

BACKGROUND

The threat of terrorism and violent extremism have worsened in recent decades, become increasingly pronounced in the Central Sahel region of Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger. The security challenges inherent in the sub-regional context, resulting from the increase in asymmetric threats and their various forms of manifestation as well as the outbreak of social tensions, have resulted in the advent of transitional regimes in the three countries of the Central Sahel and the creation of the Alliance of Sahel States (AES) in 2023.

Mali became a GCERF partner country* in 2016. To date, GCERF has invested USD 10.1 million in the country, with active grants worth USD 3.2 million currently supporting three local civil society organisations (CSOs). The investment supports the strengthening of community mobilisation and the involvement of local authorities in inter-community conflicts, the socio-economic reintegration of ex-combatants and prisoners, the support of women survivors of violent extremism, and the promotion of women and young leaders in conflict management mechanisms at community level.

GCERF pioneers a unique model of investment designed to promote a whole-of-society approach and ensure the sustainability of our programmes. Under this model, in each partner country, we support national governments in establishing a steering committee called the Country Support Mechanism (CSM).

GCERF in Mali is working with the government, through the country support mechanism, and bilateral and multilateral donors to ensure a coordinated approach to prevention. GCERF works with the Malian government to support the implementation of its national action plan and invests in local organisations that design and run programmes contributing to stability and resilience.

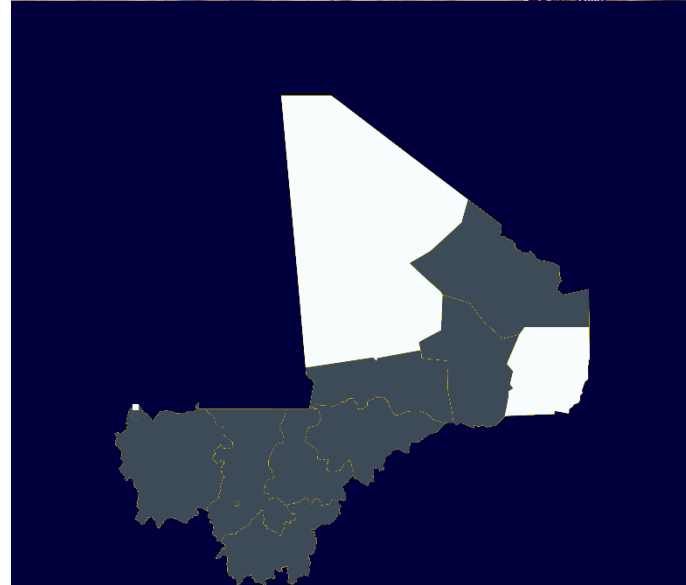
GCERF'S INVESTMENT STRATEGY IN MALI

GCERF intervention in Mali is part of the wider Sahel strategy that engages with intergovernmental bodies to promote regional cooperation in the nexus of development and security. Our programming in the region cover Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger, and our engagement directly bolster the implementation of National Action Plans of the five countries working in partnership with local, national, regional, and global partners.

GCERF's strategy for engagement in the Sahel region is built around two strategic objectives:

1. To contribute to improvements in the social ecology to create conditions conducive to prevention and resilience-building.
2. To facilitate community-led rehabilitation, disengagement, and (re)integration, including people disengaging from criminal, non-state armed and violent extremist groups.

*Partner countries are those in which GCERF funds civil society organisations to implement initiatives aimed at preventing violent extremism.



WHERE

- Kayes
- Mopti
- Koulikoro
- Timbuktu
- Bamako
- Gao
- Sikasso
- Kidal
- Segou

WHO

- Individuals who have disengaged from VE groups
- Women and survivors of VE
- Religious and traditional leaders
- Farmers and herders
- Local authorities
- Youth

CURRENT GRANTS



IMPLEMENTED BY



PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

Principal Recipient: Femmes et Développement (FEDE)

Sub-recipient: Association Sinignéssigi

Capacity building of community mechanisms to strengthen community resilience.

Information and communication campaign through local radio stations to overcome the lack of knowledge about extremist ideology.

Support the economic insertion of women and youth.

Set up an appropriate framework for women survivors of violent extremism.



AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION



GRANT AMOUNT



PERIOD OF THE GRANT

Sevare/Mopti, Socoura, Soufroulaye, Sio

USD 911,000

January 2023 – February 2026



IMPLEMENTED BY



PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

Principal Recipient: Initiatives Conseil Développement Mali (ICD-Mali)

Sub-recipient: Association pour la Promotion de l'Agropastoralisme, du Pastoralisme et de l'Elevage/ Promotion Humaine (APAPE/PH)

Reduce tensions and conflicts between farmers and livestock breeders over access to natural resources by implementing appropriate strategic developments.

Strengthen community resilience between communities by setting up forums for dialogue and consultation on social and economic issues affecting the area.

Improve the socio-economic situation of local communities.



AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION



GRANT AMOUNT



PERIOD OF THE GRANT

Bandiagara, Bankass, Djenne, Douentza, Koro and Mopti

USD 1,369,000

January 2022 – June 2025

STORY OF CHANGE

THE ASSOCIATION OF UNITED WOMEN FROM GAO CASTLE

As part of the awareness-raising initiatives carried out by Think Peace, a new women's group has been formed, illustrating the profound impact of community engagement. Thus, was born the Castle United Women's Association, an initiative inspired by the success of another local association, the Association of Emancipated Women of the 8th District.

This association had been set up in November 2022. Supported in their endeavours by a project partner, these women were able to obtain their association receipt and undergo training in soap production. During a meeting in March 2023, the women of the Castle discovered this dynamic association and were inspired by its model of solidarity and economic empowerment.

Thanks to the facilitation of the president of EMEP (Mixed Teams for a Peaceful Environment), which coordinates awareness-raising activities for the inclusion of young people and women in Gao, the two associations have started to collaborate.

"I am proud of the success our association has achieved through its collaboration with the Castle United Women's Association. We have initiated training sessions to build their capacity so that they can benefit from the same opportunities as we have in the 8th district. During our last awareness-raising activity, we made soaps together in the colours of the Malian flag (green, yellow and red)."

Maimouna Diallo, President of the Barguemio Emancipated Women's Association



Sale of soaps by the women of the group

Thanks to this training, the women of the Castle started their own production of liquid soaps in October 2023, thanks to an initial financial support of 15,000 XOF granted by the president of the EMEP of Gao.

Every Saturday, they produce soaps that are then sold by the members of the association. With a selling price of 500 XOF francs per bottle, they make a profit margin of 200 XOF francs, of which 100 XOF francs go to the saleswoman and 100 XOF are paid into the association's coffers. These funds are intended to support members in the event of social events such as weddings, baptisms or deaths.

By simply sharing experiences and skills, mutual assistance between associations has enabled a new group of women to take charge of their economic future, thus strengthening community cohesion and economic resilience against violent extremism.

KEY RESULTS

Cumulative from 2017 to March 2025

41,400

community members engaged through interfaith, intercommunity, intergenerational dialogues to foster solidarity and reject false narratives often used by violent extremist groups

30,400

community members reached by prevention campaigns to reduce the risk of recruitment by violent extremist groups

19,080

individuals at-risk of radicalisation received livelihood, economic or material support to strengthen their economic resilience

10,550

community members trained in conflict resolution and mediation mechanisms to solve grievances and differences

GCERF'S VALUE PROPOSITION

GCERF'S UNIQUE MODEL OF INVESTMENT PRIORITISES:

Community-ownership and localisation: We invest in trusted grassroots civil society organisations that prioritise the needs and grievances of communities most affected by violent extremism. Many of these organisations have never received international funding before.

Sustainability: Our programmes involve all groups of society and strengthens trust between government, civil society and community members to build stronger, more resilient societies. This ensures that initiatives and structures continue to be relevant and effective.

Robust monitoring and evaluation processes: Our multi-layered monitoring and evaluation system, operating locally and globally, provides continuous feedback on programme effectiveness, identifies areas for improvement, and ensures objectives are consistently met.

Knowledge sharing: Our global network of civil society organisations working on PVE facilitates the exchange of good practices and lessons learned, fostering collaboration and enhancing the effectiveness of interventions. We also share our experiences through our participation in various conferences, publishing of articles and research papers in reputed journals to advance the understanding of PVE.

Capacity strengthening: We strengthen the capacity of civil society organisations to manage large-scale grants and implement effective initiatives, while also enhancing government capacity to develop comprehensive, holistic strategies to prevent violent extremism.