



related to the global fall in oil prices and poor investments. Austerity measures adopted by the Government since late 2016 to address the situation led to **rising social tensions, with civil servants' strikes disrupting the functioning of basic social services, including school closures, and growing impoverishment of Chadian society**. As a result, social indicators continued to deteriorate, with a negative impact on health, education, food security and nutrition. The chronic vulnerability of the population, further exacerbated by this situation, results in significant humanitarian need.

**The relative stability of Chad within the region is increasingly fragile given internal political and social tension, and the impact of insecurity in neighboring countries.** Currently, Chad is ranked among high alert countries by the Fragile States Index. Chad has had to close its western border with Nigeria, Niger and Cameroon, its southern border with the Central African Republic, its northern border with Libya and its eastern border with Sudan. While there are some limited formal crossing points, this has seriously impacted cross-border trade, disrupting livestock trade (one of the main sources of revenue) and further depleting populations' scarce livelihoods. The country also remains exposed to potential attacks by armed groups active in the region. Since early 2019, there has been a steep rise in attacks by Non-State Armed Actors in the western province of Lac and its islands, and an attempted incursion by the rebel group Union des Forces de Resistance (UFR) through southern Libya into northern Chad was repulsed, with the support of France, in February 2019.

**In response to a rising death toll from inter-community conflicts between herders and farmers, and some reports of armed group activities, the National Assembly declared a 'state of emergency'** on 19 August 2019, which will remain in place until 10 January 2020, in the eastern provinces of Ouaddai and Sila, and the northern Tibesti region. The restive gold-rich Tibesti province has attracted not only traders and miners, but also army defectors and rebels. In Miski town, a military stand-off between the Chadian army and a local self-defense committee over the control of local gold resources, among other grievances, is entering its tenth month, with potential humanitarian consequences for local populations resulting from lack of access to basic supplies and services. IOM reports that, during August - September, some 3,000 people working in the gold mines, including migrants from a diverse range of countries, have fled Miski, seeking refuge in the town of Faya. Further population and migrant movement, and transit to and through Faya, is anticipated as armed confrontations around the gold mines persist.

In April 2016, Idriss Deby Itno was reelected President for the fifth time. Legislative elections, originally scheduled for 2017, were postponed due to budgetary challenges linked to the economic crisis. The Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) has recommended these now be held either in April or November 2020. However, the President seeks an accelerated timetable for polls to take place at the latest before end January 2020. There remain outstanding technical challenges, including updating electoral lists, the publication of the electoral chronogram, the finalization of the electoral budget, defining the cartography, and attributing parliamentary seats per constituency.

**Over past years, Chad has increasingly played a regional role**, as shown by the nomination of Moussa Faki, former Chadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as Chair of the African Union Commission, and its involvement in peace initiatives in Sudan and for Central African Republic. In 2017, under the auspices of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) and the African Union (AU), Chad hosted the first Conference on "Supporting the development of a framework for a Regional Stabilization Strategy for areas affected by Boko Haram". The Regional Stabilization Strategy was formally validated by the LCBC Council of Ministers in August 2018 and endorsed by the AU in December 2018. Chad also hosts the headquarters of the Multinational Joint Taskforce (MNJTF) operating in the Lake Chad Basin, as well as deploying its own troops in the region. Along with Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Burkina Faso, Chad is a member of the Group of Five (G5) Sahel countries working towards strengthening the bond between economic development and security, and to battle the threat of jihadist organizations operating in the Sahel region. It also contributes troops to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).

## THREE INTERCONNECTED HUMANITARIAN CRISES

**The Humanitarian Needs Overview for 2019 reflects 4.3 million people, a third of the population, as in need of humanitarian assistance throughout the country, and affected by three main interconnected crises.**

**Food insecurity and malnutrition continue to affect millions of people, particularly in the Sahel belt.** Chad is the **second country with the highest hunger levels**, according to the Global Hunger Index 2018. Around **3.3**

**million<sup>2</sup>** people are food insecure including 641,000 severely food insecure people unable to meet their basic needs, particularly during the lean season (June-August). The nutritional situation is equally alarming.

**Malnutrition is among the leading causes of child mortality in Chad**, which has the second highest under-five mortality rate in the world (123/1,000 live births) – about one out of every eight children dies before five years old. The 2018 SMART national survey on nutrition indicates a prevalence of Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) at 13.5 per cent and Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) at 4.0 per cent. This global prevalence conceals large disparities between provinces: 12 out of 23 provinces have GAM rates exceeding the WHO emergency threshold of 15 per cent. The first half of 2019 was marked by a 37 per cent increase in admissions of children suffering from SAM, compared to the same period in 2018.

**Chad hosts more than half a million people who have fled violence and conflict.** There are over 683,000 persons in displacement, including 465,000 refugees, 133,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs), and 85,000 Chadian returnees. These people have fled conflict in Sudan (since 2003), CAR (since 2003 and 2013) and Nigeria (since 2015). Internal displacements in the Lac region are caused by insecurity and military operations against an armed group. These displaced people are mainly concentrated along the borders, in the western (Nigerian refugees and IDPs), southern (refugees and Chadian returnees from CAR) and eastern (Sudanese refugees) parts of the country, as well as in N'Djamena (Chadian returnees and refugees from CAR).

**Given the level of insecurity in their areas of origin, the prospects for return for these displaced populations are not immediate** and they currently live in camps, sites or in host communities, who represent over **878,000** people. These host populations are highly vulnerable and in need of assistance as well, as refugees and displaced people are increasing pressure on already very scarce natural resources, and weak basic social services and livelihoods. This cohabitation and sharing of resources also increases the risk of inter-communal tensions.

**The first half of 2019 saw an upsurge in attacks by armed groups in the Lac province.** The number of violent armed incidents doubled between January and July 2019 in relation to 2018 (more than 60 incidents reported in 2019). This threat is likely to force IDPs and Chadian returnees into a state of prolonged displacement. Internal displacement has already resulted in an aggravation of violence and human rights abuse including gender-based violence, as well as other protection risks such as child marriage, inter-community tensions and the worsening of food insecurity and malnutrition. By end September, more than 1000 protection incidents have been reported by protection monitors in the Lac province in 2019, including abduction cases, homicides, robberies and looting.

**Diminishing land, fodder and water resources and related drivers such as change in weather patterns, demographic growth and disruption of transhumance routes have resulted in an upward trend of conflicts between herders and farmers.** An increasing number of such clashes have been reported in the South and West of Chad, while, by 19 August, intercommunity clashes in the North and East of Chad, had resulted in more than 100 killed, and many more injured, since the beginning of 2019. A presidential decree instituted the state of emergency from 20 August to 10 September 2019 (Décret n°1162 du 20 août 2019). In September, the National Assembly adopted, through a majority vote, to prolong **the state of emergency by three months until 10 January 2020.**

The state of emergency empowers the military and administrative authorities to prohibit movements of persons, vehicles and motorbikes to establish protection or safety zones where activities are regulated. Other measures include a 10pm to 6am curfew, the control of press and radio broadcasts, the confiscation of weapons of any category through house searches day and night, closure of borders along the three provinces and the prohibition of meetings likely to provoke disturbances to public order. The ban on motorbikes in rural areas has forced some humanitarian actors, whose workers use these, to suspend or reduce some activities in these areas. The impact on livelihoods, including for motorbike taxi drivers, and restricted movements for agricultural and commercial activities, has potential humanitarian consequences, giving rise to protection concerns, and for future food security and malnutrition rates. Concerns have also been raised on the preservation of the civilian nature of refugee camps in the East, which host over 340,000 Sudanese refugees, as soldiers conduct regular search operations for weapons.

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<sup>2</sup> This figure includes refugees and returnees not taken into account in the Harmonized Framework (March 2019).

### More than two million people lack access to basic healthcare and are vulnerable to health emergencies.

Chad has **one of the world's highest child and maternal mortality rates** (respectively 123/1,000 and 856/100,000 live births). The measles epidemic declared on 30 May 2018 continues to spread, with more than 20,000 suspected cases in 38 health districts this year. At the end of July 2019, a cholera epidemic broke out in the southwest of the country with 51 reported cases, including two deaths. Malaria is the leading cause of death among children under five (482,710 cases with 951 deaths from January to July 2019). This situation is strongly related to the poor development of the country, the widespread poverty, low immunization coverage, limited access to health and WASH infrastructures and a weak health system that lacks equipment and skilled personnel.

**More than 150 humanitarian partners are striving to respond to these humanitarian needs.** However, due to the geographic span of the crises and the complexity of the operating environment (absence of basic infrastructure and electricity, inaccessibility of many areas during rainy seasons), the humanitarian community's capacity is overstretched and more support is necessary to face these multiple intertwined challenges. The humanitarian community also faces chronic underfunding for the humanitarian response, limiting the implementation of life-saving interventions. In 2018, only 46 per cent of the funding required to implement the humanitarian response plan was received, and for the Lac province, only 32.1 per cent of the required \$ 179.4 million, despite its profile within the Lake Chad Basin dynamic. In 2019, **humanitarian partners need \$ 476.6 million to save and improve the lives of the 2 million people** who need it the most. However, as of 13 September, the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) had received only \$ 185.1 million (nearly 39 per cent of the requested funding).



Children fetching water in southern Chad. Only 43 per cent of the population has access to safe drinking water in Chad. Credit: OCHA/Naomi Frerotte



Children attending school in the western Lac region. Only 8 per cent finish primary school. Credit: OCHA/Naomi Frerotte

## A NEW WAY OF WORKING LINKING RELIEF AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

The chronic, widespread and deep vulnerability in Chad demands a **new way of working transcending divides between humanitarian and development interventions**. In line with the commitments emerging from the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, this joint approach will help reduce needs, risk and vulnerability, strengthen capacities to face future shocks, and ultimately contribute to ending needs.

Partners are striving to better link humanitarian and development planning and action to build resilience and facilitate early and longer-term recovery. As humanitarians strive to establish closer linkages to development partners, greater investment in development, especially at the local level, must complement humanitarian action.

In 2016, a **multi-year strategic framework** (2017-2019) was developed to facilitate the alignment between the Humanitarian Response Plan, the UN Development Assistance Framework, and Chad's five-year National Development Plan. National and international stakeholders in this process, from the Government, humanitarian, development and peace-building communities, as well as civil society actors, are now using the lessons from this new way of working to develop the next iteration of this strategic framework. This will build on the comparative advantage of actors from different sectors to ensure a more inclusive approach, to encourage development investment, and to support the ultimate achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in Chad.

As increased emphasis is placed on the operationalization of this integrated approach, **joint regional priorities** for the main crisis-affected areas (southern Chad, eastern Chad, and the western Lac region) were developed in 2017. These highlight the need for long-term solutions while ensuring a humanitarian response at scale that meets the most urgent needs. They define key actions that require involvement by all stakeholders:

- Encourage and invest in **durable solutions** for displaced populations: facilitate voluntary returns and the integration of displaced populations within host communities.
- Improve access to **basic social services** (education, health, water and sanitation) through the consolidation of existing local structures.
- Strengthen **livelihoods** to promote populations' self-sufficiency, and boost local development.
- Consolidate the **humanitarian response**, which is an essential prerequisite for the adoption of an integrated approach and the transition to medium- and long-term interventions.

European Union initiatives through the DIZA project with integrated programming in identified convergence areas, implementation of the PARCA World Bank project in refugee-hosting areas, as well the development of National Development Plans for some provinces, are already providing opportunities for such coherent action. More support is, however, urgently needed from a variety of partners to contribute to these joint efforts and help Chad emerge from protracted and recurrent cycles of crises.