to higher food prices, which again affects peoples' economic access to food. The link between wars, conflicts and food prices have been observed in Syria, where bombing of factories resulted in reduced production and higher prices. Similarly, restricted market access in Mali led to a doubling of coarse grain prices in many markets in 2011 (Breisinger et al., 2015; Hendrix & Brinkman, 2013). To add to the problem, today many current conflicts are protracted and taking place within fragile states. A prolonged crisis affects the total economy of the countries

involved and livelihood options in general decline as a result. Moreover, weak institutions and political regimes in the case of fragile states tend to limit the abilities of states to manage conflicts. They have proven to be less capable of stabilizing food prices or mitigate the effects of higher prices to ensure food security (Brinkman & Hendrix, 2011; FAO & WFP, 2010; Hendrix & Brinkman, 2013).

Food assistance in fragile protracted conflicts

Engagement in protracted crisis has proven to be different and difficult compared to acute emergencies. Over the last decades, we have experienced an increasing understanding of how protracted crisis differ from other crises, and consequently requires different approaches (Maxwell et al., 2012). For one, the country will not follow a normal development pattern. A crisis or disaster will interrupt the developmental trend over a short period of time, with the expectation that the upward trend will continue afterwards. But in a protracted crisis, there will not only be a "short" disruption. The developing trend will be disrupted for an extended period of time, implying a different set of responses. However, the current architecture of intervention is similar both in a short and a protracted crisis. Diouf & Sheeran (2010, p. 18) state that "improving food security in protracted crisis requires going beyond short-term responses and protecting and promoting people's livelihoods." This is a result of the extent of a long-term crisis, where people are required to radically change their livelihoods temporarily or permanently. Although livelihood protection has been promoted by humanitarian assistance since the 1980s, it focused mainly on providing relief rather than addressing the underlying causes for food insecurity (FAO & WFP, 2010). Development goals go hand in hand with livelihoods protection, social protection and food and nutrition assistance. It is critical for the development of individuals and societies. In other words; "there is no gap between humanitarian relief and development: food and nutrition assistance *is* development" (Brinkman & Hendrix, 2011, p. 15).

As mentioned, a typical characteristic of protracted crisis is unsustainable livelihood systems and consequently poor food security outcomes. Breakdown of livelihoods is most definitely a consequence of conflict, but it can also be a contributing factor to social grievances leading up to conflict. In that way support for livelihoods should include both acute relief and long-term solutions. There are three main types of interventions substantial to supporting livelihoods and food security in crisis: livelihood provisioning, livelihood protection and livelihood promotion (Jaspars & Maxwell, 2009). The responses include production support for agriculture and

livestock or materials for other types of business, income support through training, generating of income or direct cash transfers, and market support through vouchers and reestablishing market infrastructure. Livelihood provisioning is the first focus point upon the onset of a conflict, but during a protracted crisis elements of livelihood protection and promotion should also be incorporated (Jaspars & Maxwell, 2009).

Livelihood provisioning affects outcomes directly and aims at meeting acute needs and save lives following a crisis. Food aid is the main tool for livelihood provisioning as it meets immediate food needs. Free in-kind food distribution is commonly used as the first stage, as well as cash and voucher systems for obtaining essential commodities and services. Although food aid is intended for meeting basic food needs, it can also play a role in livelihood support. As discussed in the previous chapter, if rations are increased in the market, receivers can sell some of it to gain income, and overall prices in the market decrease. This can affect local production negatively, but if little local produce is being sold, such interventions can be justified and make food more affordable to everyone. WFP attempted this in Darfur with positive results. Additionally, food for work or food for asset creation can be successful in crisis or conflicts where people are resettled (Jaspars & Maxwell, 2009).

It should be noted that the success of food aid and food for work interventions depends, and may not be the most appropriate in protracted crisis. In long-term crisis food may become available locally as people readjust, and assistance through cash may be more useful. In general, cash and voucher interventions can be efficient complements to food distributions. Cash and voucher systems contribute to reducing expenditures for people in need, which is another immediate goal of livelihood provisioning. Vouchers have been considered safer and more effective during conflict and protracted conflict due to security issues and theft (Jaspars & Maxwell, 2009).

Livelihood protection includes safeguarding assets, such as protecting livestock and agriculture. In conflict situations people are displaced, but if the situation allows it, assistance is provided in order to help people maintain their land. But in situations with security issues, assistance may include transporting livestock and assets in the case of displacement. Another means of support includes agricultural services for improved farming practices.

Livelihood promotion is an important step when it comes to making the transition from acute and immediate relief to long-term support. It includes providing new skills for alternative livelihood strategies under changed circumstances. Moreover, it entails supporting informal institutions, like community groups. The goal may be to support local efforts in dealing with

the situation as well as increase access to services and markets. One example is providing legal support in land disputes, which is highly relevant under migration and displacement. Moreover, is the support of local governance mechanisms. This has long been a major gap in humanitarian response, but becomes increasingly important as a crisis lingers on (Jaspars & Maxwell, 2009).

Many protracted crisis are also subject to fragility and violent conflicts. This has in turn created further issues for aid implementation because it limits the choice of food assistance instruments available. A fragile state with weak institutions will be less capable of implementing and monitoring policies and programs initiated by aid agencies. Cash-based programs require extensive capacities that may be unavailable, such as simple market analysis for appropriate targeting. Additionally, they require functioning markets, financial institutions and are vulnerable to corruption. In conflict situations where violence is still on-going, cash- or food-for-work programs can be difficult to implement due to security concerns (Brinkman & Hendrix, 2011).

Moreover, considering the strong links between conflict and food insecurity, peacebuilding is regarded of particular relevance in conflict states. Although food security improvements can contribute to a more stable environment, food assistance can also intensify conflicts. In an example from Mali in the 1990s, people started to rebel following a drought period. But the situation intensified due to government allegations over embezzlement of international relief funds. This is an important issue under weak governments where aid funds are diverted to other uses. Furthermore, with limited ability to prevent looting of aid reserves, rebel groups may take control of supplies and sell food aid for revenue purposes. According to Hendrix & Brinkman (2013), they found various studies claiming that aid can be associated with increases in conflict incidences. However, they also find this to be strongly related to misappropriated food aid. It highlights the importance of proper situation analysis in order to provide well-targeted and appropriate interventions. Food assistance benefits should be delivered "early, equitably, broadly and for a considerable amount of time" (Brinkman & Hendrix, 2011, p. 15). If provided correctly, food assistance programs and projects can contribute to more peaceful societies. In protracted crisis, the need is particularly acute for peacebuilding to be integrated in such interventions and not only in post-conflict periods. In protracted situations, violence is often a recurring problem and reducing conflict drivers becomes necessary. Food security interventions are significant because they can reduce risk of violent conflict as well as addressing an important root cause of conflict. Potentially these interventions can address social and gender

inequalities, contribute to social cohesion, provide safety nets *and* support capacity development of local governments (Hendrix & Brinkman, 2013). School feeding and public works have proven to be significant contributors to peacebuilding through these channels. School feeding can provide a vital safety net against poverty and hunger, but it can also rebuild social cohesion and establish normalcy. Moreover, education and literacy is vital to combat unemployment, a typical underlying issue in conflicts. Public works also play a vital role in building social capital and cohesion, as it facilitates community participation, cooperation and integration among groups. Furthermore, such interventions are implemented with a goal of strengthening capacity and trust of local governments (Brinkman & Hendrix, 2011).

Frameworks for action in protracted, conflict and fragile situations

Over the last years, the international community has increased its emphasis on engagement in complex situations. A couple of significant developments relevant here includes the "New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States" from 2011 and the "Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises" from 2015. As described, most countries in protracted crisis are also fragile, implying how the two frameworks both overlap and complement each other. The "New Deal" builds on the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action. The Paris Declaration marked the first important step towards increasing international commitment to improve aid delivery. It focused on the importance of aid effectiveness and the necessity to strengthening governance in partner countries. In 2008, Accra Agenda for Action reinforced cooperation with fragile states by facilitating a dialogue with development partners. Despite these efforts, fragile states are still the furthest away from achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). As a response, the "New Deal" recognizes how fragile states require substantial efforts from the international and local community in order to facilitate a transition out of fragility. It is now a reference point on how actors can work effectively in countries affected by conflict, fragility and violence. Main focuses include peacebuilding and state building. Ways to achieve this combine country-led and country-owned approaches that build on country systems in order to enhance risk management, strengthen national capacities and ensure prompt and predictable funding (International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding, 2011a, 2011b).

The "Framework for Action" developed by the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), recognizes several of the same aspects as described above, yet with a particular focus on achieving food and nutrition security in protracted crisis. Nonetheless, achieving this goal also

implies addressing the fragile context for many of these crises. The Framework for Action seeks to improve food and nutrition security in protracted circumstances in a way that also addresses underlying causes. This entails attending to critical manifestations and build resilience through meeting acute food and nutrition needs, and build resilient livelihoods. Secondly, it identifies the need to meet specific challenges. This means to reach and protect affected populations, promote gender equality, support evidence-based analyses (i.e. examine underlying determinants), strengthen country ownership and promote effective financing. Lastly, it emphasizes resolving underlying causes of food insecurity. That includes contribute to peacebuilding through food and nutrition security, manage natural resources and promote national and local governance (CFS, 2015). Consequently, both documents focus on how short-term results must be combined with long-term sustainable solutions. And long-term solutions for food security include addressing state fragility as an underlying and contributing cause. Actions should build capacity and resilience through stronger country-led operations enhancing local governance.

3. Methodology

Research method and study design

Social research, in the broad sense, can be defined as "academic research on topics relating to questions relevant to the [various] social scientific fields" (Bryman, 2012, p. 5). The research can usually be inspired by developments and changes in the world around us. It's motivated by a conceptual and theoretical background which can help us to interpret research findings. Academics often do social research after reading and/or observing a certain aspect of society, when questions arise as to how things are connected. Social research is heavily influenced by theories and literature. Some information or background knowledge may lead to exploration of other ideas within the topic. But to a large extent the research is based on prevailing theories (Bryman, 2012).

The research in this paper is based on a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is based on words rather than quantification. A qualitative research is considered to be inductive, which means that a theory is developed from the research. Bryman (2012, p. 384) specifies 6 main steps in qualitative research that will be outlined below and related to this paper.

Step 1. Develop research questions. As mentioned, a theoretical background can inspire to further studies. In this case, protracted crisis is a result of factors such as climatic changes and conflicts. Humanitarian aid in such cases can be anticipated to last over an extended period of time. However, the current aid architecture is not fit for acting in these settings. Moreover, there is a problem with bridging the gap between humanitarian actions and development. These issues contributed to the development of the research questions.

Step 2. Select sites and subjects. The choice fell on the African continent, because it is a major recipient of aid flows, as well as being the location of most protracted crisis (FAO & WFP, 2010). Additionally, the main site is the Lake Chad Basin because it is highly relevant at the moment. The crisis is largely underfunded and neglected, but it constitutes one of the largest current displacement crisis.

Step 3. The collection of relevant data. This will be explained in more detailed in the methods of data collection. Relevant data is literature exploring aid and particularly food aid over time, and how it evolves with the changing environment. Other relevant data was documents explaining the background and causes of the crisis and reports on aid interventions taking place.

Step 4. Interpreting the data. This step is not very relevant because this study did not include a data collection part. To the extent of relevance, it included reading the intervention reports to a large degree.

Step 5. Conceptual and theoretical work. As mentioned previously research is motivated by a theoretical background. Here it was necessary to explain concepts used in the paper, and setting the stage for the background for the research. It was necessary to understand the problem of aid and how it fails in the context of crisis. This step also includes further specification of research questions and collection of further data. Here the research was narrowed down to focus on protracted crisis and not acute short-term emergencies. This was relevant because there are an increasing number on conflicts characterized as protracted. Additionally, the research site narrowed down to the area of the Lake Chad Basin due to particular relevance today. Therefore, the research focused more extensively on conflict and violence. Further data had to be collected on this area.

Step 6. Writing up findings/conclusions. This step involves drawing the lines and connecting findings in the data with the theoretical framework. It involved studying the reports of interventions, and exploring to what extent these aligned with the theoretical framework. Theory was used to explain specifics within the interventions, relating them to theory, and thereby interpreting whether this could contribute to long-term food security and development. The conclusion aims to sum up the findings from the discussion.

Method: Desk study

The thesis is based exclusively on a desk study approach. This is basically a text based research, where secondary data is used for analysis. The information or data used is gathered by someone else, such as researchers, institutions, organizations or NGOs. A secondary research analysis is considered both time and cost-effective, and can be used when comparing primary data collection results. It is necessary to state a clear purpose to be able to remain focused. When using secondary data there are vast amounts available online, and a statement of purpose should guide the research (McCaston, 2005).

Justification for the choice of method is based on time and budget constraints as well as security concerns. The Lake Chad Basin is a critical area due to armed conflict in surrounding areas.

Design: Case study

This research paper is based on a case study design. A case study entails a detailed and intensive analysis, and it can be a single community, a school, a family, a person, an organization or a single event. Case studies are intensive and allows for a thorough and deep understanding of an event. Although not necessarily a negative thing, one still has to acknowledge that what is gained in depth is lost in breadth. Case studies are also known to be very flexible, and some researchers favor them as a way to test and develop ideas. Additionally, many claim that they capture reality in a specific way. Because they are so specific, the can give a detailed picture of the reality of their environment. This study includes a single event; the humanitarian crisis in the Lake Chad Basin. Furthermore, it focuses specifically on the UN agencies WFP and FAO (Bryman, 2012; Murphy, 2014).

Data collection

Secondary sources

Analysis of secondary data is the analysis of information gathered by someone else. This leads to several considerations that must be addressed throughout the study. Bryman (2012, p. 544) points to authenticity, whether or not the evidence in genuine. Credibility; is the evidence free from error, representativeness; whether or not the evidence provides "typical" findings, and the meaning of the evidence. This brings into question whether or not it is comprehensible or if it can be interpreted differently.
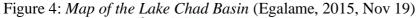
Approaches as to what kinds of data will be necessary depends. In this case, the secondary analysis was carried out to gain in-depth understanding of food aid both in theory and in practice, both globally and in a specific case. It can be considered a situational analysis of the area in question. To be able to do this, data review and analysis involve obtaining information and relevant data (McCaston, 2005). The sources used in this research were a mix of books, journals, newspaper articles, literature review articles, reports, working papers and desk reviews presented by researchers, institutions, organizations and NGOs. Literature review articles provided an understanding of the existing research on food aid, and provided information on the issue of linking humanitarian aid and development. Journal articles by various researchers could provide evidence of how aid could impact long-term goals in practice and laid a foundation for the theoretical framework. Frameworks for action published by international organizations laid out principles for humanitarian interventions and guided the discussion.

Situation reports by FAO and WFP were necessary to get data on current interventions and status of food security on the research site. Newspaper articles were helpful in following the crisis and its recent developments. Certain books provided background information about food aid in general. Working papers and desk reviews provided detailed information about how food aid is working in practice. The most important source in this case were documents from the official web pages of FAO and WFP. These included detailed description of their aid interventions and provided a basis for discussion.

Description of study area

Lake Chad Basin

The Lake Chad Basin is located in West Central Africa, and borders to the countries Niger, Nigeria, Chad and Cameroon. It consists of open waters, floodplains and islands. Lake Chad is the largest open water area, and the 4th largest lake in Africa. The Basin is a so called endorheic system. Endorheic means that it is a closed drainage basin with no outlets to large rivers or oceans, and the only way for water to leave the basin is through evaporation or seepage. The lake used to be one of the largest in the world, but the surface area of 25.000 km2 in 1973 is as now only 2500 km2. The water level of the basin has changed significantly over time and vary according to climatic fluctuations. However, the continuous loss of water in recent decades are attributed to climatic variability as well as unsustainable water utilization. The region is considered one of the poorest and most drought-prone in the world. Moreover, estimates suggest that around 40 million people are directly dependent on its water for fishing, farming, livestock and agriculture (Ogbozor, 2016; WFP, 2016d).

Figure 4: *Map of the Lake Chad Basin* (Egalame, 2015, Nov 19)

Lake Chad Basin is not only under pressure due to dry spells and shrinking water levels. It is the location of what has been described as "the world's most neglected humanitarian crisis, where poverty and desertification have been compounded by violence caused by Boko Haram", according to the U.N aid chief (Whiting, 2016, May 24). The violent outbreaks began in 2009 in Northeast Nigeria, but have affected the entire Lake Chad region. More than 2.4 million people are displaced across Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon and Chad. The U.N aid chief has further described the situations as "the most under reported, the most underfunded and the least addressed of the big crises we face" (Whiting, 2016, May 24). Diminishing resources and climatic changes already cause problems in the area, but the situation escalated with the brutality caused by Boko Haram. Large scale displacements forced people to abandon livelihood activities such as farming, fishing and livestock, further contributing to food scarcity. U.N figures now estimate that 3 million people face severe food insecurity. The WFP state that they are scaling up its response, but unfortunately there is still a big gap to fill between the humanitarian response provided and what is actually needed (Whiting, 2016, May 24).

Limitations to study

Method and data collection

Firstly, it's important to acknowledge how a desk study will limit the results and findings. The researcher is not in the field, and will not have experienced the situation first-hand. Obviously, this will have huge implications for the researchers understanding of any situation. Personally, the researcher as has not been to the region, not met the people affected and has not spoken directly to organizations in the field. There, their interpretation of the situation can be quite different from how a researcher understands it by analyzing available secondary data and information from a distance. Data can indicate one thing, but the actual experience in the field can be different. Not to mention the lack of reliable data from the most conflict prone areas where humanitarian need is high, but for safety reasons on-ground data is absent. In that way, the researcher will have to make assumptions about how the available data relates to these areas as well.

Bryman (2012, p. 315) further discusses some limitations of secondary analysis, mainly in the context of quantitative analysis, but some also relate to this case. The first point to notice is the lack of familiarity with data. If the researcher did not conduct the field research in the first place, the researcher must try to understand with what type of research it was, how it was conducted and where. Another relevant limitation is that of data quality. Basing a research on other people's findings, one cannot know to what standards it was conducted. Government and official institutions will often guarantee for the quality of data, but this cannot be said for every other source. Journal articles and reports will be based on findings and interpretations of others which the researcher again relies upon. Another issue is whether or not the data in question is appropriate. Primary data is collected with a specific idea or objective in mind, but much of the secondary data used in this research was written based on specific angles. The last point to mention is the potential for bias. This is related to the appropriateness of the data, considering that researchers obtained their data with a particular idea in mind. In any kind of research, if a scholar is interested in supporting a claim, the evidence will appear accordingly. Any organization providing food aid will be more interested in broadcasting positive findings rather than the negative sides. This will again be reflected in the data available for secondary analysis. To some extent this can be avoided by looking at independent evaluations. This problem is very relevant here, because the discussion relied on reports supplied and published by WFP and FAO directly.

Design

The case study design can have limitations. It is very context-specific, therefore it can be difficult to generalize the findings to another case. This is considered one of the main drawbacks of case studies. For that reason, case study sites must be chosen carefully. Although the case of the Lake Chad Basin is context-specific, it is still one of the largest crisis. This implies that any findings can be of use within this setting as it is a case of wide interest. Not to mention that it effects millions of people, something that justifies the use of a case study. Nonetheless, the combination of characteristics of the situation can make it difficult to apply to other similar situations. Furthermore, a flaw with the design is data collection. Because a case study is quite narrow, it also limits the data available (Murphy, 2014).

Scope

In an early stage of the research process, it was necessary to make limitations. For one, it focuses on protracted crisis instead of short-term emergencies. Secondly, it focuses on crisis due to violent conflict, and not nature-induced disasters. This compromised the ability to compare how aid interventions perform in various settings. In a larger study, it would have been of interest to use a comparative study approach.

Moreover, there are hundreds of humanitarian organizations providing food aid. A natural limitation implied to investigate the largest and most influential actors on the arena. The UN is recognized as the most important actor here, and WFP, FAO and UNICEF are the principal ones in terms of food and nutrition security. This implies a more broad and available database of sources, and it definitely limited the scope of the study to make it more comprehensible. In a way, it makes the study more generalizable because these actors operate in many conflict countries under similar circumstances. However, this limitation means that the very important contributions from numerous other smaller organizations had to foregone in this study.

Data, discussion and findings

As briefly mentioned, using a narrow case study approach implies that less data is available. This was absolutely noticeable, as detailed operational reports to some extent lacked examples or specifics to get a very deep understanding. Some of them were still in a developing phase and had not yet been independently evaluated. This meant that the research to some extent had to be based in intended impacts and objectives rather than actual ones, thereby relying on

expectations. Furthermore, the crisis in the Lake Chad Basin is still ongoing. This makes it difficult to draw any long-term conclusions. However, although the impacts in the long term are not measurable at this point, theory and evidence can still provide information as to how interventions should be conducted in order to get the intended results.

4. Discussion and findings

Case: The humanitarian crisis in the Lake Chad Basin

Introduction

The humanitarian crisis in the Lake Chad region is a complex and multidimensional situation. Over the last decade, the situation has escalated to become one of the worst currently ongoing humanitarian crisis. The reasons are manifold, from climatic issues, resource pressures, civil conflict and political instability. Droughts and climatic changes have led to reduction in water levels, further exacerbating water stress where the hydro-system of the lake is already subject to intense competition. The degradation of their most valuable resource again disrupts the livelihoods of millions of people who depend on water supply from the lake. Rapid demographic growth in the region leads to further pressures as new settlers claim their share of the resources. The change of demographic pressure follow in the wake of the violent conflict induced by Boko Haram in Northeast Nigeria, which has led to migration and displacement of millions of people in an already unstable region. The Lake Chad basin is now under a protracted regional state of emergency. The insecure situation affects every aspect of the economy in the region, leading to growing food insecurity as productive and trading activities are interrupted. All of these complex causes affect regional livelihoods.
(WFP, 2016d)

Root causes leading up to conflict

In order to understand the complex dynamics of the crisis in the Lake Chad region today, it's vital to start with the longstanding development issues the region have been facing. The root causes for the instability in the region must be addressed by humanitarian efforts in order to prepare long-term strategies. Multidimensional vulnerabilities have amounted over many years in the region. Structural problems have undermined human development and food security since colonial times.

State fragility

State fragility is significant in order to understand some of the basic issues in Nigeria leading up to the Boko Haram insurgency. The theoretical framework describing state fragility and how the various dimensions can lead to conflict, is relevant for the following analysis.

Issues of fragility can be traced back to the formation of the Nigerian state during British imperial conquest in 1900. Various areas of todays' Nigeria were brought under British sovereignty, and included two hundred groups of people with different histories and cultures. In 1914, British rulers merged the northern and southern areas to form one Nigerian state. Political bargaining took no part in the formation, nor a regard for ethnic, linguistic or cultural boundaries (David et al., 2015). Little was done to ensure a unified nation either, and this created a divided state where different ethnic groups have continued to live in mutual distrust. Furthermore, the Nigerian state has been incapable of providing equal economic opportunities for its people, leading up to economic marginalization. The Muslim-majority north and the Christian-majority south have a history of regional inequality and social cleavages. Lack of education, combined with neglect of agriculture and deindustrialization, resulted in unemployment rates three times higher in the north and poverty levels 40% higher than in the south (Meagher, 2014) Consequently, people of the northern regions have long felt neglected because of developmental differences. Valuable resources in Nigeria are mostly located in the South, and people of the North do not believe resources are shared equally. The colonial state has been blamed for laying the foundation of the fragile character of todays' state, through pursuing divide and rule policies leading to ethnic polarization. Arguably, there is no lack of potential grievances in Nigeria or the neighboring countries to lead to conflict. Moreover, many fragile state characteristics like corruption, poverty, low economic growth, divided population and underdeveloped institutions apply to the situation in Nigeria (Ofongo, 2016). The following section will discuss some of these issues as precursors for conflict:

Poverty: Poverty does not only mean a minimum income per capita, in can also be expressed in terms of productive resources, hunger, education, social services or social discrimination. In Nigeria, a majority of the population live below the poverty line, implying that people are constrained from enjoying their civil, political and socio-economic rights. The issue of poverty is not only restricted to Nigeria, but to the entire Lake Chad Basin: it is considered the "poorest; most marginalized and neglected part of each respective country in respect to the provisions of basic infrastructure and social services," (Ogbozor, 2016, p. 10). It has been regarded as a driving force behind the Boko Haram insurgency in the entire region, as some people viewed it as a better alternative when the state had failed them (Enobi & Johnson-Rokosu, 2016).

Illiteracy and unemployment: Illiteracy and unemployment are strongly related to poverty, and all these factors can potentially reinforce each other. Moreover, unemployed and illiterate

people are more receptive to new ideologies and become a potential pool of recruits. In support of this theory, Boko Haram did indeed evolve in Northern Nigeria, where the most marginalized segment of the population lives. In this area both cultural and religious practices have restricted and discriminated against education. However, even if education is completed, youth unemployment is a continuing problem. The state lack suitable structures to enable people to get work, and instead people end up as hawkers on the streets. Illiteracy and unemployment are both causes for instability and violence in the Basin area. It stands as another example of how the state failed to provide education and deliver meaningful sources of livelihoods to its people. Boko Haram did take advantage of these social grievances in their recruitment process (Enobi & Johnson-Rokosu, 2016; Ofongo, 2016).

Ethnic and religious factors: Within the societal dimension of state fragility theory, risk factors can include inequalities, social cleavages or culturally defined and structured groups. Nigeria is an example where "deeply divided states polarized along ethnic and religious fault lines often tend to be fragile and unstable resulting in violent clashes," (Ofongo, 2016, p. 153). As briefly described, the British rulers of 1914 contributed to create a culturally artificial and divided state. Since then there has been recurring outbreaks of clashes between ethnic groups, as well as Christians and Muslims. Ethnic and religious diversity does not necessarily make conflicts inevitable, but in Nigeria religion and ethnicity are important identity factors, more so than class identities. It is believed that Boko Haram used such divisions to mobilize people based on ethnic and religious identity, with a goal to gain some advantage in the country (Ofongo, 2016).

Political factor: The issues of Nigeria are not only due to poverty, inequality or religious factors, but the political factor has further pushed these tensions to the breaking point. Nigeria is a standing example of resource-curse politics, where poor governance and corruption has deprived the population of new economic opportunities. Amidst soaring mass poverty, only the northern elites reaped the benefits of Nigeria's oil resources. Northern leaders were subject to criticism, fostering popular grievance (Meagher, 2014).

Poor resource management

One of the deepest issues of The Lake Chad Basin can be traced all the way back to colonial times. As described before, the region was divided by European forces intro four separate countries, with little consideration of cultural or ethnic heritage in the region. Consequently, four different political states were forced to administer shared natural resources essential to

millions of people within their borders. Lake Chad has been a crucial ecosystem to the survival of people since prehistoric times, serving as *the* major water resource between the Sahel and Sahara deserts. With the region split into different political states, the administration of the lake became challenging. Additionally, the region was already subject to tough environmental pressures. It's a semi-arid hydro system which is prone to droughts and has been modified significantly due to increasing resource competition. The changing water levels led to growing desertification in the area, which again adds as a source of social conflict. The management of Lake Chad depends on the practices and policies of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) Member States, but linguistic and cultural barriers have impeded the cooperation. In turn, this led to "ineffective public policy for environmental regulation and regional development planning" (WFP, 2016d, p. 13). This is referred to by environmental economics as a "tragedy of the commons". It occurs when individuals, in this case the LCBC Member States, reap the benefits from a shared resource without considering the overall well-being of the entire region. The practices and policies regulating the area depend on individual Member States rather than on a shared natural resource management structure. Adding to the problem was the lack of information and data on the impacts of climate change and water use on ecosystem health. Although the understanding of climatic changes and sustainable use is much better today, regional challenges still remain for strategic planning and utilization. Both natural rainfall variability, unsustainable water use and regional policy failures contribute to peoples' insecure supply of water and food resources. With the onset of regional conflict, such underlying issues are usually not prioritized before human survival (WFP, 2016d).

Oil discovery

In addition to resource management issues and environmental degradation, political injustice and corrupt activities by state authorities became significant as the Lake Chad Basin caught international interest as a potential area for oil supply. Although oil prospects in the region can be traced back to the 1950s, new oil states emerge (Chad, Niger) and new discoveries made in Nigeria and Cameroon. It is believed that the US interest in the area, parallel to the war on terror commencing in 2001, are significant factors leading up to the current crisis. The politically unstable oil suppliers in the Middle East were further disrupted by the US-Iraq war, combined with an increasing oil demand in the US. The Lake Chad Basin was specifically considered an area of interest in this context. Other oil importing nations as well turned their eye to Africa looking for sites for foreign investment. The Lake Chad was one of three oil basins on the continent, leading to the construction of the disputed Chad-Cameroon pipeline initiated by the

World Bank in 2003. Negotiations between the World Bank, the US, Chadian and Cameroon governments and international oil companies resulted in a pipeline from Doba in Chad to the Atlantic port in Kribi-Cameroon. Following this huge investment, the Lake Chad region became strategically important to the US and others, and it became a geopolitical front in the war on terror. The Chad-Cameroon project stand as an example of similar situations across the region, where governments and oil companies prioritized economic profits over social and environmental impacts. This development further spurred corrupt activities among state authorities. Moreover, government expenditures had to be used to suppress resistance rather than being invested in infrastructure and social services (Taguem Fah, 2007; WFP, 2016d).

Standing as an example of this is Nigeria, who is the leading oil producer in Africa. Oil accounts for 95% of foreign earnings and stable economic growth rates. However, Nigerian poverty levels are very high. Too much have ended up in the pockets of private individuals without benefiting the general public. Following the oil boom, the government invested little into industries like agriculture or service sectors (Our Africa, n.d.). This implies a rise of marginalized groups with potential social grievances.

The War on Terror

The US interest in the Lake Chad Region was not only due to oil, but also the war on terror following 9/11. This is also considered to have contributed to exposing the population to radical Islamic campaigns, allowing for the rise of Boko Haram. The Lake Chad basin is the area in Sub-Saharan Africa with the highest Muslim population. The Bush administration voiced concerns about terrorist networks with ties to Al-Qaeda operating in the area. The borders in the basin area are not well protected, serving as a strategic place to transfer terrorists, equipment and money. Particularly Chad and Niger became involved in US-led initiatives to enhance stability and combat terrorism in the region. They received military equipment and training supported by the US. However, the American presence in the region did not go unnoticed. Local populations felt exploited by Western-sponsored dictatorial governments failing to involve African citizens. Initially, a growing discontent towards non-Muslim influence and US imperialism evolved. Furthermore, the invasion of Iraq in 2003 added more fuel to the fire as it was considered a display of inti-Islamic attitude. Some people of the Lake Chad region with Muslim background believed this to be an attack on Islam itself. Following these developments, rising Islamic classes gradually established a "reactionary Islam" in the area, seeking to influence local Muslims and strengthen religious practices. Peoples discontent with the American presence and their frustration due to a lack of social inequality and education made

them easy targets for recruitment by extremist groups like Boko Haram (Taguem Fah, 2007; WFP, 2016d).

Rise of Boko Haram

The extremist Islamic group we know today as Boko Haram has existed as a sect in Nigeria since 1995, under various names. The sect is based on the practice of orthodox Islam, with a goal to overthrow the Nigerian state, impose strict Sharia law and oppose Western education and influence. The detesting of Western education can be traced back to early 1900s when parts of today's Nigeria, Niger and Cameroon fell under British control. Ever since, many families refuse to send their children to what they regard as Western schools. Based on these beliefs, Mohammed Yusuf formed Boko Haram in 2002, as a response to what he alleged were non-believers running the Nigerian state. The group expressed the need to rid the Nigerian system of Western pollution. In addition to the fundamental disregard of Western education were the US presence discussed previously. Yusuf set up an Islamic school and provided an alternative education to poor Muslim families across Nigeria and surrounding countries. However, the underlying objective was to create an Islamic state by using the school for recruiting jihadists (BBC, 2016; Onuoha, 2010).

The first severe armed attack on state security forces occurred in 2003 when the group attacked police stations and public buildings in Yobe State. The following years students from several universities in the states of Yobe and Borno dropped out of their public education in order to join the group. Boko Haram caught international attention during the insurgency in July 2009. The riot started in the northeastern state of Bauchi, but quickly spread to Kano, Yobe and Borno in a matter of days. The fighting came as a response to the state polices' arrest of suspected leaders of the sect, as well as a refusal of freedom to preach and recruit more people. This response by the government came as an attempt to prevent outbreak of religious violence following the Boko Haram ideology. Combined military and police forces managed to repel and contain the attack, including to arrest Yusuf. He was killed after a few hours in police custody under suspicious circumstances. In the aftermath, 3500 people were internally displaced and an undisclosed number of soldiers killed (BBC, 2016; Onuoha, 2010).

Following the Boko Haram surge in 2009, the state declared Boko Haram finished after killing Yusuf. But the group found a new leader in Abubakar Shekau, and by 2013 it was declared a terrorist organization by the US. Boko Haram stepped up its attacks from killing mostly police

and politicians, to bombing churches, buses and civilians. They continued to storm villages and towns, abducting women and children and recruit-kidnapping men and boys (BBC, 2016).

Nigeria's neighbors have also experienced the spillover effects from the insurgency. Even from the early days of the sect, new potential recruits would cross the border from Niger, Chad and Cameroon. Nigerian soldiers would in turn travel the other way to hide from local security forces. Boko Haram has exploited the cultural, ethnic and religious links to border areas in neighboring countries, making outside recruitment possible. Government forces in Niger, Chad and Cameroon were for a long time reluctant to engage in any confrontation with Boko Haram. However, between 2014 and 2015 the group enforced a stronger presence in these countries, and the attacks could no longer be ignored. This has resulted in a stronger regional force established by the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC), consisting of troops deployed jointly by Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon. Such cooperation among the Lake Chad Basin countries has existed in the form of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) since 1998, but in 2015 a revised version of the task force authorized the deployment of up to 10,000 troops. The MNJTF managed to reclaim all towns occupied by Boko Haram, but its members took shelter in the Sambisa forest in the southwestern part of the Chad Basin. From there they continued to attack villages and towns. According to the latest reports, Nigeria's army managed to retake Sambisa forest and declared the area free of Boko Haram in December 2016. However, with Shekau still alive the group has now gone into hiding, and Nigeria's army chief warned that the battle is not over (BBC, 2016; Comolli, 2015; Solomon, 2017).

The violence by Boko Haram is estimated to have led to 20 000 deaths since the outbreak in 2009. Farms, schools and health facilities have been closed down, leaving millions of people with inadequate access to health and social services. Over 2 million people are displaced from their homes. Some of the internally displaced people (IDPs) live in camps and host communities, whilst others crossed the borders to Cameroon, Chad and Niger. This mass migration caused further pressure on scarce resource already under stress from climatic changes. People suffer under poor hygiene conditions, inadequate health services and lack of food and water. Such cramped living conditions increase the risk of both diseases and epidemics (Awosusi, 2017).

Livelihoods in the Basin

In order to understand how the Boko Haram insurgency has affected people and food security in the region, it's necessary to understand the livelihoods of the people affected. The concept

of livelihood involves understanding "the components of people's livelihood assets and the survival strategies of the rural poor" (Ogbozor, 2016, p. 5). There are many various definitions, but its concerned with how people maintain access to vital resources necessary for both short and long-term survival. In order to understand and evaluate responses in a crisis, one have to establish the impact of the crisis on lives and livelihoods, and how this in turn affects food security outcomes (Ogbozor, 2016).

The area of the Lake Chad Basin is diverse when it comes to local languages, dialects, ethnicities, tribes, and indigenous groups. People rely on population movement and cross-border trade as part of their adapting strategy to climatic variability, and this has formed cooperative relationships among groups across countries. Around 80-90% of the population depend on agriculture, livestock and fishery for their livelihoods. These activities are closely tied to the riverine system of the lake. The floodplains and wetlands of the basin provide important sources for agricultural inputs, grazing and fishing grounds. The Lake Chad Basin is a dynamic hydro-system with cyclical floods and fluctuating water levels, which demands flexible strategies where people engage in fishing, livestock, pastoralism and agricultural activities depending on seasonal changes and flood cycles. Such livelihood strategies require a significant amount of mobility, and several groups have traditions of cross-border migration. Since pre-colonial times, movement of people has been a significant part of adapting to environmental variability (Ogbozor, 2016; WFP, 2016d).

Most of the people around the lake rely on subsistence activities from fishing, herding and farming. Based on the availability of raw materials, industries like cotton ginning, breweries, leather and milling also contribute to the livelihood opportunities. However, the access to resources is very varied according to gender, ethnicity, ownership of land and assets, as well as knowledge and experience. The poorest people are usually the fishers because access to water bodies is not restricted. Farmers, on the other hand, tend to be better off because they own land. Most agricultural land is indeed privately owned by family farmers. Agricultural production is essentially the main economic activity in the region, engaging about 60% of the population. These activities are vital for local food supply, although not always sufficient for commercial trade. Some of the important agricultural crops include cotton, groundnuts, cassava, millet, sorghum, rice and onions. Many require large amounts of water which is drained from the already hard-pressured lake (Ogbozor, 2016; WFP, 2016d).

Fishing activities in the region are commonly part of a flexible and seasonal matrix of activities depending on the flood cycle. In various areas of the Basin, local populations rely on seasonal and permanent ponds, rivers and the open waters. The most used are actually seasonal ponds, implying how fishing activities are adjusted to seasonal changes. There can even be large fluctuations in terms of duration of the rainy and dry season depending on the area. In some areas fishing is an element of wealth differentiation, but in others fishers can be relatively well-off. Particularly if they own a piece of land, they have been known to buy fertilizers and seeds from the income (Béné et al., 2003; WFP, 2016d).

Livestock is the third main rural livelihood strategy. Cattle, small ruminants, poultry and equines are all common types. Livestock rearing also depends on seasonal changes, and both settled herders and migratory pastoralists have cross-border migration patterns. Many of them even rely on a close relationship with local farmers dating centuries back, where local farmers provide crop residues for animal feed, and the animals provide manure in return. Herders are already facing difficult times due to drought and declining water availability, but they are also facing increasing cultivation of traditional pasturelands (WFP, 2016d).

Many people combine fishing, herding and farming alternatively or simultaneously as various areas can be used for grazing, crops or fishing grounds during the same season. In that way, fishers, farmers and pastoralists are not necessarily separate groups. Nevertheless, all groups in the Lake Chad Basin struggle with diminishing natural resources and water levels, limiting their livelihoods strategies. Additionally, the Boko Haram insurgency severely disrupted trade and migration, destroyed livelihood assets and displaced millions of people, further adding to livelihood challenges (WFP, 2016d).

Effects of conflict on livelihoods and food security

Impacts of conflict on livelihoods are well established and can impact the economy of individuals, households and communities directly or indirectly. Direct impacts include "changes in the household composition due to killings, injuries, [abductions] and recruitment of fighters, changes in household economic status due to the destruction of assets and livelihoods and effects caused by forced displacement and migration" (Justino, 2009, p. 319). During violent conflicts, assets can be destroyed through fighting or through looting with the purpose of acquiring resources. Farmers are particularly at risk as insurgents may damage houses, land, labor, livestock or harvests. Mass displacements contribute to the problems as

people struggle to find work and suffer from reduced productivity levels. Generally, peoples' incomes and consumption are lower for an extended period of time (Justino, 2009).

Indirect impacts can either be at local/community level or at national level. Local effects will alter people's access to local exchange, employment, credit and insurance, as well as affecting social relations and political institutions. Under a conflict situation, local exchange and markets can be significantly inhibited by destroyed infrastructure. Transaction costs increase, credit and employment becomes difficult to obtain. Moreover, political institutions are altered both at local and national level. People lose access to public goods, physical security or property rights protection (Justino, 2009).

National indirect channels imply changes in economic growth and distribution of wealth. A violent conflict can both become worse or better depending on the economic growth, and vice versa. However, economic growth has a history of declining under such circumstances. This is partly because of the devastating effects a violent conflict has on infrastructure and markets, whilst at the same time limiting the abilities for economic systems and households to respond. If people are pushed further into poverty due to decline in economic growth, such effects may create new incentives for violence (Justino, 2009).

In the Lake Chad Basin, the Boko Haram insurgents have led to many impacts such as killings, destruction of assets and livelihoods and mass displacement. The group particularly target productive communities, driving them from their homes to acquire resources. Issues of security has prevented farmers from carrying out their usual activities in the field, and Boko Haram has been involved in plundering harvests and cattle, further threatening food production. In the most insecure states armed groups restrict people's movements and hence their coping strategies. Historically, migration in the region has been a significant part of adapting to seasonal environmental variability. Now these restrictions disrupt and constrain agricultural activities as transport and trade is limited. Moreover, destruction of property and infrastructure further contribute to lower food production and disturb the movement of commodities. Private houses, schools, bridges, ministry buildings, electricity offices, health centers, water sources and power distribution lines have been damaged. Displacements not only separate people from their productive assets, mass migration to new areas affect limited resources like water and land. Additionally, FAO (2017c) reports how camps for internally displaced people are set up on arable land that should be used for production (FAO, 2017c).

However, not only agriculture is severely affected, also the livestock sector and those dependent on it. Livestock is known to have been killed deliberately by members of Boko Haram, but major displacements have also forced herders to leave their livestock behind. During the pastoral lean season, the flocks are dependent on herders to guide them as water sources and pastures dry out. As mentioned, border closure and restricted migration opportunities due to security issues also inhibit transhumance flows – an important response strategy following fodder shortages. Livestock are further concentrated in areas of limited water and pastures availability, which again lead to confrontations between herders and farmers (FAO, 2017c). Fisheries is the third most vital livelihood being impacted by the insurgency. The Nigerian armed forces were required to restrict fishing on the lake because the insurgents would steal fisheries products for income generation, enabling them to further strengthen their position. If fishing isn't restricted by the armed forced, many fishers are still forced to abandon their fishing practices in order to flee the violent outbreaks (FAO, 2017c).

Boko Haram's savaging has further impacted commodity prices, transportation costs and led to market closures. As evidence suggests, price hikes in Nigeria are correlated with the intensity of civil conflict. Historically, the country experienced higher food prices during conflict events. Prices are affected by reduced production, but also market access and trade flows. Due to security concerns, imports of grain from Nigeria to Niger have been suspended. Transporters either stop the supply altogether because border points are closed, or they have to find alternative routes. Additionally, several roads were closed after explosion attacks. This increases the transportation costs due to longer travel and in turn affects commodity prices. Particularly border closures between Niger-Nigeria and Nigeria-Chad severely altered the flow of people and goods in the Lake Chad Basin, which is significant when the four Basin countries depend on trade with each other. Restriction of foreign transactions and the flow of goods impact food prices and availability by reducing food supply from some areas and increase demand in other areas. An example of this occurred when Nigeria implemented an import ban during the height of the insurgency for security reasons. Cameroon depended on exporting food products and livestock across the border, but ended up with a commodity surplus in local markets. This, combined with food aid received to the area, caused a decrease in local prices, a classical example of negative impacts resulting from flooded markets. Moreover, as a result of border closures and security concerns, several important markets had to be closed down (Breisinger et al., 2015; Ogbozor, 2016).

Recent updates on the situation in the Lake Chad Basin show that 7.1 million people are severely food insecure, and a total of 2.3 million are displaced. The people in need amount to a staggering 10.7 million. Funding requirements for 2017 are expected to reach a total of US$ 1.5 billion, compared to US$ 739 million in 2016. However, only 53% of the amount needed in 2016 was covered. Nigeria is by far the country in need of most aid and account for most of the displaced people (OCHA, 2017).

Cameroon – The Far North

1.6 million of the people in need in the Basin are located within the borders of Cameroon. Cross-border raids and suicide bombs by Boko Haram have led to massive displacements in the Far North region. Additionally, 86,000 refugees crossed the border from Nigeria so far. This puts high pressure on host communities in an area already affected by drought, lack of food and epidemics. Furthermore, food insecurity and malnutrition is alarmingly high in certain areas. Security concerns forced the shutdown of a number of health centers as well as schools, limit peoples access to basic services and education. Women and girls are at particular risk to sexual exploitation and young boys are subject to forced recruitment.

According to assessments by OCHA, humanitarian needs are mostly centered around emergency assistance and livelihood support as of now, but due to insecurity and continuing attacks aid has been difficult to deliver. OCHA further suggests some sectorial priorities where aid should be focused, including emergency education, emergency shelter and health facilities. In terms of food assistance and food security, agricultural support (i.e. seeds, fertilizers, technical support) is to be provided, together with conditional and unconditional food assistance, both in-kind or cash. Other initiatives undertaken include water and sanitation access, as well as supplementary feeding for children (OCHA, 2017).

Chad – The West

This year OCHA estimates that 345,000 people in the Basin within Chad borders will be in need of assistance. Similar to Cameroon, people are affected by Boko Haram fights and attacks. However, people in Chad were already in great need prior to the insurgency, and now further migration and displacement threaten their existence. In this area, the competition over resources like water, firewood and farmland is particularly affected. Moreover, basic commodity prices increased following the closure of the Nigerian border, as economic activities are restricted and

food shortages becoming severe. People have been forced to abandon farming activities, harvests and fishing activities as they fled the violence. Consequently, 157,000 people are now severely food insecure.

Humanitarian actions are restricted in some areas as aid agencies had to suspend their operations, but where possible the goal is first and foremost to save lives. However, the Chad region has been suffering from protracted and recurrent cycles of crises. Therefore, aid operations attempt to focus on developing socio-economic activities and strengthen capacities of communities and national actors. Sectorial proprieties include education, emergency shelter and health care. Furthermore, food assistance and agricultural support (i.e. seeds and tools) are to be provided (OCHA, 2017).

Niger – The South-East

The Nigerian part of the Lake Basin has been suffering from food insecurity, malnutrition, droughts and floods since before Boko Haram. With more than 300,000 people now displaced as a consequence of the violence, the pressure on basic services and resources is tremendous. Education and health services have been disrupted, as well as access to water. Schooling is of high importance when it comes to deterring recruitment by armed groups, which is more likely where people lack education opportunities.

Humanitarian assistance over the coming year will focus on protecting livelihoods and strengthen resistance capacities. Life-saving assistance is always first priority, but further resilience building of communities and risks and vulnerabilities analyses are to be prioritized. Moreover, the goal of humanitarian partners is to collaborate closely with the Government as well as development actors. Sector priorities include establishing temporary schooling, emergency shelter, health services, nutritional supplementation, in-kind and cash assistance as well as agricultural support (OCHA, 2017).

Nigeria – The North-East

With Nigeria being the starting point for the Boko Haram insurgency, 8.5 million are expected to be in need of assistance in the following years. Due to the proximity of the conflict, 1.8 million people are displaced and 200,000 refugees forced to migrate to neighboring countries. People in Nigeria are continuously subject to violent attacks, where men and boys are recruited by force and women and girls suffer from gender based violence and abduction. A significant part of IDPs are recently attempting to move back to their homes, but security threats cut people

off from rural and farming activates or other viable livelihood opportunities. However, most of them will continue to be displaced in larger towns.

Humanitarian needs range from lack of food, health services, shelter, education, protection and water and sanitation. The needs are broad and require humanitarian partners to deliver appropriate assistance whilst strengthening the partnership with the government. Additionally, civil protection must be an overarching strategy. Moreover, to strengthen the links between relief and development, coordination between partners is to be prioritized (OCHA, 2017). In 2017, WFP and FAO will continue to cooperate on joint emergency food assistance, agriculture and livelihoods support to internally displaced people, returnees and host communities in Northeast Nigeria. The work seeks to rebuild livelihoods, reduce food consumption needs and prevent acute malnutrition (WFP, 2017a).

International responses and effects on long-term food security

Oslo Humanitarian Conference on Nigeria and the Lake Chad Region

As previously stated, the crisis around Lake Chad has been considered one of the worst and most neglected. In an important effort to draw political and public attention to the humanitarian needs in the region, the United Nations, Nigeria, Germany and Norway hosted the "Oslo Humanitarian Conference on Nigeria and the Lake Chad Region". 24 countries, 20 international and regional organizations, as well as representatives of local and international civil society came together in Oslo on 24 February 2017. The conference demonstrates an important step towards better funding and cooperation in the region. Pledges for financial support exceeded US$ 672 million, and there has been a scale-up over the last years in humanitarian response. Furthermore, the conference acknowledged the need to establish durable solutions to support medium- and long-term development.

Key messages established during the conference include the need to align assistance with government efforts, focus on vulnerable groups such as women, girls and displaced people, improve protection and increase self-reliance. Moreover, the importance of education is established in regard to promoting peace and development ("Chair's Outcome Statement," 2017).

Frameworks for action

The statements from the conference in Oslo align very well with the principles of the CFS Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises and the New Deal

for Engagement in Fragile Sates. For that reason, principles from both frameworks and outcomes from the Oslo Humanitarian Conference will lay the basis for the following analysis. However, their outlines are intended to lay a foundation for a wide range of humanitarian interventions from various actors. Consequently, this analysis focus on these outlines in the context of food assistance. It is not within the scope of this paper to place equal weight on all aspects, therefore it will be adjusted to address specific and relevant challenges within the Lake Chad Region. Moreover, the paper focuses on the international responses implemented mainly under WFP and the joint strategies with FAO (livelihoods support) and UNICEF (health and nutrition).

Many various actors contribute to establishing the underlying causes for conflict, and consequently for food insecurity and undernutrition in the Lake Chad Basin. The underlying factors are many, from chronic underdevelopment, poverty, lack of education, security issues, poor governance, low economic development and environmental degradation. Again, the discussion centers around how food assistance interventions particularly can contribute to addressing some of these underlying issues directly and indirectly.

Address critical manifestations and build resilience

The first principles for action are concerned with addressing critical needs and building resilience. Any food assistance intervention should primarily focus on saving lives, by providing food and nutrition support to those in need. Moreover, resilience should be considered wherever possible, in order to improve the capacity of people to deal with crisis. This approach considers women's empowerment, smallholder agricultural activity and the wider economy as a whole. Additionally, an emphasis is placed on the nutritional needs of vulnerable and marginalized groups.

Meet immediate needs, build resilient livelihoods and focus on nutritional needs

These three principles focus on aligning humanitarian and development policies and actions and enhance resilience, as well as improving the nutritional status of vulnerable populations affected or at risk.

WFP has been working closely governments, local authorities and a number of local and international organizations in order to provide the best possible assistance in the Lake Chad Basin. Joint responses include a combination of WFP life-saving assistance in the form of in-kind aid and cash transfers (where markets are functioning), FAO provision of agricultural inputs such as seeds, tools and fertilizers and UNICEF contributions of supplementary feeding. Furthermore, the interventions seek to support livelihood assets creation and resilience efforts (WFP, 2017a). This collaboration is made possible to a large extent through the Food Security Cluster (FSC). The FSC is co-led by FAO and WFP, and established in 2010 to coordinate food security response in humanitarian crisis. It works directly with partners and stakeholders, including NGOs, the Red Cross, other cluster lead agencies, UN organizations, Governments and Donors. The FSC seeks to make food security coordination effective, enhance global partnerships and scale-up of communication and resource mobilization ("About Food Security Cluster," n.d.).

In January 2015, WFP launched a regional Emergency Operation (EMOP) across the Lake Chad Basin countries. WFP states that "the geographic targeting and emergency focus of this regional operation ensures no duplication with activities ongoing under parallel resilience-building and development operations". It is rather meant to ensure complementarity and linkages with other in-country operations under WFP and partners. Parallel operations can stabilize tensions as it ensures equal access across different contexts. Hence, this operation under the UN agencies is an important step towards regional and coordinated efforts.

The EMOP is projected to run for 3 years and will end in December 2017. In accordance with WFP Strategic Objective 1, "Save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies", the goal of the project is to meet food and nutrition needs. Furthermore, it aims to promote self-reliance for IDPs and refugees in protracted displacement situations as well as returnees. The project seeks to support an integrated regional response by working with the governments of Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger, ensuing international law and humanitarian principles. However, the difficult political and security context makes movements in the field difficult (WFP, 2014, 2016f). EMOP is usually the first step for delivering food assistance in complex emergencies, followed by Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations (PRRO). PRRO are implemented if it becomes clear that EMOPs are not sufficient. WFP implemented 3 PRROs in Niger, Cameroon and Chad, running more or less simultaneously from early 2015 to December 2016. The regional EMOP was initially planned for one year only, but the upscaling of the crisis also

extended the needs. Consequently, assistance is delivered jointly through the EMOP and PRROs.

The governments in the four Basin countries have quite different national institutional contexts and operational capacities to deal with the crisis. In Niger, different coordination cells under the National Mechanism for the Prevention and Management of Disasters and Food Crises (DNPGCCA) as well as regional administration has contributed significantly to the response. Nigeria also provides support through the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), which works closely with WFP. Chad and Cameroon, on the other hand, have contributed less to coordination and administration due to limited capacities. Hence, they have mainly relied on international assistance (WFP, 2016a).

In Nigeria, the regional EMOP marked the first presence of WFP in the country. The primary approach is to assist the government in delivering the response. In accordance with the Framework of Action and the New Deal, WFP invested in and built upon the existing capacity of both the National and State Emergency Management Agencies. Efforts included provision of technical support and training on cash-based transfers (CBT), food supply chain, food security and vulnerability assessment. These efforts attempted to assist cooperation in preparedness and response capacity for national agencies. Furthermore, in camps and settlements, WFP cooperated with local authorities and community members to understand food gaps and to ensure involvement of local actors. Due to Boko Haram presence, there was limited engagement in certain areas of Borno and Yobe States until the Joint-Military Force managed to reclaim the areas in 2015. As previously inaccessible areas opened up, more actors began to operate and could expand their programs. Through the Food Security Cluster, WFP contributed to collaboration for more efficient scale-up. Field-level agreements evolved between various UN agencies, international and national NGOs (WFP, 2016f).

Through the EMOP, cash-based transfers were prioritized in areas with fully functioning markets, and in more remote areas without functioning markets, in-kind assistance is provided. To combat acute malnutrition, WFP in cooperation with UNICEF also provides supplementary feeding to children in targeted communities. Furthermore, households with children suffering from severe acute malnutrition received CBT. In certain areas of Nigeria people have started to return home over the last months. Livelihood support interventions for these people become important to avoid dependence on food assistance. During the planting season in 2016, a joint Seed Protection Programme with FAO in Yobe state in Nigeria provided IDPs and returnees with seeds, combined with CBT and in-kind food assistance. Local procurement of food items

is significant to contribute to local production. In Nigeria, beans, sorghum, millet and salt came from local production, as well as some commodities imported from Cameroon. Rice and vegetable oil and specialized nutritious food had to be procured internationally (WFP, 2016f).

WFP and partners were able to reach over 1 million people in Nigeria by the end of 2016. Flexible resourcing by donors and fruitful partnerships on the ground made this possible. However, tracking and monitoring the assistance has been difficult due to lack of access and security concerns in certain areas. Nonetheless, outcome post-distribution monitoring in available areas indicate stability and improvement in peoples' dietary diversity and consumption as a result of interventions. (WFP, 2016f).

In Cameroon, WFP were already established prior to the project implementation, and could therefore rely on the experience and strong field presence of partner NGOs. This collaboration allowed assistance to reach remote areas and to be needs-and context specific, despite access and insecurity challenges. Moreover, WFP collaborated with partners in order to develop community and local government capacities. The goal is to involve local authorities so they can eventually take charge of efforts, which is an important step towards independence, capacity building and resilience. Food assistance operations addressed the needs of Nigerian refugees, IDPs and vulnerable local populations in the Far North region through in-kind assistance. However, IDPs beneficiaries with access to functioning markets where gradually shifted from in-kind to cash assistance. Additionally, WFP initiated programs to prevent acute malnutrition in children in combination with access to health care. Public works have also been used in Cameroon, like Food Assistance for Assets projects. This can both ensure food availability and access as well as support the rehabilitation of livelihoods. People participated in community vegetable gardening, rice cultivation and fish farming projects, as well as construction and rehabilitation of irrigation channels. What is more, 55% of the participants were women, allowing them to increase incomes and develop new skills. According to monitoring results, food assistance both ensured food availability and mitigated effects of negative coping strategies in affected areas. 32% more households reached acceptable food consumption. Reports from beneficiaries also indicated satisfaction with the shift from in-kind to CBT as people could now enjoy a more diverse food basket. In terms of malnutrition, also here the interventions indicate a reduction in malnutrition prevalence (WFP, 2016f).

In Niger, WFP worked with the Government, ministries of Health, Education and Agriculture, UN agencies, and NGOs to implement the Regional Emergency Operation. A national food

security cluster held regular meetings to ensure cooperation between various actors. The cluster was led by representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, with support from WFP and FAO. In situations of mixed migration, this ensured proper targeting as it is necessary to establish peoples' vulnerabilities and not only status. Therefore, WFP carried out Household Economic Analysis for adequate targeting. Additionally, due to pressure on resources and food stocks also host communities were included in the EMOP. WFP provided both unconditional and conditional food assistance through distributions, cash transfers as well as acute malnutrition programs focusing on children. Food Assistance for Assets proves important also here. Asset creation activities can support livelihood protection by encouraging self-reliance and resilience in the medium-term. Moreover, it is also intended as part of long-term livelihood promotion where new skills can help increase productivity as beneficiaries' graduate from training to apply this new knowledge (WFP, 2016f).

In accordance with Niger's international commitments with respect to education, WFP contributed with relocating schoolchildren to safer areas. Moreover, they provide school meals reaching 8,000 children. School meals can potentially enroll more children, as education is a significant underlying cause of conflict. Not to mention it provides a safe environment for the children. Monitoring of households indicates that 80% of them are at minimum or acceptable level of consumption status, however this is not a large variation from 2015. Also, only 52% had an adequate dietary diversity, which has decreased since 2015. According to WFP, more analysis is needed to identify the causes. Moreover, up to 90% of the population monitored are food insecure mainly as a result from continuing degradation of livelihoods (WFP, 2016f).

In Chad, WFP was among the first key actors to assist IDPs. Prior to its involvement from 2015, there was little humanitarian presence in this region. Under WFP initiative partnerships were established among various actors, and assistance managed to cover even remote areas in the Lake region. Since mid-2016, local and international NGOs have increased their participation. This allowed for WFP to continue to provide food distributions in cooperation with the Regional Delegation for Social Action even during attacks by Boko Haram. During the initial states of assistance, it constituted mainly in-kind distributions. Market and feasibility studies had to be carried out in order to determine the appropriateness of cash-based transfers. Moreover, local and regional authorities were originally reluctant regarding cash transfers. Therefore, CBT were delayed and in-assistance continued in areas with non-functioning markets. Locally procured cereals like sorghum and millet came from traders and smallholder farmers' associations, something that stimulated the increase in production and trade. Also

here, acute malnutrition programs for children had to be incorporated. Additionally, WFP interventions for school meals reached almost 15,000 children through this project. Through the "technical and financial partnership for education", schools also received school kits through UNICEF and the Government guaranteed available teachers.

Further initiatives supporting durable solutions in the medium- and long term include Food Assistance for Assets to strengthen livelihoods and build resilience. Monitoring results in crisis affected areas in Chad denote an improvement in indicators such as food consumption status and dietary diversity. Also rates of acute malnutrition did reach project targets, but security issues prevented all children to take part in all distributions which affects the results. Further analysis found that timely implementation of food assistance during the lean season could have contributed to improved food security status for affected households (WFP, 2016f).

Examples from Chad can further support the significance and effects of food assistance. Particularly the shift from in-kind to cash and vouchers. Internally displaced people are living in precarious shelters following Boko Haram attacks. Interviewed beneficiaries in these camps are welcoming this shift, and point out how they are now able to go to the nearest market and choose what they want. People are pleased with the idea of being able to cook what they prefer for their families. Moreover, their diets can become more diversified (Magnien, 2016). WFP in Chad attempt to buy as much as possible of this food assistance through local purchases. In areas with marketable cereal surplus, local traders and smallholder farmers benefit from increased agricultural production and trade (WFP, 2016f).

In accordance with CFS Framework for Action, building resilient livelihoods in the region is a significant factor within response programming. It emphasizes smallholder agricultural productivity. Resilient livelihoods not only increase access and availability of food for displaced- and host populations and returnees, it plays a vital role in moving from aid delivery to ending the need. It can contribute to restoring food systems, stability and sustainable peace in fragile situations. What is more, it's a step towards integration between relief and development.

It is important to understand livelihood systems and risks in order to provide timely and effective assistance. Because agriculture, livestock and fishing constitute the main livelihood strategies, supporting and investing in these sectors become significant for resilience, self-reliance and overall development. Furthermore, FAO recognizes that "restoring agricultural livelihoods is a priority to avoid further deterioration of the food security situation," (FAO,

2017b, p. 1). In Nigeria, 75% of percent of the internally displaced people stay in host communities, and the rest stay in camp-like settings. Those who are better off sometimes manage to find employment or potential livelihoods in urban area, but those without economic means or assets tend to end up in camps. Consequently, IDPs and host communities are the most vulnerable in this conflict. Host communities in Cameroon, Chad and Niger are further under pressure both from IDPs and refugees from Nigeria. FAO assessments indicate that people in host communities often receive a plot of land to cultivate. Furthermore, as agriculture used to be the main source of livelihood for the IDPs, access to land is very important (FAO, 2017c).

FAO has initiated a Lake Chad Basin crisis Response strategy for 2017-2019. The objectives include to improve food security and resilience for vulnerable groups through livelihood support. Initiatives are implemented in coordination with partners like Ministries of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, WFP and other UN agencies, national and international NGOs and the Lake Chad Basin Commission. Interventions focus on the most vulnerable families, which are the internally displaced people and host communities. WFP assessments in Nigeria showed that 85% of registered households in Borno and Yobe States engaged in negative livelihood coping strategies (WFP, 2016f). Negative coping-mechanisms can potentially have a lasting negative impact on livelihoods. Examples of this occur when people are forced to sell productive assets to satisfy immediate food needs. The goal of agriculture and livestock support is to prevent this from happening. In northeast Nigeria, an increasing number of returnees need special attention. It dictates a need to shift from relief to more sustainable interventions. Vulnerable households depend on both food assistance and livelihood support which should be conducted in parallel. It is vital to enable them to restart agricultural activities, but at the same time offer access to services and protection. This will also reduce the dependency in food aid. Joint early recovery interventions between FAO/WFP involves a twin-track emergency response approach. Emergency food assistance is provided by WFP through in-kind and cash-based transfers, and FAO provides seeds, tool and fertilizers and small-scale livelihoods starter kits. This will ensure a coordinated food and nutrition assistance with agriculture-based livelihood support. Furthermore, timing is of the essence here. Providing this assistance before the upcoming lean season in May-June is essential to avoid a loss of the fourth consecutive harvest. (FAO, 2017c; WFP, 2016e).

Over the last year, FAO and partners have supported thousands of farmers, fishers and herders throughout the region. In Cameroon, they supported small ruminant, local poultry and

pig production by distributing feed and shelters. Moreover, capacity building trainings were carried out in affected areas. In other areas, people were provided with cereal and vegetable seeds, fertilizers and small tools. There has also been focus on facilitating functioning markets for the products, food processing and agricultural infrastructure rehabilitation as well as technical assistance. Such interventions not only ensure availability and stability of food for people, but is can also ensure a diverse diet. Support for livestock contribute to combat malnutrition by supplying meat in addition to vegetables (FAO, 2017b).

Examples from Nigeria indicate the significance of these projects. FAO focus on supporting vulnerable host communities, displaced populations and returnees in Northeast Nigeria. Capacity building, vegetable seeds, fertilizers and irrigation support have been provided in various villages. According to partners on the ground, these interventions are now allowing people "to make more income, save feeding costs and have surplus in the home to take care of other basic needs" (FAO, 2017a). Moreover, 40% of the participants in the project are women. This is of importance because conflict usually hit women and children harder. Two beneficiaries interviewed in different villages can further confirm the importance of such projects, as the amount and quality of crops have increased. They both had to leave everything behind and is dependent on assistance to get started with a new livelihood. Although they both receive food support from different organizations, agricultural assistance can bring about durable solutions. "Agriculture cannot be an afterthought. This is the starting point for the implementation of longer-term activities that contribute to strengthening the population's resilience" (FAO, 2017a).

As outlined before, the Framework for Action emphasizes smallholder agricultural activities as well as women empowerment as pathways out of protracted crisis and towards resilience. Moreover, it stresses the importance of the economy as a whole. Mechanisms recommended to achieving this is encouraging local procurement, foster access to productive resources and markets, and thereby strengthening local food system. Livelihood support described above targets delivery of agricultural productive resources, but also market-integrated approaches are of interest here with a special attention to women. With the agricultural sector being the largest in terms of livelihood strategies, agricultural markets and trade cannot be ignored. What is more, functioning markets are vital to ensure food security. Lake Chad Regional Market Assessment for 2016 identifies problems in the integrated market for the region. Findings indicate how women are less likely to be involved in agricultural trade than men. Women seem to be more involved in Cameroon (50%) compared to the other countries (20%), but still face

similar challenges in terms of access to finance and markets. In Nigeria results also indicate that women are involved in post-harvest activities like cleaning and sorting. Nonetheless, in the entire region women are more likely to be retailers than wholesalers. Lack of capital and credit is an issue that constrains both men and women from economic inclusion in markets. But female traders suffer more than men. Access to productive assets is limited, which also makes them more vulnerable to food insecurity and shocks. Further lack of education and higher rates of illiteracy contribute to this (WFP, 2016b).

Traders in agriculture tend to be mostly self-financed, with the second most important source of funding being family and friends. This indicates how social networks are vital to many in terms of credit provision. For that reason, displacement destruct such networks and contributes heavily to reduced trade participation. Moreover, women are less able to self-finance their activities and are therefore more vulnerable. Very few traders rely on bank loans despite having bank accounts. This indicates a typical situation in fragile states where financial institutions are inadequate. Many banks don't have loan products customized to people with agriculture as the main source of income. Farmers can struggle to obtain bank guarantees, and historically they have trouble reimbursing their loans. In addition, for both formal bank loans and microfinance, the interest rates are high. Particularly women are even further restricted from obtaining loans because they don't have land titles to use as bank guarantees. In general, for both male and female agricultural traders, the loans they might receive are usually too small (WFP, 2016b).

Findings from the Regional Market Assessment indicate several aspects of involvement by humanitarian and development agencies. This is vital as the World Bank states that "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," (WFP, 2016b, p. 17). Other issues reported in the assessment include lack of market opportunities, access to market and market information, education or skills, and infrastructure. Humanitarian interventions are to an increasing extent involving market-based approaches. The growing focus on cash-based interventions and local procurement of food indicate this. Market-integrated relief involves working through markets to provide goods and services. Cash, voucher and in-kind delivery are examples of this. Cash empowers individuals, and unconditional cash programs can have widespread benefits for the economy. They can be used to acquire productive assets and as business start-up funds. Vouchers are also sometimes distributed for agricultural inputs. Furthermore, local procurement of food support the demand and production of locally produced

goods. Consequently, market-integrated relief is relevant in a context of recovery and development as well. So-called indirect support through markets are other market-approaches. Cash or Food for Work programs can be used to rebuild infrastructure and restore major supply routes. Another kind of programing is based on market strengthening and development. This includes support to productive agriculture and employment creation (IRC, 2016).

WFP have a strong focus on market-based approaches like cash, vouchers and local procurement with a goal to enhance market access and opportunities. As described, local procurement is pursued in the lake region where possible. Additionally, particularly cash transfers and public work programs can not only ensure access to assets but also provide training and skills. Moreover, work programs can rebuild infrastructure in the region, thereby addressing some of the issues raised in the market assessment. Further initiatives under FAO Response plan focus on assisting farmers and displaced people in the region with producing food, but also to sell their surplus on the markets. They are working to facilitate the marketing of products, rehabilitate trade networks and infrastructure. It also includes a use of cash vouchers to stimulate the demand and supporting savings and loans schemes and policies on microcredit. Both FAO and WFP have a special attention on women in this context, attempting to encourage their livelihood strategies and participation. All interventions should also aim to support social cohesion and network building, considering the importance of this indicated in the market assessment. Nonetheless, all the contributions have limited effects as long as the conflict is persistent. The market assessment indicates how many traders are affected by security threats and border closures, restricting their access to markets (WFP, 2016b).

Adapt to specific challenges

Not any humanitarian crisis is alike. This entails the need for adapting to specific challenges. Generally, protracted crises are characterized by fragmentation, complexity and insecurity that can potentially impede food assistance interventions. Therefore, interventions should seek to reach affected populations, protect those affected, promote gender equality, ensure evidence-based analyses of the situation and underlying causes, strengthen country ownership of programs and ensure effective financing.

In the Lake Chad Basin, the situation is one of complexity, including violence and insecurity. Consequently, the following discussion focuses mainly on the potential for food assistance to

offer protection and promote gender equality, which are highly relevant in this case. Where relevant and applicable, other areas of focus will be included.

Ensure effective financing

Recent numbers presented by Oxfam indicate how aid has been failing fragile states. One-third of the world's extreme poor live in states characterized as fragile. What is more, many of them suffer under violent conflicts. Humanitarian needs in these areas are on the rise, but the funds are insufficient. At the same time, there is a mismatch between needs and funding. Numbers show how "funds raised for individual humanitarian emergencies are not in proportion to the number of people affected". Protracted conflicts receive less funding than acute natural disasters, to a large extent due to lack of media coverage. They are less "newsworthy" and the public loses interest over time. Consequently, protracted fragile conflicts fall behind when governments allocate funds according to public interests (Searle, 2015).

Effective financing becomes particularly important in protracted situations. Not only because the funding requirements tend to exceed actual funding, but also because a country will rely on aid for an extended period of time. Hence, agencies and organizations depend on stable and predictable sourcing to be able to engage in long-term efforts for long-term solutions. This principle is concerned with promoting for instance multi-year financing mechanisms and building strategic financing partnerships. WFP operations rely exclusively on voluntary donations from governments, inter-governmental institutions, individuals, foundations and corporations. To the extent possible, WFP pursue multi-year funding in order to secure stable relationships with host governments and other agencies, as well as to avoid funding gaps. They have multi-year agreements with various countries, which entails that funding is secured for periods longer than a single year. Consequently, it allows for engagement in programs over several years and facilitates a shift from individual project funding to a shared strategic approach. Shared approaches are significant when it comes to aligning relief and development operations. Additionally, multi-year funding is substantial to ensure flexible funding and be able to modify responses according to changes in crisis context (WFP, 2015c).

As described earlier in this chapter, funding needs for the Lake Chad crisis exceeds actual funding. Roughly half of overall requirements were covered in 2016, and with increasing needs in 2017 the funding deficit is likely to increase. WFP intends to contribute with US$ 584.5 million through the current regional Emergency Operation (EMOP). However, funding shortfalls earlier this year are impeding further assistance and more resources are urgently

needed. Moreover, the situation is made worse from a lack of resources from the governments. In collaboration with FAO, one effort for effective financing has been to ensure emergency assistance and livelihood support before the upcoming lean season starting in May, as described before. A vital focus is to prevent the loss of another consecutive harvest in Nigeria, and timely use of resources can contribute to avoiding a serious protracted livelihoods crisis (WFP, 2017a). Furthermore, continuous assessments of the situation provide a possibility to adapt to changing needs. There is always a focus on transitioning from in-kind to cash-based transfers, which requires flexible funding mechanisms. As a result, WFP is scaling up cash-based assistance where markets are functioning and accessible. In that way funds can be used more effectively because of the positive effects of cash injections on livelihoods, trade and market activities. Nonetheless, effective financing also includes greater international attention. The Humanitarian Conference stands as an important step in this direction. International donors pledged US$ 672 million over the next three years. This is a significant contribution to total needs and at the same time it allows for implementation of interventions over an extended period of time (WFP, 2017b)

Protect those affected and at risk from protracted crisis

Integrating protection in food assistance is of particular importance in complex emergencies and conflict situations. Under such circumstances people are subject to rights abuses and violence. Besides, women and girls are at high risk of sexual and gender-based violence that demands particular attention. In fragile contexts, the state will lack the ability to protect its residents from both social and political violence. The goal of food assistance is to improve the safety, protection and ultimately food security for affected population. According to WFP framework and definition (Crawford et al., 2010):

> Protection means carrying out food assistance activities in ways that contribute to the safety, dignity and integrity of people in the communities receiving that assistance (p. 235)

The terms dignity and integrity express a focus on the humanitarian principle of *humanity* as a basis for interventions. In other words, to the extent possible the individual should be considered. WFP contributes by taking several considerations in terms of responses, like providing assistance through a protection lens. This implies an understanding of protection, international law and humanitarian principles. Furthermore, context analysis is used to map

threats and protection solutions, and ensure a do-no-harm approach towards beneficiaries or other community members. Although protection is a part of WFP policy framework overarching food interventions, they acknowledge the enormous challenges. It requires combined efforts by State and police forces, as well as international protection enforcement actors (Crawford et al., 2010).

In Lake Chad Basin, violence is occurring particularly towards women, children and displaced populations. Gender-based violence means that women and girls are specific targets, subject to abduction, sexual exploitation and abuse. Children are also of high risk, and unaccompanied and separated children have been registered across all countries. These children are subject to forced recruitment, forced suicide attacks, sexual violence, as well as child labor. Displaced populations are further at risk, with recorded human rights violation. Opposition military forces are known for targeting minorities, accusing individuals and groups of associations with Boko Haram. This is particularly affecting men and boys (IRC, 2017).

WFP considers protection threats directly affecting the interventions in the Lake Chad region. For one, they work with Protection Agencies, community leaders and women's groups to identify the most vulnerable within target populations. This is to ensure safe access to distribution sites by considering barriers such as distance, timing and cultural concerns (i.e. separate queues for men and women). Considering the location of distributions can significantly contribute to ensure shorter and safer travels. Moreover, WFP closely monitor the security threats directly at distribution or program sites. But data on this can be very unreliable. In Nigeria, 99% of households in certain areas reported no security problems. However, this is more due to cultural restrictions keeping beneficiaries from reporting instances rather than areas being completely safe. In Cameroon and Chad, gender-balanced feedback and complaint mechanisms were established, such as on-site committee groups and telephone hot-lines. This was to allow beneficiaries to report issues like sexual exploitation, abuse of power or other food assistance related issues. In terms of distribution, security threats and frequency of attacks led to some sites in Cameroon being closed down. As a result, WFP had to ensure safe travel to other sites, and worked with local authorities to arrange transport (WFP, 2016f).

Protection in relation to food assistance is not only concerned with providing assistance in a safe manner. Food assistance itself can also promote security. Particularly school feedings can serve as a safeguard for children. The school provides a safe environment where the kids are

less easily influenced by Boko Haram, but can also protect them from domestic violence and exploitation. Some are known to wander outside of camps in order to collect firewood and sell it. Whether these actions are supported by the family or an individual coping mechanism, providing food or livelihood opportunities to the family or the child itself is a protection measure (IRC, 2017; Molinas & de la Mothe, 2010).

Women and young girls also face severe security threats, some of which are mitigated through food assistance or livelihood support. Large numbers of female-led households are a result from widowhood, displacement and conflict. Household and community structures are uprooted, leaving many women without support networks. Women are now left to fend for their families, and must bear the security threats this entails. Besides, negative livelihood strategies are especially linked to gender. In Borno State in Nigeria, assessments of protection risks show that gender-based and sexual violence is significant. The rates have increased since pre-conflict levels. In some of the areas, women and girls resort to transactional sexual services in exchange for food or money as a negative coping mechanism. The Protection Sector Working Group in the region found that rape and sexual abuse occurred in almost half of the 26 sites covered, but also in camps and host communities with concentrated humanitarian assistance. In Maiduguri, such incidents have even been reported in relation to food distribution within the camps. Reports found that women and girls resort to prostitution in exchange for food, but also for permission to leave the camps where IDP movement is controlled (OCHA, 2016). Unfortunately, WFP analyses indicate similar negative impacts from food distributions in other countries as well. This involved people providing food assistance, camp managers, volunteers and WFP or partner staff (Crawford & Pattugalan, 2013).

In addition to security issues within camps, women in the area have traditionally been collecting firewood and selling the bundles. Despite increased security threats in areas of Boko Haram activity, many continue to rely on this livelihood strategy. Women have been attacked, raped, killed or abducted while collecting wood. Providing food, CBT and alternative livelihood strategies can be of substantial importance. Three assessments of the protection risks in the region found that "the protection risks women are facing are directly linked to the level of assistance they are able to reach on a regular basis, their prior vocational skills and capacity to carry them out," (OCHA, 2016, p. 2). These findings emphasize the importance of assistance, support for livelihood strategies and vocational training to gain new skills. Nonetheless, further

security during these operations is needed to avoid the potential threats to women and girls discussed above (OCHA, 2016).

Promote gender equality

Gender equality is of specific interest in the context of protracted, conflict and fragile settings. Under such conditions, achieving gender equality face particular challenges. Women and girls are specifically vulnerable to sexual and gender-based violence, and under weak institutions they are further restricted from obtaining justice or security. The UN Security Council states that impacts of conflict on women and girls are both disproportionate and unique, but also that women are fundamental pieces in peace-building and conflict resolution. What is more, gender equality should be addressed in these situations as it can further promote Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets on gender equality and inclusive societies (Koester et al., 2016).

For the reasons stated, it's essential to also incorporate a gender approach in aid interventions. According to Koester et al. (2016, p. 355), "recognizing women and men's gender-specific experiences provides a more complete understanding of conflict and fragility and helps ensure that responses are inclusive and responsive to all". An understanding of gender differences can not only make aid more inclusive, it can also make aid more efficient by building on experiences and knowledge. Koester et al. suggests that aid agencies must focus on promoting gender equality in programming goals. Additionally, ensure that aid is actually translated into effective programs that can both improve equality *and* address drivers of conflict and fragility (Koester et al., 2016). In terms of food distribution and gender in emergencies, aid agencies must be sensitive to different needs and interests of men and women. In many situations requiring food assistance, gender will affect access to and control over food. Moreover, agencies must understand various nutritional needs between men, women and children. Last but not least, food interventions should also be used to promote gender equality by strengthening women and men's skills and involvement at various stages (IASC, n.d.).

In order to provide appropriate aid in a gender perspective, needs and vulnerability assessments must be conducted. But it also requires an understanding of men and women's roles in a cultural and social context. In the Lake Chad Basin, there are significant gaps between boys and girls school enrollment, resulting in skewed literacy rates. Consequently, women are disadvantaged form an early age and constrained from education opportunities. The region has the highest

fertility in the world because young girls end up with early marriages and pregnancies. For some of these reasons, power imbalances and structural discrimination lead to gender-based vulnerabilities such as gaps in access to resources and services. This implies that men and women are also disproportionately affected by crises, which can further exacerbate inequalities. In terms of conflict, women and girls are specifically subject to sexual and gender-based violence (WFP, 2016d). Boko Haram specifically targets women and girls, and estimates suggest that more than 2,000 have been abducted since 2009. Here they are subject to sexual violence, slavery and forced marriages. Some are also used for recruitment and suicide bombers (NRC, 2016). Moreover, degradation of natural resources in the region impact women harder because of their lower social and economic status, affecting their access and ownership of productive assets. Gender-based discrimination further impacts their food security status by "preventing them from engaging in their own right to adequate food and from acting on behalf of their families and communities to the full extent of their capabilities," (WFP, 2016d, p. 36).

The WFP try to consider women and girls in their emergency programming by employing the tool Rapid Gender & Age Analysis in Emergencies in order to identify key vulnerabilities and specific protection needs. What is more, the ongoing Emergency Operation in the Lake Chad region incorporates the Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) approach (WFP, 2016d, 2016f). The AGD approach was developed by the UN Refugee Agency in 2004, and provides a framework for partner agencies to ensure inclusion of all groups in a given population. The approach focuses on displaced populations, recognizing the importance of local knowledge (i.e. skills, expertise, risks) in terms of improving their situation (UNHCR, 2012).

Women are recognized as the most vulnerable in areas of displacement and return in the Lake Chad Basin. Women have limited access to assets and land, and widowed women with children are particularly vulnerable to gender-based violence. In a context of recurrent attacks, abuse and exploitation, many resort to transactional sexual services as a negative coping mechanism. WFP food assistance programs can provide a significant attempt to combat such issues. Firstly, women were included in the process of forming project design, thereby allowing specific needs to be factored in. They are also prioritized in beneficiary registration as female household heads. This can be significant in establishing and promoting women's role in household food security. In Cameroon, 70% of households registered for CBT were led my females. WFP also attempts to include up to 50% women in food management committees across all countries. Despite these efforts however, post-distribution monitoring in Nigeria indicated that the household

hierarchy prevented many women from making significant decisions over the use of cash or food. In other cases, women were already in charge of cooking and food handling, implying little change in their household status. Furthermore, men expressed a wish to be registered as household heads regardless, in line with local customs and traditions. Consequently, strong fundamental perceptions of gender roles can impede equality attempts. However, the results varied across all four countries, and Chad registered an increase in women's decision making over food and CBT. Nonetheless, all regions exposed a need to engage in awareness campaigns to ensure women's involvement in food assistance (WFP, 2016f).

To address some of the basic gender gaps in the region, school feeding and education can be significant contributors. School feeding is known to improve education for girls, as households benefit from sending both boys and girls to school. Both in-school meals and take-home rations can be very effective. Educated girls can potentially gain a more prominent role in households and contribute to further food security for their families. Moreover, they are less likely to have early pregnancies or many children. Better informed choices and healthier mothers, further benefits future generations. According to World Bank estimates only one additional year of schooling can potentially decrease the birth rate by 10 percent. Studies find that school meals combined with take-home rations have the most effect on girls' enrolment. This can benefit their families more directly during school years, and maintain their attendance (Molinas & de la Mothe, 2010).

In the Lake Chad Basin, WFP support school feeding all over the region. However, many families are reluctant to send their girls to school. Economic and socio-cultural factors contribute to this. The girls are valuable labor in the household, combined with the cost of attendance. Many are also subject to early marriage, which again translates into low retention rates. Consequently, households view school attendance as a net loss considering how it entails reduced labor and loss of potential income (WFP, 2015d). School meals and take-home ratios can therefore provide the necessary incentives for households to send their girls to school. In Mao in Chad, WFP cooperates with Canada's Department for Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development in supplying school meals at a primary school. Here the children receive a daily meal and a monthly ration of vegetable oil. Data shows that the proportion of girls graduating from schools receiving support by WFP is 2.5 times higher compared to the national average. The kitchen is run by local women, something which also boosts their participation. Moreover,

the father of one of the girls explains that the cost savings from his daughter's take-home rations will allow him to buy a couple of goats to feed the family (Tomas, 2015).

Bridging relief and development operations

Another important scope of this paper was to assess the transition from relief to long-term solutions that can improve food security in the long run and contribute to development. When the WFP pledged to shift from being a relief agency to a food assistance agency, this implied a focus on long-term solutions as well. In other words, it is considered a relief *and* development agency. The strong status of the UN in terms of humanitarian aid and development aid is indispensable. Agencies like WFP, FAO, UNICEF UN Development Programme (UNDP) are therefore brought together under a common umbrella.

In relation to the discussion on bridging operations in chapter 2, this definitely contributes to improving some of the issues in this regard. It can positively reinforce institutional and strategic gaps, by initiating dynamic responses and blur the division between aid and development. Furthermore, in terms of funding gaps, efforts to strengthen long-term multi-year funding are pursued. The UN can facilitate stronger partnerships and coordination between the agencies under the common umbrella. However, the agencies could not have achieved their goals without strong partnerships with non-EU implementing partners on the ground, like local NGOs. This has definitely strengthened operations and allowed for local engagement and partnerships.

The ongoing Emergency Operation in the Lake Chad Basin build on the objectives of saving lives and improve food security, and protecting and rebuilding livelihoods. As explained, these interventions potentially have implications in the long-term as well by building resilience and local capacity. Some of the longer-term efforts by WFP include Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations (PRRO) followed by Development Operations (DEV). These efforts extend the focus to also address objectives like enabling people to meet their own food and nutrition needs and breaking the intergenerational cycle of hunger. PRRO and DEV have not as of yet been initiated at a regional level in Lake Chad. However, they do exist in several of the respective basin countries. As explained, linking these various interventions are necessary to bridge the gap. Also in these projects, WFP continued to collaborate closely with FAO for rural development activities and UNICEF for nutrition activities.

In Cameroon, a PRRO finished in early 2016. The objectives included addressing environmental pressures due to refugee influxes, but also to irregular rainfall patterns. The operations were implemented in close cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER). Further implementing partners included FAO, Red Cross, UNICEF, the UN Refugee Agency and local communities. The operation focused on both providing acute assistance, but also recovery trough Food for Assets to refugees and host populations. Increased waves of population displacement put pressure on resources in the northern region of Cameroon. The area is subject to influxes of refugees from Nigeria to the West and the Central African Republic to the East. In the northern areas under partnership with FAO, food assistance-based training was conducted in order to build economic self-sufficiency through training in activates toward agriculture and husbandry. Further interventions like Food for Assets helped rehabilitate rural water supply and rice production. A total of ten communities benefited, and allowed for the utilization of previously abandoned land for food production. This was an important step to minimize impacts of food security shocks resulting from climatic or social stressors due to the conflict. Food for Assets activities involved both host populations and refugees to build social cohesion. Additionally, the projects emphasized women's participation in farming activities. Around 60 percent were women. This can help ensure a more equal access to land, which is an issue in terms of disproportionate effects of crisis. However, poor literacy rates restrict women in the region from maximizing the potential from these interventions. Moreover, due to the severe situation in the north, a specific focus was given to supplementary feeding programs. This was supplied through local health facilities under the leadership of UNICEF and the Ministry of Health, as part of capacity building. The northern parts have the highest rates of malnutrition in the country. Nonetheless, following the severe outbreak of violence over the monitoring period in 2015, the nutritional status in the Far North continued to decline despite these efforts. Neither malnutrition nor food consumption improved significantly. This is attributed to the overall deterioration of the food security situation in the entire region over this period due to an upsurge in refugees and internal displacements (WFP, 2015b, 2016c).

Final independent evaluation of the PRRO indicate that the project managed to focus on longer term strategies to build livelihood resilience, rehabilitating and constructing productive infrastructure was of importance here. However, the deteriorating situation in the Far North between 2013-14 led donors to prioritize emergency operations instead. This led to resource shortfalls, and also indicates a problem with higher donor funding to emergencies than other

long-term operations. As a result, people in the Far North under the PRRO were shifted to the regional EMOP following increased influxes of refugees in the Lake Chad region. This gives an example of how insecurity and instability deprive these people of recovery options. Moreover, funding shortfalls diverted the efforts away from capacity-building and sustainability strategies. The operation environment dictated a focus on delivery, thereby jeopardizing the potential of the operation (WFP, 2016c). Furthermore, the operation did not link relief and recovery to the Development Operation in Cameroon (explored in the subsequent paragraph). To a greater extent, it could have built on resilience strategies of the DEV, by exploiting yield increases form the grain reserves to minimize seasonal price variations (WFP, 2016c).

To complement the PRRO in Cameroon, a 5-year Development Operation (DEV) was initiated in 2013, with a project end date in December 2017. The objectives focus mainly on combating low agricultural production in the north region, but also on school feeding. Furthermore, it included a specific hand-over strategy to strengthen the capacity of the government to reduce hunger. This is a significant step towards capacity-building and self-reliance. The Cameroon Country Programme was designed to align with the Government efforts, and takes into account its Strategy for Growth and Employment 2010-2020. The WFP project addresses hunger and malnutrition, support basic education, and focuses on local purchases to avoid disincentive effects (WFP, 2013a, 2015a).

The Country Programme targeted the northern regions due to its high rates of malnutrition and food insecurity, but it is also the area with lowest school enrolment rates. To address some of these issues, part of the project fund was directed towards school feeding to boost school completion rates. However, due to limited resources the project only reached half of the targeted number of schoolchildren over the first years. In order to enhance resilience to an unstable climate, a better part of the funds was spent on supporting community grain reserves. 100 villages received support, which was more than initially planned. The government doubled its annual contribution to allow for this. Grain reserves make it possible to increase community access to food, but also to avoid sharp increases in in grain prices during the lean season. High food prices are also highly related to outbreak of conflict and riots, implying a potential stabilizing effect (Chen, 2016). What is more, the community grain reserve projects were targeted specifically towards women. Women's groups were in charge of the management of the granaries, with 80% women in project management committees. Monitoring results

indicated that more women participated in decision-making of the use of food within the household as a result. As described before, food assistance interventions should be sensitive to men and women's needs and abilities. To ensure the participation of women, they often did work requiring less physical strength (WFP, 2015a).

Results over the first years also indicate how granaries managed to secure food access during the lean season. Monitored households did not need to sell off their assets to gain food. Nonetheless, they showed similar results for food consumption indicators like that of the PPRO in the northern regions. The deteriorating results over the first years were due to increased security threats from the insurgency combined with poor rainfall. These factors disrupted farming activities. Nutrition outcomes in the north region, on the other hand, indicate that interventions might contribute to stabilizing the nutrition situation (WFP, 2015a)..

The goal of the project is for the Government to take over the activities though developing governmental capacities. In terms of school feeding take-over strategy, WFP provides technical assistance while the Government takes over food delivery. For the grain reserves, the Government provides the service with technical assistance, in order to enhance ownership and sustainability of the activity. WFP also provided support for developing national guidelines on food and nutrition. The design of the policy provides clear roles of the Government, the communities and WFP. Additionally, workshops were organized in order to provide training with regard to monitoring and evaluation of the food security situation. Keeping close control over food prices and availability over time is vital for early warning and handling of food crises. The Ministry of Agriculture was heavily involved in these processes. Furthermore, to support government efforts to increase agricultural production, WFP focus on local purchases through producers' groups and programs aiming at boosting production. Consequently, these interventions were aligned with the Growth and Employment Strategy Document and Cameroon's National Food Security Programme that focus on small-scale agricultural production and livelihood resilience. Lastly, a hand-over strategy was in place for the Ministry of Public Health. Ministry staff received training on planning, monitoring and evaluation of nutritional status to increase their capacitates to manage nutrition inputs. However, efforts are closely monitored because of institutional risks such as lack of funding and weakness in terms of monitoring and management of resources (WFP, 2013a, 2015a).

Contribute to resolving underlying causes of food insecurity and undernutrition in protracted crises

The last and very important aspect of action in protracted crisis is how to address the underlying causes. It includes a focus on peacebuilding and stability, management of natural resources and promoting effective national and local governance. In other words, it requires lasting political, economic, social and environmental solutions.

In the case of protracted conflict in the Lake Chad Basin, addressing the underlying causes of food insecurity includes also directing attention to the underlying causes of conflict. The previous discussion has already touched upon some of these aspects. Although natural resource depletion is a significant contributor to the crisis, it is not within the scope of this study to discuss this. Consequently, this paper has focused on how conflict and displacement due to violence affect peoples' livelihoods and food security. The following discussion focuses particularly on how food assistance interventions relate to peacebuilding, education and contribute to effective national and local governance.

Contribute to peacebuilding and development through food security and nutrition

The underlying goal of food assistance is to promote food security and nutrition. As discussed earlier, food insecurity can be a driver of conflict, but it is also a result of conflict. In that way conflict, food security and peace consist of complex interlinkages. Food security and nutrition interventions can build resilience to violence if they are focused on promoting equality and build social cohesion. Food aid agencies, like the WFP, acknowledge their potential contributions in transitioning countries towards peace. With over 65% of their programs taking place in conflict settings over the last years, reducing the potential for conflict is a major step towards achieving food security. A stable and peaceful environment is a necessity for creating lasting food security and sustainable livelihoods (WFP, 2013b). Moreover, food security, peace and development is linked. The ways in which food assistance affects peacebuilding also builds development, and development builds peace. In other words, all three components build on each other.

Food assistance can affect several aspects of a country necessary for peacebuilding, stability and development. This includes social cohesion between ethnic or religious groups, building legitimacy and capacity of governments to provide food, provide safety nets, ensure economic development and reduce inequalities. In the Lake Chad region, WFP efforts can contribute to achieving this. Public works like Food Assistance for Assets are known to promote social

cohesion by encouraging cooperation and participation by different groups. Additionally, it helps rebuild networks and trust, improving underlying conflict drivers like mutual distrust between various groups. Public works can potentially directly build peace, as findings from Liberia suggest. Here 90% of the participants believed that the jobs provided had helped to promote peace and reconciliation (Brinkman & Hendrix, 2011). Moreover, it can help youths to gain employment, another driver of conflict in the region. Inequalities were a major cause for the outbreak of Boko Haram, where people in northern Nigeria felt marginalized and excluded. Food assistance, if targeted correctly, should enable these people to feel included. This is a major part of the "leave no one behind" policy. In that way, the most vulnerable populations in these areas should be a focus. Furthermore, economic development in the region can be supported by food assistance interventions and livelihood support. Corrupt governments in the region have failed to support the development of important economic sectors like agriculture. Fragile states tend to lack the resources to invest in infrastructure and research necessary to ensure stable food supplies (Simmons, 2013). Public works and other kinds of assistance rebuild agricultural assets and support livelihoods, allowing for development within this sector. Furthermore, the concept of presenting people with a dignified livelihood is relevant here. International actors need to understand that Boko Haram is not built entirely on extremist Islamic values. Poverty and economic marginalization are significant causes to address. Humanitarian assistance must recognize that to meet the "varied needs and skills of those vulnerable to radicalization is crucial to addressing the incentives that fuel insurgency" (Meagher, 2014, p. 3). This includes specifically livelihoods support and public works programs to assist both educated and uneducated youth. Both agricultural and industrial programs are of significance here, in order to provide technical training to ensure a meaningful livelihood.

Moreover, investing in national and local governance to ensure legitimacy and capacity building is vital for both development and peacebuilding. To get local Institutions involved not only builds trust between government and people, it also ensures their capacity to mitigate risks connected to relapse of violence. As described previously, WFP focus in all its operations on the cooperation with local organizations and communities in order to strengthen their capacity to deliver assistance on their own. Furthermore, it is part of their Strategic Plan to incorporate interventions with national policy and government efforts.

Consequently, food assistance can provide to food security and thereby tackle social grievances and provide potential peacebuilding at this level. But it can also contribute to addressing some of the underlying causes for violence such as economic marginalization and poverty.

Education and employment as precursors for stability and development

As described earlier, lack of education, illiteracy and unemployment are root causes of the conflict. When the weak state fail in delivering these basic needs, social grievances arise and the potential for conflict is prominent. These issues are considered directly related to Boko Haram's insurgency. To recap, families ended up with sending their kids to Islamic schools, which again exposed the children to possible indoctrination. Moreover, illiterate and unemployed youths were easy targets for recruiting. The Oslo Humanitarian Conference on Nigeria and the Lake Chad Region acknowledged the important role of education in promoting peace and development. Prior to the conference, also the UN High Commissioner of Refugees stated that he was "convinced that education is the most important investment that we have to make in the Lake Chad region now and in the future to avoid a repeat of the events and of the horrible abuses of the last years," (Schmidt, 2017).

Decent employment can reduce an individuals' incentive to join a rebellion. According to World Bank Development Report, "lack of employment threatens post-conflict recovery and stability", (Chen, 2016). This is related to the concept of dignified livelihoods mentioned before, something which is regarded of significance in the Lake Chad region. One effect of employment is to reintegrate ex-combatants. Another is to strengthen social inclusion and cohesion. In the case of Boko Haram, this can have impacts on several aspects. One of the core issues leading to further stigmatizing of people and groups potentially connected to Boko Haram, is the state military's counterproductive handling of the situation. Abuses such as arresting families of group members, destroying their homes or random arrests and killings further nurture radicalization (Meagher, 2014). If these people to a larger extent are included in employment and education efforts rather than targeted, it can potentially contribute to social inclusion and reduce the resentment towards the state particularly by the northern populations. A Headteacher made a point of this at an internationally-supported school in Nigeria. Some mothers had been complaining and asking why the school enrolled Boko Haram children, whereby the Headteacher replied: "Should we exclude them, and allow them to follow in the footsteps of their father? No." (Schmidt, 2017). In addition to the direct impacts such as the one

above, education and employment further support economic development by affecting income growth, poverty reduction and improved living standards. According to extensive literature reviews, employment can be significant in terms of stability and poverty reduction in fragile states (Chen, 2016).

In terms of food security and employment, in the Lake Chad Basin the agricultural sector account for the largest portion of employable economic activity. However, there has been too little investment into this sector by state governments. Agricultural development not only employs people and reduces the chance of people joining a conflict, is also has direct impact on food security outcomes (Chen, 2016). Education and employment creation is no easy task. It requires significant investment by the state governments, and a fragile state does not necessarily have the essential resources. Nonetheless, humanitarian organizations can contribute by public works programs to ensure employment opportunities and livelihood options. In FAO's work, there is particularly focus on livelihoods opportunities and employment within the agricultural sector. As this is the main source of employment and income for about 80% of the population in the region, the potential is significant. The response strategy pays special attention to women and youth in this regard, recognizing how this can drive social and economic stabilization. Efforts to achieve this includes access to financial services and microfinance as well as establishing agricultural associations (FAO, 2017c).

Furthermore, WFP contribute to education through school feeding. Evidence indicate that school feeding programs increase school enrolment and reduce drop-outs. Other potential benefits are higher cognitive abilities for the children, as short-term hunger relief improve learning and performance in school. School feeding improve the nutritional status of children, which can have significant ramifications not only for the child itself, but the entire society (Molinas & de la Mothe, 2010). Malnutrition and undernutrition among children is a major consequence of conflict. Two-thirds of the undernourished children under five years of age live in conflict-affected countries. Particularly high rates of growth stunting can be observed in areas of conflict, but also in the post-conflict period. Both disease and malnutrition will affect the physical and mental development of the child. This can potentially lead to poor education outcomes as well as diminished ability to work (Tamashiro, 2011). First and foremost, this affects the life prospects of the child directly, but it also has implications for the society. Connections between unemployment, economic growth and development are well established

in economics theory. In other words, it does not gain the overall performance of a country to have large proportions of the population physically or mentally unable to work.

Efforts of school feeding in the region have already been described to some extent. This is part of the objectives of most food assistance programs conducted by WFP. In Chad, a Development Project to support primary education and girls' enrolment was launched in 2012. The operations covered several food insecure areas in Chad, but also lake areas where children fleeing Boko Haram attend. One of these schools in Mao has been described previously. During the project, the children received hot meals in schools. Girls also received take-home rations to reduce drop-out rates. However, there are still gaps in number of enrolled students and actual attendees, which implies that close monitoring is necessary for these operations to work. Moreover, there is focus on community participation through Parent Teacher associations and management committees who monitor and manage the food assistance provided. Some of the schools also obtain financial contributions from the communities, implying that communities are involved and sense a degree of ownership of the program. Although WFP attempts to facilitate the hand-over to the government of school feeding programs, institutional capacities restrict such transitions in fragile states. The National Directory of School Feeding is responsible for management and coordination as part of including school feeding in national policy. However, limited capacities at central and regional levels restrict its operational capacity. WFP contribute with technical and logistical support, but the institution has limited support for adequately targeting and monitoring exercises. As a result, the gradual national ownership of the program may take time. A legal and institution framework is in process including a national policy on school feeding. This contributes to more potential investment and interest in the education sector in Chad (WFP, 2015d).

According to household surveys amongst beneficiaries of the program in Chad, three-quarters expressed how school feedings strongly influenced their decision to register children in schools. School retention rates in supported areas compared favorably to national levels as well. Nonetheless, the monitoring results of 2015 were negatively affected by a teacher strike, funding constraints and delayed food deliveries. As a result, some schools closed before the official end date of the schoolyear due to depleted food stocks. Besides, several schools had to be excluded from participating owing to poor quality of services such as lack of trained teachers. Even for schools meeting the minimum requirements, problems of too few or unqualified teachers can call into question the benefits of attending school. As a response to these findings

after the first years of operation, the project had to reduce the number of beneficiary schools, but also increased focus on onsite teacher trainings. This particular project highlights some benefits and issues in relation to school feeding. People expressed a favorable impression of the project, but for various reasons the actual long-term impact is unclear (WFP, 2015d).

To conclude this chapter, food assistance interventions have the potential to impact lives, livelihoods and the overall society in the Lake Chad Basin through public works, livelihood support and school feeding. It should be implemented so as to best provide underlying support for education, employment and stability.

Promote effective governance and humanitarian coordination

The "New Deal" specifies the importance of country-led operations to enhance local governance and contribute to state building. WFP recognizes governments as principal partners, and FAO further states that governments are "primary partners for technical advisory services and support in policy development." Ultimately, the national government must request interventions in emergencies or development projects. Certain exceptions are made if national authorities have lost control of their territory (FAO, 2017c; "Governments," 2017). Country-led operations should seek to strengthen capacities of national institutions to carry out operations, thereby contributing to building trust between people and the Government.

Strengthening local governance and humanitarian coordination is particularly important in Lake Chad because the crisis is regional. Governance challenges in the region have resulted in poor development outcomes, described previously as one of the drivers of conflict. This is true both for combined governance efforts in the lake region, as well as governance within the respective countries. The Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) is responsible for equitably and sustainably managing the Lake Chad countries to promote regional integration, peace and security across the Basin. It was responsible for establishing the multinational Joint Task Force in 2014, which has been somewhat successful in ensuring the retraction of Boko Haram in several areas. Furthermore, its mandate focus on preserving national resources. FAO is one of LCBC's partners, contributing to achieve this through formulation of response plans. Additionally, all the Basin countries are in charge of separate emergency response plans. As mentioned, Niger and Nigeria have significantly contributed to response effort. Chad and Cameroon on the other hand, have shown limited abilities. But despite their joint and individual efforts, government institutions for emergency response are facing particular challenges in areas of information, coordination and operation. They have limited capacity to respond to the

needs of the rural population. Consequently, they rely on resource partners to be able to supply basic services (FAO, 2017c).

Humanitarian agencies aim, to the extent possible, to facilitate intervention programs run by government authorities. In the Lake Chad area, they need assistance in terms of information, coordination and operation. Information and cooperation is supported through actions and information sharing between governments, UN agencies, NGOs, resource partners and civil society organizations. This can prevent project duplicates by coordinating actions, share best practices and lessons learned, link various projects on relief and development, and identify gaps in coverage. Moreover, joint assessments make it possible to ensure a detailed picture of the situation. Contributing significantly to this is the UNs Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) with its response plans. By putting together requirement overviews from various sources, responses can more easily be coordinated. Further initiatives ensure that the governments are supplied with baseline data. Data on food security, market information, migrations and crop assessment improve governments abilities to interact (FAO, 2017c).

One of the channels for information and coordination in the Lake Chad Basin is the WFP/FAO co-led Food Security Cluster. Food security actors have regular meetings, including Rapid Response Mechanism workshops coordinated with the UN Refugee Agency. These meetings allow sector partners to share planned activities to better coordinate assistance. There are also various cooperation initiatives and local national clusters in the different countries. In Niger, a common convergence approach is the Diffa Regional Technical Working Group on Resilience. However, this group brings together only UN agencies, but it would be more appropriate if other actors were involved. In Cameroon, FAO works with the decentralized services of the Ministries of Agriculture and Livestock and local NGOs in the field. And in Nigeria a Food Security Working Group under leadership of FAO/WFP/Ministry of Agriculture have regular meetings. Furthermore, strong partnerships with UN Refugee Agency and UN Development Programme work to ensure durable solutions. It was under this partnership that early recovery interventions were initiated and coordinated in northeast Nigeria.

5. Conclusion and recommendations

It is clear from this study that there have been significant evolvements in the architecture for aid interventions. Protracted crises gained renewed attention, particularly with The State of Food Insecurity in the World: Addressing food insecurity in protracted crises from 2010. It focused on how these crises are different and require a new way of thinking. Nonetheless, it is a subject which has been debated extensively before, and continue to be. Relief and development efforts must be aligned in order to facilitate a transition out of protracted crisis and towards permanent recovery. An extensive approach is necessary to address underlying causes, and at the same time provide lifesaving assistance. Moreover, the way to address these crises must be dynamic in a changing crisis context. Protracted crises are the new norm, and violence and climate change stressors are increasing. Both the New Deal guiding interventions in fragile and conflict states and the Framework for Action in Protracted crisis are both much needed enhancements on this area. Furthermore, humanitarian agencies are to an increasing extent incorporating these new principles into their operations. One important step has been the global shift from food aid to food assistance. Food organizations, agencies and donors understand the importance of providing the aid in a matter that supports the underlying causes of food security, without causing dependence. This study focused on how food assistance is provided under the UN Agencies (WFP, FAO, UNICEF). WFP has strategically shifted its operations from aid to assistance where possible, and both FAO and WFP incorporate long-term principles in their program plans.

In terms of the operations in the Lake Chad Basin, the first thing to acknowledge when attempting to draw some understanding or conclusion is that is and ongoing situation. To that extent, the operations explored have not ended and are still awaiting final evaluation. The situation is still unstable at best, and it is unlikely to see significant evolvements in either food security or development as long as attacks from Boko Haram occur. Peace and stability are precursors here. Over the last years, multiregional forces under the Lake Chad Basin Commission have managed to reclaim strategic areas, and hopefully this can eventually contribute to stability. Unfortunately, a terrorist group has never been the easiest with which to negotiate peaceful solutions. Nonetheless, small inputs to improving the lives of those affected, if targeted towards the most vulnerable areas, can contribute to this. This study explored how

the UN food agencies can manage this through food assistance directed at improving food security and livelihood opportunities.

The first goal of the interventions was to address critical needs and build resilience. This was achieved through in-kind food deliveries, cash-based transfers, public works, school feeding, supplementary feeding and livelihood support. As explained, it is difficult at this point and with the data available to address exactly to what extent this worked, particularly in the long-run. Not only because it takes time to gather and analyze, but also because of the security situation. Security threats in the region hamper interventions and their outcomes, insurgency outbreaks influenced the situation and results declined. In terms of direct food security and malnutrition, some areas indicated an improvement, while others deteriorated as a result of violent attacks and general increase in food insecurity at the time of monitoring. They were somewhat successful in improving malnutrition. However, funding constraints were a big problem throughout WFP and FAO operations. With limited funds, operations have to focus on acute relief rather than recovery and resilience. Some of these gaps in funding were covered by local procurement of food and government contributions.

In-kind assistance met acute needs, and people were shifted to cash-based transfers as soon as market conditions allowed. This is vital for dignified existence, and for people to potentially develop a livelihood strategy. Public works facilitated asset creation, skills and training, and social cohesion and networks. Furthermore, FAO facilitated livelihood support, inputs and agricultural training. Findings indicated that people in certain areas did not have to resort to negative coping mechanisms. School feeding were implemented in all regions, and seems to have improved nutrition and enrolment rates overall. Funding constraints reduced the number of meals to certain areas, and schools were dropped from the program. On that note, the WFP policy seems to include a strong degree of exclusion. To be enrolled the schools must have a minimum standard, including things like infrastructure to deliver meals, space to make it and at least one qualified teacher. This can leave behind the most vulnerable schools, children and areas. In other words, it does not align well with the recent "leave no one behind" international statement. When funding ran dry, the schools with the greater potential for achieving program objectives were selected to continue. This indicates a problem with donor dependent aid. In order to get further support, the receiving agency must also demonstrate that they can reach program objectives. Issues like this became clear under school feeding policy, but is likely a problem in other areas of the operation as well. A part of the WFP policy is to ensure that factors

necessary for a quality education are put in place *where possible*. These interventions could possibly benefit from closer integration with public works and teacher trainings, or with other actors who could supply any of the missing elements.

The second goal of the interventions was to address and adapt to specific challenges. Reaching affected populations was a challenge in itself due to the security situation. As the program progressed, it was expanded to include recently accessible areas. Nonetheless, this is likely to be a problem also in the future if the insurgency continues or escalates. Building on strong partnerships with local organizations in the field allowed WFP to reach areas even during attacks and severe threats. Protection issues are also related to this, and children and women are particularly vulnerable. Findings from camps in Nigeria further support this. Gender-based violence even within WFP supported camps is extremely important to address. This has also been recognized as a problem of significance, but further security measures are needed here.

Further support directed towards women can help them avoid negative coping mechanisms like transactional sexual services. On that note, addressing women empowerment is a principle widely recognized for its importance in humanitarian work. Women are often the most vulnerable and worst hit by crises. This is often related to socio-economic and cultural factors resulting in illiteracy and lack of ownership of assets. Illiteracy is a recurring factor identified as a major reason for reduced benefits from interventions. Consequently, trainings to develop new skills are of relevance here. Improving illiteracy combined with greater gender equality can have extended effects. Findings indicated that WFP interventions had some impact on women's role in the household, but results were all over poor due to strong cultural gender perceptions. This can be addressed by higher literacy rights to give women a stronger bargaining power. For that reason, school feeding should not only seek to enroll more girls, but investments and partnerships for better teaching can ensure higher benefits in the long-run.

It becomes clear that partnerships and coordination of interventions are very important in this setting. Both FAO and WFP took a leading position in this, by ensuring cluster cooperation with governments, national and international NGOs, UN agencies and other stakeholders and actors. Building on partnerships and the experiences of others allowed for a better understanding of a complex situation. It also made it possible to reach a larger number of people. In terms of financing, as mentioned, both FAO and WFP struggled under limited funds.

This is a common situation for donor supported agencies and requires strict and effective financing.

Lastly, the third goal of the operations was to address underlying causes to conflict and food insecurity. Due to the short time-span the programs have been operating and the continuously changing context of the crisis, it is difficult to justify the extent to which this is true. Moreover, relief and development operations are implemented after the initial stage of an emergency operation. Considering that the conflict is still on going, a regional recovery or development operation is yet to be implemented. Nonetheless, interventions over the short-term must also address underlying causes, if not it will continue as a negative feedback loop.

In a conflict situation, peace resolutions are of the essence. In many situations food insecurity and price instability reinforce conflict. Therefore, interventions aiming to improve food security can contribute to this. Grain reserve interventions in Cameroon are examples of measures taken to stabilize prices in the lean season. Public works and livelihood support are vital to decrease social grievances in the region by reducing poverty and economic marginalization. It can also create social cohesion reducing tension between groups.

Both FAO and WFP focus on youth, acknowledging how youth unemployment is a contributing factor to instability. Improving education for everyone is part of this. School feeding support enrollment and thereby education, but without qualified teachers the potential benefits are limited. This is an important area that could benefit from more attention in order to enhance teaching outcomes, and not just enrollment. Additionally, food assistance should enhance governance and focus on country-led operations to strengthen local capacities, gain trust from the population and reduce aid dependence. In the Lake Chad Basin, government institutions lack information, resources and abilities to coordinate. Both WFP and FAO focus specifically to include government efforts. They are considered the most important partners. The operations conducted focused on capacity training of staff, and to have the government deliver the aid with support. Specific measures were put in place to supply the government with data.

Furthermore, WFP includes a hand-over strategy to the government in its project plans. However, this has not been initiated in the EMOP due to the intended short duration of the project. It is there to coordinate efforts of PRROs and DEVs where there is an initial focus on take-over strategies. Nonetheless, weak institutions have made this difficult. But also funding constraints have forced a focus on emergency food delivery rather than facilitating the long-term sustainability of the projects through capacity building. Some available evaluation data

indicate that more could be done to ensure a durable take-over strategy in WFP programs. Nevertheless, operations were to the extent possible aligned with national policy and government efforts.

Bridging relief and development has been a continuous area of discussion for years. Due to time-constraints of this study, it would have been too comprehensive to address the efforts across various agencies and organizations or separate development organizations. Therefore, the focus remained on how the UN agencies in particular addressed development potentials within their operations. Moreover, how WFP incorporates both EMOPs, PRROs and DEVs as part of their strategy. As described in the chapter on limitations, these operations are still running and therefore exact outcomes are unavailable. Not to mention that observable outcomes take many years. Nonetheless, it was possible to address to what extent interventions maintained a focus on development, capacity-building and resilience.

Development focuses on reconstructing a country's infrastructure, institutions, and economy. This is important for peacebuilding, and one approach is to focus on country-led operations. Moreover, long-term sustainable capacity-building strategies are of the essence. WFP is both an emergency and a development agency, which makes linking these efforts easier. However, in the specific examples of the PRRO and DEV, they did not manage to link the efforts sufficiently. The interventions in the PRRO did not take advantage of the grain reserves under the DEV. In that way, the efforts of the development operation were not extended and missed an opportunity for expansion. Nonetheless, WFP and FAO did focus on infrastructure in public works that build both reliance and capacities and is a part of development objectives. It supported local communities in becoming self-reliant. FAO also focused on agricultural activities, this is a major part of getting the food system and the local economies back on track. Moreover, institutions were included in the operations and received training to enable them to run the operations on their own. But funding constraint and weak institutions definitely restricted the potential development benefits of the operations. Generally, there is still a focus on emergency operations because of the unstable situation. New violent outbreaks disrupt people and force them to move repeatedly. Influxes of new refugees to camps further distract funds away from solutions that could support development. All in all, the agencies examined here do conduct many of the appropriate steps associated with development. Nevertheless, to what extent it actually does contribute to development in the long term is ambiguous from this study.

The situation is the Lake Chad Basin is most likely not resolved for many years. It requires an integrated approach also in the future, where peace resolutions must remain a focus. The interventions and attempts by individual organizations and actors are not enough if not well integrated with peace and state building. It is clear that the basic foundations for a peaceful and stable society are lacking. Humanitarian actors should remain focused on saving lives, but because a major share of aid flows goes to emergency operations they have an obligation to contribute to this. Moreover, they have a presence and an ability to operate in these situations exclusive to aid agencies.

As a result of the conference in Oslo the crisis is to some extent back on the agenda. But the world cannot let this situation remain neglected, forgotten and underfunded. The media and public opinion that to a large degree shape the use of government aid funds must take their share of the blame. This crisis should be back in focus. Moreover, donors must understand that more funds should be invested in long term development operations. However, it is difficult to justify the directing of funds to grain reserves or infrastructure when lives could have been saved by sending that package of rice. Nonetheless, it is important to acknowledge that this does not constitute a dignified life for the people involved in the long term. It will never allow them to experience safety and freedom.

This paper attempted to make a small contribution to the understanding of the complex crisis in the Lake Chad Basin, and the basic underlying causes that require attention. Moreover, it addressed how food aid interventions by the UN agencies can potentially contribute to stability, food security and ultimately peace and development. It finds that important contributions toward these goals are made, but no intervention can reach its full potential under the persistent threat of Boko Haram.

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