FINAL EVALUATION

«Youth, Peace and Security»

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Centre for Research and Intervention in Public Health (CRISP)
Garba Zakari Marou, Senior Consultant
+227 96 53 69 69

Contacts:

Beatrice Abouya
Country Director
Search For Common Ground Niger
+227 80 06 62 22
babouya@sfcg.org

Frank Noel Metohin
MEAL Manager Niger – Burkina Faso
Search For Common Ground Niger
+223 72 46 47 91
femetohin@sfcg.org
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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

IGA: Income Generating Activities
DAC: Development Assistance Committee
LCBC: Lake Chad Basin Commission
CCSE: Communal Monitoring and Evaluation Committees
CGA: Common Ground Approach
CJA: Code of Administrative Justice
CP: Peace Committees
CRISP: Centre for Research and Intervention in Public Health
DM&E: Design Monitoring and Evaluation
DSF: Defence and Security Forces
FRG: Federal Republic of Germany
HACP: High Authority for Peacebuilding
ILT: Institutional Learning Team
PPIT: Project Performance Indicators Table
JPS: Youth, Peace and Security
OECD: Development Cooperation Directorate
PAD: Peace Architecture Dialogues
Search: Search for Common Ground
ToR: Terms of Reference
TEP: People’s Voices
GBV: Gender-Based Violence
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Executive Summary

Designed to support the efforts led by the High Authority for Peacebuilding (HACP) in building a local and inclusive peace architecture in Diffa, the "Youth, Peace and Security" project was implemented by Search For Common Ground (Search) for 24 months, from 1 July 2019 to 31 July 2021. Its overall objective was to strengthen community resilience and response to violent extremism and community conflict in Diffa with a view to restoring and consolidating peace and security in the intervention area, namely the communes of Mainé Soroa, Bosso, Chétimari, Kablewa and Guéskerou. It is an urgent response to insecurity through, among other things, strengthening the skills of key community actors in dealing with intra- and inter-community conflicts, increasing the engagement of youth at the community level in support of community resilience to violent extremism, conflict mitigation and economic recovery, amplifying the voice of key stakeholders, particularly women, youth and marginalised groups, in contributing to peace and stability, and restoring trust between the security forces and the population. The project thus contributes to the early detection and peaceful mitigation of conflict and violent extremism in the target areas, with a particular focus on the participation of youth and women.

In order to assess its performance, the Center for Research and Intervention in Public Health (CRISP) conducted an independent final evaluation of the project, the main objective of which is to assess the overall performance of the project. It also aims to highlight good practices and lessons learned that should contribute to strengthening the peacebuilding approach, which will help to better address the issue in the design of other projects of a similar nature. In accordance with the requirements of the evaluation, the mission was carried out through two complementary approaches, qualitative and quantitative, involving all direct and indirect beneficiaries of the project. The 5 communes of the project were all covered by the survey and a total of 695 people were interviewed, 569 for the survey and 126 for the interviews and focus groups.

Main Results

*The project’s relevance*

All project partners, namely the administrative and customary authorities, local elected officials, the HACP, the Security and Defense Forces (SDF), the populations of the project intervention zones and the beneficiaries, believe that the project is well suited to the context in which it was implemented.

The people met during the interviews (authorities, HACP and SDF) support the alignment of the project objectives with the government’s priorities in view of the objectives pursued and, above all, because of the activities carried out.
The administrative authorities, traditional chiefs, HACP, population and beneficiaries believe that the project activities corresponded to their needs in terms of strengthening community resilience in the face of violent extremism and community conflicts and promoting the involvement of marginalised people in peace-building efforts in the communes of Diffa.

**The project’s effectiveness**

At the end of the evaluation, it was found that the project had achieved a satisfactory overall performance. Indeed, 87.03% of the planned activities were carried out and the targets achieved, as explained below in the “level of achievement for each activity” section. The stakeholders’ interviews essentially validated the statements regarding the degree of achievement of the project objectives. Almost all interviewees stated that the quality of the activities carried out under the Youth, Peace and Security project (mainly related to training, awareness raising and solidarity activities) was "good" or "very good".

**The project’s effects**

Notwithstanding the difficulties encountered and the delays in the project’s implementation, several notable effects in terms of consolidation of peace, resilience of communities in the face of violent extremism and changes in attitudes and perceptions are observable in the beneficiary communes. These are mainly the improvement of social cohesion and the reduction of inter- and intra-community tensions between communities and the SDF and between men and women thanks to the exchange frameworks created as part of the project; the initiatives of young people in the community; the revitalisation of the conflict prevention and management structures set up by the High Authority for Peacebuilding (HACP) and the development and validation of the peace architecture of the Diffa region.

There has also been a clear improvement in collaboration between the communities and the SDF on the one hand, and between the communities and the authorities on the other, which is demonstrated by the greater awareness of the importance of working together through mixed groups, the reporting of suspicious persons to the authorities and the SDF, the respect of curfew hours by the community, the sharing of security-related information with the SDF, the organisation of community activities in conjunction with the SDF, and sporting and cultural activities bringing together the SDF and the community.

In terms of youth engagement and the return of peace and stability in Diffa, the final evaluation showed that various activities conducted by the youth went beyond the activities initiated by the project, demonstrating their commitment. Indeed, through these activities, young people managed to renew the bonds of solidarity, fraternity and social cohesion within the
community on the one hand, and between the community and the SDF/authorities on the other, thus strengthening social peace and stability in the intervention zone.

In terms of good practices, we note, in relation to peace-building and community participation, (1) a preventive watch mechanism in the management of conflicts, (2) a synergy of actions between young people, the authorities and the SDF in carrying out peace-building activities, (3) a strong commitment by young people in carrying out social cohesion activities such as awareness-raising, participatory theatre, the running of innovation camps for young people, sporting and cultural activities which are a factor strengthening the mixing and interaction between different groups.

The evaluation mission notes that young people and women are powerful vectors for peace building, provided that they are supported, and that support for income-generating activities (IGAs) for them is a necessary condition to guaranteeing sustainable social cohesion.

In view of all these findings, several recommendations were made to contribute to better achieve and strengthen the project’s objectives in a potential second phase. This would involve:

➔ Considering a second phase for the project with a view of continuing efforts made by focusing on the finalisation of the architecture of peace and its operationalisation, the extension of the project’s intervention area, the continuation of mass sensitisation and the accompaniment of young people and women in the appropriation of its achievements (Recommendation 2&3);

➔ In view of the still precarious situation in the project’s intervention area, which is still subject to risks of radicalisation by young people, it would be beneficial to reinforce and consolidate the efforts made by the project through the realisation of projects allowing for a real perpetuation of the empowerment of women and young people at the economic level (Recommendation 13);

➔ Advocating with administrative and municipal authorities for the handling of certain costs, in particular the functioning costs of the CPs, CCSE and the architecture of peace in the communal development plans of the 5 target communes with a view of improving to close monitoring and ensuring greater diligence in the implementation of activities and greater responsiveness (Recommendation 1);

➔ Effectively implementing the knowledge management dimension of the project with a view of disseminating its achievements as well as better capitalising on its actions and results (Recommendation 5 & 8);
I. INTRODUCTION

The overall aim of the Youth, Peace and Security project is to strengthen community resilience to violent extremism and community conflicts in the Diffa region, with a view of contributing to the African Union’s Lake Chad Basin strategy and objectives. The project seeks to support the Government of Niger in building a more inclusive, bottom-up and participatory community engagement process for the promotion of peace and stability across the region.

Implemented by Search in partnership with the Government of Niger, the High Authority for Peacebuilding (HACP), community radio stations, the Defence and Security Forces (SDF) with funding from the Federal Republic of Germany. The project is implemented in 5 communes of the Diffa region, namely Bosso, Chétimari, Gueskerou, Kablewa and Maine-Soroa, where Search already has a strong presence in order to encourage them to build a local peace architecture.

Building on the framework outlined by the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) strategy, the role of youth in promoting peace and security in Africa is expressed in Article 17 of the Administrative Justice Code (CJA). In line with this article and other normative frameworks on Youth, Peace and Security (YPS), including United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2250, the project involved youth, women, marginalised groups, youth leaders, SDF and local and municipal authorities, empowering them to work together as allies to contribute to strengthening day-to-day security and peace in their communities, with a particular focus on the active involvement of youth in local peace structures at community level. It has also mobilised community radio partners with whom Search is currently working to produce and broadcast various programmes and credible messages based on official sources in order to put an end to rumours, which are the sources of conflict and security instability.

In addition, the project strengthened the effectiveness of the existing local peace architecture by promoting mutual trust and collaboration between the authorities, the security and defence forces, and the communities. In addition, it also aimed to strengthen the participation of youth in local peace infrastructures and empower them to actively contribute to conflict prevention efforts through innovative socio-economic initiatives and awareness raising activities, in order to build their resilience to violent extremism.

The project had three main objectives which were:

- Strengthening the capacity of key community actors to address intra- and inter-community conflicts (in line with objective 36 of the eighth pillar of the LCBC strategy);
Increasing youth engagement at the community level to improve community resilience to violent extremism, conflict mitigation and economic recovery (Pillar 9 objective 39)

Amplifying the voice of key stakeholders, particularly women, youth and marginalised groups, contributing to peace and stability (Pillar 8. Objective 4).

The project was launched on 1 July 2019, and finished on 31 July 2021. At the end of the project implementation period, Search initiated a final evaluation to assess the performance of the project and its effects on the beneficiaries.

Specifically, the evaluation aimed to:

- Measure the changes attributable to the project’s actions in line with the three objectives and on the basis of objectively verifiable project indicators;
- Assess the level of change in community perceptions of civil-military collaboration, youth engagement, return of peace and stability in Diffa;
- Develop a comparative table of project indicators including a justification of the level achieved for each indicator;
- Identify and document successes, good practices, observed weaknesses and other lessons learned, as well as constraints and opportunities related to the implementation of the project;
- Analyse the project implementation on the basis of the OECD/DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, effects/impact and sustainability to be included in the study report.
- Formulate relevant recommendations for this concluding project and the design of future projects of civil-military collaboration and youth engagement for increased stability and propose concrete actions to be implemented by Search in similar future projects.

Project Scope, Evaluation Questions and Expected Results

Project Scope

In terms of scope, the project was implemented in five communes of the Diffa region, selected for their similar security contexts and because of their strategic position in the dynamics of extremist groups in the region. These are the communes of Bosso, Chetimari, Gueskerou, Kabléwa and Mainé Soroa, coloured in blue in Figure 1 below.
Evaluation Questions

The evaluation questions were structured around the two (2) main areas of major concern for this evaluation, namely:

**Axis 1: Evaluative questions on changes resulting from the implementation of activities:**

→ Do training participants have the skills to engage positively and constructively in their communities?
→ What did participants do with the new capacities developed during the training?
→ How did participants, in particular, use the new capacities developed in the training? Did the participants identify and participate in the management of conflicts and/or violence, as well as solve problems related to violent extremism in the region?
→ What themes were addressed during the main project activities (popular expression forums, participatory theatre performances, radio programmes and short films)?
→ Were any relevant decisions made in the face of violent extremism, conflict mitigation and economic recovery?
→ Did the whole community participate in the popular expression forums and coordination meetings?
→ Were the issues of all stakeholders discussed in the activities?
→ Did the different stakeholders interact in a constructive and positive way?
→ Did the perception between the different communities change? How?
→ What are the collaborative initiatives between the different stakeholders if any?
→ Do authorities, defence and security forces and community members participate in and encourage youth community engagement activities?
→ Is there collaboration between community members, authorities, defence and security forces and policy makers on the community response to violent extremism?
→ Have radio broadcasts and various dialogue platforms provided communities with access to credible and sensitive information on violent extremism?
→ Do stakeholders have a better understanding of issues related to violent extremism?

**Axis 2: Evaluation questions according to OECD/DAC criteria**

**The relevance and quality of the design**

→ Was the project appropriate for the context in which it was implemented?
→ Was the conduct of activities appropriate to the cultural norms of the participants?
→ Were all the planned activities carried out according to the implementation schedule?
→ To what extent did the project provide alternatives to the challenge of civil-military collaboration and a response to security instability?
→ Are synergies with other organisations created and maximised?
→ Was the choice of participants appropriate for the achievement of the project objectives?
→ Did the intervention meet the needs of the target population (participants and their families)?
→ Was the project able to reach the direct and indirect beneficiaries during its implementation as planned in its design?
→ How do participants judge the effectiveness of the project activities in relation to their traditional practices of civil-military collaboration and security management?

**Effectiveness of implementation**

→ What is the status of implementation of activities?
→ What is the level of achievement of the expected results?
→ What is the level of achievement of the project objectives?
→ What factors have affected the achievement of the Project objectives?

**Measure Effects and/or impact**

→ How were the initiatives carried by the project affected civil-military collaboration?
→ What progress in civil-military collaboration has resulted from the implementation of the project?
→ In what ways have young people used the skills acquired in the training to strengthen their engagement with violent extremism and conflict management?
→ What has promoted youth engagement at the community level? What instead hindered their engagement and was not considered in the project?

→ To what extent do these IGAs contributed to increasing youth engagement at community level in favour of:
  
  ✔ Of community resilience to violent extremism,
  
  ✔ Conflict mitigation and
  
  ✔ Economic recovery

→ How have the skills acquired by the key stakeholders in the project enabled them to propose civil-military community alternatives and activities?

→ What new configuration has the project allowed to give to the existing peace architecture in the project’s intervention communes?

→ To what extent have the radio broadcasts and various dialogue platforms enabled all communities in the project’s intervention communes to have access to credible information and strengthen community resilience to violent extremism?

→ Were there any unexpected effects (positive or negative) as a result of the project activities?

Successes, good practices, challenges observed and lessons learned

→ What are the most significant successes to be credited to the project?

→ Are there still real barriers to collaboration and trust building between community members and the SDF, from the perspective of community members or SDF not directly involved in project activities?

→ What were the major challenges and difficulties related to the effectiveness of the project?

→ What lessons learned and good practices emerge from the implementation of such a civil-military collaboration project?

The sustainability of the intervention’s achievements

→ To what extent are the participants able to maintain and continue to cultivate non-violent conflict management among the populations without possible support from the project? Has there been any evidence of replication or multiplier effects?

→ Is stakeholders’ engagement likely to continue or increase after external funding ceases?

→ To what extent is the survival of IGAs ensured after the project’s withdrawal?
→ To what extent has the project put in place a mechanism for the architecture to remain functional and endure after withdrawal?

**The expected results of the evaluation**

**In terms of the expected results of this evaluation, it will be measured:**

→ The changes attributable to the project’s actions in line with the three objectives and based on objectively verifiable project indicators are assessed according to:

→ The level of change in communities’ perceptions on civil-military collaboration, youth engagement, return of peace and stability in Diffa is assessed;

→ The project’s Logical Performance Framework (LPF) is filled in;

→ Successes, good practices, observed weaknesses and other lessons learned, as well as constraints and opportunities related to the implementation of the project are identified and documented;

→ Analysis of the project implementation on the basis of the OECD/DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, impact and sustainability is carried out;

→ Recommendations based on the results and findings of this evaluation are formulated.
II. METHODOLOGY

a. Methodological approach used for the evaluation

Given the nature of the project and the indicators, which are mostly expressed in percentages, a methodological approach based on a rigorous mixed (qualitative and quantitative) survey of direct beneficiaries and the community (indirect beneficiaries) in the five communes where the project is active was chosen. The evaluation was conducted in two phases: (1) an exploratory phase to prepare/understand the mission and (2) a field phase during which data was collected and analysed. The exploratory phase consisted of: 1) a scoping meeting, 2) a literature review, 3) the development of data collection tools, 4) the production and presentation of the inception report, and 5) the recruitment and training of enumerators.

The scoping meeting

It consisted in the organisation of a briefing meeting with the aim of defining precisely of Search's expectations. It enabled evaluators to get an overview of the study's objectives and to identify expectations on Search's part. This meeting allowed for an exchange of information to frame the mission between the CRISP consultant and Search "Youth, Peace and Security" project team, the DME Niger team and the ILT team.

Literature Review

The first step was to revisit/analyse the available project documentation. The main documents consulted were the project document/logical framework, the different quarterly reports produced and other studies already carried out in the areas of interest to young people/women and peacebuilding. This review allowed for a much better understanding of the objectives and goals of the project. The consultation of some documents related to the mission also allowed for a better understanding of the evaluation objectives and an appreciation of the secondary data available.

Development of survey tools

A questionnaire for quantitative data collection and interview and focus group guides for qualitative data collection were produced by the evaluation consultant. These tools were approved by the Search team before being tested during enumerators training and used in the field during data collection. The questionnaire and focus group guides were administered using mobile devices (smartphones).

Production and presentation of the inception report

At the end of the exploratory phase, CRISP shared the methodological note and the content of the data collection tools with Search staff. The aim was to ensure a mutual learning process between the different stakeholders involved in the final evaluation of the project, in order to validate the data collection tools and the evaluation methodology.
**Recruitment and training of enumerators**

Recruitment of the data collection enumerators took into account the level of training, the professional experience in conducting surveys and the ability to speak at least 2 to 3 languages of the region (Hausa, Beribi and/or Fulani) to limit bias and improve accuracy in data collection. Thus, 8 enumerators and 2 supervisors received training on all data collection tools, as well as the use of the Kobotoolbox platform and the handling of smartphones in order to guarantee an appropriation/understanding of the tools and consequently the efficient execution of the data collection. It should be noted that before the start of the training, the objectives, results and main activities of the project were reviewed by the enumerators. The training ended with a pre-test of the tools in the commune of Chétimari.

**b. Field phase**

This phase to collect data in the five communes of the project lasted 7 days. The staff of the Diffa Search office, in particular the DM&E and the focal point of the commune of Bosso, facilitated the work of the enumerators in collecting data. Indeed, they mobilised the young beneficiaries of the project and the local administration of the communes to participate in the final evaluation survey. Several methods of data collection were used by the enumerators to enable the triangulation of information. Thus, data were collected using the following methods:

**Secondary data collection**

The literature review drew on the findings, conclusions and recommendations of various documents containing the secondary information sought. The following documents were exploited by the consultants:

→ The Terms of Reference for this evaluation,
→ Periodic reports on project activities,
→ Report of the Baseline Assessment of the project,
→ Project monitoring reports,
→ The project document,
→ A database for monitoring beneficiary activities,
→ The project monitoring & evaluation plan ;
→ Some evaluation reports related to the evaluation

**Quantitative survey**

For the quantitative survey, the **household approach** was preferred given the local context, and a **questionnaire** allowing the evaluation of the evolution of the project indicators was administered to **569 people** from the target community. The questionnaires were distributed in the five communes of the project using the Probability Proportional to Size (PPT) method of random sampling. Thus, in each commune the sample size was determined on the basis of a margin of error (e) of 5% of the total number of people in the target communes of the region, a
margin coefficient (t) depending on the confidence interval (s) of 95% which gives a (t) equal to 1.96 as well as an estimated response rate of 80% in order to compensate for cases of non-response.

The sample size was determined on the basis of the following formula:

\[ n = \frac{t^2}{e^2} \times p(1-p) \times (N-n) / (N-1) \]

N = population size (here N = (88 450) total size of people in the five target municipalities
n = minimum sample size
e = margin of error (e = 5%)
P = degree of variability or degree of homogeneity (P=50%)
t = corresponding to the value read from the normal distribution table, it is related to the degree of confidence (95%). For a confidence level of 95% we have an associated t = 1.96.

Hence n=383 persons and n adjusted for the estimated 80% response rate is 479.

Below is the number of people rolled up during this evaluation by age group.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by age group (N = 569)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Absolute frequencies</th>
<th>Relative frequencies</th>
<th>Cumulative frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 18-25 ans</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>34,45%</td>
<td>34,45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 26-35 ans</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>37,08%</td>
<td>71,53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 36-50 ans</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>22,14%</td>
<td>93,67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 51 ans et +</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>6,33%</td>
<td>100,00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>569</td>
<td>100,00%</td>
<td>100,00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the 569 people surveyed, 71.53% were aged between 18 and 35, compared with 28.47% in the 36 and over age group. This data differs from the baseline survey data, in which out of the 438 people surveyed, the 18-35 age group represents 59.6% of the sample and those aged 36 and over 40.4%. However, this data shows us that young people were more reached by this evaluation.

Figure 2: Distribution of respondents by commune and gender
This graph shows that of the 569 people surveyed, 43.41% were women and 56.59% were men. This data differs from the baseline survey, in which out of the 438 people interviewed, 60% were women and 40% men. It shows that overall more men than women were interviewed, and this observation is the same for all the communes except Chétimari, where the difference is not so great.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents by category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories of respondents</th>
<th>Absolute frequencies</th>
<th>Relative frequencies</th>
<th>Cumulative frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Community leaders</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2,28%</td>
<td>2,28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Young leaders</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>20,39%</td>
<td>22,67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Head of peace committee</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0,18%</td>
<td>22,85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Head of communal monitoring and evaluation committee</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0,53%</td>
<td>23,37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. SDF</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0,35%</td>
<td>23,73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Authorities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0,18%</td>
<td>23,90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Community member</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>75,40%</td>
<td>99,30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0,70%</td>
<td>100,00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>569</strong></td>
<td><strong>100,00%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100,00%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that 75.40% of the respondents, i.e. 429 of the 569 people enrolled, are members of the community, while the authorities, the SDF and community leaders all together represent only 2.81%.

**Qualitative research**

To complement the quantitative information, **focus groups** were held with direct and indirect beneficiaries of the project. The qualitative data collection methods used were:

- **18 focus group discussions** out of 20 planned were conducted involving 126 participants, including 60 direct youth beneficiaries from the peace committees, communal monitoring and evaluation committees and youth leaders of the project and 66 indirect beneficiaries of the project from the community.
- **57 semi-structured interviews** out of 70 planned were conducted with key informants to get their views on the project activities. It should be noted, however, that the discrepancy between the interviews and focus groups conducted and those planned during this evaluation is mainly due to the unavailability of certain actors who participated in the implementation of the project, as detailed in the limitations of the methodology.

The people interviewed were:

→ The administrative, municipal and customary authorities (8)
→ The HACP (1)
→ Members of the CCSE and CP (5)
→ SDF (Police, Gendarmerie, Water and Forestry, National Guard) (9)
→ IGA beneficiaries, including 5 per commune (25)
→ Community radio station managers (6)
→ Search staff who implemented the project (3)

c. Data processing and analysis

Data processing
The quantitative data collected was exported into EPI Info 7 software for processing and cleaning. Once the database was ready, the constituted variables underwent a thorough statistical analysis that allowed for the production of different tables (simple tables, cross-tabulations, graphs) for the analysis. The tables produced on EPI Info 7 were then transferred to Microsoft Excel for the production of graphs.

Data analysis
Once the verification and data cleaning was completed, the cleaned database was used to derive the relevant performance indicators for understanding the evaluation on the project’s results framework and the performance indicator monitoring plan. The qualitative data was classified by themes and sub-themes, which allowed us to conduct a content-based analysis to enhance the quality of the results.

A triangulation of the quantitative and qualitative data was then carried out to consolidate and produce the final report. Statistical analyses were carried out using Epi Info 7 statistical software and Excel in Windows. The trends identified enabled the study’s expectations to be met more effectively.

d. Limitations of the methodology used for the study

The methodology used had some minor limitations that did not have much impact on the quality of the evaluation results. These limitations included, among others:

→ The 2021 elections caused a change at the level of the municipalities and in the prefectures;
→ The mobility of some beneficiaries (SDF) of the project did not facilitate our collection because a large part of the SDF and authorities (Administrative or municipal) who took an active part in the implementation of the project were no longer at their posts due to
assignments or transfers for SDF and political replacements with the local elections of December 2020 and the change of government;
→ The unavailability of some major actors involved in the implementation.
III. RESULTS

The results of this evaluation are presented according to the objectives of the evaluation.

A. Relevance of the project

The relevance criterion is about understanding what the 'real' needs of the population are, and assessing the extent to which the objectives and activities of the intervention meet the needs of the beneficiaries and contribute the peace-building process - in other words, whether they address the key determinants of violent extremism, collaboration, and conflict that the analysis has revealed. In assessing relevance, it may be necessary to assess the extent to which an intervention fits into the overall strategies and policy framework of the country or external partners.

1. Relevance of the project to the security context

100% of the project’s partners, namely the administrative and customary authorities, local elected officials, the HACP, the SDF, the population of the project’s intervention zones and the beneficiaries believe that the project is well suited to the context in which it was implemented. According to them, before the beginning of the project, there was no relationship between communities, SDF and authorities, and they also had very little knowledge about social cohesion and resilience to violent extremism.

For the commissioner of Mainé Soroa: "It is thanks to the project that I have known this project that did not exist before. It is a very important framework to exchange on several issues including security and conflict prevention and management".

The project is all the more appropriate in terms of relevance, as it is in line with the policy of the State in accordance with the provisions of Article 3 of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, adopted by the First Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union held in Durban, on 9 July 2002.

2. Relevance of the project to the project objectives

The people met during the interviews (Authorities, HACP and SDF) support the alignment of the project’s objectives with the government’s priorities in view of the objectives pursued and the activities carried out. The relevance of activities such as sensitisation, capacity-building of young people to face violent extremism and IGAs to keep young people busy in order to prevent them from joining extremist groups.

For the prefect of Mainé Soroa: "All the approaches of the project are perfectly in line with the government’s policies on peace, security, social cohesion and economic recovery of young people, women and marginalised groups".

1 Rapport Evaluation finale projet NIG002_SFCG_Niger
According to the prefect of Diffa: “One of the main concerns of the government is the return of peace and social tranquillity throughout the national territory and more particularly in the regions affected by the insecurity of extremist groups, including the region of Diffa and Tillaberi. And in view of the project’s objectives, it can easily be said that the project is in line with the government’s policy.”

3. Relevance of the project to the needs of the target population

Concerning the adaptation of the project’s activities to the needs of the target populations, the results of the interviews and focus groups showed that the project is in line with their needs for all the respondents that were interviewed.

Indeed, for the administrative authorities, traditional chiefs, HACP, population and beneficiaries, this relevance is justified given the security and social environment of the intervention zone, which is characterised by conflict and insecurity.

For a community leader in Chétimari: “The relevance of the activities chosen by the project, such as the IGAs and the youth camps, have made it possible to resolve many of the problems experienced by young people and to strengthen links between young people from different backgrounds through solidarity activities”.

Our findings show that the needs most expressed by the people interviewed are the same in the five communes where the project is active, namely training and IGAs. This observation is a proof of the project’s alignment with the needs of the populations in all project’s intervention communes.

In general, all the people reached, including the community, in the focus groups and individual interviews, agree that the project was in line with their expectations and needs, as shown above.

B. Efficiency

This section addresses the key issues of effectiveness in terms of the level of implementation of activities, the level of achievement of objectives and the main findings of the final evaluation.

1. Level of achievement of activities

The activities of the Youth, Peace and Security project were planned in an equitable manner across the five communes of intervention of the project, and were carried out in part in accordance with the work plan. The analysis of the project reports allowed us to calculate the level of achievement for each activity, summarised in the table below:
Table 3: Level of achievement of project activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Planned</th>
<th>Achieved to date</th>
<th>% of implementation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity 0.1</strong> Baseline &amp; Conflict Assessment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity 0.2</strong> Stakeholder Mapping Process</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity 0.3</strong> Rapid assessment of IGAs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Result 1:</strong> Strengthened capacity of key community actors to resolve intra- and inter-community conflicts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity 1.1</strong> Capacity building and planning workshops for mixed groups</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>220%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity 1.2:</strong> Joint security forces and community solidarity activities</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity 1.3:</strong> Revitalisation of the Communal Monitoring and Evaluation Committees (CMEC)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>220%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity 1.4:</strong> Revitalisation and development of peace committees (PCs)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>140%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity 1.5:</strong> Establishment of Peace Architecture Dialogues (PAD)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Result 2:</strong> Increase youth engagement in communities for community resilience to violent extremism, conflict mitigation and economic recovery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity 2.1:</strong> Youth empowerment and capacity building</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity 2.2:</strong> Innovation camps for young people</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity 2.3:</strong> Youth-led inter- and intra-community conflict prevention efforts</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>109%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity 2.4:</strong> Youth economic empowerment</td>
<td>250²</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>140%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Result 3:</strong> Support key communication actors in providing conflict-sensitive information and mobilising communities and narratives against violent extremism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity 3.1:</strong> Train local producers/journalists and support local radio stations</td>
<td>In-situ radio training</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of people trained</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Radio magazine</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

² This is in fact a single activity in which 250 people will be identified for IGAs
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity 3.2. Produce and broadcast diverse audio content</th>
<th>Round tables by Search Studios</th>
<th>48</th>
<th>40</th>
<th>83%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Radio round table by the 8 community radio stations.</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>663</td>
<td>577</td>
<td><strong>87,03%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Out of 663 planned activities, 577 have been implemented, so a physical completion rate of 87.03%. This high rate of implementation could be explained by the security stability, as indicated by the information collected during the survey (93.15%), but also by the strong support from the authorities and the population to the project’s implementation. However, an analysis of the project reports shows that despite this high rate of implementation, some key activities were less successful. These included monitoring activities, where only three (3) missions were carried out during the life of the project; activities planned by the mixed groups, dialogue activities on the architecture of peace, and the youth innovation camps. According to the interviews and group discussions, this situation can be explained by the poor integration between the programme team and the DM&E department, the mobility of the SDF, the delays in starting the project and the failure to carry over the budget from the first year to the second year, with the postponement of unfinished activities.

Nevertheless, the evaluation team believes that the project was effective in view of the physical implementation rate of over 87.03%.

2. **Level of achievement of objectives**

The stakeholders’ interviews essentially validated the statements regarding the degree of achievement of the project’s objectives. Almost all interviewees stated that the quality of the activities carried out under the Youth, Peace and Security project (mainly related to training, awareness-raising and solidarity activities) was "good" or "very good" at 66.67% and 33.33% respectively. It should be noted, however, that this level of achievement of the project’s objectives is reflected in the project approach used by Search during the project implementation. Indeed, Search organised various training workshops, including on dialogue facilitation, conflict transformation using the Common Ground Approach (CGA), IGAs techniques, etc., which led to the success of the project activities, which all participants in the evaluation found innovative.

These trainings aimed at reinforcing the knowledge on different themes, allowing participants to better understand what was expected from them during the project implementation. In view of the results obtained in the trainings’ pre- and post-tests and the information provided by some
of the beneficiaries met during the focus groups or interviews, it should be said that Search has been effective in achieving the project’s objectives.

According to an authority in Kablewa, "The project has contributed to the promotion of peace and the consolidation of connections between the communities, SDF and the authorities in the commune, which was not the case before its implementation".

A community member in Bosso: “If all NGOs would carry out activities like the ones implemented by Search throughout this project, many of our problems, especially those related to conflicts, will be completely eradicated in the community”.

C. Measuring effects and/or impact

The present analysis is conducted on the immediate and intermediate effects of the project. In the case of this analysis, it is more a question of measuring the effects that are observable in the short term. These effects are all significant and create lasting changes on the lives and environment of individuals and groups that are directly or indirectly causally linked to the project.

The effects of the project are assessed through the tangible results obtained in terms of achievements, that can have a favourable influence on the living conditions of the actors, conflict prevention and management, collaboration, youth involvement, security and peace building.

In order to achieve the intended effects of the project, a set of activities has been identified in the various project reports that have had a positive impact on the beneficiaries and the community.

1. Capacity-building effects on young people and radio partners

Overall, all stakeholders involved in this evaluation in general and the young people in particular consider the capacity-building training they have received to be very satisfactory. Indeed, for the journalists and producers from the partner radios, the production and broadcasting of counter-speech messages and the training received enabled them to be more efficient in their daily activities and to improve the quality of the information broadcast on their radios. It should be noted that in addition to the radio partners, young people interviewed believe that the training they received has contributed to a different view of life in society in general. These include the perception they had of the SDF and the authorities before the project was implemented, but also their relationship with the elderly.
2. Effects in terms of conflict prevention and management

In the context of conflict prevention and management, the training received by young people enabled them to be operational in the field. The young people led conflict prevention and management activities throughout the entire duration of the project. These activities contributed to a considerable reduction in inter- and intra-community conflicts, conflicts between young people from the fadas and the palais\(^3\), and the establishment of a climate of trust between the communities, the SDF and the authorities. A young participant from the focus group in Gueskérou said: "With the start of the project, we have seen many changes. This project has brought us closer to the SDF and made us understand that we must collaborate with them for the return of peace. We have done several activities with the SDF that have pushed us to be friends rather than enemies. Today we do fadas with the SDF, we attend their ceremony and vice versa, which was very difficult before."

3. Effects in terms of social cohesion

With regard to the improvement of social cohesion and peacebuilding, the project organised sports and cultural activities in all the communes of intervention, which made it possible to highlight the potential of women for social cohesion and peace-building through their full participation in the activities and their commitment to the promotion of peace alongside young people. Thus, these activities once again proved that sport and culture are a means of promoting peace and overcoming ethnic and professional differences and social and cultural divisions. In Kablewa, for example, the participation of members of the security forces in football tournaments alongside young people contributed to ease tensions between the two groups. A local authority in Gueskerou said: "The project's support has produced observable effects such as joy, peace and enthusiasm for the project's activities."

4. Effects in terms of revitalisation of peace structures

Support for equipment and materials for the CCSEs and capacity building for these community actors and other stakeholders in the implementation of the project, such as the peace committees, has made it possible to strengthen community peacebuilding mechanisms. These peace committees and CCSEs were revitalised and trained in all five communes, which enabled them to be operational for the first time since their creation and to play their part in the prevention and management of conflicts in the intervention area. These committees played their part in promoting community initiatives by tackling community problems, particularly violent

\(^3\) Fada being a term used locally, common to the Djerma-Songhai and Haoussa languages, which designates a group of young people (men and/or women) who meet at specific times around tea to talk
extremism. Thus, the ambassadors for peace have been major actors in conducting dialogues and forums for popular expression throughout the lifetime of the project.

5. Effects of the youth innovation camps

The Youth Innovation Camps were initiated to encourage the spirit of initiative, commitment and collaboration of young people for conflict transformation. By creating frameworks for discussion, debate and exchange for the participants, Search wanted to consolidate the resilience of young people to face violent extremism, and to mitigate inter- and intra-community conflicts. The positive effects were considerable. According to a local authority of Mainé Soroa: “These youth innovation camps, even if insufficient (organised once per commune), compared to their contribution to peace, social cohesion and collaboration as they bring together young people from different regions and connect civilians with the authorities and SDF, have enabled the creation of bonds of friendship between young people from different communities (hosts and displaced persons, ethnic components) which has led to the establishment of a climate of mutual trust.”

From our observations in the field, this activity was well appreciated in all communes that have benefited from the project’s activities. The people we met mentioned the defining feature of this activity compared to the others. For a young leader from the commune of Kabléwa, “The characteristic of this activity, beyond strengthening the bonds of unity and solidarity, is that it provides a framework for evaluating the participants in the training courses on the skills they have acquired and how to use them through an organised competition”.

6. Peacebuilding effects

The positive effects identified in this area mainly concern the creation of ties of friendship and fraternity between young people from different communities (hosts and displaced persons, ethnic components) on the one hand, and between the community and the FDS on the other, resulting in the establishment of a climate of mutual trust. For example, the inter-community tensions between the Mohamidine Fulani and the Arabs of Mainé Soroa have been resolved thanks to the project, which has had a catalytic effect on peace management and consolidation. The quality of relations between ethnic groups, between host and displaced communities and between farmers and herders has improved to the satisfaction of all. All this contributed to the gradual restoration of a climate of peaceful coexistence.

According to the participants, commendable changes can be attributed to the organisation of sporting and cultural activities involving all ethnic groups and different fringes of the
community, organisations of meetings to facilitate dialogue, forums for popular expression, participatory theatre and radio broadcasts which enabled:

✔ The entirely positive reaction of the young people who have since carried only striking messages on themes related to the expected results of the project;

✔ The re-establishment of social cohesion between the different layers of the community (youth, women, marginalised groups and the elderly);

✔ Changes in the behaviour and resilience of young people to violent extremism;

✔ Improved relationships with SDF, authorities, community and youth, especially boys who have seen significant changes.

This testimony of a radio agent in Bosso goes in this direction: "Many young people were ready to join the insurgent group given the idleness in which they vegetate but the activities of the project notably sensitization, youth groupings, broadcasts and IGAs have allowed many to give up".

7. Effects that relate to the architecture of peace

A true precursor to peace, the peace architecture is a consultation framework bringing together different actors who can contribute to peacebuilding through peaceful conflict management and inclusive dialogues bringing together communities and authorities. Despite the project's delay in starting the dialogue process due to difficulties in bringing together key stakeholders during the pandemic, discussions and meetings finally resumed in May 2020. An expert consultant with years of experience in peacebuilding and economics was recruited to provide external expertise and insights into the design of the peace architecture and guide its drafting process. According to the authorities met during this evaluation, the concept of the 'Architecture of Peace' is known by the majority of the population of the Diffa region, including both administrative and customary authorities, thanks to the implementation of the 'Youth, Peace and Security' project.

In its conception, the peace architecture should play the role of an early warning and rapid response system at three levels: the communal, departmental and regional levels under the respective leadership of the Mayor, the Prefect and the Governor. It should be pointed out that, initially, the project was intended to strengthen it, because according to the information received by Search during the design of the project, the framework existed, so it was only necessary to make it functional. But during the implementation phase, the project had to develop and validate the document first. A decree appointing the members of this structure should have been issued by the governor of the region, to proceed with their establishment, but unfortunately, this was not possible until the end of the project last July 2021.
8. Effects on civil-military cooperation

One of the main immediate effects of this project is undoubtedly the civil-military collaboration. Indeed, all stakeholders and communities that were met during this evaluation were unanimous on the fact that the project has brought the community and the SDF closer together. This rapprochement is reflected in a change of the attitude and perception of youth, women and marginalised groups towards the SDF. The analysis of the survey data on changes in the behaviour of community members and the SDF in relation to collaboration in the management of insecurity in the Diffa region is illustrated in the table below:

Table 4: Changes in the behaviour of community members and the SDF in relation to collaboration in managing insecurity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change in the behaviour of community members and the SDF in relation to collaboration</th>
<th>Absolute frequencies</th>
<th>Relative frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Reporting suspicious persons</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>88,19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Good collaboration with the SDF</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>88,19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Respecting curfew times</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>77,17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Mitigation of community and SDF conflicts</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>64,57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sharing security information with the SDF</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>66,93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Establishing a climate of trust between the population and the SDF</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>56,69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Other to be specified</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be seen from this table that the denunciation of suspicious persons and good collaboration with the SDF (88.19%) were the most cited changes, followed by respect for curfew times, the mitigation of community and SDF conflicts, the sharing of security information with the SDF and the establishment of a climate of trust between the population and the SDF. This information from the survey corroborates the information gathered in the interviews and focus groups below.

According to an environmental officer from Guéskerou: “I have been in Guéskerou for five years and this project has allowed me to strengthen my relationship with the people and I have many numbers from the people who share with me a lot of information, which is not the case for an SDF who has just arrived in Guéskerou”

For an SDF of Mainé Soroa, “the activities between youth and SDF, has allowed us to solve many problems that were a source of conflict between public security agents and the youth of the community, but also, we have used the services of the youth to solve a problem of the youth of fadas and palaces here in Mainé Soroa”.
According to a focus group participant in Bosso: “With the arrival of the project, we have seen many changes. This project brought us closer to the SDF and made us understand that we must collaborate with them for the return of peace. We have done several activities with the SDF that have pushed us both to be friends rather than enemies. Today we do fadas with the SDF, we attend their ceremony and vice versa, which was very difficult before”.

For an authority in Mainé Soroa: “The project’s activities have given us the opportunity to exchange with the community on many subjects, including the functioning of the SDF, but especially on the collection of taxes, especially for those who do not have a national identity document. For the population, the police collect these taxes and pocket them for their personal use. Thus, thanks to these exchanges, we had the opportunity to explain to them and this brought down several prejudices observed on both sides (SDF and community)“.

For an official of the Mainé Soroa town hall: “The project has demystified exciting myths between communities and SDF because with this project, people have understood that wearing the uniform is like a function, just like the nurse who fights against a disease or the village teacher who passes on knowledge to the children”.

A SDF from Kablewa said: "Don’t be afraid to approach us and share with us information that can help us to better defend you and our country together". The project’s activities have enabled some civilians and the SDF to become friends, and they occasionally see each other at weddings, baptisms and funerals.

According to a community member in Mainé Soroa: “At the beginning of the project interventions in our commune, there were many difficulties in the civil-military relationship, as well as a breach of trust between the civilians and the SDF. With the intensification of sports activities, Town Hall meetings, participatory theater, dialogues, insalubrities and sensitisation on local community radios, these relations have clearly improved nowadays”.

9. Youth engagement

According to all actors (authorities, SDF, technical service, HACP and project staff) and populations met in the framework of this evaluation, the commitment of young people in the implementation of the project is very noticeable. This is reflected by their full participation in the implementation of activities such as the youth innovation camps, solidarity activities, sports and cultural activities, the facilitation of work experience sessions, Town Hall Meetings, listening clubs, solidarity weeks and awareness sessions.

Indeed, for the majority (3/5) of the people met during the group discussions, this commitment could be explained by the training and the support the youth received, whereas some think that it is only the innovations (youth innovation camps and collaboration with the SDF) brought by the project that are at the root of this change in young people’s behaviours.
A young leader in Kablewa stated: "The project implemented by Search has enabled me to be independent because today I can meet my small expenses and I don’t see why I shouldn’t get involved in activities to make the community understand that it must count on us young people on all issues concerning our security, peace and the tranquillity of our village".

For a community member met during the group discussions in Bosso: "Without the young people and their commitment, this project would not be a success given the security context but especially the activities they have implemented" he went on to tell us that: "not everyone can be seen with the SDF in our villages for fear of reprisals from the BH".

A communal environment officer from Guéskerou said: "The strategy adopted by Search for the implementation of the 'Youth, Peace and Security' project was one of the factors that contributed to the engagement of young people in the implementation of the project’s activities". "This project has shown us that we must count on young people by involving them fully in security management issues in our commune" for the Vice Mayor of Gueskerou.

10. Effects of radio programmes and different dialogue platforms

The analysis of the sample survey data revealed that thanks to the radio programmes produced and broadcast, the population's understanding of the issue of violent extremism (81.88%) and collaboration has improved considerably. Indeed, the population has started to share suspicious situations observed with the authorities and/or the SDF (80.43%), and violence within the community is rare. Also, respect for curfew hours is increasingly respected (77.54%) according to the survey data.

According to the authorities and radio managers interviewed, the round-table shows and magazines produced and broadcast in local languages have been an opportunity for key stakeholders to deepen their understanding of issues such as violent extremism, collaboration, conflict management, rumour management, social cohesion, youth and women's involvement in local security management and have contributed to the amplification of youth and women's voices within their communities. 95.65% of the respondents support or agree that the programmes broadcast had as their main objectives the prevention of violent extremism and the promotion of peace in general. This trend is similar in all other communes except Mainé Soroa where the rate is 100%.
11. Improvement of the security environment and social cohesion in the community by young leaders

According to the data collected in the framework of this evaluation, 44.82% of the population feels that the peace and security situation in their community has clearly improved and 48.33% feels that the situation is stable, whereas this proportion was only 6.85% for those who felt that the situation had deteriorated. This perception is equally shared between men and women, as it is shared by 43.75% of women and 56.25% of men. However, this distribution is disparate according to the communes, as the security situation is much worse in Chétimari and Gueskerou, with 11.39% and 17.05% respectively, while for the other three communes the proportion is around 2%. However, there has been a clear improvement in the security context at the end of the project compared to the beginning of the implementation, when respondents to the baseline assessment stated that the security context had deteriorated.

![Figure 3: Distribution of respondents according to the security situation in the area by commune](image)

It emerged from the interviews and focus group discussions that the project has contributed in part to improving the security situation in the communities by increasing social cohesion through the involvement of young people in peace initiatives and community activities. Indeed, according to information gathered from local authorities, the project's actions were essentially based on
training and capacity building of young leaders, women and marginalized groups to better conduct important sensitisation actions with the community.

For an authority in Bosso, "this stable situation imposes more vigilance on us and we always ask everyone to respect the security instructions in force in the area".

An authority from Mainé Soroa: "It is true that for a while now the security situation in the area has been relatively calm, especially with the denunciations, even though they are low, but also because the Komadougou River is in flood, the movements of the BH are lower".

Nevertheless, it should be noted that there is unanimous agreement on the reduction of inter- and intra-community conflicts in all the communes where the project is active, as shown by the following:

"The implementation of project activities by young people has enabled the community to see conflict resolution in a different light and this has contributed greatly to the reduction of conflicts in the community". Community member in Chétimari.

"The capacity building of young people through the Youth, Peace and Security project has been instrumental in sensitising and preparing young people. The young people have even managed to undertake important community awareness and solidarity actions that have helped to restore a climate of trust in the community, which is conducive to peace and social cohesion." An authority from Bosso.

"The actions of young people in community sensitisation activities would have been more effective if the project had also put in place mass sensitisation activities in their efforts to respond to violent extremism and community conflicts in the commune." Head of Radio Mainé Soroa.

12. Level of change in community perceptions of IGAs

Initiated by the project to contribute to the social integration of young people in the various decision-making bodies of the community in order to boost the commitment of young people within the community, the IGAs are in fact a means for the project to protect young people from need. Indeed, in a context where economic and social instability is increasing, exposes young people to pull factors that also increasingly serve as a reason for recruiting young people into radicalisation groups through manipulation, disinformation and the proliferation of extremist narratives often based on false religious interpretations. It is with this in mind that Search, through the "Youth, Peace and Security" project, has opted to support 250 beneficiaries in the first instance, to which it has added 100 young leaders already being involved on other projects being carried out by Search in the Diffa region, thus increasing the number of IGA beneficiaries from 250 to 350, i.e. 70 beneficiaries per commune.

According to Search's IGA manager, 16 types of IGAs were presented to the beneficiaries to choose from distributed as follows:
Table 5: Distribution of IGA types by commune according to the number of beneficiaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IGA</th>
<th>Municipalities</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bosso</td>
<td>Maine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of tableware</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep fattening</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of fabrics/cloths</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juice sales</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incense production</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of cereals</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restoration</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cellular repair</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photocopy and camera kits</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of condiments</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment for managing a projection room</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of animal feed</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peeling mills</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish/fishing sales</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacture and sale of bricks</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of braid articles</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>70</strong></td>
<td><strong>70</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above shows that all the IGAs proposed by Search to the beneficiaries were chosen at least once. However, we note that sheep fattening with 41.43% is the most chosen IGA, followed by the sale of tableware with 20.86%, the sale of cloth/cloth with 18% and cellular repair 6.57%.

The results of the interviews with 26 beneficiaries - 5 from each commune except Kablewa where 6 beneficiaries were surveyed - show that 19% were female and 81% male. 100% of these
beneficiaries stated that they had carried out their IGA and more than 92% thought that this activity was perfectly suited to their needs. Only 8% or 2 beneficiaries (Kablewa and Guéskerou) out of the 26 surveyed thought that the activity did not fit their needs. 42% stated that they had encountered difficulties in implementing the activity and the main difficulties encountered were theft of livestock, poor quality of accessories in the kit, insufficient skills for implementation and fluctuating market prices. When asked whether these beneficiaries benefited from follow-up from the project team, 96.15% answered in the affirmative.

With regards to the monitoring of their activities, all of them replied that they had been monitored at least 1 to 3 times and that this was conducted by either Search or the CCSE of the commune. However, it should be noted that despite this insufficient monitoring, the evaluation mission was surprised to note the low level of joint monitoring (Search - CCSE) for these beneficiaries. This observation on follow-up was also reported by the beneficiaries, the CCSE and even the project staff in the group discussions and interviews.

As for the income generated by the IGA, 100% of the beneficiaries surveyed stated that the activity generated income with a monthly average of around 25,000 FCFA with a maximum of 125,000 FCFA and a minimum of 5,000 FCFA.

To the question “Does the income generated by this IGA allow you to meet your family needs?” 67.38% of the respondents answered yes and the main needs cited were the purchase of clothing, food for the family, support for parents and the reconstitution of the kit for the continuation of their activity.

The figure below shows the changes in the living conditions of the beneficiaries by commune as a result of the implementation of these activities.
Figure 4: Distribution of respondents according to the changes in their living conditions brought about by the IGAs

Overall, the implementation of the IGA by the beneficiaries has brought many changes in their lives, which we have summarised in two main groups: empowerment (62%) and improvement of living conditions (38%), which includes the purchase of clothing, food, support for parents, replacement of stocks and small daily needs.

For a member of the peace committees in Chétimari: "Search’s support in IGAs has encouraged me to invest fully in the project's activities".

"Without the project’s support for young people in IGAs, it would be difficult, if not impossible, for young people to participate in the project’s activities on a permanent basis" for the vice mayor of Guéskerou.

The above testimonies show how the project’s support has been a determining factor in the commitment of young people in general and the direct beneficiaries of the project in particular to promote peace in their community.

D. Analysis of indicators

1. Strengthening the capacity of key community actors to deal with intra and inter-community conflicts

In order to achieve this objective, Search’s project team implemented activities such as joint capacity-building and group planning workshops, joint and community solidarity activities between security forces and the community, revitalisation of the Communal Monitoring and
Evaluation Committees (CMECs) and Community Peace Committees (CPCs), and the holding of peace architecture dialogues (PADs).

**% of key actors with increased knowledge of conflict prevention and management**

This indicator measures the proportion of actors with increased knowledge of conflict prevention and management among the project’s target population. The data analysed on the perception of respondents on the issue is illustrated in the figure below:

![Figure 6: Respondents’ assessment of their level of knowledge about conflict prevention and management with their participation in activities by commune](image)

25% of the respondents to the survey stated that the level of knowledge of key actors on conflict prevention and management is "Medium" compared to 72.63% who found the level of knowledge to be "Strong", of which 34.74% thought the level of knowledge was "Very strong". There has been an improvement of this indicator from the baseline study data of 45.9% to 72.63% in the final evaluation, a positive gain of 26.73. However, despite the plethora of training carried out and radio messages produced and broadcast, this indicator has not been able to reach the project target of 86%. However, it should be noted that this high level of knowledge acquired by the key actors has strongly contributed to the mitigation of conflicts in the area, thanks to the various knowledge restitutions to the populations through the sensitisation activities conducted by the youth. A community member in Gueskérerou said: **"The various awareness-raising activities organised by young people in the community on conflict prevention and management, collaboration and social cohesion have enabled us to see things differently, which was not the case before the project was implemented".**
The table below shows the distribution of respondents according to whether they have applied what they have learned to promote peace in their community.

**Table 6: Distribution of respondents according to whether they have implemented the acquis to promote peace**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Have you applied the achievements of these activities to promote peace?</th>
<th>Absolute frequencies</th>
<th>Relative frequencies</th>
<th>Cumulative frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Yes</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>87,16%</td>
<td>87,16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. No</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12,84%</td>
<td>100,00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>148</strong></td>
<td><strong>100,00%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100,00%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This data shows that more than 87% of respondents have applied their new knowledge for the promotion of peace against 12.84% who have done nothing.

With regard to the actions implemented, the evaluation mission noted that awareness-raising actions in favour of peace came in first place with 90.70%, followed by encouraging neighbours to participate in activities with 70.54% and collaboration through solidarity activities (football matches, closing of camps, rehabilitation or construction of showers, sanitation) and sharing of information with the SDF with 62.02%.

In response to the question “Do you think that these activities have helped to prevent conflicts and improve collaboration between the communities and the local authorities and the SDF?” 91.89% answered in the affirmative, out of which 86.03% think that these activities have helped preventing conflicts and improving collaboration between the community and the SDF and intergenerational collaboration in favour of peace, 71.32% think they have contributed to the establishment of a climate of trust and the creation of a space for community dialogue, and 61.03% to the calming down of the social climate. This information is similar to what was collected from the community in focus group discussions and individual interviews or participants. According to an environmental protection officer in Gueskerou: “I have been in Gueskerou for five years and this project has helped strengthening the proximity with the population and I have a high numbers from the population who share a lot of information with me, which is not the case for an FDS who had just arrived in Gueskerou”.
% of key stakeholders (including women, youth and hard-to-reach groups among youth), who support or have taken action to promote peace

This indicator informs us about the proportion of key stakeholders who have supported or taken action to promote peace among the target population key stakeholders (including women, youth and hard-to-reach groups among youth) who support or have taken action to promote peace.

![Figure 7: Distribution of respondents according to what they have done or supported to promote peace in the community by commune](image)

The analysis of the data shows us in the graph above that 87.63% of the respondents had supported or undertaken measures to promote peace in their commune. The gender breakdown shows that only 6.85% of men and 17.95% of women did not support or undertake actions to promote peace. These results could be explained by the enthusiasm of the communities for the project’s activities. Thus, the main activities carried out or in which they participated are summarised in the graph below.

![Figure 8: Distribution of respondents by what they have done or supported to promote peace in your community (N=190)](image)
Out of 569 respondents who participated in the project activities, 100% reported that they had supported or taken action to promote peace. For a project target of 80% and a result of 58% in the baseline study, this indicator is the only one of all project indicators to reach the 100% mark.

To the question “What have you done or supported to promote peace in your community?” it can be seen from the graph above that sanitation activities were cited 80.53%, followed by sensitisation sessions with 66.84%, while activities such as fencing of SDF camps only registered 8.42%. According to a participant in the focus group discussions in Mainé Soroa: “The Karfimu Zaman Taré project has strengthened our bonds of brotherhood and cohabitation with the various activities carried out by the youth.”

% of key stakeholders (including youth, women and marginalised groups) who feel they can work with local authorities on initiatives for peace and regional conflict resolution in Diffa

This indicator measures the proportion of key stakeholders (including youth, women and marginalised groups) who feel they can work with local authorities on initiatives for peace and regional conflict resolution in the Diffa region.

![Figure 9: Distribution of respondents according to their opinion on the collaboration between young people and local leaders by commune](image)

Regarding the collaboration of key stakeholders (including youth, women and marginalised groups) with local authorities in peace initiatives and regional conflict resolution in the Diffa region, 88.69% of the respondents think that this collaboration is “good”, of which 33.16% considered this collaboration “perfect”. It should be noted that the value of this indicator on
collaboration has almost doubled compared to the result recorded in the baseline study, which was of 46.9%. This increase could be explained by the enthusiasm generated by this new initiative, as for the majority of the people met in the framework of this evaluation, it is a first of this kind in the region in general, and particularly in the project intervention zone.

For an SDF in Mainé Soroa: "The project’s activities have given us the opportunity to exchange with the community on many subjects, including the functioning of the SDF, but especially on the collection of taxes, especially for those who do not have a national identity document. For the population, the police collect these taxes and pocket them for their personal use. Thus, thanks to these exchanges, we had the opportunity to explain to them and this brought down several prejudices observed on both sides (SDF and community)."

2. Increase youth engagement in communities for community resilience to violent extremism, conflict mitigation and economic recovery

Capacity building for youth empowerment, organisation of youth innovation camps, organisation of youth-led intra- and inter-community conflict prevention activities and youth economic empowerment

% of trained youth who are effectively involved in conflict prevention efforts

This indicator provides information on the proportion of trained youth who actually participated in conflict prevention efforts.

![Figure 10: Distribution of respondents according to their assessment of effective participation in conflict prevention efforts by trained youth by commune](image)

This graph shows us that 82.63% of the respondents think that the level of participation of the trained youth in conflict prevention efforts is 'strong', of which about 49% found these efforts
very strong’. This high level of youth participation would have enabled the youth to understand that the prevention and peaceful management of conflicts within the community is a source of stability and minimizes conflict in the community as testified by a focus group participant in Bosso: "The youth have understood now that conflict within a community is not good and that there are many ways to avoid or manage it thanks to their participation in the project activities. This means that there is less conflict now in the village". This trend is observed in the majority of the intervention communes, with the exception of Chétimari where the level of contribution is considered high at 68.57%. However, the beneficiaries met in the focus group discussions believe that the participation of the trained youth in the conflict prevention efforts is strong in view of the activities implemented. In the light of the above, it should be said that this indicator has shown progress compared to the baseline survey (25%) for a project target of 80%, i.e. a progress of 57.47% compared to the baseline survey and 2.47% compared to the project target.

% of target population stating that youth engagement contributes to breaking down intergenerational barriers and improving social cohesion

This indicator provides information on the proportion of the target population stating that youth engagement contributes to breaking down intergenerational barriers and improving social cohesion.

![Figure 11: Distribution of respondents according to the efforts of young people to become actors who contribute to social cohesion in their community by breaking down intergenerational barriers](image)

The young beneficiaries of the project have increased their participation in community-based approaches/activities aimed at strengthening social cohesion and peaceful cohabitation as shown in the evaluation results in the figure above. Indeed, it appears from the data analysis that young
people mentioned that they could participate in these activities by being active in order to break down any cohabitation barriers with their elders.

The baseline assessment revealed that 26% of the respondents were in favour of getting involved in their community in order to break down intergenerational barriers for the consolidation of peace, security and social cohesion. In the final evaluation, 97.09% of the respondents stated that they had participated in peacebuilding activities initiated by youth beneficiaries of the project at the community level. Furthermore, the survey data shows that 35.26% of the respondents found the relationship between youth and the elderly “excellent”, 52.11% “good” and 11.58% “moderately acceptable”. Also, 22.68% of the respondents claimed to have participated in community activities organised by the project for the reinforcement of peace, security and social cohesion 1 to 2 times while 47.42% participated in community activities for the reinforcement of peace, security and social cohesion between 3 and 5 times. A community member in Kablewa said: “Our participation in some of the project activities has allowed us to be closer to the youth and to understand that it is important to involve them in all matters concerning our community because we have noticed that they are very committed to promoting peace and social cohesion with this project”.

In general, the final evaluation showed that all young leaders, both men and women, initiated/participated in activities aimed at strengthening peace and social cohesion. It should be noted that some of these activities were organised as part of the implementation of the project activities while at the own initiatives of young beneficiaries to address the conflict and security challenges that identified through the meeting of mixed groups in the commune, according to the information given by the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of the project during the group discussions.

Through the present analysis and the field findings, the evaluation confirms that the project has considerably contributed to the improvement of youth participation in community activities for the reinforcement of peace, security and social cohesion for the elimination of intergenerational barriers.
% increase in the number of targeted community members who report that young people are taking action to become active and positive members

This indicator provides information on the proportion of targeted community members who report that young people are taking action to become active and positive members.

The evaluation also examined the degree of ownership of the project's activities by the young people through the actions taken to become active and positive members of their community. The men and women interviewed during the focus group discussions stated that the organisation of community activities linked to the strengthening of peace, security, collaboration and peaceful cohabitation show how committed young people are to their struggle to be recognised as an important part of the community. This feeling is widely shared by the communal, administrative and customary authorities met as part of the evaluation process. According to the participants, (i) initiatives for the peaceful management of conflicts, (ii) the construction of infrastructure of community interest favourable to social cohesion, such as sanitation sessions, fences and the construction of showers in military camps, (iii) sensitisation of communities on themes popularised by the project such as collaboration, violent extremism, conflict management, advocacy, rumour management, gender-based violence, leadership, organisation of football matches and other cultural events such as the horse race etc. were the main activities carried out by the youth leaders to strengthen peace and social cohesion in the community.

The baseline showed that only 50% of the youths thought that their contribution was increasing with some disparities in Gueskerou (41%) and Chétimari (67%). At the end of the project, the final
evaluation showed that just over 81% of respondents felt that the degree of contribution of young people to becoming active and positive members was high, of which 38% felt that the degree of contribution was very high. However, it should be noted that only in Chétimari (67%) did the trend not change significantly compared to the baseline situation, while the other four communes all exceeded the 80% mark.

% of targeted young people who believe they can engage constructively with their peers in a non-adversarial and non-violent manner

This indicator provides information on the proportion of young people who believe that they can engage in constructive dialogue with their peers in a non-adversarial and non-violent manner. The data shows us the degree of maturity of the young people at the end of the various training courses received, which is reflected by their ability to engage in constructive dialogue with their peers in a non-accusatory and non-violent manner. Indeed, this observation is the same throughout the project’s intervention zones where all the communes oscillate around 100%, with the exception of Chétimari which recorded 95%. These high rates observed here and there in the zone illustrate the change in perception of young people on how to deal with a problem in a peaceful and non-violent manner, induced by the various activities implemented by the project among the community in general and particularly among young people as testified below:

According to an authority in the town of Mainé Soroa: “The peace and security youth project has positively changed the vision of the young people of Mainé because before the implementation of this project, it was practically impossible to organise an activity bringing together young people from different cultures without it ending in fights”.

The respondents’ perception of young people’s ability to exchange with other young people from different cultures in a non-violent manner is very good. Indeed, 98.13% of them think that young people have the ability to interact with other young people from different cultures in a non-violent manner. This impression is also perceived at the level of key informants in the communities. An authority from Mainé Soroa: “The project has shown us how capable young people are of exchanging with each other without any problems and even manage to plan actions to be implemented in relation to problems identified during the meetings they organise”.

3. Amplify the voice of key stakeholders, particularly women, youth and marginalised groups, in contributing to peace and stability (Pillar 8. Objective 4).

In order to reach a large number of people, Search trained 8 producers/journalists from 8 local radio stations and supported local radio stations in the production and broadcast of 156 diverse audio contents.
% of target population reporting that women, youth and marginalized groups are more involved in peace and stability efforts in their communities

This indicator provides information on the proportion of the target population reporting that women, youth and marginalized groups are more involved in peace and stability efforts in their communities.

The data from this evaluation shows that 90% of respondents believe that youth, women and marginalized groups are now involved in peace and stability efforts in their communities, while 10% believe the opposite. With a project target of 60%, this indicator has improved significantly from the baseline survey data of 27.6%, a gain of 62.4 points. According to a young leader from Mainé, "Not long ago, the town authorities involved us in managing a problem at the palace level, where young people listened more to their chief than to their own parents, whereas before the project we were not involved in anything." ... He went on to say that "Thanks to the CP set up by Search, now some people even think that we have a job at the town hall, because we are invited to meetings".

The above graph shows that respondents' assessment of the involvement of young people, women and marginalized groups varies according to gender. Indeed, out of the 33.68% who found that young people, women and marginalized groups were more involved, 38.14% were men and 26.39% were women, whereas the proportions were more or less the same for the 'Involved' modality, with 59.72% for women and 54.24% for men. Thus, even if the involvement of
marginalised groups is effective, it should be said that women have a higher level of appreciation of this involvement than men.

**% of radio listeners declaring their support for promoting peace and addressing drivers of violent extremism in radio programmes**

This indicator provides information on the proportion of radio listeners declaring their support for promoting peace and addressing the drivers of violent extremism in radio programmes. According to the authorities and radio managers interviewed, the roundtable shows and magazines produced and broadcast in local languages have been an opportunity for key stakeholders to deepen their understanding of issues such as violent extremism.

95.65% of the respondents support or agree that the programmes broadcast have the objective of preventing violent extremism and promoting peace in a global way. This trend is similar in all other communes, except Mainé Soroa where the rate is 100% as shown in the figure above. According to a radio manager in Bosso: *"The main messages broadcast by the radios call for the denunciation of suspicious persons, the collaboration with the SDF, the avoidance of suspicious packages, the reporting of rumours in order to reduce cases of violence in the community".*

**% of radio listeners who report having access to relevant security information and positive counter-narratives to violent extremism**

This indicator provides information on the proportion of radio listeners who report having access to relevant security information and positive counter-narratives to violent extremism. The graph below shows the level of access of community members to relevant security information and positive counter-narratives to violent extremism by commune.
97% of respondents think that the level of access of community members to relevant security information and positive counter-narratives to violent extremism by commune is acceptable, of which 43% think it is ”Good”. In response to the question “Can you give us examples of topics broadcast by the radios?” 70.87% cited violent extremism as a topic discussed in the broadcasts, out of which 73.91% think these messages are important and useful in building community resilience to violent extremism. On the other hand, the discussions with the community during the focus groups showed that they have little knowledge of the concept of violent extremism in all the communes except in Mainé Soroa, where some of them were able to give a fairly clear definition of the concept. Unfortunately, this was also the case for men in the communes of Bosso, Chétimari and Guéskerou.

E. Comparative table of project indicators

The table below presents the level of achievement of the logical framework indicators at the final evaluation compared to the project target according to the project baseline.

Table 7: Project performance framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall objective: To strengthen community resilience and response to violent extremism and community conflict in Diffa</th>
<th>Project indicators</th>
<th>Project baseline</th>
<th>Project target</th>
<th>Final evaluation of the project</th>
<th>Difference with the project target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indicator 0.1: % of youth respondents, including those from hard-to-reach groups, who report being able to contribute to the community-led multi-level dialogue process and programme on peace and stability in the Diffa region</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>82,47%</td>
<td>+2,47</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Objective 1: To strengthen the capacity of key community actors to address intra- and inter-community conflicts (in line with Objective 36 of the eighth pillar of the LCBC strategy).</td>
<td>Indicator 1.0: # of key stakeholders trained in conflict management, leadership and community awareness</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator 1.1: % of key actors with increased knowledge of conflict prevention and management</td>
<td>45,90%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>72,63%</td>
<td>-13,37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator 1.2: % of key stakeholders (including women, youth and hard-to-reach groups among youth) who support or have taken action to promote peace.</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>87,63%</td>
<td>+7,63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Indicator 1.3: % of key stakeholders (including youth, women and marginalised groups) who feel that they can work with local authorities on regional peace and conflict resolution initiatives in the Diffa region

| | 46,90% | 70% | 83,68% | +13,68 |

### Objective 2: Increase youth engagement at community level for community resilience to violent extremism, conflict mitigation and economic recovery (Pillar 9 objective, goal 39)

| Indicator 2.1: % of trained youth effectively involved in conflict prevention efforts | NA$^4$ | - | 82,63% | - |
| Indicator 2.2: % of target population stating that youth engagement contributes to breaking down intergenerational barriers and improving social cohesion | 26% | 60% | 87,37% | +27,37 |
| Indicator 2.3: % increase in the number of targeted community members who report that young people are taking action to become active and positive members | 50% | 50% | 97,09% | +47,09 |
| Indicator 2.4: % of targeted young people who believe they can engage in constructive dialogue with their peers in a non-adversarial and non-violent manner | 42,20% | 60% | 98,13% | +38,13 |

### Specific objective 3: Amplify the voice of key stakeholders, in particular women, youth and marginalised groups, in contributing to peace and stability (Pillar 8. Objective 4).

| Indicator 3.1: % of target population reporting that women, youth and marginalized groups are more involved in peace and stability efforts in their communities | 27,60% | 60 % | 90 % | +30 |
| Indicator 3.2: % of radio listeners declaring their support for promoting peace and addressing drivers of violent extremism in radio programmes | 68% | 80 % | 95,65% | +15,65 |
| Indicator 3.3: % of radio listeners who report having access to relevant security information and positive counter-narratives to violent extremism | 68% | 80 % | 97,10% | +17,10 |
| Indicator 3.4: # of stories of radio listeners taking any peace support action and addressing the drivers of violent extremism | 0 | 5 | ND | 0 |

Overall, the «Youth, Peace and Security» project achieved its objectives and even exceeded some of them, taking into account the indicators proposed and measured in the results framework. The planned outputs were all largely achieved. It should be noted, however, that for the peace architecture component, only the drafting of the document and its validation, as well as 5 meetings, were carried out, but it's formalisation by a decree that should have been issued by the authority could not be done until the end of the project. The reasons put forward by the authorities and the project staff are the changes in the public administration with the December 2020 elections and the delays in starting the project.

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$^4$ Non applicable because the baseline study did not measure this indicator
F. Sustainability of the intervention’s achievements

1. The project has thought about the "Exit strategy" to ensure social cohesion project

The project involved the municipalities of each commune from the outset, which should ensure continuity of post-project monitoring through the revitalised CCES, once the project was completed. Thus, the very approach of training the 350 young community leaders and then accompanying them with an IGA of their choice was part of the project’s exit plan. However, the vast majority of people (including committee members) met during this evaluation are optimistic about the sustainability of the activities, especially for IGAs whose viability would depend on the conviction and determination of the beneficiary. The following accounts support this view:

"Before the project, I could not even afford a piece of soap, but since I started my small business, I no longer need to ask for help from anyone, but rather I help others and I do not see how I can stop what I was doing." according to a Kablewa beneficiary.

"Thank God and thank you also to Search who allowed me to realise my dream because thanks to this support, I was able to open a small business for my little brother too, for whom it works better than me and I am proud of that." A young leader of Mainé Soroa.

The project was sustainable thanks to the preparation of the beneficiaries and the strong involvement of the administration at the communal level

The involvement of the communal administration and the training of 70 young leaders per commune is one of the factors favourable to the viability of the project according to the project team. Indeed, the authorities, especially the communal authorities, told us that they had been involved in the implementation of the project and that the project had left them with a model to follow for the consolidation of peace within their commune, and the inclusion of young people and women in the decision-making process.

The young leaders trained under the project are very dynamic and say that they see no obstacle to continuing the activities initiated by the project within their capacity. However, this assertion of continuity by the beneficiaries remains mixed when we look at the answers given to the question "Do you think that the stakeholders (people who participated in the implementation of the project: young leaders, women, marginalised groups, the FDS and partner radios, etc.) will continue to maintain their commitment to peacekeeping after the end of funding?" Indeed, the people interviewed gave divergent opinions, so for the vast majority (7/10) of the people we met, it would be possible for the isolated sensitisation activities in view of the knowledge acquired by the participants, the continuation of the IGAs by the beneficiaries, the sanitation activities and the broadcasting of radio messages in favour of the promotion of peace, whereas for the others,
only the IGAs could continue at the end of the project. Interviews with radio managers leave us optimistic that the broadcasting of peacebuilding messages will continue, as for them it is a vocation to do so without even any funding. Also, the evaluation team notes with satisfaction signs of replication for the IGAs in several communes, including Chétimari, Mainé Soroa and Kabléwa. Indeed, some beneficiaries stated during the group discussions and interviews that many young people in their communes have formed a savings group in order to be able to carry out an IGA because they do not have the necessary resources to do so alone.

Thus, in view of the above and the observations made in the field, we believe that the results obtained by the implementation of this project are sustainable, reproducible and should be scaled up to the region.

G. Successes, good practices, observed weaknesses and other lessons learned, as well as constraints and opportunities related to the implementation of the project

1. Successes

   o The revitalisation of community peace and development structures has enabled these structures to become operational, thus contributing to the progressive involvement of young people and women in decision-making bodies.
   
   o The involvement of the administrative authorities, particularly the municipal authorities, has contributed to the strengthening of dialogue and consultation between the governed and those in power in order to better face the challenges of violent extremism within the community.
   
   o The conduct of collaborative activities between the population and the SDF has helped bring the SDF and the community closer together by breaking down prejudices on both sides.
   
   o The development and validation of the peace architecture.
   
   o The capacity building for young leaders, journalists and media technicians and the provision of equipment for community radios has greatly contributed to the better implementation of project activities.
   
   o The organisation of youth groups by theme: advocacy, participatory theatre, forum for popular expression and the media has made it possible to raise awareness among the vast majority of the community on themes such as conflict prevention and management, collaboration, violent extremism, social cohesion and peace.

2. Major challenges and difficulties

   o Lack of understanding of the local language by the vast majority of the SDF.
o The mobility of the SDFs due to the rotation system, which is often done every three months.
o The amount provided per IGA kit does not allow for a good composition of kits with better quality.
o The quality of IGA supplies leaves much to be desired as they are paid for locally.
o The delay in the provision of IGA kits for some beneficiaries.
o The envelope allocated for the organisation of activities to prevent inter-community and intra-community conflicts is very insufficient.
o The insufficient monitoring of project activities (IGA).
o The number of IGA beneficiaries per commune is very low given the size of the communes.
o The incomplete delivery of IGA kits, impacting on their quality and the expected results.
o The security situation has had a significant impact on certain activities.
o The young people trained in participatory theatre were not provided with sound equipment.
o Insecurity, which hinders access to certain areas and the implementation of certain activities;
o Culturally, women tend not to be involved in public activities and speaking out, which hinders their involvement in activities such as participatory theatre.
o The lack of women's leadership; although they are always present, women did not always actively participate in group activities, which is why the project has organised separate male and female youth innovation camps.
o The lack of dedicated spaces for women and girls throughout the project.
o Non-respect of curfew hours by the youth;
o The lack of identity cards for the population (this causes huge problems between SDF and civilians).

3. Lessons learned

**Lesson learned 1:** The inclusion of all youth leaders, women, marginalised groups, religious leaders, radio stations, authorities and the HACP is conducive to the success of the community peacebuilding project. In the context of creating and revitalising frameworks for dialogue at the community level, the project took into account the mix of representatives from different strata of the population, the authorities and civil society, which allowed for easy social cohesion. Indeed, as an administrative authority in Mainé Soroa told us, "the committees found on site brought together young people, women and all segments of the population without taking into account their political, religious or ethnic affiliation. The project has facilitated the integration of all these categories". He also added that "the project has provided a lot of contextual training which has enabled the young beneficiaries of the project and the whole community to behave well and reduce
cases of violence and conflict”. He went on to say that “the project has been able to establish/determine channels of listening/information gathering before its launch through trainings, sensitization sessions and radio broadcasts”. Finally, he pointed out that “the project has also facilitated the community, especially the youth leaders to improve relations with the SDF and local authorities”.

Lesson learned #2: The project has shown that the involvement of the SDF in community activities and exchange frameworks (Mixed Group, Youth Innovation Camps, Mixed Workshop, Peace Architecture, Round Tables, radio broadcasting, etc.) has favoured the settlement of disputes and the consolidation of peace.

Lesson learned #3: The capacity building of youth, women and marginalised groups in conflict prevention and management, leadership, entrepreneurship, etc. and their accompaniment in IGA by the project has strengthened their involvement and commitment in the promotion of peace which has greatly contributed to the creation of a climate of trust and good collaboration between the different segments of the population, which has allowed for the mitigation of conflicts in the area.

Lesson learned #4: The short time frame of peacebuilding interventions is still a barrier to promoting visible change in this area.

Twenty months of implementation is not enough time to set up dialogue frameworks and make them viable, to succeed in strengthening the social fabric and to make it non-reversible. If the donor’s funding cycle is structurally short, it is probably necessary to think of what other, longer interventions to connect them to in order to make their results sustainable.
CONCLUSIONS

In view of the above, it is easy to see that significant results have been achieved through the interventions of the "Youth, Peace and Security Project: A community initiative for increased stabilisation in Diffa" in the intervention zone due to the relevance of its activities, which proved to be coherent with the context of the intervention zone, the alignment of the project's objectives with the priorities of the State of Niger and the needs of the project's beneficiaries, the systematic and permanent commitment and adherence of local actors and authorities to the project's approach thanks to its participatory nature. The project's approach is participatory, inclusive, instructive and, above all, innovative. It has also led to the development and validation of the peace architecture document, the establishment of a climate of trust between the various stakeholders, particularly the SDF and the communities, the effective implementation of IGA by the 350 young people, and the acquisition of increased knowledge by the various project stakeholders in terms of conflict prevention and management.

Thus, the resources deployed during these 24 months were indeed worthwhile. However, in view of the positive changes brought about and the importance of the phenomenon, additional resources must necessarily be mobilised in order to finance a second phase, which is greatly desired by the stakeholders, to amplify the positive results obtained by moving on to new areas sharing the same types of challenges.
RECOMMENDATIONS

In the future, Search and the partners should follow the following recommendations:

To the Government and authorities of the Diffa region:

Recommendation 1: Invest more in the monitoring of peacebuilding and security activities, as well as in the assumption of certain costs, in particular the functioning of the PCs and CCSEs in the five project communes.

Recommendation 2: Materialise the architecture of peace in the Diffa region by issuing a decree fixing the composition and functioning of these structures.

To the German cooperation

Recommendation 3: Fund a second phase of the project to increase the impact of the project, consolidate the achievements of the implementation of the first phase by expanding the area of intervention and putting special emphasis on women's leadership.

To Search

Recommendation 4: Consider a follow-up to the project in order to finalise the peace architecture process and perpetuate the gains in terms of social cohesion, collaboration and IGA.

Recommendation 5: Continue efforts to reach more targets and strengthen awareness-raising activities in other villages facing the same problem by organising mass activities and intensifying the production and broadcasting of radio programmes.

Recommendation 6: Continue giving responsibility to community structures through the municipalities in the implementation of programmes to promote peace and the fight against violent extremism by ensuring their real capacity for technical supervision and local monitoring.

Recommendation 7: Broaden the project's targets by using tools such as awareness-raising caravans and other similar tools in order to reach a large part of the communities.

Recommendation 8: Continue to work with radio partners and reflect with them on the mechanisms to be put in place to better consolidate the gains for peace.

Recommendation 9: Continue to involve local authorities in the implementation of the activities of the NGO Search in their administrative entities so that they take ownership of the achievements of the project.

Recommendation 10: When designing the project, provide for a monitoring plan to ensure the sustainability of the project's achievements after the funding has ended.
To the SDF

Recommendation 11: Be truly involved in the actions of the PCs and respect the population.

Recommendation 12: Continue to hold open days to explain their role and functioning to the population, in order to facilitate collaboration between them.

To community peace structures and project beneficiaries

Recommendation 13: Ensure that the activities of IGA beneficiaries are monitored by CCSE members in the field to ensure local supervision;

Recommendation 14: Continue public utility activities such as sanitation in order to preserve cohesion and collaboration.
ANNEXES

Terms of Reference (ToR)
Methodological note
List of collection tools
Assessment matrix
Work plan
List of documents consulted