



MID-TERM EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE  
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RESILIENCE PROGRAM FOR  
EASTERN POPULATIONS FACING CONFLICT AND  
CLIMATE CHANGE IN CHAD (RESPECCT)

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# Final Report



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# Summary

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## Acronyms and abbreviations

<b>ACCCIA</b>	Association Against Climate Change and Food Insecurity
<b>ADASE</b>	Association for the Development of Agriculture, Sanitation, Health, Education, Water, and the Environment
<b>ADIL</b>	Association for the Promotion of Local Initiatives
<b>ADRAH</b>	Association for the Development and Strengthening of Humanitarian Action
<b>AFD</b>	French Development Agency
<b>AG</b>	General Assembly
<b>ANADER</b>	National Agency for Rural Development Support
<b>ATURAD</b>	Association of Witnesses to Emergencies and Development Actions
<b>AVEC</b>	Village Savings and Credit Association
<b>BCI</b>	International Consulting Office
<b>CCA</b>	Cantonal Action Clusters
<b>CDA</b>	Departmental Action Committee
<b>CLA</b>	Local Action Committee
<b>CNARR</b>	National Commission for the Reception and Reintegration of Refugees
<b>CPA</b>	Provincial Action Committee
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization
<b>CVL</b>	Local Green Committee
<b>CWG</b>	Cash Working Group
<b>DGG</b>	Gender Discussion Group
<b>DIZA-EST</b>	Inclusive Development Program for Reception Areas in Eastern Chad
<b>DM</b>	Distribution Monitoring
<b>EUD</b>	European Union Delegation
<b>EASE</b>	Economic and Social Empowerment
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-Based Violence
<b>HEA</b>	Household Economy Approach
<b>IGA</b>	Income-Generating Activity

<b>IRC</b>	International Rescue Committee
<b>M</b>	Medium (socio-economic category of households)
<b>MEAL</b>	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning
<b>MEB</b>	Minimum Expenditure Basket
<b>N</b>	Nanti (socio-economic category)
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>OG</b>	General Objective
<b>OS</b>	Specific Objective
<b>P</b>	Poor (socio-economic category)
<b>PARCA</b>	Project to Support Refugees and Host Communities
<b>PDL</b>	Local Development Plan
<b>PDM</b>	Post-Distribution Monitoring
<b>PV</b>	Minutes
<b>rCSI</b>	Reduced Coping Strategy Index
<b>RESPECCT</b>	Economic and Social Resilience of Eastern Populations Facing Conflict and Climate Change in Chad
<b>SAP</b>	Early Warning System
<b>SCA</b>	Food Consumption Score
<b>SDAM</b>	Food Diversity Score
<b>SFCG</b>	Search For Common Ground
<b>SISAAP</b>	Food Security Information and Early Warning System
<b>SOP</b>	Standard Operating Procedure
<b>SPONGAH</b>	Permanent Secretariat for NGOs and Humanitarian Action
<b>TA-ERD</b>	Technical Advisor – Economic Recovery and Development
<b>TP</b>	Very Poor (socio-economic category)
<b>UCC</b>	Consortium Coordination Unit
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Program

# Executive Summary

## Program context and evaluation methodology approach

The Economic and Social Resilience of Eastern Populations Facing Conflict and Climate Change in Chad (RESPECCT) program is part of a regional context marked by a profound multidimensional crisis. Since April 2023, the resumption of conflict in Sudan has caused a massive influx of refugees into the eastern provinces, including Ouaddaï, Sila, and Wadi Fira, exacerbating already heavy pressure on natural resources, social services, and community cohesion. This crisis adds to long-standing structural vulnerabilities linked to poverty, chronic food insecurity, and the effects of climate change. In this context, the program, implemented since February 2023 by a consortium of international and national NGOs, aims to combine humanitarian aid, economic recovery, and peacebuilding using a Nexus approach.

The external mid-term evaluation analyses the program's performance using the criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and impact, while incorporating a cross-cutting analysis of issues such as gender, local governance, and conflict sensitivity. It is based on a mixed methodology combining documentary analysis, quantitative household surveys, individual interviews, and group discussions conducted in the three provinces of intervention. The triangulation of sources has made it possible to assess in a nuanced way the progress made, the limitations observed, and the dynamics at work.

## Mid-term program performance

In terms of relevance, the program appears to be strongly aligned with the needs of host populations, refugees, and returnees. The priorities identified by the communities (access to livelihoods, food security, social cohesion, and prevention of tensions) closely correspond to the areas of intervention selected. The Sudanese crisis of 2023 has profoundly changed the context since the program was designed, but it has demonstrated a remarkable capacity to adapt. RESPECCT plays a central role in areas outside camps, which are less covered by traditional humanitarian aid, by helping to absorb the shocks associated with new arrivals and limiting local tensions. The Nexus approach thus appears relevant in responding to the intertwining of humanitarian, economic, and social vulnerabilities, while RESPECCT will be responsible for building certain basic service infrastructures, as some structural needs go beyond the scope of the program.

The program's coherence is generally satisfactory. This is evident first and foremost in the complementary roles of the consortium members. This division of responsibilities promotes functional coordination between assistance, recovery, and peace. External coherence is also ensured by the program's alignment with national priorities and strategic frameworks related to resilience, decentralization, and conflict management. Decentralized government services participate in consultation mechanisms and technical monitoring, although the regularity of exchanges and the formalization of this coordination could be strengthened. At the community level, local committees play a key role in reporting information, mobilizing resources, and mediating, helping to anchor the program in local dynamics.

The effectiveness analysis shows mixed results at mid-term. The cash assistance component is the most advanced and visible: nearly 9,000 households have been reached through several transfer cycles, with tangible effects on reducing negative survival strategies and temporarily stabilizing food consumption. Quantitative data indicate a moderate improvement in consumption and food diversity scores. However, the structural components (IGA, vocational

training, environmental actions, and social cohesion activities) have experienced significant delays due to administrative, security, and organizational constraints, as well as the impact of the Sudanese crisis. These delays have hampered the sequential logic of the Nexus and limited the program's ability to produce lasting effects at this stage. The positive dynamics observed (functional AVECs, initial improvements in community relations, increased participation of women) remain fragile and unevenly distributed across areas.

In terms of efficiency, the program presents a marked contrast between good control of financial procedures and slow operational execution. The budget consumption rate remains low at mid-term (26% of the overall budget), reflecting implementation delays rather than financial inefficiencies. However, the cash component illustrates efficient use of resources: transfer costs are contained at around 5% and the transfer amount has been adjusted from 42,000 to 48,000 CFA francs to take inflation into account. Monitoring, accountability, and control mechanisms are functional, and audits have not revealed any major irregularities. Nevertheless, the lack of synchronization between the different components (cash, IGA, social cohesion) limits the overall return on investment. The costs incurred for studies, diagnostics, and technical tools are relevant, but their added value will depend on their effective translation into operational activities in the next phase.

In terms of impact, the effects observed at this stage are mainly emerging. The program helps to mitigate immediate vulnerabilities, by stabilizing food consumption and providing partial support for livelihoods. AVECs are an important lever for economic empowerment, particularly for women, although their potential remains conditional on the effective deployment of IGAs. On the social front, there are encouraging signs of cohesion and peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities, particularly through the collective spaces and dialogue mechanisms supported by the program. However, the effects on gender norms and conflict prevention remain embryonic and require further action. A comparative analysis with former participants of the DIZA-East program suggests that sustainable impacts are achievable, but that they require time, continuity of intervention, and stronger coordination between the different components.

Cross-cutting issues are generally integrated into the program design, but their operational implementation remains uneven at mid-term. The conflict-sensitive approach is an important achievement, particularly through the analyses produced and the initial community dialogue mechanisms, which help prevent tensions between host populations, refugees, and returnees, but are not yet fully deployed in the field. Gender mainstreaming is visible in the targeting and strong participation of women, with emerging effects on their economic autonomy and ability to speak out, but changes in social norms remain limited due to a lack of systematic transformational actions. Environmental and climate issues are well identified in the program strategy, but their operationalization remains partial due to the late start of activities and the still weak link between warning systems and operational decision. Finally, accountability and community participation mechanisms are functional and widely recognized, although their effectiveness varies across areas and would benefit from greater coordination with local authorities. Overall, the cross-cutting dimensions provide a relevant foundation for the Nexus approach, but their full potential will depend on more consistent and synchronized implementation during the remainder of the program.

In conclusion, the mid-term evaluation shows that RESPECCT is a relevant program, well aligned with strategic needs and priorities in a particularly unstable context. It has a solid conceptual architecture and real potential for transformation, particularly thanks to its Nexus approach.

However, its effectiveness and efficiency remain below initial ambitions due to cumulative delays and the still incomplete implementation of the structural components. The remaining period is a decisive window of opportunity to accelerate implementation, strengthen the link between the humanitarian, development, and peace pillars, and consolidate achievements. If this momentum to catch up is confirmed, the program will be able to fully play its role in stabilizing and sustainably strengthening the resilience of the populations of eastern Chad.

## **Lessons learned and good practices**

### *Lessons learned*

The implementation of the program confirms that interventions in eastern Chad must be designed to be fundamentally adaptive, in a context marked by recurring and unpredictable shocks. The Sudanese crisis has shown that the ability to adjust quickly is crucial, and that *crisis-type* mechanisms should be integrated more structurally into planning to avoid disruptions in implementation.

Experience shows that the Nexus approach only produces results if its various components are implemented in a synchronized manner. When cash assistance, economic recovery, and social cohesion are deployed in an unbalanced way, the impacts remain partial and fragile. Conversely, their gradual articulation is an essential lever for stabilization and resilience.

Community structures appear to be indispensable for mobilization, accountability, and the prevention of tensions. However, their effectiveness depends on continuous support and coordination with decentralized services, without which their role remains limited or uneven depending on the area.

Managing community expectations is a key challenge in a context marked by a strong humanitarian presence. The introduction of structural approaches requires constant communication, transparency, and explanation to avoid misunderstandings and frustrations and to maintain confidence in the program's targeting and priorities.

Finally, the results already achieved confirm that technical approaches must be adapted to local ecological and social realities. Agroecological practices, for example, produce different effects depending on the area and require specific support, highlighting the need for finely tailored interventions.

### *Good practices*

Village Savings and Credit Associations (AVECs) are one of the program's most solid achievements, both as a mechanism for economic empowerment and as a space for social cohesion. Their rapid adoption, smooth operation, and ability to continue beyond the direct support of the project make them a key lever for community resilience.

The accountability mechanisms put in place have increased transparency and helped prevent tensions related to targeting. Beyond their control function, they promote dialogue, trust, and peaceful dispute resolution, which enhances the overall acceptability of interventions.

The gradual integration of gender, protection, and social cohesion dimensions is an important step forward. Awareness-raising activities have promoted greater participation by women and initiated changes in intra-family and community dynamics, laying the foundations for more sustainable social transformations.

The context and conflict analyses and methodological frameworks developed represent a major strategic asset. They improve understanding of local dynamics and enhance the quality of management, provided they are quickly translated into operational decisions and concrete actions.

Coordination within the consortium is a key factor in ensuring consistency, promoting complementary expertise and aligning interventions. Despite the costs of coordination, this organization enhances the program's visibility and supports a truly integrated approach to the Nexus.

Finally, community and institutional anchoring reinforce the sustainability of actions. The gradual involvement of local authorities, technical services, and community structures promotes ownership, alignment with public priorities, and continuity of effects beyond the project cycle.

### **Recommendations**

The recommendations below aim to remove the main obstacles identified at mid-term and accelerate the production of results, while consolidating the coherence and sustainability of the program:

1. Streamline administrative and validation procedures at the donor and consortium levels to reduce implementation delays and secure the operational sequence of the Nexus.
2. Strengthen the institutional anchoring of the program through the formal involvement of local authorities and decentralized services to improve the coordination, continuity, and sustainability of actions.
3. Structure proactive community communication based on regular information and accountability mechanisms to limit misunderstandings, manage expectations, and strengthen public confidence.
4. Implement a plan to accelerate structural components (IGA, environmental projects, social cohesion), with a clear timetable, defined responsibilities, and close monitoring of progress.
5. Strengthen the link between AVEC, IGA, and vocational training to maximize economic and social impacts and consolidate pathways out of vulnerability.

6. Expand social cohesion and conflict prevention activities in the most sensitive areas, particularly around land issues, transhumance, and cohabitation between refugees and host populations.
7. Strengthen technical support for environmental actions, relying more on decentralized services and practical exchanges to promote the sustainable adoption of agroecological techniques.
8. Enhance and strengthen existing accountability mechanisms by improving their visibility and feedback to communities to consolidate transparency and trust in the program.

## 1. Introduction

The general context of the RESPECCT program is one of a multidimensional crisis that has profoundly affected the provinces of Sila, Ouaddaï, and Wadi Fira in eastern Chad for more than 20 years. These territories, which border Darfur, have repeatedly suffered the repercussions of the Sudanese conflict and have received a continuous flow of refugees since the early 2000s. The resumption of war in April 2023 caused a new influx of refugees, estimated at around 900,000 people in April 2025 (UNHCR, 2025), which has increased pressure on already limited resources, exacerbated food insecurity, increased pressure on land, and exacerbated pre-existing tensions between host populations, returnees, and refugees. At the same date, there were 493,670, 161,362, and 98,031 new refugees in Ouaddaï, Wadi-Fira, and Sila, respectively.

Compounding this migration crisis are the intensifying effects of climate change, resulting in prolonged droughts, localized flooding, accelerated soil degradation, and increasing competition for access to water and arable land (SPARC, 2024). The most recent humanitarian analyses (OCHA, 2024 and 2025) show that nearly 40% of the Chadian population remains dependent on emergency aid, with some areas in the east experiencing critical levels of food insecurity and very high proportions of households with inadequate food consumption. In this environment marked by systemic vulnerabilities, the need to coordinate humanitarian responses, development dynamics, and peacebuilding actions becomes a strategic imperative.

The RESPECCT program was born precisely out of this need to move beyond fragmented sectoral responses and promote an integrated approach to resilience (humanitarian-development-peace). Implemented since February<sup>1</sup>, 2023, for a period of five years, under the coordination of Concern Worldwide in a consortium with the International Rescue Committee (IRC), Search For Common Ground (SFCG), and national NGOs (BCI, OHDEL, ECOCITOYEN), the program targets the three provinces most exposed to the combination of the above-mentioned shocks. Its intervention logic is based on three complementary pillars: access to essential resources in crisis situations (particularly through cash assistance), strengthening livelihoods and adaptation to climate change, and developing community-based conflict prevention and transformation mechanisms, including systematic consideration of gender issues and gender-based violence (GBV). This structure should make it possible to respond both to the immediate needs of populations and to long-term structural challenges, in line with the integrated territorial approaches implemented by AFD in Chad, one of the donors to this program.

## 2. Methodology

This section outlines the methodological approach that guided the mid-term evaluation, based on a combination of documentary, quantitative, and qualitative sources. The approach adopted aims to reconstruct the intervention logic, analyse the program's performance, and understand

the social and operational dynamics in the three provinces. Systematic data triangulation<sup>1</sup>, adapted to the contextual realities of Ouaddaï, Sila, and Wadi Fira, ensured the credibility of the findings and provided a nuanced interpretation of the results observed at this stage of implementation.

## **2.1. Evaluation objectives**

The mid-term evaluation has a dual strategic objective. On the one hand, it aims to analyse the program's performance over the period from February 2023 to December 2025, examining how activities, approaches, and coordination mechanisms have contributed to the expected interim results in the three provinces. Second, it seeks to identify the corrective measures needed to strengthen progress toward the impact objectives, particularly in a context of rapidly changing humanitarian and socio-political dynamics. The objective is therefore to assess the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and impact (effects) of the program, while identifying levers for adjustment to consolidate achievements and strengthen sustainability. It also involves analysing the added value of the Nexus approach (in terms of the link between humanitarian assistance, economic strengthening, and social cohesion), assessing the quality of gender, climate, and "do no harm" integration, and capitalizing on emerging practices to guide the rest of the program.

## **2.2. Methodology used**

The methodology used was based on a combination of quantitative, qualitative, and documentary data, in accordance with the mixed approach defined in the inception report and technical proposal. The documentary analysis made it possible to reconstruct the intervention logic based on key program documents (logical framework, updated proposal, annual and semi-annual narrative reports, sectoral technical studies, baseline, monitoring and evaluation plans, contextual analyses, and reports from internal program mechanisms). This review served as the basis for constructing field questions and triangulating results.

Qualitative data collection was based on semi-structured individual interviews and group discussions with consortium teams (Concern Worldwide, IRC), administrative and traditional authorities, decentralized technical services of the State (ANADER, water services, CPA, CDA, CLA), as well as community leaders and participants (women, young people, refugees, AVEC members). These tools made it possible to analyse the modalities of community participation throughout the project cycle, the perceived effects on livelihoods and social cohesion, as well as the functioning of accountability mechanisms (local committees, suggestion boxes, hotlines) and tension management at the local level. These interviews provided a variety of perspectives that were essential for understanding local ownership, obstacles, and the effects of the approaches implemented. The testimonies collected are a rich source of information, particularly for interpreting quantitative indicators.

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 1 of the report.

The quantitative data was collected by BUCOFORE researchers during the November 2025 field mission. Since the mid-term evaluation is not based on a complete statistical comparison between a baseline and an endline, the assessment of the program's performance was based on a referential and contributory analysis approach. The results observed were first compared with the intermediate targets and annual milestones defined in the program's logical framework and in the annual operational plans validated by the consortium and the donor. Secondly, the analysis drew on the program's implicit theory of change, as expressed in the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus intervention logic, to examine the consistency between the activities implemented, the expected intermediate results, and the changes observed at this stage of implementation. Finally, the developments highlighted by the available quantitative indicators (food security, livelihoods, participation, social cohesion) were systematically interpreted considering qualitative data from interviews, group discussions, and field observations, making it possible to assess the plausibility of the program's contributions to the observed effects, without claiming complete causal attribution. This approach is in line with best practices for mid-term evaluations in fragile contexts, where the primary objective is to assess the program's trajectory, the robustness of its intervention assumptions, and the likelihood of achieving results by the time of the final evaluation. The following tables summarize the main statistics<sup>2</sup> :

*Table1 : qualitative collection results*

Provinces	Project team	Programme Participants	Administrative and traditional authorities	Grand total
Ouaddaï	4	9	3	
Sila	4	9	4	
Wadi-Fira	5	8	3	
Total	13	27	10	50

- Focus group: 6
- Individual interviews: 44

In total, qualitative data collection covered 50 exchanges distributed almost evenly across the three provinces: Ouaddaï (16), Sila (17), and Wadi-Fira (16). It combined 44 individual interviews and six focus groups in order to articulate detailed analyses of trajectories and implementation (interviews) with an interpretation of collective dynamics (focus groups). The individual interviews involved 13 members of the consortium teams (Concern Worldwide, IRC), 27 programme participants (including women, young people, refugees, and AVEC members), and 10 administrative and traditional authorities, also including representatives/agents from decentralized structures involved in coordinating and supporting activities (CPA, CDA, CLA, as well as sectoral technical services such as ANADER and water services). The focus groups (with between 6 and 8 participants) were conducted mainly with groups of participants (notably AVEC and women's/youth groups) to document shared perceptions, perceived effects, and

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 2 for details.

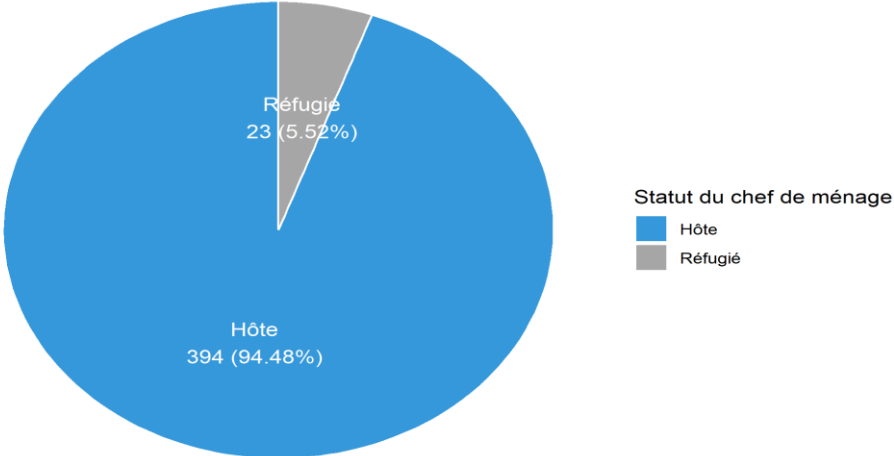
potential tensions, complementing the individual interviews conducted with teams and authorities.

Table2 : quantitative collection results

Provinces	Departments	Total
Ouaddaï	Assoungaha	182
Sila	Kimiti	95
Waidi Fira	Kobe	140
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>417</b>

Graph1 : distribution according to household head status (host community / refugees)

Répartition selon le statut du chef de ménage



### 2.3. Successes and limitations of the method

The methodological approach adopted provided a well-supported and generally robust assessment of the program's performance. The systematic triangulation of recent quantitative data from the BUCOFOR mission, qualitative data collected in the field, and documentary analysis (narrative reports, logical frameworks, monitoring documents) reinforced the credibility of the findings and facilitated the identification of converging trends, despite the diversity of sources and provincial contexts. The quantitative data made it possible to objectively assess the mid-term changes in key indicators, while the qualitative approaches contributed to a deeper understanding of the mechanisms of change, particularly regarding community perceptions, social cohesion, and local power dynamics.

However, certain methodological limitations must be considered when interpreting the results. Seasonal population mobility, combined with occasional security constraints, restricted access to a few localities in each of the three provinces (Ouaddaï, Sila, and Wadi Fira), without affecting all intervention areas. These constraints led to limited variations in the provincial coverage of the surveys, which were more pronounced in certain peripheral areas or areas recently affected by security incidents. In order to reduce the effect of these potential biases, the evaluation team opted for a targeted redeployment to accessible localities with comparable profiles, as well as a strengthening of the cross-referencing of available sources.

Furthermore, in a limited number of villages, sociocultural norms initially limited the active participation of women, particularly in mixed interviews and certain group discussions. Aware of the risk of under-representation of women's voices, the team implemented several mitigation measures, including the formation of mixed survey teams, the organization of single-sex group discussions, the adaptation of data collection schedules to women's domestic constraints, and the application of minimum quotas when selecting participants. These adjustments significantly improved female participation in most sites, although in a few specific locations, the depth of information collected on gender issues remains more limited and must be interpreted with caution.

Finally, some community structures (committees, AVECs, and others) still in the process of being set up or structured provided only partial information, requiring more in-depth analysis and contextualization, supported by testimonials from implementation teams and local authorities. Despite these limited constraints, the combination of quantitative and qualitative data, the diversity of profiles consulted, and the corrective measures implemented allow us to consider that the results presented provide a sufficiently solid and credible basis for assessing the performance of the RESPECCT program at mid-term, while calling for particular vigilance in interpreting the results relating to gender and certain specific areas.

### 3. Analysis of the performance of the program<sup>3</sup>

The analysis of this program's performance is structured in accordance with the evaluation criteria defined in the terms of reference (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and cross-cutting issues), each of which is examined on the basis of the specific evaluation questions associated with it. This structure ensures that the evaluation is aligned with contractual requirements and recognized standards for program evaluation.

Beyond this criteria-based analysis, the evaluation incorporates a cross-cutting Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus approach, as formulated in the program design documents. This is based on the assumption that short-term economic stabilization (cash transfers) creates the conditions for a gradual improvement in livelihoods (AVEC, IGA, training), which is likely to strengthen social cohesion and, ultimately, the sustainability of achievements in the intervention areas.

At this stage of implementation, the evaluation does not seek to demonstrate fully consolidated Nexus effects, but rather to conduct exploratory "Nexus tests" by examining whether signs of integration between the different components of the program are observable (continuity between cash and economic recovery, interactions with social cohesion actions, initial signs of local ownership). These elements provide an analytical basis for assessing the program's trajectory at mid-term and will serve as a reference for analysing Nexus effects in future reports.

To summarize the findings from the detailed performance analysis, an indicative rating has been assigned to each evaluation criterion on a scale of 1 (very low) to 5 (very satisfactory). This rating is not based on a mechanical calculation, but on a reasoned evaluative judgment, based on the convergence of documentary, quantitative, and qualitative data, as well as on an assessment of the degree to which the expected results have been achieved at mid-term, in light of the evaluative questions defined in the terms of reference. The scores reflect the relative performance of the program at this stage of its implementation, taking into account contextual constraints, the evolving nature of certain effects (particularly Nexus and sustainability), and the trajectories observed rather than the final results expected at the end of the program.

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<sup>3</sup> Contrary to the terms of reference, which propose that evaluators give scores for the criteria assessed, we propose instead to analyze each criterion in order to help strengthen the strengths and provide further efforts for the aspects that have not worked sufficiently.

### 3.1. Relevance

The analysis of the program's relevance shows that the action responds closely and consistently to the priority needs of host, refugee, and returnee populations in eastern Chad, while aligning with local dynamics, national priorities, and the strategic approach of the triple Nexus. This relevance is evident first in the strong alignment between the program's objectives and the most pressing needs expressed by the communities, and second in the level of participation of different social groups, particularly the most marginalized. It is also evident in the suitability of the Nexus approach to the political, socio-economic, and climatic realities of the intervention areas, and finally in the coherence of the partnerships mobilized to strengthen local mechanisms for resilience, social cohesion, and governance.

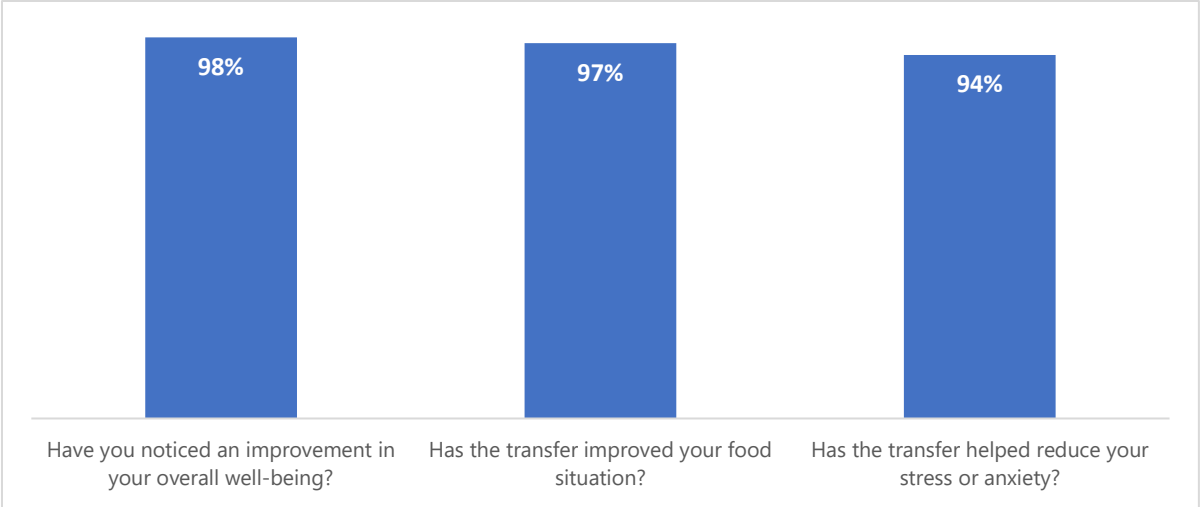
Interviews conducted in the three provinces clearly reveal that the essential needs of the populations revolve around four areas: *access to water, food security, livelihoods, and social cohesion in the face of migration dynamics and local tensions*. Participants consistently cite water as the primary shortage affecting daily life: insufficient boreholes, distance from water sources, and demographic pressure linked to new arrivals. Similarly, food security remains fragile, as shown by quantitative data reporting low or marginal food scores in a significant proportion of households, particularly in Ouaddaï, according to BUCOFORE data, where nearly 16% of households still have a "poor" food consumption score (SCA) and more than two-thirds have a low food diversity score (SDAM). The higher food consumption score observed in Ouaddaï (approximately 16% of households with poor consumption) can be partially explained. Interviews and group discussions indicate that, in several localities in this province, households face greater pressure on their livelihoods, linked to the concentration of recent refugees, limited access to agricultural land, and increased dependence on markets, in a context of rising and volatile food prices. Qualitative data also suggest that, in some areas of Ouaddaï, economic recovery activities (IGA and AVEC) have not yet reached a sufficient level to fully offset this structural vulnerability, contributing to weaker food consumption outcomes at this stage: *"Here, even with cash, it's difficult to eat properly all month long, because prices are rising fast and many families don't have fields. We depend mainly on the market."* (Interview with beneficiary household, Ouaddaï province).

Beyond immediate material needs, the populations encountered highlight structural social and institutional needs, particularly the strengthening of social cohesion, the prevention and peaceful management of tensions between host and refugee communities, and the consideration of gender norms in a context of high demographic pressure. Interviews and group discussions indicate that recent migration dynamics linked to violence in Darfur and climate hazards have accentuated the competition for resources and complicated local coexistence, particularly in areas hosting large numbers of refugees. While needs such as access to water and education are frequently mentioned by communities, these mainly fall within the remit of other humanitarian or institutional actors. In this context, RESPECCT appears relevant by positioning itself in a complementary manner, focusing its interventions on economic and social resilience, community dialogue mechanisms, social cohesion actions, and training on

peace and coexistence, in synergy with sectoral interventions carried out by other partners. Respondents mainly refer to refugees who have recently settled in host communities; unstructured internal displacement is mentioned only marginally and does not constitute a specific category of program participants. This focus reinforces the coherence of RESPECCT's targeting and its alignment with local concerns, without creating a gap between the needs expressed and the program's operational mandate.

This alignment is even more evident as the program adopts an explicitly *intersectional* approach, which is a notable departure from traditional programs. In practice, this means that women, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, female-headed households, and newly arrived refugees are considered not only as potential participants, but as groups whose vulnerability is analysed in its multiple dimensions (economic, social, environmental, and identity-related). Quantitative data confirm the relevance of this approach: female-headed households have significantly lower levels of food consumption, greater reliance on negative coping strategies, and reduced capacity to diversify their diets. In this context, the program's activities (cash, AVEC, income-generating activities (IGAs), vocational training, support for local governance) respond in a targeted manner to these differentiated vulnerabilities. Participants report feeling more fulfilled, as evidenced by the positive responses below from BUCOFORE's quantitative data collection:

Graph2 : assessment of program activities



The relevance of the program is also evident in the *high level of community participation*, particularly among the most marginalized groups. Participants report having been involved in targeting, identifying priorities, implementing projects, and monitoring activities on a daily basis. In several villages, local committees (local green committees, targeting committees, complaint management committees) are responsible for much of the awareness-raising and mobilization work, thereby strengthening local ownership and the legitimacy of the program. Women, who often make up the majority of AVECs, play a central role in community financial management. Refugees sometimes hold positions of responsibility within the groups. Young people, through their participation in vocational training, represent a lever for sustainable transformation of local economies. This active participation demonstrates that the program does not simply intervene "for" communities, but works "with" them, in a spirit of commitment and empowerment.

A critical look at the *relevance of the Nexus approach* highlights that this participation is not only a participatory management mechanism, but also a crucial element in an area marked simultaneously by humanitarian emergencies, structural vulnerabilities, and the risk of conflict. Eastern Chad is, in fact, a territory where mass displacement, security crises, gender inequalities, chronic food insecurity, and severe climate hazards intertwine. In such a context, the use of the triple Nexus (humanitarian, development, and peace) is not only justified but indispensable. Cash transfers meet immediate needs; development activities (agricultural production, training, value chain structuring, sustainable resource management, agroecology) address the root causes of poverty; and finally, actions related to social cohesion, community mediation, and the transformation of gender norms directly address the factors that contribute to conflict.

Furthermore, the implementation of the *crisis modifier* is a key operational lever of this Nexus approach, enabling the program to respond quickly and in a targeted manner to unexpected shock, such as mass influxes of refugees, floods, or health emergencies. Emergency interventions carried out within this framework, particularly those related to cholera prevention and response, have been cited by local authorities and community actors as essential for

containing immediate risks while maintaining the continuity of resilience actions. This adaptability reinforces the relevance of RESPECCT's Nexus approach, ensuring an effective link between ad hoc humanitarian response, socio-economic stabilization, and tension prevention.

Quantitative data also show that households combine humanitarian vulnerabilities (low food scores, high dependence on negative coping strategies), structural constraints (low level of education, dependence on rain-fed agriculture), and risks of tensions linked to pressure on resources. This overlap of risks fully justifies a program that simultaneously integrates prevention, response, and local capacity building. Testimonials indicate that the intervention has already had a noticeable impact on social cohesion within the targeted communities. Refugees and host populations participate jointly in AVEC and other program activities, which helps to reduce distinctions and discriminatory practices in daily interactions. Several participants emphasize that these collective frameworks have fostered a gradual rapprochement between groups and an improvement in the social climate in the villages. As one participant puts it: *"We all work together in harmony. Before, everyone kept to themselves, but now we see each other often and help each other out."* Another beneficiary emphasizes the inclusive nature of the measures put in place: *"In the groups, we no longer differentiate between refugees and locals. We are all participants and we participate in activities together."* These elements confirm that, beyond their economic effects, the collective mechanisms supported by the program already constitute concrete spaces for cohabitation, dialogue, and the strengthening of social ties.

The analysis of *institutional and strategic relevance* confirms that, beyond community needs, RESPECCT is closely aligned with national priorities. Technical services (National Agency for Rural Development Support (ANADER), environment, health, livestock, in particular) emphasize that the program's interventions are in line with the government's guidelines on combating desertification, sustainable resource management, promoting climate-resilient agriculture, and strengthening decentralization. Local authorities also appreciate the consistency between the program's activities and local development plans, despite persistent expectations regarding the regularity of exchanges and information sharing.

A major contextual factor further reinforces the program's strategic relevance and deserves to be explicitly considered in the analysis: the profound gap between the time of its design and the actual conditions of its implementation, which were profoundly reconfigured by the Sudanese crisis that began in April 2023. The massive and rapid influx of Sudanese refugees has profoundly transformed the demographic, territorial, and socioeconomic balance in eastern Chad, increasing pressure on natural resources, basic social services, and local social regulation mechanisms, particularly in areas outside the camps. In this new context, characterized by a more diffuse humanitarian presence and a sharp increase in community vulnerabilities, RESPECCT has gradually established itself as a central mechanism for absorption and stabilization, playing a buffer role between humanitarian emergency, local resilience, and tension prevention. The delays observed in certain activities, operational readjustments, and increased use of crisis modification should therefore be interpreted not as malfunctions, but as adaptive responses to a major exogenous shock that has profoundly redefined intervention priorities. This capacity for adaptation reinforces the relevance of the program, as it confirms the validity of its Nexus approach in an environment characterized by the close intertwining of humanitarian, development, and peace dynamics. By prioritizing intervention in areas heavily

affected by new arrivals but less covered by traditional emergency aid, the program helps to limit the risks of marginalization, contain local tensions, and support community resilience mechanisms, which gives increased strategic value to its targeting choices and operational positioning.

Finally, the program's relevance is evident in *the quality of the partnerships mobilized*, which are essential in a Nexus context. Collaboration between consortium members and decentralized services reinforces the complementarity between gender equality, livelihoods, and social cohesion activities. The teams recognize that operational coordination is generally effective (sharing vehicles, mutual adjustments to schedules, relaying awareness-raising actions). However, several interviews with local authorities and decentralized technical services highlight the need to revitalize certain coordination practices with the program. These actors highlight the importance of more regular coordination meetings, more systematic sharing of operational information, and greater involvement of technical services in monitoring rural activities. As one technical officer points out: "*We are involved, but not always on a regular basis. If we met more often to take stock, monitoring would be better in the field.*" These observations reflect less a questioning of the partnership than an expectation of a gradual strengthening of institutional collaboration, in line with the program's sustainability objectives.

**Relevance rating: 4.5/5**

The RESPECCT program is highly relevant to the needs of the target populations and the context, which has been profoundly transformed by the Sudanese crisis since April 2023. Although designed before this major disruption, it has been able to adapt thanks to its roots in the Nexus approach and the flexibility of its intervention methods. The joint targeting of host, refugee, and returnee households remains consistent in an environment marked by increased pressure on resources and social cohesion mechanisms. In a context where humanitarian aid is largely concentrated in camps, RESPECCT plays an essential complementary role in areas outside the camps, contributing to shock absorption, socio-economic stabilization, and the prevention of tensions. At the mid-term stage, the program therefore remains highly relevant, even if certain structural needs, exacerbated by the crisis, exceed its scope of intervention.

### 3.2. Coherence

An examination of RESPECCT's coherence reveals a well-articulated intervention, both in terms of its internal dynamics between the three consortium members (Concern Worldwide, IRC, and SFCG) and its interactions with institutional, community, and humanitarian actors in the provinces of Sila, Ouaddaï, and Wadi-Fira. This coherence is also evident in the program's alignment with international normative frameworks relating to the triple Nexus, protection, gender equality, and accountability. In a context marked by overlapping humanitarian, climate, and social crises, the program thus manages to effectively articulate its humanitarian, development, and peace components in an integrated rather than sequential manner.

The internal coherence of the consortium is a key structuring element. Each of the three members brings distinct and complementary skills to the table. This clear division of responsibilities avoids duplication and facilitates operational complementarity. The teams in the field confirm this dynamic: *"We work together, we share vehicles and we always coordinate to avoid ending up in the same village on the same day,"* says an IRC agent, highlighting the fluidity of daily coordination. The following table summarizes the responsibilities of each stakeholder:

Table3 : division of roles and coordination mechanisms within RESPECCT

<b>Actor/Structure</b>	<b>Main role in the program</b>	<b>Level of intervention</b>	<b>Coordination mechanisms and institutional links</b>
<b>Concern Worldwide</b>	Overall coordination of the consortium; cash transfers; AVEC/IGA; early warning system and environmental activities	National/Provincial	Consortium meetings; interface with provincial authorities and national officials
<b>IRC</b>	Cash implementation; post-distribution monitoring; community mobilization; basic service infrastructure	Provincial/Local	Field operational coordination; regular exchanges with local authorities
<b>SFCG</b>	Social cohesion; conflict prevention; community mediation	Provincial/Local	Local consultations; collaboration with authorities and community leaders
<b>National/local partners</b>	Sectoral implementation and community facilitation (specifically social cohesion/peacebuilding)	Local	Local technical meetings; liaison with decentralized services
<b>Community committees (CLA/CCA/CPA)</b>	Identification of needs; reporting of alerts; local monitoring	Village/Canton/Province	Community-authorities interface; contribution to the early warning system
<b>Authorities &amp; SISAAP</b>	Analysis and monitoring of alerts; institutional coordination	Provincial/National	Integration of field information into existing mechanisms
<b>Decentralized government services</b>	Sectoral technical support; supervision of activities; contribution to sustainability and alignment with public policies	Provincial/departmental/local	Participation in consultation frameworks; ad hoc support for monitoring activities; technical exchanges with consortium partners, with a need to strengthen the regularity and formalization of coordination mechanisms

This coordination mechanism contributes to the overall coherence of the program by linking the interventions of consortium partners with community structures and local and provincial authorities. The community committees supported by RESPECCT ensure that information and

alerts are reported from the local level, which are shared with the authorities and indirectly feed into existing monitoring and alert mechanisms, particularly SISAAP. This organization promotes greater complementarity between humanitarian, development, and crisis prevention actions, while remaining within existing institutional frameworks.

This synergy is also evident in the complementarity of interventions. When IRC makes cash transfers, Concern and SFCG ensure that economic empowerment, community organization, and social cohesion activities follow or accompany these distributions. Several agents explain that this coordination ensures logical continuity between the three pillars of the Nexus. Several agents explain that this coordination is based less on a simple sequence of activities than on close technical supervision of local partners who support peacebuilding activities, ensuring operational coherence between the three pillars of the Nexus. Cash distributions implemented by Concern and IRC help stabilize eligible households, including refugees, while technical support from local partners facilitates the gradual orientation of participants towards IGA, training, and local governance mechanisms. At the same time, SFCG plays a central cross-cutting role by integrating a conflict-sensitive approach into all program activities: training focal points in conflict sensitivity, facilitating regular meetings to analyse local dynamics, developing and monitoring a conflict sensitivity integration action plan, and conducting annual conflict analyses to identify risks of tension and adjust Concern and IRC interventions. This set of mechanisms helps to ensure functional continuity between humanitarian response, economic recovery, and conflict prevention. Quantitative data also show that 56% of male-headed households and nearly 72% of female-headed households still resort to negative (low or severe) coping strategies, confirming the need to combine immediate cash transfers with sustainable economic support.

Coordination with state actors also strengthens the program's external coherence. Decentralized services (ANADER, environment, livestock, health, in particular) emphasize that RESPECCT's interventions are in line with national priorities to combat desertification, strengthen climate resilience, and stabilize sensitive areas. An ANADER trainer emphasizes this point: *"What RESPECCT is doing is exactly in line with the government's priorities on climate change and agricultural production."*

However, the analysis also shows that institutional coherence depends heavily on regular interaction. Several technical state actors regret the decline in the frequency of meetings and exchanges compared to the start-up phase, as this interviewee points out: *"Before, we often organized meetings together. Now, that is no longer the case. We need to strengthen monitoring from the outset of activities."* This observation highlights an important area for improvement: consistency is real, but consolidating it requires more regular coordination and more systematic information sharing between the consortium and local institutions.

At the community level, too, coherence is visible through the activation of dialogue and participation mechanisms. Green committees, Departmental Action Committees (CDA), Local Action Committees (CLA), Provincial Action Committees (CPA), and targeting committees are mobilized, and quantitative data show a significant level of contact: in Sila, 82% of households

have interacted with the CLA or CPA, while in Ouaddaï, the rates vary between 52% and 58% depending on the structures. This proximity between participants and community bodies facilitates the flow of information, strengthens the credibility of the program, and creates a bridge between the consortium's interventions and local governance mechanisms. Several participants also report that these structures have improved cohesion between different groups: "*Before, everyone lived in their own corner. Now, we get together all the time and help each other,*" reports an AVEC member in Ouaddaï.

In terms of standards, the RESPECCT program is clearly in line with international guidelines on the triple nexus of humanitarian aid, development, and peace, combining a response to immediate needs with sustainable recovery and conflict prevention. This approach is consistent with the European Union's strategic frameworks on the Nexus and peacebuilding, in particular the joint communication on the HDP Nexus, the European guidelines on conflict prevention and social cohesion, and the European commitments to gender equality and inclusion. The integration of a conflict-sensitive approach, promoted by SFCG, and a transformative approach to gender, broadened to include an intersectional perspective (women, young people, people living with disabilities, refugee status), translates these guidelines into concrete operational modalities for the program.

Furthermore, the program's normative coherence is reflected in the application of key principles of recognized humanitarian standards, particularly those relating to accountability, access to information, community participation, and complaint handling, as defined in the SPHERE standards and the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS). The accountability mechanisms put in place (suggestion boxes, accountability committees, hotlines, and community mediation mechanisms) are regularly mentioned by participants as functional and accessible, indicating that these commitments are not only theoretical but are effectively implemented. As one community facilitator points out: "*Complaints come in, we collect them, we pass them on. People know they can speak up and that something will be done.*"

Finally, the coordination between humanitarian, development, and peace components is progressing gradually but consistently. The cash distributed by IRC helps stabilize households and reduce emergency situations; Concern's IGA, AVEC, and agricultural support contribute to strengthening productive capacities and economic empowerment; and the mechanisms for social cohesion, local dialogue, and conflict prevention promoted by the new implementing partners help to secure these gains to foster a climate of sustain. Far from being a series of activities, this coordination forms a continuum: "*When we receive the cash, we can finally buy what we need and participate in training. Before, that wasn't possible,*" explains a Sila beneficiary. Thus, the coherence of the RESPECCT program is based on a set of carefully constructed complementarities: complementarities between consortium members, between institutional and community actors, between material and social interventions, and between immediate needs and long-term challenges. Despite some expectations related to strengthening institutional coordination with state actors, the overall coherence of the program appears solid and constitutes a decisive foundation for its effectiveness and relevance in an environment as complex as eastern Chad.

**Coherence rating: 3.5/5**

The internal coherence of the program is generally satisfactory, both in terms of the intervention logic and the complementarity between the consortium partners. Operational synergies are observed between the humanitarian, development, and peace components, although their intensity varies depending on the province and component. At this stage, coherence is real but still has room for improvement, which is consistent with an intermediate phase of implementation.

### 3.3. Program effectiveness

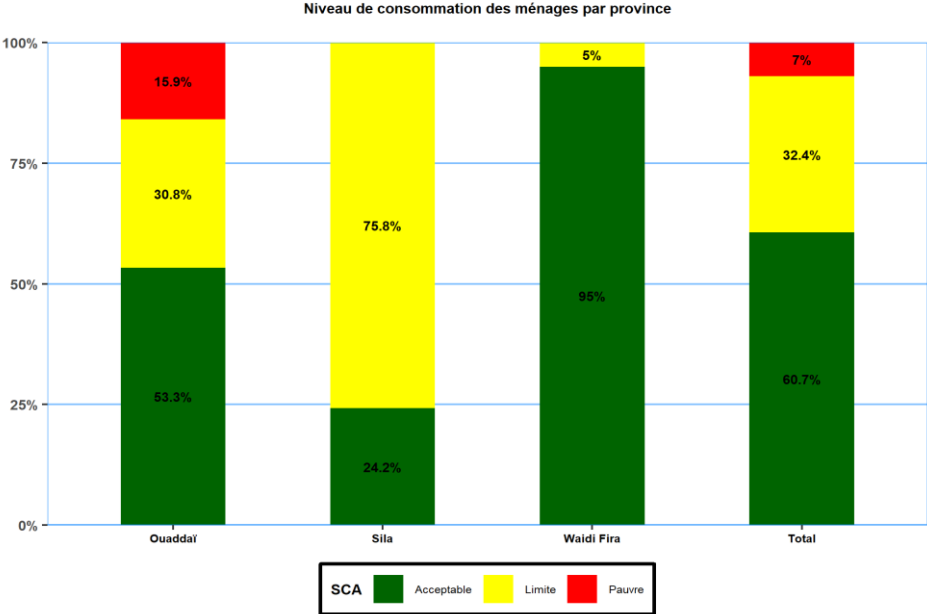
The assessment of the effectiveness of the RESPECCT program at the end of its third year of implementation shows progress significantly below the expectations set by the intervention logic. This logic, although robust and adapted to the socio-economic and security context of eastern Chad, was based on a sequential ramp-up: economic stabilization through monetary assistance, socio-economic structuring through AVECs, vocational training for young people and IGAs, environmental support to reduce climate risks, and strengthening of social cohesion through dialogue activities and conflict prevention mechanisms. However, cumulative delays (administrative, operational, and contextual in relation to the 2023 Sudanese crisis) prevented the consistent implementation of this sequence. Analysis of the indicators for the first two years (collected by the consortium) and qualitative information available from local actors highlights a trajectory of implementation that is too slow to guarantee satisfactory effectiveness at this stage.

From a strictly logical point of view, the program structure remains relevant. It clearly establishes a causal chain in which cash assistance enables highly vulnerable households to meet their basic needs, thereby reducing their negative survival strategies and creating the conditions for savings, stabilization, and engagement in more resilient economic activities through those mentioned above. These economic activities must then be reinforced by targeted environmental actions, building a physical and productive base that is less exposed to shocks. Finally, social cohesion (implemented through community dialogues, collaborative resource management, and the involvement of local civil society organizations (CSOs)) constitutes the sustainable foundation of collective resilience. This chain is technically sound and adapted to a context marked by massive displacement, increased pressure on natural resources, and fragile social relations. However, as one consortium interlocutor put it, "*the Nexus vision was affected from the outset by administrative delays,*" which compromised the temporal coherence between the three components and reduced overall effectiveness.

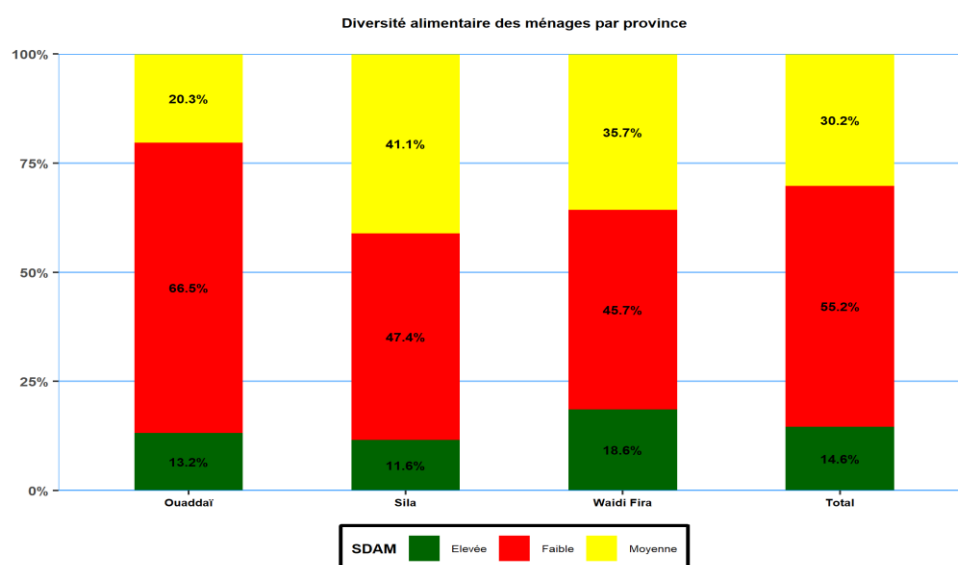
Analysis of operational progress confirms this limitation. Over the first two years, cash distributions were the most advanced component. Consortium data show measurable progress on certain food security indicators: the Food Consumption Score rose from 52% to 59%, and the Food Diversity Score from 3.3 to 3.4. This progress, although modest, reflects the immediate effect of cash on households' ability to access more regular food supplies. A representative from Ouaddaï indicates that "*distributions have reduced debt pressure,*" confirming a stabilizing effect. However, these results are undermined by the weak link with IGAs and environmental activities, which have not progressed at the same pace. Food security is therefore improving

on an ad hoc basis, but without structural consolidation, which limits its lasting effect, as shown in the figures below based on quantitative data collected by BUCOFORE:

Graph 3 : food consumption score



Graph4 : household food diversity by province



However, this improvement must be assessed differently depending on the program components and the associated monitoring methods. For several areas (including social cohesion, IGAs, community infrastructure, climate risk reduction, and changes in social norms), the formal indicators of the logical framework do not yet show consolidated values at this stage. This situation is less a reflection of a lack of activities or effects than of a mismatch between the phasing of implementation, the maturity of interventions, and the measurement mechanisms initially planned, with some indicators requiring a longer observation period or specific tools to be reliably reported.

At the same time, data from available operational monitoring tools, particularly post-distribution surveys, highlight positive developments in certain key areas, notably in terms of women's participation in household decision-making, with clear progress observed over the course of the cash transfer cycles. These results suggest that changes are already underway, even if they are not yet fully captured by the aggregate indicators of the logical framework.

Similarly, qualitative evidence gathered from participants and local actors points to a gradual improvement in social relations and interactions between groups, although these changes cannot yet be translated into stable figures. In this context, the lack of consolidated quantitative data for certain indicators should be interpreted with caution and understood as reflecting a dynamic that is still being structured, rather than as a performance deficit. This interpretation calls for greater alignment between existing monitoring tools and strategic indicators in the next phases of the program, to better document the effects already observable in the field.

The delay in contracting local CSOs<sup>4</sup> played a decisive role. A Wadi-Fira representative emphasized that *"the delay in validating CSOs blocked all cohesion activities,"* confirming that the peace component (which is essential in a context of tensions related to transhumance, land ownership, and the presence of refugees) could not start on time. However, this component was not completely inactive: several important studies were carried out, including the conflict

<sup>4</sup> The contract was signed on November 1, 2025.

analysis in 2023, the conflict snapshot in 2024, the gender analysis, and the conflict sensitivity strategy. These outputs provide a solid analytical foundation and now enable a better understanding of the dynamics of tension in the target provinces. A representative of a local government technical department mentioned that "*the conflict analysis has identified the most vulnerable areas,*" demonstrating the real strategic value of these studies. However, their impact on effectiveness remains limited as long as the corresponding operational activities, such as inter-community dialogues and collective actions, are not implemented.

Economically speaking, AVECs represent one of the most tangible advances. In all three provinces, groups have been effectively established, meetings are held regularly, and female participation is high. A representative from Sila points out that "*AVECs help us to better organize our spending,*" which is a sign of ownership. However, the lack of deployment of IGAs (including kits, which only began to be distributed at the end of the third year in two of the three provinces, notably Sila and Wadi-Fira) is a major limitation. Without IGAs, the economic impact of AVECs remains partial and does not yet offer households the prospect of a sustainable improvement in their incomes.

The effectiveness of inclusion measures also reflects mixed progress. Joint committees, accountability mechanisms, and Engaging Men approaches have been established in several villages, which could help reduce certain intra-household tensions and improve the program's acceptability. A contact in Ouaddaï notes that "*men are beginning to accept women's involvement,*" confirming a gradual change in attitude. However, in the absence of concrete social transformation and community dialogue activities, these mechanisms remain support measures rather than drivers of change. Their impact remains superficial as long as they are not accompanied by systematic action.

Overall, the effectiveness of the RESPECCT program at the end of its third year is limited. The progress observed in food security thanks to cash transfers is real but insufficiently consolidated. Structural activities (economic, environmental, and social) started too late to produce the expected intermediate results. The baseline studies for the peace component are relevant but have not yet been translated into operational terms. Institutional delays, delays in recruiting local CSOs, and logistical and security constraints have weighed heavily on the program's ability to deploy a fully functional Nexus approach. However, the recent momentum for catching up (notably the preparation of IGAs, the structuring of environmental committees, the mobilization of CSOs, and the consolidation of AVECs) offers a window of opportunity. If the fourth year of implementation is marked by sustained acceleration and better synchronization of components, overall effectiveness can be strengthened. At this stage, however, it remains insufficient in relation to the ambitions of the logical framework.

### **Effectiveness rating: 3/5**

At the midpoint, the program has achieved tangible intermediate results, particularly in terms of stabilizing food security, gradual economic recovery, and strengthening social cohesion. However, the achievement of results remains uneven across areas, target groups, and components, and some effects remain fragile or still under development. Effectiveness is

therefore considered moderate but improving, reflecting a positive trajectory rather than a fully consolidated level of results.

### 3.4. Efficiency

The assessment of the program's efficiency at the end of the third year paints a similar picture to that of its effectiveness: a robust architecture, significant technical investments, and proven financial discipline, but a ramp-up that is still too slow to optimize the use of the resources mobilized. Consolidated financial data through July 2025 show an overall consumption rate of 26.4%, of which only 17.09% was allocated to activities. At this stage of the cycle, this level of disbursement reflects less an economy than a slowdown in execution. As one consortium member summed it up: *"We didn't run out of budget, we ran out of time to use it at the right moment."* This under-consumption affects overall efficiency, particularly for components whose impacts are built up over time.

Where resources have actually been committed, efficiency appears satisfactory overall, particularly for the cash assistance component, which is the most operational segment of the program at this stage. Between the start of the program and July 2025, four cycles of unconditional cash transfers, supplemented by a catch-up round, reached 8,990 households out of the 9,000 initially planned, for a cumulative amount of approximately FCFA 1.61 billion (approximately EUR 2.46 million). The implementation mechanisms demonstrate good operational control: the fees charged by the financial service provider represent approximately 5% of the amounts distributed, a level consistent with current practices observed in cash transfer schemes in humanitarian and recovery contexts. In addition, the program demonstrated its ability to adapt by increasing the unit amount of the transfer from 42,000 to 48,000 CFA francs per household from the second cycle onwards, in line with the guidelines of the Cash Working Group and changes in the cost of living. Implementation deadlines were generally met, operational incidents were limited, and monitoring and accountability mechanisms were functional. Qualitative feedback confirms the immediate usefulness of the program, as one respondent pointed out: *"The distributions really reduced the pressure of debt. Households were able to breathe a little."* Nevertheless, this efficiency remains essentially operational: in the absence of sufficiently rapid coordination with structural components (IGA, AVEC, livelihood strengthening), the cash's effects remain partly transitory, which further limits its medium-term transformative potential.

Investments in engineering (diagnostics, conflict analysis, market analysis, AVEC tools, *Standard Operating Procedure*, cash and IGA) represent a significant portion of initial expenditures. They reflect serious preparatory work, the quality of which is recognized by partners. However, their return remains deferred. The example of the SOP IGA illustrates this gap well: technically finalized and methodologically validated, but with the actual distribution of kits only beginning at the end of the third year. As one field representative put it, *"Everything is ready in the documents, but the action has yet to be taken."* These investments are not inefficient in themselves; they become temporarily inefficient due to the lack of operational implementation. The cost-benefit ratio therefore remains unbalanced at this stage.

A similar phenomenon can be seen in the dynamics of AVECs. Their deployment is real and relatively efficient: the groups are established, functional, and largely female, with modest

operational costs. Their social and financial effectiveness is beginning to show. Nevertheless, their overall efficiency is closely dependent on the launch of IGAs, which have not yet been distributed. The absence of this complement reduces the capacity of AVECs to generate sustainable economic added value, which contributes to limiting the return on the resources already committed to their formation and support.

Consortium operation was intended to be a significant driver of efficiency, thanks to the pooling of tools, the coordination office, and monitoring mechanisms. In several respects, this gamble paid off: harmonized SOPs were used by all organizations, conflict analysis and conflict sensitivity strategy were produced once for all areas, and cash distribution logistics benefited from single agreements with the financial service provider. These elements constitute real economies of scale. However, this pooling of resources has been accompanied by high transaction costs. Joint validations, regular coordination with neighbouring programs (PARCA, UNHCR, WFP), and inter-NGO adjustments have sometimes lengthened delays. As one coordinator pointed out: *"The consortium provides consistency, but discussions take time that we don't always have."* This time is not wasted from a qualitative point of view, but it does have an impact on efficiency when delays accumulate.

The Nexus approach was intended to enhance efficiency by sequencing investments: stabilizing (cash), strengthening (AVEC/IGA), securing (social cohesion, environment). Conceptually, this logic can optimize the use of resources by avoiding isolated and redundant interventions. However, the time gap between the components (very advanced cash, increasing AVEC, delayed IGA and construction projects, a peace component still in preparation) prevented the expected leverage effect. Thus, monetary stabilization, effective in the short term, has not yet benefited from the economic and social reinforcement that would have maximized its profitability. As one local actor put it: *"Cash worked, but the other activities did not follow suit."*

A summary analysis can be made as follows:

#### *Humanitarian pillar*

From a Nexus perspective, the humanitarian pillar is the one in which the conversion of resources into immediate results is most advanced. Cash transfers have made it possible to reach almost all the targeted households and inject significant amounts of money into local economies, generating rapid effects on consumption and reducing economic tensions in the short term. This performance gives the humanitarian pillar a central stabilizing role in the program's architecture, while highlighting that its effectiveness remains highly dependent on its ability to be relayed by the other pillars.

#### *Development pillar*

The development pillar is still only partially effective at this stage. The resources mobilized have mainly been used to lay the technical and organizational foundations for interventions (AVEC, IGA, productive and environmental projects), which limits the immediate materialization of the expected economic effects. While some positive dynamics are underway, particularly through AVEC, the lack of full deployment of IGA and productive investments has reduced this pillar's ability to amplify the effects of the humanitarian pillar and contribute fully to the overall efficiency of the Nexus approach.

### *Peace pillar*

Although the peace pillar has mobilized more limited resources, it has made it possible to structure essential mechanisms for preventing and managing tensions, particularly through conflict analysis, conflict sensitivity training, and community dialogue mechanisms. At this stage, its performance is best assessed in terms of risk reduction and the creation of conditions conducive to the implementation of other components, rather than in directly quantifiable results. Its contribution to overall efficiency therefore depends heavily on its operational coordination with the humanitarian and development pillars.

Broadly speaking, the program's efficiency at the end of the third year can be described as unsatisfactory. Resources are used rigorously and produce convincing results where activities are fully deployed, particularly in the monetary component and the structuring of AVECs. However, the slowdown in the structuring components, the under-consumption of the activity budget, and the lack of operational connection between the different Nexus sequences severely limit the overall return on investment. As highlighted above, the catch-up momentum observed in 2025 (validation of 40 projects, 20 of which are due to start in early 2026, distribution of kits, consolidation of AVECs, finalization of IGA tools, mobilization of CSOs) opens a window of opportunity for correction. For efficiency to finally reach the expected level, this momentum will need to translate into concrete and sustained acceleration in year 4. At this stage, however, both efficiency and effectiveness remain below the program's initial ambitions.

### **Efficiency rating: 2.5/5**

The program's efficiency is affected by the complexity of the security context, frequent adjustments related to crises (refugee influxes, climate hazards), and certain inefficiencies inherent in consortium coordination. While resources are generally used in line with the objectives and economies of scale exist, high operational costs and implementation delays in certain areas limit the full optimization of the cost-to-outcome ratio at this stage.

## **3.5. Impact/effects of RESPECT and DIZA-East**

This section analyses the effects of the program on the target populations, distinguishing between the emerging impacts observed at this stage of RESPECT's implementation and the lessons learned from the longer-term trajectories of former participants of the DIZA-East program. This dual perspective allows us to assess both the changes that are already noticeable and the plausibility of the expected structural impacts, considering the actual phasing of interventions and the different dynamics between provinces.

### **3.5.1. Assessment of the impact of RESPECT**

The assessment of the program's impact<sup>5</sup> highlights emerging effects, which are still partial but already noticeable, in the reduction of certain immediate vulnerabilities, the gradual strengthening of the economic autonomy of marginalized groups, the gradual improvement of social relations, and the beginning of the activation of local governance structures. Although

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<sup>5</sup> This refers to the effect generated, i.e., the long-term impact.

encouraging, these effects remain uneven across the target provinces and mainly reflect the scope of the components that have effectively progressed in the first three years, namely cash assistance, AVECs, and the first community involvement mechanisms. Structural impacts (related to IGAs, environmental actions, and social cohesion mechanisms) remain limited due to the late start of these components.

The first clear impact concerns the program's ability to alleviate the immediate food insecurity of the most vulnerable households through cash transfers. In the provinces where needs are most acute, particularly in certain areas of Ouaddaï, participants emphasize that cash has been an essential lifeline during the lean season. One respondent in Brédjing said that "*cash was the only way to cope when prices were rising.*" In Sila, which was severely affected by recent floods and significant fluctuations in food prices, households emphasize the stabilization that these transfers have brought: "*After the rains, everything was expensive. Cash saved us,*" said a resident of Kerfi. In Wadi Fira, where markets are relatively better supplied, it has enabled some households to build up small food stocks and start saving initiatives. These dynamics reflect a real but essentially cyclical impact, linked to the humanitarian aspect of the program, and still disconnected from the development components, whose delays have limited the expected multiplier effect.

The economic impact of development activities continues to be driven mainly by AVECs, which are the most advanced of the structural components. Women, who are well represented in these groups, report tangible effects on their autonomy and economic empowerment. One woman from Wadi Fira notes: "*With my contributions, I bought two goats. Before, I had nothing.*" In Ouaddaï, earnings continue to be used mainly for domestic consumption, reflecting the fact that economic revitalization is still in its early stages: "*I used the AVEC to pay for my children's schoolbooks and clothes,*" says a beneficiary from Brédjing. The impact of AVEC is therefore real but limited by the absence of fully operational IGAs, which slows down income consolidation and the expected transformative effect on livelihoods. Households headed by women (which have lower food diversity scores in some areas) seem to benefit more from these economic effects, due to their high participation in AVEC and their involvement in small-scale marketable activities.

On the social front, although the peace component of the program has experienced significant operational delays, some initial effects are observable in villages where community interactions have been strengthened by AVEC, local committees, or early outreach activities. In Sila, which has seen recent arrivals of displaced persons and refugees, a member of a local committee recalls: "*When the refugees arrived, some people thought they were going to take their place. Now they farm together.*" In Ouaddaï, where refugees and hosts have been living together for longer (particularly around Treguine and Brédjing), cooperative practices have been strengthened, as noted by a local beneficiary: "*In the AVECs, we all work the same. We no longer look at who is a refugee or a local.*" In Wadi Fira, community dynamics were initially more stable, but the first dialogue activities strengthened local conflict prevention mechanisms: "*Now, when there is a problem, we sit down and talk,*" says a committee member in Iridimi. However, these

effects remain localized and reflect pre-existing community efforts rather than the structural impact of the peace component, which is still being activated.

The effects on gender relations are also a notable dimension of the emerging social impact. Awareness-raising about gender-based violence and the gradual involvement of men in certain activities have begun to change some family practices. A woman from Ouaddaï confides: "*We were taught how to talk within the household. Before, we didn't say anything.*" In Wadi Fira, these changes seem more visible, probably due to the more active participation of young men in the community spaces mobilized by the program. In Sila, the changes are noticeable but slower, reflecting the persistence of more rigid traditional norms. However, these impacts remain fragile and require the full implementation of the social and economic components to consolidate.

At the institutional level, the program's impact is evident in the gradual strengthening of existing local structures. The involvement of the decentralized services in training and technical monitoring has improved the quality of agricultural practices in certain areas. An ANADER agent in Sila sums it up: "*People are now applying what we teach them: spacing, seed treatment (...). Production has improved.*" In addition, the community structures supported by the program (dialogue committees, green committees, accountability committees) are beginning to play a more visible role in local mediation and collective management, although their level of ownership varies from one province to another.

Finally, the first signs of sustainability are appearing in the three provinces, although they are still limited. AVECs are continuing even in the absence of project teams, contributions are being maintained, and certain resilient agricultural techniques are being applied. A spokesperson from Wadi Fira said: "*Now we know how to continue without waiting.*" In Ouaddaï, there is still some concern about the material resources needed to sustain certain activities: "*We have the training, but we need the resources,*" says a local official. In Sila, the transition seems more solid thanks to the vitality of community structures and a culture of organization consolidated by previous interventions by Concern and other NGOs.

### **3.5.2. Impact of DIZA-East: lessons learned from focus groups of former participants**

Focus groups conducted with former participants of the DIZA-Est program shed specific light on the longer-term effects of economic and social resilience interventions, complementing the impact analysis conducted for RESPECCT. These group discussions, conducted in the localities concerned with around ten participants per group, make it possible to document trajectories of change over a longer period of time, where the effects of RESPECCT are still developing at the mid-term stage.

In an initial focus group, participants highlighted a perceived continuity between DIZA-Est and RESPECCT, both in terms of the intervention logic and the effects felt. The discussions revealed a sequence of support combining cash transfers, training, and community investments, which participants associated with a lasting improvement in their living conditions. Several members of the group indicated that the skills acquired, and support received through DIZA-Est continue to influence their current economic practices, several years after the end of the project. As one

participant put it, echoed and approved by other members of the group: *"With DIZA, we received cash, we were trained, and some even worked around the health centre. Many continued to work afterwards, especially in small businesses and gardens."* (Focus group of former DIZA-Est participants, Sila)

The discussions highlight that the impact of DIZA-East was not limited to immediate effects, but contributed to strengthening sustainable economic capacities, including the continuation of income-generating activities and the adoption of savings practices. Several participants mentioned stockpiling or diversifying activities as gains directly linked to the support they received, enabling them to better absorb subsequent shocks.

A second focus group, organized in the village of Brédjing (Ouaddaï province) with indigenous participants, confirms this interpretation by placing greater emphasis on the collective and social dynamics inherited from DIZA-East. The participants, including several members of AVEC, emphasized that the mechanisms put in place during the project promoted solidarity and cooperation between households beyond the formal duration of the intervention. As one participant summarized, with the group's agreement: *"What we learned with DIZA has helped us to continue together. Even afterwards, we meet, discuss and look for solutions"* (Focus group participants, AVEC members, Brédjing, Ouaddaï).

This focus group also sheds light on coexistence between populations, with participants indicating that the presence of refugees in the locality did not generate major tensions and that participation in activities was inclusive. One participant specified: *"There are a few refugees here, but the relationship is good. We participate in activities together"* (Beneficiary focus group, Brédjing, Ouaddaï).

This point, shared by several members of the group, remains contextual and cannot be generalized to all intervention areas, but it illustrates how previous programs have contributed to establishing local practices of dialogue and cooperation.

Overall, the focus groups show that the impacts observed among former DIZA-Est participants are based on a more successful combination of immediate support, technical assistance, and community engagement, combined with sufficient exposure time. In comparison, current RESPECCT participants mainly describe recent effects, still largely linked to monetary stabilization and initial collective dynamics. This longitudinal reading reinforces the plausibility of the medium- and long-term impacts expected from RESPECCT, subject to the full and coordinated implementation of the development and social cohesion components.

*Box1 : impact of DIZA-East, lessons learned from focus groups*

Focus groups conducted with former DIZA-East participants highlight several signs of lasting impact: continuation of economic activities after the end of the project, adoption of savings and management practices, strengthening of collective dynamics, and improved capacity to cope with shocks. Although based on a limited number of localities, these results illustrate the importance of time and continuity of support in producing structural effects and offer a relevant point of comparison for assessing the potential longer-term impact trajectories of RESPECCT.

### **Impact rating: 3/5**

Positive effects are noticeable on beneficiary households and certain community dynamics, particularly in terms of resilience to shocks and improved social relations. However, given the program's stage of progress and the structural nature of vulnerabilities, these effects remain

partial and still reversible. The impact is considered moderate at this stage, with potential for amplification in the medium term.

### 3.6. Cross-cutting issues

The review of cross-cutting issues in RESPECCT shows that the consideration of gender dynamics, the principles of "do no harm," the principles of the conflict-sensitive approach, and disaster risk reduction has been part of a gradual, contextualized approach consistent with the realities of the three provinces of intervention. These dimensions have not been treated as peripheral elements, but as structural components of the program, in line with the preliminary analyses conducted by the consortium (conflict analysis, gender analysis, conflict snapshot, peace and conflict sensitivity strategies) and with existing community support approaches. However, their level of deployment remains uneven and reflects the pace of progress of the program: some advances are noticeable, while others are still emerging, due to operational delays in the areas of peace, environment, and social transformation.

Gender norms and power dynamics were a major initial barrier. In some localities in Ouaddaï, interviews indicate that women historically attended community meetings without speaking. A beneficiary from Brédjing sums up this change: *"Before, we came to the meetings, but we weren't allowed to speak. Now we are told to give us your ideas."* This shift is recent and can be explained by the awareness-raising activities carried out as part of the AVECs and the initial capacity-building actions, although the indicators of change in norms show that this process is only just beginning.

In Sila, barriers are more related to domestic responsibilities and seasonal constraints. A facilitator from Kerfi explains: *"Women want to participate, but they are often too busy with housework and children."* This reality limits women's actual availability to actively participate in certain structuring activities. The impact of empowerment approaches (IRC's Economic and Social Empowerment (EASE) approach, GBV awareness-raising, intra-household discussions) is noticeable but gradual and depends heavily on the full implementation of the economic and social components.

In Wadi Fira, although the situations are similar to those in the two provinces, social norms appear to be more flexible, facilitating mixed participation in AVEC and training sessions. A member of Iriani states: *"Here, our husbands let us go to meetings because they see that it brings something to the household."* This openness reflects more stable community dynamics and longer experience of collaboration with humanitarian organizations. Nevertheless, gender gaps persist: available data show that female-headed households continue to have lower levels of food security and more limited access to productive resources, highlighting that norms are changing slowly despite the program's efforts.

In addition to the qualitative analyses presented above, certain cross-cutting quantitative indicators provide an objective view of the dynamics observed. Data from post-distribution surveys indicate a continuous increase in women's participation in decisions related to the use of cash transfers, with a rate exceeding 97% after the third cycle, compared to approximately

68% during the first cycle, confirming a measurable change in women's decision-making power within beneficiary households. Furthermore, the composition of the AVECs, which are largely female, is reflected in the majority presence of women in savings and collective management mechanisms, strengthening their access to financial resources and community decision-making spaces. Finally, monitoring data on accountability mechanisms show that the complaints recorded mainly concern operational aspects (targeting, organization of activities), with no widespread reports of community tensions or incidents specifically affecting women, which corroborates the qualitative findings on the integration of gender and "do no harm" principles in implementation.

The consortium's efforts are structured around a clear functional division: Concern works on economic empowerment and the structuring of AVECs and supports the emergence of "model couples"; IRC strengthens protection mechanisms and gender-sensitive approaches; SFCG works on community dynamics and conflict-sensitive social interactions. This complementarity has led to real progress: in Ouaddaï, women now report participating in certain financial decisions; in Sila, young girls enrolled in training courses say they are "treated like boys"; and in Wadi Fira, discussions about task sharing have become a topic addressed "within the family," according to a participant in a focus group conducted during the data collection mission. However, these transformations remain fragmented and have not reached the methodological level envisaged in the logical framework, due to the late start of the peace and social transformation components.

The principle of "do no harm" is a second cross-cutting pillar and appears to be one of the most operational components of the program. The accountability system put in place (suggestion boxes, complaints committees, village meetings, telephone hotline) has made it possible to anticipate and prevent the risks of tension or exclusion linked to targeting. One Sila beneficiary said: *"When we file a complaint, they read it and come to see us. It is not ignored."* This feedback confirms that the mechanisms are perceived as accessible, which could reduce the risk of conflicts arising. In Ouaddaï, where the historical coexistence of refugees and hosts sometimes generates divergent expectations, these committees have played a central role in avoiding perceptions of favouritism. A local leader notes: *"If it weren't for the committees, there would have been problems. People see that everything is discussed publicly."* In Wadi Fira, the "do no harm" principle has focused primarily on preventing inter-community divisions, with increased attention to the role of religious leaders, young people, and women in cohesion activities.

Sensitive targeting, community validation of lists, mixed groups, and inter-NGO coordination have helped to limit the risks of exclusion. Nevertheless, some complaints persist, particularly concerning highly vulnerable non-participants, but these complaints reflect the vitality of the accountability system rather than major flaws. They are even an indicator of social inclusion, insofar as they show that people feel justified in challenging the program.

The third cross-cutting dimension is the consideration of disaster risks and environmental protection. Although some environmental activities are behind schedule in their full deployment, the training and demonstrations already carried out have had visible effects in

several villages. In the Sila region, which faces recurrent floods and droughts, participants report that agroecological techniques have begun to improve productivity: "*Before, nothing grew here. Since we started making half-moons, we've been harvesting better,*" explains one farmer. In Ouaddaï, the focus on recovering degraded land and stabilizing soils has yielded encouraging results: green committees around Brédjing say that "*the land is slowly coming back.*" In Wadi Fira, where the soil is very sandy and exposed to the wind, soil stabilization projects have also played a social role by promoting cooperation among residents: "*When we work together on the sites, we forget about ethnic or camp issues,*" said one focus group participant.

At the institutional level, the integration of the SAP System approach is based on a gradual articulation between the community mechanisms supported by RESPECCT (community action committees, local relays) and existing institutional mechanisms, notably SISAAP at the national and decentralized levels. In Sila, community actors describe a system that is now operational, based on the regular transmission of climate alerts (risk of flooding, heavy rains) via community relays, local authorities, and the usual communication channels (community meetings, messages relayed by village chiefs and committees). These alerts have already led to concrete adjustments in practices, including the postponement of agricultural schedules, the securing of certain property, and the anticipation of temporary displacement of exposed households.

In Ouaddaï, where environmental dynamics are more complex and hazards more diverse, the SAP approach is still mainly used for awareness-raising and preparedness purposes, in conjunction with technical services and local authorities. Community committees indicate that the information received is mainly used to strengthen collective vigilance and fuel discussions with the authorities, without any systematic response mechanisms having been fully formalized at this stage.

In Wadi Fira, local committees explain that the alerts transmitted are taken into account in community discussions and exchanges with local authorities, particularly to anticipate risks related to rainfall and pressure on resources. However, they stress that the operational impact of the SAP remains dependent on technical capacity building (training in signal interpretation, understanding of alert thresholds) and the availability of material resources, as expressed by one committee member: "*We follow the alerts when they come in, but we need more training and more equipment to fully understand and act.*"

Overall, the consideration of cross-cutting issues in RESPECCT has reduced the risk of conflict, strengthened social inclusion, gradually transformed certain gender norms, improved environmental practices, and structured community mechanisms capable of anticipating or mitigating shocks. While the degree of adoption varies from province to province and some aspects are still not fully operational, the integration of these dimensions is already helping to lay the foundations for sustainability and resilience for communities in eastern Chad.

### **Cross-cutting issues rating: 3.5/5**

Cross-cutting dimensions are well integrated into the program's design and implementation, with specific measures to promote gender equality, inclusion, and the prevention of negative effects. Positive differentiated results are observed, particularly for women, despite persistent

sociocultural and contextual constraints in some localities. Cross-cutting performance is considered satisfactory, with targeted areas for improvement.

## **4. Overall conclusion of the mid-term evaluation**

The mid-term evaluation of the program highlights a set of contrasting results, revealing both the strategic relevance of the intervention and the operational limitations that have hampered the realization of its potential during the first three years. The analysis clearly shows that the Nexus approach remains fully adapted to the structural vulnerabilities of eastern Chad. The needs of host populations, refugees, and returnees justify the continuation of an integrated approach that simultaneously targets stabilization, empowerment, and the prevention of tensions. In this regard, the program's design, its geographical concentration, and the technical complementarity of the consortium members are undeniable assets.

However, the analysis also reveals that the actual progress of the program remains below the level expected at this stage. Administrative delays, obstacles related to the contracting of local CSOs, security and climate constraints, and difficulties in accessing certain areas have profoundly disrupted the planned sequence of activities. These have prevented the early activation of several structural components (IGA, community infrastructure, social cohesion actions, environmental projects), which is currently limiting the materialization of the expected interdependent effects of the Nexus. The results are therefore visible but partial: cash has stabilized the most vulnerable households; the AVECs have provided a solid foundation for community organization and economic empowerment; agroecological activities have shown positive signs of climate adaptation; and the first dialogue initiatives have strengthened trust where they have been launched. However, these results remain fragmented, as they have not been integrated into a smooth operational rhythm.

However, the recent momentum observed at the end of year 3 shows that the conditions are now in place for a significant acceleration in the second half of the program. The clarification of roles within the consortium, the establishment of local CSOs in the consortium, the strengthening of community structures, the rise of accountability approaches, and the initial effects of technical training are all levers for transforming the current momentum into more structural impacts. The evaluation thus reveals a program whose relevance is confirmed, whose initial effects are tangible but still limited, and whose potential remains significant provided that the catch-up efforts undertaken are consolidated and structured.

In a context of continuing migratory pressures, regional instability, and persistent climate vulnerabilities, RESPECCT remains a strategic intervention, and the coming years will be decisive in translating the Nexus vision into sustainable impacts.

## 5. Lessons learned and good practices

The lessons learned from this mid-term evaluation provide essential insight into the factors that have facilitated or hindered the implementation of the program, while the good practices identified highlight the approaches that have produced solid and replicable results. Together, they form an analytical basis for guiding the adjustments needed to optimize the second part of the program, strengthen the coherence of the Nexus, and increase the impact for the benefit of communities in eastern Chad. These lessons inform both operational management and community and institutional dynamics.

### 5.1. Five key lessons learned

The data analysed highlights several key lessons that shed light on both the internal dynamics of the consortium and the operational reality in the three provinces of intervention.

A first lesson concerns the centrality of sequencing in Nexus approaches. The program had been designed in a coherent manner, but implementation showed that a delay in one component (in this case, IGA, environmental activities, and community conflict prevention mechanisms) can compromise the overall logic. The lack of temporal coordination between cash, savings schemes, IGA, and social cohesion actions demonstrated that visible progress in food security cannot be stabilized without effective economic and institutional strengthening. This observation reaffirms that the conceptual coherence of a Nexus program is not enough: it is the actual synchronization of the sequences that determines its impact.

A second lesson concerns the need to consolidate governance mechanisms from the outset of the program. Delays in contracting local organizations prevented the timely implementation of peace activities, which reduced the program's ability to contribute to reducing community tensions during a period marked by significant population movements. It appears that in fragile contexts where inter-community tensions can evolve rapidly, institutional strengthening cannot be considered a complementary component. It must be established as a prerequisite, on the same footing as humanitarian response activities. The experience of the first three years shows that a functional governance framework (including CSOs, community leaders, and decentralized services) would have helped mitigate operational delays by strengthening local capacities for tension management and arbitration.

The third lesson concerns the relevance of the participatory approach, which proved to be a major asset but could have been exploited more systematically. In localities where communities were involved from the outset (for example, in certain areas of Sila where green committees and accountability committees already had experience from previous programs), program activities were better understood, better accepted, and more quickly implemented. Conversely, in areas where participatory mechanisms were new or poorly established (particularly in several cantons of Wadi Fira), initial misunderstandings slowed implementation. Experience thus shows that community participation is more effective when it builds on pre-existing structures and is accompanied by capacity-building efforts.

A fourth lesson concerns managing expectations. The eastern provinces, particularly areas close to the border, have been saturated with humanitarian interventions for more than two decades. Communities have developed high expectations, sometimes focused on assistance rather than structural reinforcement. The program has shown that the introduction of integrated approaches (savings, community management, conflict prevention) must be accompanied by constant communication efforts to avoid perceptions of inequality, especially when structural activities are delayed. The experience of the teams interviewed by the evaluators shows that regular information sessions and accountability mechanisms effectively reduce the risk of tensions related to targeting.

Finally, a last lesson concerns the importance of adapting technical approaches to the ecological and social realities of the three provinces. Agroecological training has shown encouraging results, but has also revealed that certain techniques require longer-term support in the most arid areas of Wadi Fira, or stronger coordination with decentralized services in the agricultural expansion areas of Sila. This environmental diversity shows that technical approaches cannot be standardized without being adapted to local specificities.

## **5.2. Six good practices identified**

Several good practices have emerged from the RESPECCT program and constitute important levers for the second phase of implementation.

The first, and undoubtedly the most significant, is the effectiveness of the AVEC approach as a driver of economic empowerment and social cohesion. In the three provinces, these structures were quickly adopted, and their regular operation, even in times of logistical constraints, testifies to their internal resilience. AVECs have proven to be not only a financial instrument, but also a social space where trust, solidarity, and sometimes even spontaneous mechanisms for managing tensions are built. Their ability to function even outside the direct intervention of the program is one of the most robust achievements of the period evaluated.

A second good practice is the consistent and structured use of accountability mechanisms. The complaints system (suggestion boxes, committees, village meetings, and feedback line) has not only improved transparency but, above all, prevented the emergence of conflicts related to targeting. In several localities in Ouaddaï, community leaders indicated that the mere existence of these mechanisms reduced suspicion and encouraged dialogue. This experience shows that, in complex local environments, accountability is not only a tool for compliance, but also a lever for social cohesion.

The third good practice concerns the gradual articulation of gender, protection, and social cohesion components, even though their operational deployment was delayed. Awareness-raising activities carried out by the IRC and initial community activities facilitated by SFCG and Concern have already promoted, in some localities, a change in intra-household relationships and increased participation of women in collective spaces. When applied together, these approaches reinforce each other, improving both the acceptability of the program and the

protection of vulnerable groups. This joint dynamic provides a solid foundation for future social transformation activities planned in outcomes 2 and 3.

A fourth good practice can be seen in areas where decentralized services (ANADER, environment, livestock) have been closely involved in activities. In Sila, for example, collaboration with ANADER has improved the adoption of agroecological techniques and facilitated the community dissemination of good practices. The active participation of technical services strengthens sustainability, reduces communities' dependence on external assistance, and helps institutionalize resilience approaches.

A fifth good practice can be observed in the organization of the consortium. Despite initial delays, the roles and responsibilities of each member are clearly defined, and the areas of intervention are well distributed, which has limited overlap and duplication. Internal coordination platforms have enabled regular information sharing, and although some links still need to be strengthened (particularly between the peace and livelihoods components), the "consortium" structure is an advantage for a harmonized ramp-up from the fourth year onwards.

Finally, a last good practice concerns community engagement in the broad sense. In almost all the areas visited, communities demonstrated a significant capacity for self-organization, whether in continuing AVECs, applying agroecological techniques, or actively participating in local committees. This participation provides fertile ground for the intensification of structuring activities in the coming years, confirming that the initial social mobilization is one of the program's most solid successes.

## 6. Recommendations from this mid-term evaluation<sup>6</sup>

The recommendations from this mid-term evaluation are in line with the dynamics of a program whose strategic relevance has been fully confirmed, but whose operational progress remains below the level expected in the third year of implementation. Analyses show that initial delays, administrative burdens, environmental constraints, and difficulties in coordinating the different components have slowed the realization of the Nexus's potential, producing partial but promising results. In this context, the recommendations proposed here aim both to correct the structural factors that have hampered the program's effectiveness and to strengthen the operational levers capable of accelerating the production of tangible results over the next two years. They distinguish between strategic commitments (requiring high-level decisions by consortium member organizations and donors) and operational measures that can be implemented directly by teams in the field. The overall objective is to consolidate achievements, streamline internal mechanisms, strengthen the integration of components, and ensure a consistent and sustainable ramp-up of the program, in line with the needs of the populations of eastern Chad and the ambitions of the logical framework.

### 6.1. Strategic recommendations

#### *Strategic recommendation 1*

Reduce administrative and procedural burdens at the level of donors (European Union and French Development Agency) and consortium member organizations. Delays in validation and contracting had a direct impact on implementation, preventing the timely activation of CSOs and components structuring the Nexus. It is recommended that accelerated procedures be adopted for time-sensitive programs (contractual validation schedules, pre-disbursement mechanisms, etc.), combined with an internal simplification of administrative protocols between consortium members. This reduction in systemic friction is essential to secure the logical sequence of interventions.

#### *Strategic recommendation 2*

Strengthen the institutional anchoring of the program by formally integrating local authorities and decentralized services into project governance. The delays observed have shown that the absence of robust local structures reduces the program's resilience to external constraints (mobility, tensions, climatic hazards). The signing of operational agreements with technical services (ANADER, environment, livestock, social affairs) and municipalities would help stabilize implementation and strengthen the sustainability of results.

#### *Strategic recommendation 3*

Stabilize relations with communities through a structured community communication strategy. The historical context of assistance and delays in implementation have reinforced certain

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<sup>6</sup> Once again, contrary to the wish of the ToR to see recommendations related to the various criteria, we propose to structure them in such a way as to resolve overall problems.

expectations and feelings of unfairness. A proactive communication strategy, based on clear messages, regular information meetings, and increased use of accountability mechanisms, will improve trust and reduce the social risks associated with operational delays.

## 6.2. Operational recommendations

### *Operational recommendation 1*

Implement an operational acceleration plan for the structural components (IGA, environmental projects, social cohesion). These components are essential to producing the expected changes in outcomes 2 and 3, but their late deployment limits the program's ability to generate sustainable transformations. A detailed roadmap with a quarterly schedule<sup>7</sup>, specific responsibilities, and progress indicators is recommended to ensure rapid ramp-up.

### *Operational recommendation 2*

More systematically link AVECs, IGAs, and upcoming professional training. AVECs work well but do not reach their full potential without structured alignment with IGAs and training programs. It is recommended that AVEC members be directed to IGAs as a priority and that operational bridges be created between trained young people and local economic groups in order to reinforce the financial and social gains already observed.

### *Operational recommendation 3*

Rapidly expand social cohesion and norm transformation activities in areas where tensions are most acute (land, transhumance, cohabitation between refugees and hosts). Initial experiences show that, once initiated, these activities produce visible effects, but their geographical coverage remains limited. Expanding these actions will help prevent latent conflicts and strengthen the social fabric.

### *Operational recommendation 4*

Consolidate technical support for environmental activities to ensure the sustainable adoption of agroecological practices. The results observed are encouraging, but vary from province to province. It is recommended to intensify practical demonstrations, strengthen farmer-to-farmer exchanges, and involve technical services more systematically to disseminate techniques in the most arid or degraded areas.

### *Operational recommendation 5*

Strengthen and promote existing accountability mechanisms. Complaints committees, village information sessions, and suggestion boxes have proven useful in preventing social tensions. Greater visibility of these tools, combined with regular feedback to communities, would improve transparency, trust, and overall understanding of the program.

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<sup>7</sup> It would be important to carry out a technical review in terms of timing and budget to enable the remaining activities to be carried out in a relevant manner. It is not realistic to expect the remaining activities to be completed in two years.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Triangulation matrix of sources used

Reading: ● = primary source ○ = contributing/confirming source

<b>Evaluation criteria</b>	<b>Key evaluation questions</b>	<b>Documentary analysis (proposal, narrative reports, logical frameworks, SOPs, financial data)</b>	<b>Quantitative data (household surveys, SCA, SDAM, rCSI, PDM, Concern/BUCOFORE databases)</b>	<b>Qualitative data (interviews, FGDs, observations, field extracts)</b>
<b>Relevance</b>	Adequacy of objectives to the needs and priorities of populations (women, youth, persons with disabilities, marginalized groups)	● (initial assessments, intervention logic, targeting)	○ (socio-demographic profile, vulnerabilities, gender/province disaggregation)	● (perception of needs, expressed priorities, unmet needs)
	Level of participation of participants and non-participants, including marginalized groups	○ (participation and accountability mechanisms described)	○ (participation in activities, coverage rates)	● (participation narratives, complaints, feedback mechanisms)
	Justification for choosing the Nexus approach in light of local dynamics	● (proposal, strategic notes, HDP articulation)	○ (cross-referenced food security/resilience indicators)	● (assessment by local actors and partners)
	Alignment with national priorities and policies of Concern and partners	● (sectoral policies, institutional frameworks)	—	○ (perception of technical services and local authorities)

	Strategic relevance of partnerships within the Nexus framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (roles of partners, partnerships, coordination mechanisms)</li> </ul>	○ (distribution of interventions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (assessment of partners, perceived complementarity)</li> </ul>
<b>Coherence</b>	Synergies and complementarities with other interventions and actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (mapping of actors, coordination reports)</li> </ul>	○ (geographical and sectoral overlap)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (partner discourse, coordination practices in the field)</li> </ul>
	Internal coherence between humanitarian, development, and peace components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (logical framework, sequencing of activities)</li> </ul>	○ (joint evolution of indicators)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (field feedback on coordination between components)</li> </ul>
<b>Efficiency</b>	Cost-effectiveness of activities (cost/results)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (financial reports, unit costs)</li> </ul>	○ (results achieved per activity)	○ (operational perception of efficiency)
	Effective use of resources to produce results Nexus-HDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (budgets, operational plans)</li> </ul>	○ (comparison of outputs/results)	○ (assessment by field teams)
	Economies of scale and added value of the consortium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (logistics pooling, coordination)</li> </ul>	—	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (partner and team testimonials)</li> </ul>
	Smooth transition from emergency → development → peace	○ (planned measures, crisis modification)	○ (temporality of measured effects)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (stories of adaptation and continuity)</li> </ul>
<b>Effectiveness</b>	Relevance of the intervention logic and achievement of results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (results chain, assumptions)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (SCA, SDAM, rCSI, IGA, AVEC, training)</li> </ul>	○ (validation and explanation of changes)
	Significant changes attributable to the program (planned or unplanned)	○ (expected objectives)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (changes in key indicators)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (perceived changes, unexpected effects)</li> </ul>

	Consideration of inequalities and differentiated effects	○ (gender and inclusion approaches described)	● (disaggregation by gender, province, household type)	● (discourse on women, young people, vulnerable households)
<b>Impact/Effects</b>	Response to the needs of the most vulnerable households and adequacy of modalities	○ (planned targeting)	● (improved food security, livelihoods)	● (beneficiary assessment)
	Differentiated effects according to gender, age, status, and influence on relationships between actors	○	●	●
	Strengthening local capacities and sustainability of achievements	○ (institutional mechanisms)	○ (maintenance of practices)	● (ability to continue after the project)
<b>Cross-cutting issues</b>	Dynamics and barriers related to equality and power	○	○	●
	Integration of the "do no harm" principle	● (SOP, AAP mechanisms)	○ (complaints recorded)	● (local perceptions)
	Consideration of DRR and the environment	● (environmental components, SAP)	○ (observable results)	● (assessment by communities and technicians)

## Appendix 2: Summary table of qualitative sampling

### A. Institutional actors and partners

Type of data collection	Participant profile	Institution/Organization	Gender (F / M)	Province/Level	Number
Individual interviews (IDIs)	Implementation managers	Concern Worldwide, IRC, SFCG	F & H	National/Provincial	4
Individual interviews (IDIs)	Field teams / mobilizers	NGO partners	F & H	Ouaddaï / Sila / Wadi Fira	9
Individual interviews (IDIs)	Decentralized technical services	Agriculture, Livestock, Environment, Hydraulics (ANADER, etc.)	Mostly H	Provincial/departmental	1
Individual interviews (IDIs)	Local authorities	Prefects, canton chiefs, administrative authorities	Mostly H	Local/departmental	9

**Subtotal institutional actors:** 23 people

### B. Community actors, participants, and affected populations

Type of collection	Participant profile	Status (Host / Refugee / Returnee)	Gender (F / M)	Province	Number
Individual interviews (IDIs)	Direct participants (cash, IGA, AVEC, FP)	Mixed	F & M	All	19
Individual interviews (IDIs)	Vulnerable households not receiving benefits	Hosts/Refugees	F & M	Ouaddaï/Sila	2
Focus group discussions (FGD)	Female participants	Hosts / Refugees	F	All	4
Focus group discussions (FGD)	Male participants	Hosts/Refugees	H	All	2

**Subtotal community actors:** 27 individual interviews and group discussions combined

### Appendix 3: Fieldwork schedule

<b>Data collection phase</b>	09/11	10/11	11	12/11	13/11	14/11	15/11	16/11	17/11	11/18	19/11	11/20
Travel - departure												
Contact with the Abéché team and travel to Wadi-Fira and Sila												
Collection in Kimiti - Sila												
Collection in Kobe - Wadi Fira												
Iriba-Abéché-Hadjer-Hadid trip Journey from Gozbeida to Abéché to Hadjer-Hadid												
Collection in Assounga - Ouaddaï												
Return to Abéché												
Return trip to N'Djamena												