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PARTNERSHIPS FOR PEACE

Strengthening West African capacity to counter violent extremism

The Partnerships for Peace project is a capacity-building and networking effort that will support West African regional institutions, national governments, and civil society organizations to more effectively counter violent extremism in the Sahel region. The project approach is rooted in empowering West African institutions and organizations to lead sustainable, long-term peacebuilding efforts.

At the regional level, the project will support the efforts of regional bodies, such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Sahel G5, to assist their member states in developing effective and sustainable programs to improve security, reduce conflict, and counter violent extremism. At the national level, Partnerships for Peace will assist governments in developing national strategies for countering violent extremism (CVE) and programs to serve at-risk communities. Finally, the project will support networks of West African advocacy and practitioner groups to improve stakeholder coordination on CVE approaches among traditional and religious leaders, youth, and women's groups.

The project will initially target Burkina Faso, Niger, Chad, Cameroon and Mauritania; however, Partnerships for Peace will have the flexibility to modify its geographic targets and partnerships as the dynamics of violent extremism shift in the region. Furthermore, the project will modify its approach as the needs and capacities of organizations evolve, in response to technical learning in the CVE sector, and as opportunities arise.

Partnerships for Peace is an element of USAID's support to the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership. Together with other CVE programming and broader development efforts, the project contributes to the U.S. Government's goal of reducing vulnerability to violent extremism in West Africa.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Partnerships for Peace will improve West Africans' capacity to counter violent extremism by achieving the following results:

- Greater understanding of violent extremism and knowledge of CVE approaches in West Africa
- Increased leadership of CVE efforts by West African governments and civil society
- Improved regional coordination of CVE efforts

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

- Conduct an initial five-month assessment to identify the existing CVE understanding and capacity of ECOWAS, the Sahel G5 and the national governments of Burkina Faso, Niger, Chad, Cameroon and Mauritania.
- Engage think tanks and academic institutions to work with governments, civil society and regional bodies to advance West African understanding of the root causes of vulnerability to violent extremism and the most effective means of countering it.
- Assist regional organizations in improving knowledge of CVE approaches in West Africa.
- Organize study tours for stakeholders and government officials to learn about CVE experiences and challenges in neighboring countries.
- Assist national governments to develop CVE strategies in collaboration with key stakeholders, such as local governments, civil society representatives, regional bodies and donors.
- Provide capacity-building assistance to stakeholders on mobilizing resources for CVE efforts.
- Hold conferences on the latest thinking and trends in CVE programming and the progress target countries have made in implementing CVE strategies and course corrections.
- Support regional organizations to create or enhance CVE networks comprising regional, national and sub-national civil society actors.
- Provide grants to support West African organizations to promote CVE programs.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

GOAL

Strengthen West African capacity to counter violent extremism

LIFE OF PROGRAM

September 2016 – September 2021

TOTAL USAID FUNDING

U.S. \$13 million

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

Burkina Faso, Niger, Chad, Cameroon and Mauritania, as well as ECOWAS and the Sahel G5

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER

Creative Associates International