

Summary of progress and lessons learnt/actions taken since last review

The programme has established a good base for addressing a wide range of conflict and stabilisation activities in the NE. Building on the 2015-16 Defence and Security Programme, military support has continued to focus training on capabilities including pre-deployment training for all recruits to the Nigerian army, counter-improvised explosive device (C-IED) training and work with the air force on airfield security while responding to broader initiatives aimed at strengthening institutional capacity.

Significant successes included:

- Over 14,000 AFN personnel trained during the year. Up to 70% of those were either deployed to the NE or employed in AFN training schools as instructors.
- The establishment of a gender adviser network within the AFN (for which BMATT [British Military Advisory and Training Team] staff received a CSSF recognition award).
- Increasing evidence of UK training leading to some enhanced operational effectiveness in NE Nigeria including greater air-land integration (resulting in better defence of forward bases), protection of civilians (due to better damage assessments), and lives saved through C-IED training and the provision of medical kit.
- Introduction of female screening at checkpoints by female security officers.

During the first year, the programme has established a breadth of programming, and potential entry points with the armed services and with civil society that will provide flexibility in future years. There are strong signs of greater coherence between individual defence activities (a recommendation from last year). The establishment of a single senior responsible officer (SRO) under the Defence Adviser has improved coordination within the military programmes and overall programme monitoring and reporting. However, coordination between the civilian partners is limited.

While the programme is in a good position to respond to changing circumstances and demand, there appears to be a gap in operational planning. As the Nigerian system sees the benefits of UK assistance, and the quality of support required gets more sophisticated, the UK needs to be able to respond in a more coherent fashion. Following up on initial steps taken during 2016-17 to improve the UK government's capacity to support stabilisation planning, and to genuinely move towards integrated delivery in the complex environment of the NE, is a priority.

Summary of recommendations for the next year

- Prioritise work to further develop stabilisation planning for NE Nigeria. This should consider how the UK can use CSSF funds and how to support the work of other donors.
- Ensure the high numbers of military people posted through Nigeria are aware of cross-UK government priorities and ways of working, in particular through pre-deployment training and inductions.
- Continued consolidation of "institutional support" to the Nigerian military including C-IED training school and gender.
- Consolidation, and rationalisation where appropriate, of the civilian component to reduce the number of small initiatives that cannot deliver impact. A focus on gender, CVE and community conflict management would seem appropriate.
- An annual risk review of both components of the programme should be instituted, alongside ongoing Overseas and Security Justice Assessment renewals. In particular, consideration should be given to potential risks associated with the conflict management and stabilisation component.
- Institutionalise more operational planning to ensure that the programme continues to strategically adapt to changing context. This might mean revitalising the NE strategy working group.