

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).

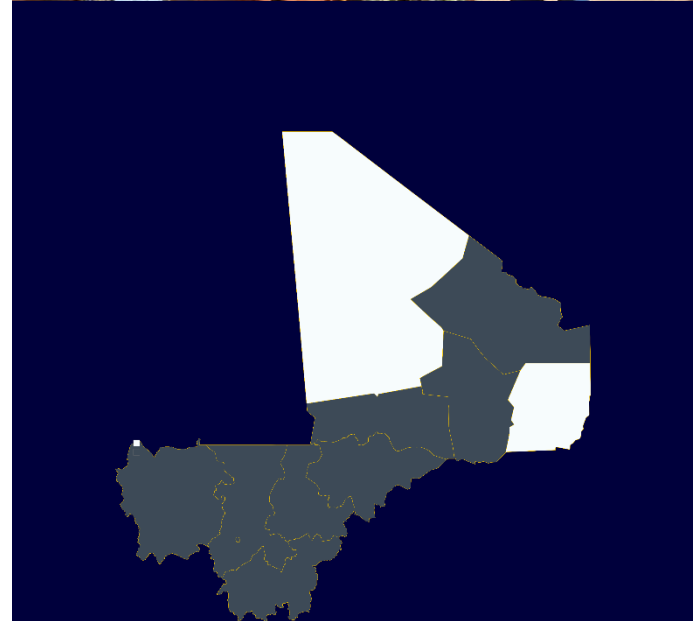
GCERF in Mali is working with the government, through the country support mechanism, and bilateral and multilateral donors to ensure a coordinated approach to prevention. GCERF works with the Malian government to support the implementation of its national action plan and invests in local organisations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

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



IMPLEMENTED BY		PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES	
Principal Recipient: Femmes et Développement (FEDE)		Capacity building of community mechanisms to strengthen community resilience.	
Sub-recipient: Association Sinignèssigi		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
Mopti		USD 911,000	January 2023 – February 2026

STORY OF CHANGE

WOMEN SURVIVORS' STORIES



“I've become a new person thanks to the support group, and I feel confident with all the people who understand and support me.”

N'na Kantao, a women survivor from VE

STORY OF CHANGE

WOMEN SURVIVORS' STORIES

The story of Fatoumata

Fatoumata, displaced from Moura in the Djenné Circle, now lives in Mopti after fleeing her village under direct threat from armed groups. "They said if we stayed there overnight, we would all be executed," she recalls emotionally.

In the dead of night, accompanied by adults and children, she fled through the forest, seeking refuge in Nagara, without being able to carry anything. "We had absolutely nothing—no belongings, not even a place to sleep. We survived on the charity of kind-hearted people."

For four months, she endured extremely precarious living conditions, sheltered under makeshift tents provided by generous locals. Upon their arrival in Mopti, a second violent attack again destroyed their few possessions and homes. Fatoumata eventually settled in Mopti with her family, holding on to the hope of finding some form of stability.

Even today, she remains dependent on humanitarian assistance and local solidarity. Her story illustrates the harrowing reality faced by many displaced women. Through the FEDE-supported program, efforts are underway to help them rebuild their lives by strengthening their resilience against violence, providing psychological and social support, ensuring minimum security, and creating opportunities for recovery and empowerment.

Another story is that of N'na Kantao, one of the many survivors of violence linked to violent extremism who make up the various discussion groups set up as part of Kaoural's project implemented by FEDE.

N'na Kantao's husband was murdered almost in front of her eyes one evening by armed men in Djenné. Her long wandering began with her children before arriving at the displaced persons' site in Sio. Initially, she was one of the most withdrawn and traumatised survivors. She spoke very little and seemed totally devastated, unable to overcome her pain. But thanks to the care of the facilitator of her discussion group and the support of the other survivors, she gradually managed to free herself and express herself. Today, she participates fully in the discussions within her group and is once again looking to the future.

"I've become a new person thanks to the support group, and I feel confident with all the people who understand and support me."

N'na Kantao, a women survivor from VE



Recreational programme with the participation of women survivors. Photo: FEDE.

KEY RESULTS

19,069

People trained on PVE, conflict sensitivity, critical thinking, conflict resolution skills

10,652

People trained in conflict resolution, mediation mechanism, process

275

People receiving counselling, psychosocial support

7,294

Training in leadership skills, conflict resolution, peace advocacy

4,204

Training on vocational skills

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.



GCERF
Preventing Violent Extremism
and Terrorism

Find out more about becoming an investor, our work, and the collective impact we make at:
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