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ANNEX

Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) – Global Europe

Exceptional Assistance Measure regarding Cameroon

1. IDENTIFICATION

Action:	Supporting the Reintegration of ex-associates and Strengthening Social Cohesion in Cameroon's Far North Region
Action Reference:	NDICI CR 2024 / 02
Cost:	EUR 3 500 000 (European Union (EU) contribution).
Budget Line:	14 02 03 10
Duration:	Maximum 18 months. The authorising officer responsible may decide to extend this period twice by a further period of up to six months, up to a total maximum duration of 30 months, under the conditions laid down in Article 23(6) of Regulation (EU) 2021/947.
Lead service:	FPI

2. ACTION SUMMARY

This 18-month exceptional assistance measure seeks to support the relevant government entities to progressively strengthen processes for the reintegration of ex-associates, as defined by the African Union and the Lake Chad Basin Commission¹ in the Far North region of Cameroon, ensuring strong government ownership of the process in line with the mandate of the National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Committee (NDDRC). More specifically, the action will support the NDDRC to develop procedures, strategies and work plans for the holistic implementation of reintegration processes in the Far North, including capacity building of local and national authorities, education and training on the empowerment of ex-associates, psychological support, child protection and gender mainstreaming. Specific support will also be provided to improve living conditions of ex-associates at the transitional centres.

¹ The term ex-associate is used broadly, by the African Union and the Lake Chad Basin Commission, to refer to all persons who, regardless of age, gender, alliances and circumstances that led to their involvement, have lived under Boko Haram's control for a period of time, without presuming or prejudging the nature of their relationship with Boko Haram, and who have voluntarily surrendered to the authorities to be rehabilitated and reintegrated. This generic term therefore includes ex-combatants, former-hostages, wives and children of Boko Haram members, and persons who played auxiliary roles (informants, recruiters, supply workers, smugglers, telephone operators, etc.) in Boko Haram camps.

The action also aims at consolidating peace at the community level by strengthening social cohesion and resilience building and promotion of community acceptance and reduction of stigmatisation of ex-associates that are either already based within communities or may return following formal reintegration processes. Particular attention will be paid to protection needs for children formerly associated with armed groups. Support will be provided for livelihoods, rehabilitation, and the construction of small-scale community infrastructure, as well as strengthening health services and community awareness. The action could also contribute to paving the way for transitional justice².

3. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

3.1 BACKGROUND

Cameroon faces serious peace and stability challenges, including persistent terrorist threats from Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) in the Far North region, within the Lake Chad Basin. Violence coming from border areas along the Nigerian frontier and around the islands of Lake Chad in the Far North has created a persistent social, political, security and humanitarian crisis, deepening instability and holding back economic growth. Attacks are not only limited to clashes with government security forces but are also carried out on nearby communities to amass wealth and resources such as money and cattle, as well as a means of kidnapping both men and women including as a mode of forced recruitment.

Cameroon's Far North region is historically characterised by environmental and development challenges, high levels of illiteracy and underemployment, lack of basic services, ineffective governance, mistrust of security forces, and episodes of inter-communal violence caused by competition over decreasing natural resources and interreligious conflicts, including recent attacks against Christian communities. The Far North Region and the Lake Chad Basin is also an area prone to criminal activities, banditry and all sorts of trafficking, the latter facilitated by the geostrategic position at the crossroads of significant communication routes between Cameroon, Chad, and Nigeria. These factors have contributed to creating fertile ground for the recruitment of vulnerable persons into non-state armed groups who have turned this region into a fallback zone and recruitment pool. A wide range of individuals are associated with Boko Haram and ISWAP.

To respond to the persistent threats, the National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Committee (NDDRC) was established by Presidential decree in November 2018, mandated to coordinate reintegration pathways to ex-associates. Progress has been made to deliver on these commitments in the Far North region. However, deficits in the formal process to support ex-associates and communities has resulted in unregulated and ineffective processes of return. There is a need to support both formal channels for reintegration of ex-associates as well as community engagement in areas ex-associates are known to be returning to independently and to offer them viable alternatives to terrorist and other criminal activities.

² Gender considerations, human-rights based approaches and conflict sensitivity will be fully mainstreamed in the action as well as respect for child protection and children human rights.

3.2 RATIONALE FOR CRISIS RESPONSE ACTIONS UNDER THE RAPID RESPONSE PILLAR OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD, DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION INSTRUMENT

The instability and social, political, security and humanitarian crisis in the Far North region marked by numerous incidents linked to the activities of non-state armed groups, constituting an exceptional and unforeseen situation in the sense of Article 4(4) (a) of the NDICI Regulation. An adequate response cannot be provided under any other European Union Instrument due to the urgency with which the funds are required and due to available resources already being firmly committed.

Annex IV, paragraph 1, second paragraph, point (h) of Regulation (EU) 2021/947 specifically provides for the use of the NDICI rapid response pillar to support (h) support for civilian measures related to the demobilisation and reintegration of former combatants and their families into civil society, and where appropriate their repatriation, as well as measures to address the situation of child soldiers and female combatants.

3.3 RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

Risks	High, medium, low	Mitigation
Low level of, or absence of ownership of interventions by local authorities for community engagement activities	Medium	Implementing partner to solicit and maintain the commitment of state partners through regular communication and sensitisation
Increased insecurity in the Far-North project intervention area restrict access to far North sites	Medium	Implementing partner to solicit support from the security forces. Periodic assessments of the security situation by UNDSS and local administrative authorities.
Dissatisfaction of host communities and ex-associates with assistance provided due to perceived unfairness in targeting and distribution	Medium	Implementing partner to ensure inclusive approach in the conduct of activities, systematically including host communities. Implementing partner to sensitise populations and continuous monitoring using community-based mechanisms
Civil society organisations working directly with ex-	Medium	Implementing partner to ensure strong coordination between NDDRC,

associates leads to protection issues		implementing agencies, key CSO partners to ensure a presence of security personnel. Implementing partner to continuously monitor the situation
Insufficient coordination between stakeholders	Medium	Implementing partner to hold regular coordination meetings

4. OBJECTIVES

4.1 OVERALL OBJECTIVE

The overall objective of the action is to strengthen avenues towards long term peace in Cameroon's Far North region through successful reintegration of ex-associates, strengthening communities of return and prevention of (re-)recruitment.

4.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- 4.2.1 Support relevant government entities to strengthen processes for reintegration of ex-associates in the Far North region.
- 4.2.2 Strengthen community acceptance, social cohesion and community resilience in localities in the Far-North that are known to be receiving high numbers of ex-associates.

5. ACTION COMPONENTS AND EXPECTED RESULTS

The main expected results/outcomes include:

Expected Result (1): Government entities have strengthened capacity to develop, process, and implement programs for reintegration of ex-associates in the Far North region.

Activities (indicative):

- 5.1.1 Capacity building of local and national authorities through trainings, workshops and experience-sharing exchanges on the empowerment of ex-associates, psychological support and child and woman protection
- 5.1.2 Capacity building of traditional and community leaders

Expected Result (2): Community acceptance, social cohesion and community resilience in localities in the Far-North that are known to be receiving high numbers of ex-associates are strengthened.

Activities (indicative):

- 5.2.1 Organisation of participative workshops to select communities that will be prioritised for interventions in support of social cohesion and community resilience

- 5.2.2 Rehabilitation and construction of small community infrastructure
- 5.2.3 Establishment of youth and adolescent clubs for youth empowerment, and support to socio-recreative activities, including via vocational training
- 5.2.4 Capacity building of local health committees, including support to survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, mental health and psychological support
- 5.2.5 Mapping of existing community practices for Transitional Justice dealing with community acceptance of ex-associates
- 5.2.6 Organisation of income generating activities including vocational training

6. IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES

The Commission will ensure that the appropriate EU rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures³.

6.1.1 Indirect management with a pillar assessed entity

This action may be implemented in indirect management with an entity which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria: solid presence in the field, strong operational capacity in terms of technical competences and long-standing experience on national reintegration processes and strong institutional links with relevant government partners and other entities in the country. The implementation by this entity entails strengthening processes for the reintegration of ex-associates and strengthening community acceptance, social cohesion and community resilience in localities in the Far North Region (Expected Results 1 and 2 related to Specific objectives 4.2.1 and 4.2.2).

6.2 INDICATIVE BUDGET

The total European Union contribution under this Financing Decision **will not exceed EUR 3 500 000**. A breakdown among components is provided hereunder, and is indicative.

³ www.sanctionsmap.eu Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website, it is the OJ version that prevails.

Indicative budget breakdown

Components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)	Indicative third party contribution, in currency identified
Component 1: Supporting the Reintegration of ex-associates and Strengthening Social Cohesion in Cameroon's Far North Region		
6.1.1 – Indirect management with an international organisation	3 500 000	n/a
Total	3 500 000	n/a

6.3 ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The action shall be implemented under indirect management for component 1. It will be devolved and sub-delegated to the **European Union Delegation in Cameroon**, with the support of the Commission for the conclusion of the contracts implementing the action.

6.4 PERFORMANCE AND RESULTS MONITORING AND REPORTING

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final report. Each report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (outputs and outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the Logframe matrix. The report shall be laid out in such a way as to allow monitoring of the means envisaged and employed and of the budget details for the action. The final report, narrative and financial, will cover the entire period of the action implementation.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

6.5 EVALUATION

Having regard to the nature of the action, an evaluation will not be carried out for this action or its components.

The Commission may, during implementation, decide to undertake such an evaluation for duly justified reasons either on its own decision or on the initiative of the partner.

The financing of the evaluation shall be covered by another measure constituting a financing decision.

6.6 AUDIT

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audits or expenditure verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

The financing of the audit shall be covered by another measure constituting a financing decision.

6.7 COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

The 2021-2027 programming cycle has adopted a new approach to pooling, programming and deploying strategic communication and public diplomacy resources.

It will remain a contractual obligation for all entities implementing EU-funded external actions to inform the relevant audiences of the Union's support for their work by displaying the EU emblem and a short funding statement as appropriate on all communication materials related to the actions concerned. This obligation will continue to apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, partner countries, service providers, grant beneficiaries or entrusted or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of EU member states.

The 2022 "Communicating and Raising EU Visibility: Guidance for external actions" reference document shall be used to establish the appropriate contractual obligations.

7. COMPLEMENTARITY, COORDINATION AND FOLLOW-UP

The action will complement ongoing and planned EU engagement in Cameroon, notably under the Multi-Annual Indicative Programme for Sub-Saharan Africa 2021-2027, the EU's support to the Lake Chad Basin Multinational Joint Task Force, and the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations.

At regional level, the action will complement phase II of the RESILAC programme ("Redressement Economique et Social Inclusif du Lac Chad"), the ongoing Regional Stabilisation Facility for the Lake Chad Basin program, and the action currently under identification "Reintegration of ex-combatants and the empowerment of women: community barriers to violent extremism in Africa (REMPARTS)" which will cover Cameroun, amongst other countries in the Lake Chad basin.

At national level, the action will complement the EU ongoing stabilisation efforts in the Northern regions of Cameroon, especially through the Team Europe Initiative "Cameroun Septentrion Vert et Résilient".