

# FACTSHEET

## Frexus Project

### PROJECT DETAILS



**Project Name:** Frexus: Improving security and climate resilience in a fragile context through the Water-Energy-Food Security Nexus

**Joint Co-financing:** German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), European Union (EU)

**Duration:** January 2019 – June 2023

Project Location	Implementing Agency	Partners
Mali, Niger, Chad	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH	International, regional, national and local stakeholders



*Peaceful and climate-resilient communities managing their land, natural resources and ecosystems*

– Vision of the Frexus Project

### Introduction to the Region

Mali, Niger and Chad lie in the heart of the Sahel region, a semi-arid region between the Sahara in the north and the Sudanian savanna in the south. The region is shaped by its two major basins and its ecosystems, the Niger River and the Lake Chad.

The waters of the Niger River and its tributaries originate from the high rainfall of the eastern Guinea Highlands, crossing country lines and forming a boomerang shape as the Niger “bends” in Mali before flowing south into the sea at the Gulf of Guinea. The landscape and climate are diverse, containing mountains, moist forests, savannahs and wetlands. Lake Chad, on the other hand, is mostly fed by the Chari River and its tributary, the Logone. It is characterised by its shallow waters, high evaporation and numerous small islands, mudbanks and swamplands. The climate around the lake is mostly dry, with moderate rainfalls during the summer months.

These water bodies provide drinking water, hydropower generation, irrigated agriculture, fishing and transportation and are vital for the livelihoods of overall 60 million people living in the three countries.

### Regional Challenges

The Sahel region has experienced a convergence of different challenges in the past years. Above all, the security situation has deteriorated significantly, showing an increase in armed conflict, rebel groups and terrorism as well as political instability. Community conflicts, for instance between farmers and herders, have increased over time, and latent tensions have become manifest conflicts, for instance with the emergence of militias.

On the other hand, the region is considered one of the most vulnerable to climate change worldwide, witnessing heavily fluctuating rainfall, as well as floods and droughts. With many livelihoods depending on either rainfed agriculture or the resources of the major basins, scarcity and competition for resources are increasing.

This dynamic is amplified by rapid population growth which increases the pressure on all resources. With most inhabitants dependent on agriculture and livestock, ensuring water, energy and food security has become more and more difficult.



For at least **10 years**, the Sahel region has a continuous **increase of violent conflicts**<sup>1</sup>

The Sahel region is considered as one of the **most vulnerable to climate change** worldwide<sup>2</sup>

**Agriculture** in the Sahel is almost **entirely reliant on the limited variable summer rainfall**, making it highly vulnerable to climate change<sup>3</sup>

The population in the region is expected to increase almost threefold between 1990 and **2030 to reach 516 million people**<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ACLED (2021); <sup>2</sup> UN (2018); <sup>3</sup> World Bank;

<sup>4</sup> UN (2015). Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, World Population prospects: the 2015 revision, DVD edition.

## Solution: WEF Nexus Approach

The **vicious cycle of resource scarcity, competition, conflict and instability can be turned into a virtuous cycle of resilience, sustainable resources management, cooperation and security**. First, the project will properly assess the often-assumed links between natural resources, the effects of climate change, and manifest conflicts in the intervention areas. It will then enable stakeholders to understand these interactions and to mitigate potential negative effects in their natural resource management. The project uses an integrated approach – water-energy-food (WEF) security Nexus – in the areas of development and security that will create and foster new opportunities ensuring long term sustainable development and peace.

## Objectives

The Frexus project has been **designed to support the peaceful resolution of social tensions and conflicts between population groups that are caused or exacerbated by climate change** in fragile areas. The specific objective is to support more conflict-sensitive and climate-sensitive management of land, natural resources and ecosystems in targeted communities, considering the needs of vulnerable groups.

## Regional Strategy and Key Activities

The Frexus project, together with its partners, will improve the understanding of the interaction of social and environmental factors, including climate change, governance and management of natural resources, and conflict in fragile areas. Activities include:

- Baseline studies in the intervention zones, including conflict and climate risk assessments.
- Development and application of advanced analytical tools.
  1. A global hotspot identification tool to identify areas that could suffer resource-related conflicts in the next 12 months.
  2. A local tool to identify key drivers of conflict and to assess local intervention options.
- Conflict and climate risk assessments.

The Frexus project, together with selected communities, will create and endorse **conflict-sensitive and climate-sensitive Action Plans** for the integrated management of land and natural resources considering the water-energy-food security nexus approach. Frexus will then support community stakeholders to select and implement measures from the Action Plans. Activities include:

- Inclusive community workshops.
- Implementation of selected Action Plan measures.

The Frexus project will strengthen planning and operational capacities of stakeholders to adequately address and mitigate both conflicts and the effects of climate change, based on integrated planning. Capacity measures include:

- Trainings and workshops on the interlinkages between natural resources, climate change, security and peace.
- Trainings on sustainable natural resources management and conflict prevention.
- Trainings on the application of the developed analytical tools.

The Frexus project will enhance awareness of the WEF Nexus concept and its implications for security and peace among stakeholders at local, national and multi-country level. Activities include:

- Learning events with security stakeholders.
- Awareness raising activities through public media.

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