



## 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 2 million currently supporting two 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:

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



## 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 GRANT



 IMPLEMENTED BY	 PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES	
<b>Principal Recipient:</b> Femmes et Développement (FEDE)	Capacity building of community mechanisms to strengthen community resilience.	
 AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION	 GRANT AMOUNT	 PERIOD OF THE GRANT
Mopti	USD 911,000	January 2023 – February 2026



**“I feel comfortable thanks to the activities of the Kaoural project, which provided us with food kits, Art for Change training, and coaching.”**

Fatoumata Diallo, a women survivor from VE

# STORY OF CHANGE

## WOMEN SURVIVORS' STORIES



### The story of Fatoumata

Fatoumata Diallo, 25, lives in Soufouroulaye and works as a housekeeper. Before participating in the project, she lived in precarious circumstances, felt sad, and lacked self-confidence. She explains:

"I wasn't interested in the conflicts between men and women. I faced many difficulties: I had no housing and suffered from food insecurity."

The project activities that directly involved her included Art for Change training, coaching, food kit distribution, awareness-raising activities, and support groups.

The goal of these activities was to strengthen social cohesion and ties between us and the host communities, to provide us with food kits to alleviate our suffering, and to help us overcome the past and forget the negative experiences, particularly the attacks we suffered in our villages of origin.

Fatoumata describes the changes in her life thanks to the project:

"Thanks to these activities, I've found peace again. Through drawing, I know I can do many things and forget the past, especially the attack on our village and the subsequent displacement."

She also notes the impact on her daily life:

"Whenever I remember a bad experience, I draw to relieve my anxiety and lessen my worries."

And on her family:

"When I explained this training to my mother, she started doing the same thing. We decided to draw together to forget the problems caused by the attack."

Her feelings today are positive:

"I feel at ease thanks to the activities of the Kaoural project, which provided us with food kits, Art for Change training, and coaching."

**"I thank the Kaoural project for everything it has done for me. I feel confident and capable of overcoming many problems."**

Fatoumata Diallo, a women survivor from VE



"Art for change" Body mapping activities with women survivors. Photo: FEDE

# KEY RESULTS

Cumulative from 2016 till June 2025

**19,000**

**individuals trained on PVE, conflict sensitivity, critical thinking, conflict resolution skills to strengthen community resilience and susceptibility to extremist agenda and recruitment**

**10,650**

**people trained in conflict resolution, mediation mechanism, process**

**7,300**

**individuals trained in leadership skills, conflict resolution, peace advocacy**

**4,200**

**individuals trained on vocational skills to strengthen economic resilience against violent extremism**

**275**

**individuals provided with counselling and psychosocial support to overcome trauma associated with violent extremism**

## 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.