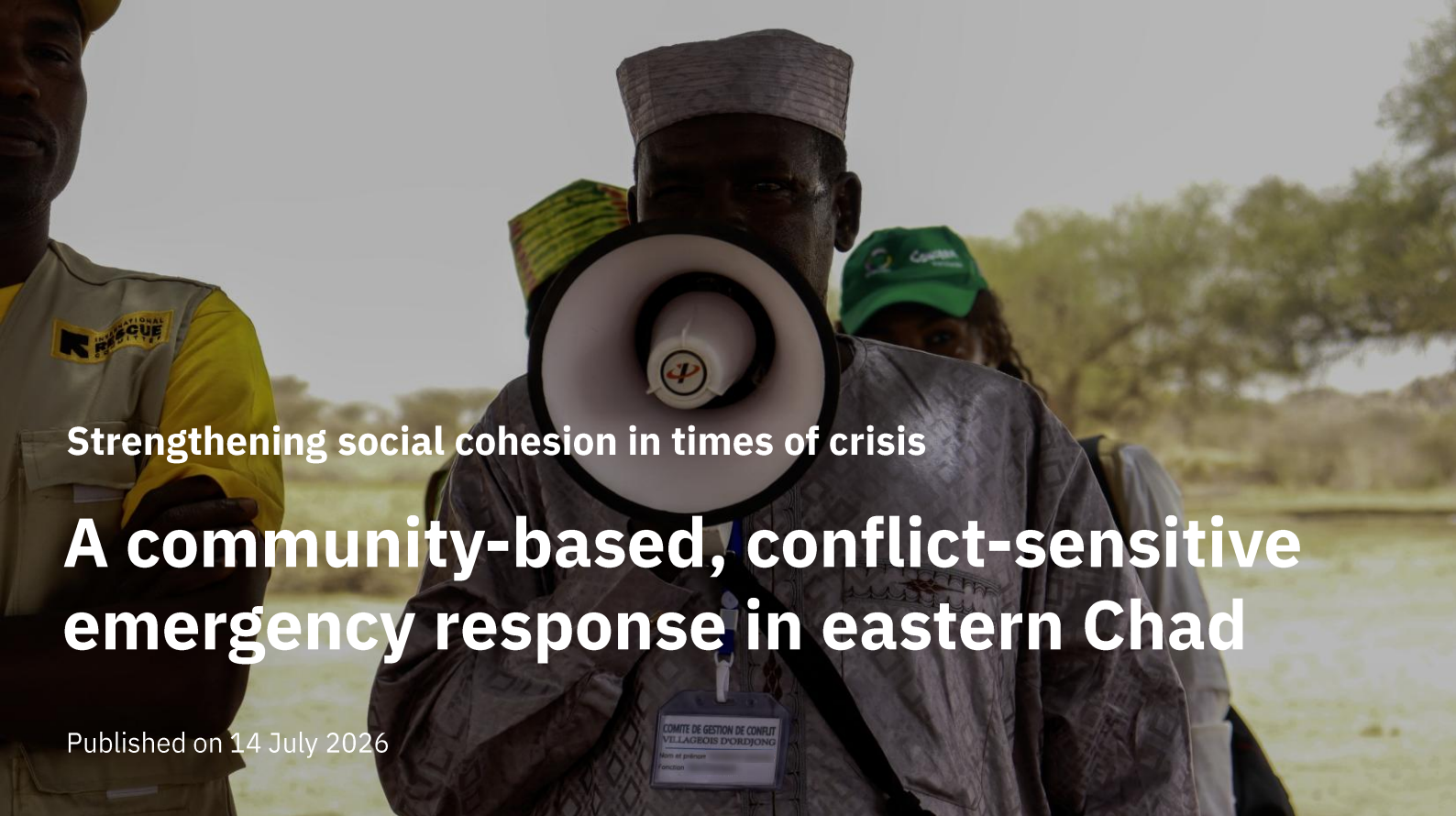




Strengthening social cohesion in times of crisis

A community-based, conflict-sensitive emergency response in eastern Chad

Published on 14 July 2026

A member of a RESPECCT conflict management committee in Wadi Fira presenting awareness-raising initiatives, April 2026. Photo: Saam Kouakaine

A humanitarian crisis with far-reaching consequences

Since the start of 2026, violence linked to the Sudanese conflict and incursions by armed groups into the border area between Sudan and Chad have led to significant population movements in Wadi Fira. Assessments carried out by the RESPECCT consortium identified nearly 8,000 displaced households, as well as refugees and returnees being hosted in the intervention villages.

In a context already characterised by food insecurity and the vulnerability of local communities, the displaced populations faced urgent needs for food, water, shelter, healthcare and non-food items. At the same time, the arrival of new households was increasing pressure on resources and the risk of tensions between host communities, displaced people and refugees.

When communities raise the alarm



Jan–Feb 2026

Seven alerts issued by the early warning system indicate the arrival of displaced people in RESPECCT target villages.



17 February 2026

The authorities in the department of Iriba department issue an advocacy note requesting support for the affected populations.



20–26 February 2026

Rapid needs assessments and conflict analyses are conducted to identify priorities and risks.



March 2026

Activation of the Crisis Modifier and Planning of the response.



March 2026

Community awareness raising on peaceful coexistence, and participatory targeting of households together with communities.



16–17 April 2026

Distribution of cash assistance to 1,300 vulnerable host community, displaced and refugee households.

RESPECCT's early warning system played a decisive role in identifying the crisis and monitoring its development. Information reported by the Community Action Committees – community structures set up as part of the early warning system – enabled local authorities and the consortium to document the scale of the displacement and analyse the risks of tensions. These alerts led to the activation of the Crisis Modifier, a contingency fund integrated into the programme to finance emergency response to unforeseen shocks.

Emergency response in support of resilience

Beyond the newly displaced populations, the crisis had significant repercussions on households already supported by RESPECCT. Some households were forced to flee their villages, leaving behind their possessions and the income-generating activities supported by the programme. Others shared their resources with the new arrivals, thereby undermining their own livelihoods. Without additional support, these households risked losing the gains made since 2023 and slipping back into a situation of high vulnerability.

Thanks to the Crisis Modifier, RESPECCT was able to deliver an emergency response whilst safeguarding the gains in resilience and strengthening the capacity of the affected communities to cope with the crisis.

Community perceptions

The results of the post-distribution monitoring show that the intervention was perceived as fair and inclusive.

“The criteria for selecting beneficiaries were transparent and applied consistently to everyone.”

Focus group participant

Participants also highlighted the importance of awareness-raising activities on peaceful coexistence to strengthen relations between communities.

“Tensions over access to resources were greater before. After the assistance, they have eased and we see ourselves more as one family.”

Focus group participant

Lessons for future crises

- **Community-based early warning mechanisms enable crises to be identified quickly.** The alerts received made it possible to monitor how the situation was developing and guide the response.
- **A conflict-sensitive approach enhances acceptance of the assistance.** The inclusion of different groups helped to minimise the risk of tensions and perceptions of exclusion.
- **The complementary nature of the consortium enables a more comprehensive response.** The combination of cash assistance, conflict analysis and awareness-raising enabled a response tailored to the context.

Why a conflict-sensitive approach?

Assessments showed that displacement not only created urgent humanitarian needs but also risks of tensions over access to resources such as water, firewood, agricultural land and livelihoods. In several localities, host communities were already sharing their resources with new arrivals despite their own difficulties.

To address these challenges, the programme adopted an inclusive approach targeting host communities, displaced people and refugees, whilst incorporating awareness-raising activities on peaceful coexistence and dialogue. The aim was to meet humanitarian needs in a way that did not exacerbate tensions, while helping to strengthen social cohesion among across affected communities.

KEY RESULTS



1,300
households supported



63.7 million FCFA
distributed



97 % consider the targeting to be fair



94 % are satisfied with the assistance received



92 % consider the awareness-raising campaigns useful in the current context



65 % report an improvement in relations between communities