

SUCCESS STORY

Support for training and public security in Chad (SECUTCHAD)




EU Trust Fund for Africa – Sahel & Lake Chad



 **EUTF PARTNER:**
COGINTA

 **COUNTRY:** Chad

 **BUDGET:**
EUR 10.0M

 From **03/2017**
to **06/2020**

Objective of the project

To strengthen the ability of security forces to carry out their day-to-day duties and to engage in dialogue with the population.

Key successes

- > 60% of 409 randomly selected people in the target areas indicate in a 2020 survey that the presence of security forces allowed them to secure their economic activities.
- > 38,253 people sensitised on the role of security forces and of civil society in providing security.
- > 1,785 security forces trained.

The project 'Support for training and public security in Chad'¹ (SECUTCHAD, €10M) was implemented between March 2017 and June 2020 along the border in western Chad (provinces of Mayo-Kebbi, Chari-Baguirmi, N'Djamena, Lac and Kanem). The project aimed to strengthen the capacity of internal security forces (*Gendarmerie Nationale* [GN]; *Police Nationale* [PN] and *Garde nationale et nomade du Tchad* [GNNT]) to provide security to local populations. By strengthening public confidence in the security forces' effectiveness, the project also aimed to create a more conducive environment for socio-economic activities. Focusing on the areas around Lake Chad and the Chari River/Logone River, which marks the Cameroon-Chadian border, the project operated in an extremely challenging environment characterised by jihadist violence, forced displacement, and socio-economic marginalisation.

How did the EUTF help?

The project extended the presence of security forces by addressing infrastructure, equipment, and training needs. It constructed 24 infrastructures for police stations and delivered 28 boats, 69 cars or motorbikes, as well as technical and personal equipment. The project also trained 1,785 members of security forces on a number of topics, including equipment use, intervention techniques, intelligence, deontology, swimming, and others. The strengthened capacities allowed the GN to establish new lake and river brigades. These units secured, for example, the market and its access in the city of Bol, which is located at the northeast

of Lake Chad. This allowed more people to participate in economic activities, notably fishers and farmers living on the small islands around the lake who sell their products in the city – a practice that had stopped when Boko Haram started operating in the area in the 2010s.

The project took important steps to help improve complementarity and collaboration between the GN, the PN, and the GNNT. In Lac Province, the project supported the establishment and equipment of a Common Operational Centre among the three security forces. Its purpose was to coordinate security operations 24/7 and to receive emergency calls from the population. Five operators each from the GN, PN and GNNT were trained to use the equipment, notably radio communication systems. At the time of the ex-post evaluation two years after the end of SECUTCHAD, the Centre was still operational and benefited from further support through a follow-up project, although it was lacking a legal framework which would allow it to receive regular state funding for its activities.

SECUTCHAD fostered the engagement of security actors with the communities, thereby building public trust. The project raised awareness of 38,253 people on the role of security forces and of civil society in providing security, including 31,164 through a local security committee in Bol. The committee, which assembled security forces, the administration, traditional and religious authorities, and civil society, benefited from training and equipment provided by SECUTCHAD.



Meeting once a month, it developed a joint security diagnostic, promoted information exchange on the security situation, defined priorities for action, and worked on sensitising the population on security forces' missions. Furthermore, it allocated small subsidies, funded by the project, to local NGOs engaged in resolving security issues. As a result of the inclusive and demand-driven set-up, the committee substantially improved cooperation between the involved actors and re-oriented security forces' priorities towards the population's needs (e. g. petty crime, drug use). Despite this considerable progress, the security situation in and around Bol remained extremely fragile and addressing security issues like gender-based violence would require further action in the future.

Keys to success

Focus on the highly relevant topic of security: In a 2018 survey of the population in the project's target areas, 25% of respondents said that insecurity and crime were the most important problems, only surpassed by the economic situation, which was cited by 47%.² Despite the highly complex conflict dynamics in the Lake Chad basin, the project managed to achieve incremental change towards a more secure environment in the target areas, for instance through the new lake and river brigades. In another survey conducted in February 2020 in the areas of interventions³, 59.4% indicated that the security situation had improved over the last two months, whereas 14.2% said that it had deteriorated.⁴

Comprehensive security approach in a geographically defined space: Instead of focusing on one security aspect only, the project targeted various facets related to creating a more secure environment, including infrastructure, equipment, training, legal frameworks, and institutions (focusing on cooperation among security forces and linking them with local authorities and the population). While adopting a comprehensive security approach, the project's geographic focus successfully prevented overburdening. Ultimately, SECUTCHAD was most successful where its holistic approach was applied to a small geographic area, amidst favourable conditions for change. The city of Bol was a case in point, where multiple approaches coincided (strengthened capacities of security forces, consultation framework with the population) and met with a conducive

environment (strong engagement of the mayor who chaired the local security committee).

People-centred security approach: SECUTCHAD helped security forces prioritise the local population's security concerns, fostering an understanding of security as a public good which should serve the population's needs. In the survey conducted at the end of the project in 2020, more than 60% indicated that the presence of security forces allowed them to secure their economic activities. Moreover, the project directly strengthened security forces' links with the population, including through the local security committee in Bol. It also systematically linked security with development aspects, for example by securing access to the market in Bol or by providing water points next to police stations. This approach contributed to changing the security forces' self-perception, as well as the population's perception of security forces.

Building on success

SECUTCHAD contributed to building a secure environment for people in western Chad. It provides an example of how external actors can work with local communities and authorities to stabilise a highly vulnerable environment characterised by jihadist violence, forced displacement, and socio-economic marginalisation. The community-driven approach was key to sustainably and progressively improve the security situation. Close monitoring of (the perception of) the security situation in the area of intervention and active engagement of security and civil society actors in defining and solving pressing security issues contributed to successful implementation of the community-driven approach.

The EDF-funded project PAASIT (*Projet d'Appui à l'amélioration de la sécurité intérieure au Tchad*), though focusing on the national security governance architecture, was able to continue some of SECUTCHAD's activities (e. g. support for the Common Operational Centre in the Lac province). PAASIT, therefore, consolidated SECUTCHAD's achievements and provided a framework to upscale the positive experiences and lessons learned.

¹ *Appui à la formation et à la sécurité publique au Tchad.*

² The survey was conducted among a representative and random sample of 402 people living in 18 of the 21 target localities of the project across three geographic zones (Lac, Mayo Kebbi Est, N'Djamena).

³ This survey was conducted among a representative and random sample of 409 people in eleven target localities of the project across 4 geographic zones (Lac, Hadjer-Lamis, N'Djamena, Mayo Kebbi Est).

⁴ 26.4% of respondents indicated that it had not changed or did not provide an answer.



EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa

Disclaimer

This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union through the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF). Its contents are the sole responsibility of Altai Consulting and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

The research for this success story was conducted from January to April 2024, was based on project documentation, and presents the situation at that moment.

©2024 ALTAI. All rights reserved.
Licensed to the European Union under conditions.