BASELINE STUDY REPORT

Project: "On est ensemble".

Strengthen the resilience of youth to violent extremism and promote long-term stability in northern Tillabéri

NIGER
Communes: Abala, Ayorou, Banibangou, Bankilaré, Sanam (Tillabéri)

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List of Acronyms

**AGR**: Revenue Generating Activity

**ComDev**: Communication Society for Development

**EV**: Violent Extremism

**MSDS**: Defense and Security Force

**FGD**: Focus Group Discussions

**HACP**: High Authority for Peacebuilding

**IC**: Confidence Interval

**KII**: Key Informing Interviews

**NGO**: Non-Governmental Organization

**CSO**: Civil Society Organization

**SFCG**: Search For Common Ground

**SG**: Secretary General
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Executive Summary

This report is part of the baseline study in the five (5) intervention communes of the On Est Ensemble project, funded by USAID. Search for Common Ground is implementing a project in partnership with the youth of the local association ComDev with the overall objective of "Strengthening youth resilience to violent extremism and promoting long-term stability in northern Tillabéri".

The project has two (2) specific objectives: (1) To enable positive youth engagement in local decision-making processes; (2): To increase incentives for meaningful and concerted economic engagement of youth.

The overall objective of this baseline study is to determine the baseline level of project performance indicators by ensuring greater conflict sensitivity.

Specifically, it is about:
1. Determine the current level of project indicators;
2. To identify divisive factors and triggers of conflict between communities in the project areas.

This baseline study was conducted using a mixed approach combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. Data collection was based on individual interview tools, key informant interview guides (KII) and focus group discussion (FGD). All tools were programmed on the Kobo Toolbox server to digitize the data collection on smartphones. Thus, smartphones were used for data collection via the Kobo Collect application. The data extracted from the server was processed and analyzed via the Excel spreadsheet program.

1. Current level of project indicators

   The indicators that have been measured are:
   - **Indicator 1**: 34% of target community members report that youth are taking steps to become active and positive members.
   - **Indicator 1.1**: 36% of targeted youth believe they can engage constructively with their peers in a non-adversarial and non-violent manner.

2. Divisive factor and conflict triggers

   - Mistrust and prejudice based on belonging to a socio-cultural group;
   - Mismanagement of conflicts by traditional leaders and chiefs;
   - The collapse of the economic sector and employment in the municipalities;
   - Disunity of leaders responsible for bringing the community together around a common interest;
   - Insufficient transparency in the public management of the authorities;
   - Lack of trust between the Defense and Security Forces and communities;
   - Suspicion of community complicity with non-state armed groups;
   - Restriction of individual and collective liberties through the imposition of a state of security emergency;
   - Ignorance of the importance of safety measures and civic obligations by some community members and the
   - Inappropriate behaviour of certain MSDS elements.

3. Recommendations for readjusting the project implementation strategy

   - The "We are together" project, because of its social and economic ambitions, must maintain a vigilant eye on the involvement of women in the implementation of its interventions.
   - A risk mitigation plan must be developed as part of the management of this project, which will address solutions to some of the uncontrolled factors of uncertainty that are innumerable, especially in the early stages of project implementation.
   - The "We are together" project must look at the inclusive process to be successful in achieving its objectives.
The key results of this mission are as follows:

This study shows a rather erratic state of collaboration between youth from different communities and a mixed perception of youth by community members. In fact, a proportion of 66% of respondents believe that the youth in their communities do not take enough steps to take action and be active and positive members in their communities.

Also, the contribution of youth to peace and security is rated "Great" and "Very Great" by 37% and 8% of survey respondents respectively, while 29% of respondents find their contribution "Average", 19% "Low" and 6% "Very Low". Analysis of the data revealed that a small number of respondents (36%) report being able to engage constructively with their peers in a non-adversarial and non-violent manner.

Regarding the ability of young people to collaborate with other young people from different communities, 7% of respondents said it was very weak, 27% weak, 30% average, 29% strong and 7% considered it very strong.

This weakness in young people's capacities is justified by a set of factors that they mentioned such as the lack of awareness of citizenship and politics, the low involvement of young people in previous actions, the lack of concern for the security problem, the persistent resentment resulting from a tumultuous cohabitation in the past, the fear of aggravating already conflictual relationships, and the unavailability linked to individual occupations.

The conflict analysis conducted as part of this baseline study based on the information gathered during the various interviews and FGDs confirms the worrisome state of the security situation. The main characteristic of the region's context is its high volatility, creating a climate of permanent anxiety even in times of calm. The most recurring conflicts that hinder security stability and social cohesion within communities are conflicts related to access to and management of natural resources, conflicts related to the actions of GANE, leadership conflicts, inter-ethnic conflicts, conflicts between youth and communities, and conflicts between authorities and communities.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The baseline study of the "On est ensemble" project established a baseline situation of the project indicators in the project intervention zones according to pre-established criteria. The data collected provided a general overview of the security situation in this area of northern Tillabéri, to understand the dynamics of conflicts, the factors of division and blockage, and the opportunities for collaboration between members of the different communities. The data collected also made it possible to calculate the various project indicators in order to have an idea of the gap that needs to be filled in order to achieve the project's objectives. The following recommendations are based on all of the data collected.

Recommendations for gender mainstreaming

Women are much less represented than men in the activities themselves. If, on the other hand, they are the first to suffer the effects of the crisis. The "We are together" project, because of its social and economic ambitions, must maintain a vigilant eye on the involvement of women in the implementation of its interventions.

Recommendation for implementation of all activities
Given the low capacity of young people to collaborate due to the different prejudices of belonging to a socio-cultural group, it is essential that the project takes this difficulty into account by setting up frameworks for dialogue for the joint implementation of activities.

**Recommendation for strengthening positive youth engagement**
The commitment of young people as a positive consolidating actor remains weak. Therefore, the project must analyze the needs of young people and take their opinions into account to increase their commitment to social cohesion between community groups in each of the communes.

**Recommendations for strengthening dialogue**
The "*On est ensemble*" project must look at the inclusive process of all community groups in the communes in order to be effective in carrying out activities and achieving objectives. Indeed, it appears from this analysis that collaboration among youth in communities in conflict is weak and mistrust is pervasive. For several other reasons, previous projects have missed their objectives because members of minority and/or marginalized communities were not involved, severely limiting the impact of the results.
Introduction

Located in southwestern Niger, bordering Burkina Faso and Mali, the Tillabéri region is increasingly affected by instability resulting from intensified cross-border attacks by violent extremist groups, increased banditry, and exacerbation of inter-community conflicts. Indeed, early 2018 saw a sharp increase in attacks against the population. Continued harassment of border communities, raids and theft of livestock and property, sexual violence, and killings are regularly reported by communities. As a result of the rapid acceleration of insecurity, internal displacement has increased exponentially and economic opportunities have diminished. As a reminder, a state of emergency has been declared in the 12 of the 13 departments in the Tillabéri region. Although these measures are intended to address immediate security threats, the root causes of instability remain largely ignored in the region strategically located only 100 kilometers from Niger's capital. The installation of the state of emergency has prevented crop growth in many rural areas, reducing income-generating opportunities for all groups. Indeed, Tillabéri is home to diverse and often conflicting ethnic groups, including Fulani pastoralists, Hausa and Zarma-Songhai farmers, and semi-nomadic and nomadic Touareg and Arab tribes (many of whom have fled insecurity in the neighboring region of Gao in Mali). While the root cause of conflicts between these communities often boils down to access and claims to resources such as land, water, livestock and humanitarian aid, tensions and fighting tend to adopt a group or ethnic dynamic. Pre-existing conflict dynamics between these groups have been fundamentally affected and exacerbated by the sudden instability in central Mali.

I. Presentation of the project

In the context described above, Search for Common Ground (Search) is implementing in partnership with the youth of the local association ComDev and the High Authority for Peacebuilding (HACP), the governorate of Tillabéri, the national and regional youth councils, and local management structures a project whose overall objective is to "Strengthen the resilience of youth to violent extremism and promote long-term stability in northern Tillabéri". The project specifically targets five communes in the northern strip: Ayorou, Bankikaré, Banibangou, Sanam and Abala. Strengthening resilience and stability and reducing vulnerabilities to VA will require investments in inter-group cohesion, mobilizing youth for positive change, and supporting collaborative social development and peacebuilding activities". The project aims to achieve three outcomes, namely:

- E.R.1.1: Youth in communities in conflict have increased capacity to constructively engage their peers and leadership in a non-adversarial and non-violent manner.
- E.R.1.2: Youth in communities in conflict lead conflict mitigation and stabilization efforts in partnership with their peers and leaders.
- E.R.1.3: Mixed groups of young men and women from different groups work together and strengthen relationships through collaborative initiatives.

1.1 General objective

The overall objective of this assessment is to determine the baseline level of project performance indicators by ensuring greater conflict sensitivity.

1.2 Specific objectives

Specifically, it is about:

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1. Determine the current level of project indicators;
2. To identify divisive factors and triggers of conflict between communities in the project areas.

II. Methodology

The methodology used to conduct this baseline study is based on a mixed approach (qualitative and quantitative) that allows for data triangulation.

Quantitative approach

The quantitative approach involves the use of a questionnaire that is administered to a representative sample of community members who are young men and women (aged 18 to 35) from conflict-affected agricultural, pastoralist, semi-nomadic and nomadic communities. But also traditional chiefs and locally elected officials. This approach is used to measure the indicators. This makes it possible to monitor the progression of the effects attributable to the project's actions on the direct and indirect beneficiaries.

The indicators that have been measured are:

- % increase in the number of members of the target community who report that youth are taking steps to become active and positive members.
- % of targeted youth who believe they can engage constructively with their peers in a non-adversarial and non-violent manner.

Taking into account a confidence interval (CI) of 5%, a Z-score of 1.96 and a proportion of 50%, the sample size for a 95% level of significance is 384 people to be surveyed. The sample of 384 was distributed according to the weight of the population in each commune. In other words, the sample per commune is determined by multiplying the proportion of the population in each commune by the sample size (384) to obtain the number of persons to be surveyed in each commune.

The questionnaire was set up on the Kobo Collect server so that the collection could be carried out on smartphones via the application adapted to this server. This approach offers the advantage of a daily follow-up of the data collection in order to monitor the performance of the teams and the evolution of the field data collection. The data sent on a daily basis is monitored to ensure its quality. These data were then exported to Excel for reconciliation, processing and analysis.

II.1 Socio-demographic characteristics

As part of sampling, field data collection to ensure that gender sensitivity is taken into account. For example, the distribution of respondents shows a certain balance between male and female respondents, with 50% male and 50% female respondents each. There are differences, however, between localities such as Abala where women make up 61% of the sample, which are compensated for by other localities such as Banibangou where men are in the majority in the sample.
The age distribution shows a predominance of the 30-34 age group with 39% of respondents, followed by the 35-39 age group with 32% of respondents and the 25-29 age group. Age groups over 50 years of age are the least represented in the sample. Youth being the main target of this project, the sample was also designed with a view to ensuring their strong representation.

The breakdown by ethnic origin reveals that 38% of respondents are of Hausa ethnic origin, 31% of Zarma ethnic origin, 23% of Tuareg ethnic origin, 7% are Fulani against 1% Arab and 0.4% greedy.
AID 014 Project Baseline Study Report

Figure 3: Distribution of Respondents by Ethnicity

Qualitative approach

The qualitative approach uses a discussion guide to conduct Focus Group Discussions, Key Informant Interviews (KII) and individual questionnaires. It allowed for an analysis of the factors dividing communities in order to understand the dynamics of conflict between the different community groups involved in the implementation of the project. This analysis identified opportunities for social cohesion between youth in communities in conflict and existing local conflict resolution mechanisms.

Focus Group Discussions

The FGD targeted a group of 8 people with generally similar characteristics (gender, age, ethnicity, etc.). They were carried out by two team members including a note taker and an exchange facilitator. Three FGDs were carried out within the framework of this Baseline, for a total of 15 FGDs.

- 01 FGD: Of women including 8 adult women.
- 01 FGD: Of men including 8 adult males.
- 01 FGD: Young people including 8 persons under 30 years old.

Key Informing Interviews

KIIs with key individuals are essential for gathering in-depth information on a particular topic or context. KIIs target specific individuals who have a comprehensive understanding of the local context. The categories of respondents targeted in each of the communes are as follows: Prefect / SG Prefecture, Mayor / Vice Mayor, Chef de canton, Commune leader male, Female leader, Young leader, CSO actor, Peace committee leader, Traditional leader.
A total of 51 KIIs were completed during the field data collection.

These activities were carried out in the project's target areas, which are shown on the map below.
Each discussion guide has a consent section. Thus, participants gave their consent prior to participating in the interview. The questionnaires were coded to keep the anonymity of participants anonymous and saved on the SFCG premises. Photographs were also taken following the signing of a consent form.

II.2 Limitations of the study and mitigation measures

It is important to take into account when conducting this research that there are certain risks and limitations. This is often the case when research takes place in difficult environments. Specific problems may arise when collecting data, such as the following:

✔ The different research teams were able to feel pressure from the different stakeholders to provide results adapted to their agendas;
✔ Security constraints may have limited the ability of participants to speak openly about certain issues;
✔ Cultural constraints, including the gender, religion, or ethnicity of the interviewer, can be a challenge in data collection;
✔ Linguistic constraints: the different languages used along the process can be a constraint. Data collection tools are translated from French into local languages, where the nuances of the content may have changed. Interviews were conducted in the local language and transcripts were translated into French. Translation errors may occur during this process;
Respondents may have provided false or misleading information. Potential reasons for this may include lack of information or misinformation from the respondent, inadvertently presenting opinions as facts, deliberately pushing the conversation in the wrong direction in order to discredit others, being viewed favorably by the interviewer, fear of the repercussions of revealing information and/or overestimating one's own role in the events;

When the data was extracted, 237 forms were retained for analysis instead of the 256 decided upon during planning.

Search has tried to minimize these risks by:

- Recruiting interviewers at the local level who can reduce cultural bias and ensure frank discussions;
- Trying to ensure that all respondents participate voluntarily, informing them of their right to decide whether or not to participate, and emphasizing that there are no repercussions if they do not participate;
- Trying to ensure that participants do not provide erroneous or incomplete information by building trust with the interviewer, adapting data collection tools to each context and target population, and ensuring anonymity;
- Working with investigators with expertise and experience, who have a basic understanding of development/security issues and establish links with local communities;
- Informing the local authorities and military positions in the search area of the team's travel schedule;
- The logistics team was in charge of checking the condition of the vehicles before the start of the mission.

III. Results

The results of this baseline study focus on assessing the baseline level of the performance indicators of the "On est ensemble" project. This will make it possible to situate the gap to be filled in relation to the problem that the project proposes to address. As a reminder, the project addresses the issue related to the place of youth in conflict transformation and peacebuilding, for safer communities and youth empowerment in areas of northern Tillabéri severely affected by security challenges. To ensure their sensitivity to conflict, the results also address a dynamic component of conflict, in order to take this reality into account in the programming of activities. This will also help to ensure the principle of "Do No Harm".

III.1 Analysis of the security context

The security context in the communes targeted by this baseline study is described as unstable by the respondents who participated in the various interviews and focus groups. The permanent presence of Niger's military positions in the communes has fostered a lull over the past few months, however, respondents state that rumors of the presence of armed bandits who are trying to lay siege to the communes are creating psychosis (the population's psychosis and permanent feeling of fear because of armed groups who exercise their power to the dismay of the communities as a whole) among the population. The increasingly pressing and permanent threat of these non-state armed groups stems from the expansion of their area of action in the Liptako-Gourma region covering the border areas of Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso. Policing by the governments of these three countries and other security partners has become a daunting task in the face of recurring attacks by NSAGs. The latter take advantage of the weak presence of the state in villages far from urban communes to sow disorder.
through aggression, intimidation, kidnapping, theft of livestock or merchants, or attacks on military positions that sometimes result in heavy human toll. Despite the apparent calm in the communes during data collection, communities report that there have been several incidents in recent months beyond the urban communes and permanent military positions. These events that have had the greatest impact on social tranquility are the following:

**Table 1: Safety Incidents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communes</th>
<th>Safety Incidents</th>
<th>Periods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bankilaré</td>
<td>★ Reports of men on motorcycles travelling to Dolbel and Wanzerbé (Goroual) and to Lemdou (Bankilaré)</td>
<td>Between June and July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>★ Arrival of 137 people fleeing violence in Burkina Faso in the commune of Bankilaré</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayorou</td>
<td>Assassination of the chief of a village in the commune of Inates</td>
<td>July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banibangou</td>
<td>★ Kidnapping of a trader at the Tizégorou market, the village chief of Intadéné and three of his subordinates</td>
<td>Between June and July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>★ Assassination of a peasant in the fields</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>★ Theft of cattle in the villages of Inekar, Soumatte, Fandoubanda.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>★ For the most recent one, dated 09/07/2020, attempted kidnapping of the village chief of Soumatte, absent from the village.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abala</td>
<td>★ Removal of the chairman of the market intermediaries structure (Dillali)</td>
<td>June and July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>★ Attack against MSDS in Tamalaoulaou</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>★ Assassination of the village chief and an imam wounded by bullets in the neighboring commune of Filingué in Rouhou</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>★ Population movements from the village of Rounhou to Filingué</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>★ Conflict between farmers and breeders in Badak Toudou, resulting in 3 injuries, 2 of which were serious.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanam</td>
<td>★ Kidnapping of the village chief of Martchen Djaouri</td>
<td>June</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**3.1.1. Security context in BANKILARÉ**

In the opinion of the authorities and community leaders, the security situation in the department of Bankilaré is calm compared to other departments in the Tillabéri region. However, the leaders observe the beginning of worries with the rise of events or movements that seem to be without seriousness but that should be considered with great vigilance. Indeed, with the deterioration in Burkina Faso, which seems to become in a few months the epicenter of this Sahelian crisis by the scale and constancy of jihadist attacks, the authorities of the department of Bankilaré are on alert with regard to suspicious movements of motorcycles in their border area with this country. Many have been reported since the beginning of the year and concern continues to grow. In addition to suspicious movements, people are threatened via telephone calls, social networks, and acts of cattle theft.
3.1.2. Safety Context in ABALA

The security situation in the department of Abala has not improved significantly. Since Sanam is a rural commune of Abala, the analysis was done jointly. As evidenced by the respondents’ comments, the defense and security forces have been on constant alert for several weeks. The deleterious climate persists due to suspicious displacements in the area and accentuates the feeling of perpetual insecurity within the community. Since then, cases of kidnapping have been reported, as well as incursions by armed groups into the area to force the population to pay taxes. Threats and intimidation also occur against local dignitaries and villagers who are suspected of collaborating with state authorities and the DSF. Thus, kidnappings are occurring, sometimes followed by the release of the villagers, suggesting that the suspected FDS informers are being called to order. Respondents expressed great concern about the evolution of the situation, especially since they have the impression that terrorist groups and armed bandits are acting with increasing ease in the area. What increasingly concerns respondents from this community is the form of impunity, lawlessness, and weak authority of the regalian force, which continues to prevail in the area despite government announcements of redeployment to these localities after the resounding attacks on the Chinégodar and Inatès military camps.

3.1.3. Security Context BANIBANGOU

In the locality of Banibangou, in the opinion of the authorities and community leaders, the situation is clearly critical because on a daily basis they hear about cases of aggression, theft of livestock, and threats in the area. This is forcing many farmers to stay away from their fields to sow seeds and impacting the already fragile ecosystem of the department. This locality is remembered as having been the target of violent attacks at the end of 2019, resulting in about 100 deaths in the ranks of the army. Months later, the memories are still vivid and weigh on the sense of insecurity of the local population. According to the authorities, this fear hinders any economic development initiative and precipitates the occurrence of other types of crises, including food, health, and education. There have been reports of suspicious movements, rumors of the installation of IEDs and continuing death threats against certain village chiefs.

3.1.4. Security context in AYOROU

The security situation in Ayorou, meanwhile, seems calm according to the participants in the individual interviews. Massive displacements of jihadists were noted in the department a few weeks
ago which foreshadow destabilization in the future. Respondents said that the situation remains worrisome and that vigilance is still required.

"The security situation is calm in recent days despite the threats of attack on Ayorou. »
Representative of the Ayorou Youth Council

III.2 Analysis of conflict dynamics

The analysis of conflict dynamics is an important step in understanding the factors that trigger conflicts but also their impact on the social cohesion and stability of the project's target areas. This analysis was carried out in accordance with the need to ensure better adaptation to the assumptions underlying project implementation. Thus, in the framework of this report, a rapid conflict analysis was carried out on the basis of the information gathered during the various interviews and FGDs. The conflicts identified are, according to the respondents, the most recurrent in terms of youth involvement and also those that hinder security stability and social cohesion within the communities.

III.2.1. Conflicts related to access to and management of natural resources

This type of conflict is considered in the communes targeted by this study to be one of the important factors in the destabilization of social cohesion and peace. Due to the multiple restrictions decreed by the government as a result of the increasingly deteriorating security situation, communities claim that natural resources today remain the livelihood solution that guarantees household survival. These types of conflicts result, according to respondents in the five (5) target communes studied, from anarchy in the use of natural resources such as land, water and grazing, supported by climatic conditions that limit rainfall. As mentioned by a representative of the prefecture, "The most recurrent conflicts are: conflicts related to the management of natural resources (damage to the countryside, use of water points), theft of animals, terrorist attacks. The authorities need the support of all stakeholders to ease these tensions because they will increase with the winter season". Thus the conflicts related to access and management of natural resources during this study are as follows:

III.2.1.1. Conflict between farmers and breeders

In the opinion of the respondents, this type of conflict is the oldest, but it must be said that in recent years, violence and relative cases of serious injury have been on the rise. This finding corroborates that of the recent conflict analyses carried out by Search in the communes concerned by this study. These conflicts are frequent throughout the winter period (June to October each year) between the owners of cattle herds and farmers in the Tillabéri region. The reason put forward by respondents is quite simple: the lack of respect for the rural code that governs the use of land, grazing areas and corridors. The escalation of violence in this conflict is taking on a new form because, according to the respondents, the deterioration of the security context is encouraging the circulation and easy acquisition of weapons by some herders. Also, it emerged that farmers and pastoralists face restrictions on their movements in some areas targeted by military operations. This reduces arable land for farmers and grazing land for pastoralists. So when there is an altercation there is a high probability of casualties among the parties in conflict. According to a young leader in Abala: "The conflict manifests itself because of the lack of respect for the corridors of passage. Young people are involved because they are the sons of the people concerned and in the majority of cases there are violent altercations between herders and farmers."
III.2.1.2. Conflict between farmers

This type of conflict is also linked to the management of arable land but also and above all to land acquisition. According to the respondents, these are problems that result from land resulting from inheritance sharing and which in reality have no legal documentation. In the majority of cases, the parties in conflict are fighting over portions of land. So when the communal authorities take up the situation there is always one of the conflicting parties who feels that the decision is to his disadvantage. However, the altercation between the conflicting parties is already taking place on the fields between young farmers and it is the violence of these altercations that leads the authorities to seize the situation. But here again, the majority of community members do not have legal documents attesting to the ownership of the spaces. As one civil society actor mentions, "The poor management of cases of land distribution among members is the very origin of conflicts between farmers. People go beyond their field boundaries and this is a problem at harvest time, because each person wants to have enough means of subsistence for his family".

III.2.1.3. Conflict between breeders

This type of conflict is linked to the management of grazing areas but also to the management of water points for watering livestock. This conflict turns into a settling of scores and the respondents state that it is difficult when there are victims in this type of conflict to reconcile the herders. In some cases the use of firearms and arrow bows in these conflicts results in victims. According to the respondents, this state of affairs aggravates the security situation at the same time and increases the prejudices of the herder community. The possession of weapons leads community members not to differentiate themselves from the armed bandits who terrorize the population.

III.2.2. Conflicts Related to Non-State Armed Groups

The deterioration of the security context is largely due to the abuses of non-state armed groups. Initially this type of conflict was associated with violent extremist groups operating from the tri-border region between Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso, but nowadays bandits and other delinquents in the area take advantage of the situation to sow psychosis in communities. According to community members, this is due to the level of vulnerability of the youth but also to the lack of opportunities or frameworks for strengthening the commitment of youth to peace and stability in their communities. It appears from the data collected that the latter are largely the target of recruitment or complicity of armed groups by providing them with fuel, shelter or repair their motorcycles. This fact accentuates mistrust within communities but also does not reflect a good image of the commitment that youth should have in peacebuilding. This type of conflict is also at the root of the difficulties in collaboration between communities and the defense and security forces, which does not help control the security situation in the region, which remains volatile. This type of conflict has a negative impact on the daily lives of communities, who claim that the weak presence of the state exposes them to taxes decided by non-state armed groups. In addition, they are most often responsible for cattle thefts and attacks on merchants in the area who are already subject to state of emergency restrictions involving the closure of certain markets in the region. According to respondents, anyone who refuses to pay these taxes would be at systematic risk of kidnapping or assassination.

According to a woman leader in Abala: "The youth are involved in these conflicts because they have nothing to do, they also help the bandits by providing them with gasoline, they repair their motorcycles very expensively, they sometimes help them by giving them places to shelter for a certain period of time."

A representative of the youth council stated: "The population is confronted with the imposition of taxes demanded by non-state armed groups. This phenomenon has been reported several times to
the authorities without any action being taken. The communities are forced to submit or their lives will be threatened.

III.2.3. Inter-ethnic conflict

This type of conflict generally pits members of communities from different cultural or ethnic backgrounds against each other. The data collected allow us to identify fractures and prejudices that constitute obstacles to the acceptance of this cultural diversity. In the opinion of the respondents, this type of conflict exists because each ethnic group considers itself superior to the other but also on the basis of rumors that one ethnic group is more complicit or plays a role in the expansion of extremist armed groups that create psychosis in the daily lives of the population. The recent conflict analyses carried out by Search in the communes concerned by this study highlight the conflicts between the Peulhs and the Tuaregs, which is the most violent, especially in Abala, where this conflict has claimed many victims in both ethnic groups². The occurrence of this type of conflict results in enormous loss of life as witnessed by the respondents from the commune of Ayorou who report a situation where a conflict between young people from the Peulh and Daoussak communities has claimed victims. Beyond these two ethnic groups, respondents state that cohabitation between other ethnic groups in general is subject to mistrust and accusations regarding the deteriorating security situation. The community leaders who spoke out on the issue said they are doing their best to ease tensions between these two ethnic groups, but they also sadly note that the frameworks put in place by humanitarian actors bringing together several leaders from different communities are not resolving these conflicts. Respondents also mention the poor coverage of the area by the DSF to recover weapons and reduce violence around the altercations between Peulh and Tuareg. One traditional leader described the conflict in the following terms: "There is a breakdown of trust and joking kinship nowadays between the different ethnic groups, in the past there was no ethnic problem but nowadays there are constant killings between Tuareg, Daoussahk, Peulh etc... Dialogue must be the mechanism by which conflicts are resolved and not with weapons.

III.2.4. Conflicts between young people in communities

This type of conflict pits young people against each other on the basis of their belonging to a political opinion, a "Fada" group ideology, or belonging to a culture (as in the case of inter-ethnic conflicts). Respondents approached this type of conflict because of the lack of cohesion that exists among young people in all of the municipalities covered by this study. Information from the various interviews and focus groups revealed violent altercations with the use of edged weapons among youth to defend the values they adhere to. This situation is all the more worrisome since young people are also the main actors in other conflicts but also in the search for easy gain, which leads them to collaborate with armed bandits operating in the region. This situation has already been reported in the previous conflict analysis conducted by Search in the form of conflicts related to delinquency among youth, which is manifested by the resurgence of cases of aggression orchestrated by some members of the community. Respondents claim that these aggressions are due to the deterioration of socio-economic conditions in the region. The closure of markets and the restrictions of the state of emergency in terms of hours and areas of travel have significantly increased the economic vulnerability of the population. Although respondents state that they are aware that these restrictions were put in place to ensure the protection of the population, the fact remains that their effects are being felt negatively in all communities. According to them, the bad influence of the armed groups in the area is the cause of the progressive loss of all moral values, as in the past, respondents stated that crimes, robberies, rapes, circulation of weapons and aggression are things that did not exist in their communities. One administrative authority stated, "Today, young people have completely lost the innocence of the past, the lack of

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² SFCG _ NIG712_Report Conflict Scan_Tillabéri_092018 VF 30_01_2019
supervision pushes them towards dangerous paths and especially towards armed groups. I encourage any action that will allow them to occupy themselves and do noble deeds and return to the path of reason”.

III.2.5. Conflict between authorities and the population

This type of conflict is the result of poor conflict management in general, the lack of transparency with which communities accuse the authorities in the management of public property, on the one hand, and the communities' failure to comply strictly with security measures, on the other. According to respondents, the low level of community involvement in decisions that concern the management of public property accentuates the magnitude of this problem. It should also be noted that membership in one political party or another can play a major role in the opportunities that may be available to community members. This frustrates those who are not from the same political party or cultural group, who feel they are victims of social injustice or discrimination based on their membership. This situation is the main driving force behind violent extremism, which is the result of all kinds of exclusion based on belonging to any group. In response to this exclusion, respondents said that communities no longer respect security measures to the letter and some do not hesitate to brave the prohibitions to join non-state armed groups. This situation is worrisome according to respondents who believe that this will only further destabilize the security situation and the socio-cultural context of the communes. **This community leader from Banibangou states, "The population is very vulnerable but also frustrated to see their living conditions deteriorate because of the security situation. We are trying to alleviate the discontent of the population, but this must involve the leaders of all ethnic groups in the decision-making process."**

III.2.6. Leadership conflicts

This conflict is the least violent at first glance, but its accentuation can lead to uprisings and revolts between members of the groups to which the leaders in conflict belong. Indeed, this leadership problem is described by respondents as a situation that generally pits the leaders of social groups and youth associations in the community against each other on the basis of the interests at stake. Respondents observe that each of the leaders seeks his or her own interest or that of his or her home group to the detriment of the others, especially when it comes to the actions of NGOs in the community. In their view, this conflict should be taken seriously to avoid further aggravating the conflictual relationships that already exist within communities. The risk of this type of conflict is that the lack of collaboration between leaders can hinder the achievement of the objectives of any intervention that will be implemented in the communes. **A leader from Bankiléré states: "Each leader wants to be superior to the other and this creates division within the community, we need to get agreement among all of us so that peace can return to our commune and to the entire region."**

III.3 Dividing factors between stakeholders

The recurrence of conflicts in the areas covered by this study is not unrelated to the existence of divisive factors that constitute an obstacle to the consolidation of peace and stability in the communes. The information from the various interviews and focus groups allows us to identify three (3) categories of major divisions that constitute an obstacle to conflict management.

III.3.1. Community division factor

- Mistrust and prejudice based on belonging to a socio-cultural group
- Mismanagement of conflicts by traditional leaders and chiefs
- The collapse of the economic sector and employment in the municipalities
- Ignorance of the extent of safety risks for municipalities
AID 014 Project Baseline Study Report

- Disunity of leaders responsible for bringing the community together around a common interest

III.3.2. Socio-political factors of division
- Stigmatization about belonging to a socio-cultural or political group
- Insufficient transparency in the public management of authorities
- Retention of Information on Public Interest Matters
- Impunity for troublemakers and other bandits, when denounced by the community.

III.3.3. Divisional factors of a security nature
- Lack of trust between defense and security forces and communities
- Suspicion of community complicity with non-state armed groups
- Restriction of the state of emergency
- Ignorance of the importance of safety measures and civic obligations by some members of the community
- Inappropriate behavior of certain MSDS elements

III.3.4. Consequences of conflicts
The way in which conflicts develop in the communities targeted by this data collection demonstrates the extent to which they significantly alter the daily lives of the population. This conflict dynamic is confirmed by the respondents as an obstacle to peace and stability in their communities. Thus, according to the respondents, these conflicts have unfortunate repercussions for the community since at the present time daily habits have completely changed (living together, social cohesion is at its lowest level, permanent fear of insecurity, etc.). The respondents proposed a non-exhaustive list of the consequences of these conflicts in their communities, namely:

- Youth idleness and reduction of their ability to earn a lawful income
- Decrease in household income that impacts the health of women and children
- Sale and consumption of illicit products (cannabis, drugs, weapons)
- Impossibility to cultivate in the field because of armed bandits circulating in the area.
- Closure of schools and markets in addition to constant checks and searches of goods.
- Bad habits of young people who take as an example acts of banditry (robbery of merchants during the transport of goods or at home)
- Hostage-taking and targeted assassination of DSF informants or community and traditional leaders
- Inability to collaborate with authorities and SDSs
- Levyng taxes imposed by non-state armed groups, whose refusal to pay can cost lives.
- Impossibility for young people to travel by motorcycle to earn an income
- Exodus of young able-bodied people and neglect of their communes
- Targeted inter-ethnic attack, loss of life and loss of cultural diversity
- Depopulation of their village populations and overpopulation of urban communes (refugees, internally displaced persons)
- Recruitment of young people into non-state armed groups

III.3.5. Interest and motivation leading to conflicts
As for the motivations of young people to join armed groups or to engage in banditry, in the opinion of respondents, this is primarily a structural problem of idleness, low level of education and ignorance making them vulnerable to manipulation. Access to resources such as land, grazing areas, and the desire for domination and revenge in order to bring back only those resources are the reasons why
altercations in the communities become violent. However, the majority of respondents admit that the
deterioration of the security context combined with the lack of a framework that promotes the positive
equipment of youth will only amplify this negative spiral. In such a context, young people are more
exposed to the emergence of armed groups that emphasize easy gain as a source of motivation for
their radicalization.

In an attempt to explain this breakdown in the security environment, respondents identified certain
issues that can act as triggers for conflict. The arrival of the winter is generally perceived as a
high-risk period where minor conflicts are likely to degenerate, demonstrating at the same time a great
similarity between the types of conflicts that often involve the same actors. In addition, misinformation, rumors, bad governance through poorly managed conflicts are likely to trigger other
conflicts that are more devastating and more permanent in the communities according to the
respondents.

However, these motivations seem complex, reflecting the dynamics at work in these areas, which
combine the ideal of armed groups, insurgency against state power, and difficult economic conditions.
Indeed, according to the respondents, young people are generally motivated by:

- The feeling of power and domination that they feel they have substituted for the State;
- The lure of profit by making their lucrative and illicit activities prosper freely;
- Through mimicry behavior in some areas where a large number of young people have already
  joined jihadist groups;
- The will to fight with state institutions that they perceive as hostile and corrupt.

The motivations are different depending on whether they join armed groups directly or cooperate
indirectly. This being the case, jihadist groups give them:

- A meaning and legitimacy to their violent actions;
- Having a home group with which they will share their ideals;
- Protection from vital food and security needs that were not guaranteed to be met outside of
  this framework;
- The feeling of playing an important role in the expansion of a cause.

III.4. Assessment of project indicators

III.4.1. Perception of youth engagement

- **Indicator 1: % of target community members who report that youth are taking steps to
  become active and positive members.**

The assessment of this indicator results from data collected from respondents on the ability of young
people to be active and positive members of their communities, as well as their contribution to the
peace and stability of their communities.
Figure 5: % of respondents reporting that youth are taking action for peace and stability by commune

From this information, only 34% of respondents confirm that youth are taking sufficient steps and actions to be active and positive members of their communities. According to the respondents, this low level of youth engagement illustrates their resignation due to the lack of opportunity and framework for expression, but also their great vulnerability to violent extremism and the potential danger to which the communities located in the northern areas of Tillabéri are exposed. Indeed, there is a great fear in every family that one day one of their members will join or be victimized by non-state armed groups. This perception of young people by other members of their communities is the expression of a fear that the situation may no longer be under control in terms of the ability to attract them to their ranks and the growing influence they may have in the propagation of their rigorist ideology. This combination of the rise of armed groups and a decline in initiatives involving young people constitutes a permanent danger to the stability of the region.

Figure 6: % of Respondents Reporting Youth Taking Action for Peace and Stability by Gender

There are disparities in respondents' opinions on the role of youth in promoting peace and development initiatives across localities. In the communes of Abala, Banibangou and Sanam, in terms of proportions, the negative perception of youth as positive actors for peace is more accentuated than in the communes of Bankilaré and Ayorou. From a gender perspective, men's perception of the role of youth is less positive than women's perception of the place of youth as actors in the emergence of more peaceful and stable communities.
Among the reasons for this, respondents cite a kind of marginalization of youth in the implementation of peace initiatives; a lack of training of youth in citizenship skills; and a lack of interest in community and collective issues, among others. Community leader from Ayerou said, "Youth lack leadership. The efforts of young leaders are not very visible, but they are doing their best.

III.4.2. Contribution of young people to peace and stability in their communities

The contribution of youth to peace and security is rated "Great" and "Very Great" by 37% and 8% of survey respondents respectively, while 29% of respondents find their "Contribution Average", 19% "Low" and 6% "Very Low". Here again, these figures hide disparities between communes where in Banibangou and Abala the situation seems more critical than in Ayorou, Sanam and Bankilaré. On the other hand, male respondents have a more mixed perception of the contribution of youth to peace and security than female respondents. The main finding here is that the position of youth as actors for peace and security is not unanimous.

Figure 7: Youth Contribution to Peace and Stability
Indicator 1.1: % of targeted youth who believe they can engage constructively with their peers in a non-adversarial and non-violent manner.

With regard to collaboration between youth from agricultural, nomadic, semi-nomadic and pastoral communities, respondents were asked about the ability to see youth from these communities in the same activity. Then, a third of the respondents (36%) declare to be willing to collaborate together in social and economic activities. They say that they are used to working and meeting in informal settings previously, such as during social events such as baptisms, births, deaths, or within formal settings such as student and youth associations, and that there are usually no specific tensions when a young person or, more generally, a member of another community is invited to an activity elsewhere than in his or her community. This promptness tends less and less to be a reality in connection with the deterioration of the security situation. Respondents also point out that communities have a share of responsibility in this context because of the prejudices they have towards one another and the reciprocal accusations about the deterioration of the security situation.

Figure 8: % of respondents who believe that youth can engage non-violently with their peers

![Bar Chart]

The data show that a significant number of respondents (74%) say they are not willing or remain hesitant to collaborate with members of other communities. Respondents cite mistrust as the main obstacle to collaboration between members of these communities, followed by non-supportive leadership as some leaders are likely to take advantage of these divisions within communities, fear of certain communities perceived to be closely linked to violent extremist groups or banditry, and the mobility of nomadic and pastoralist communities that do not give communities the opportunity to build long-term relationships.

Many respondents said that the relationship was more peaceful in the past, with members of the different communities living together in relative harmony, although conflicts are recurrent in the communes. This allows community leaders to anticipate tensions and take steps to sensitize communities. With the advent and expansion of violent extremist discourse in the Liptako gourma areas, which does not spare the Tillabéri area, this calm has been undermined because some communities suspect others (mainly the Peul) of adhering to this ideology and spreading violence. Even though there have been efforts on the part of community leaders not to fall into generalization,
discourse against the Fulani community is experiencing a notable upsurge, which contributes to fueling mistrust and the feeling of stigmatization on both sides of these communities.

**Figure 9:** Respondents Believing that Youth Can Engage Non-Violently with Peers by Sex

![Figure 9](image)

Regarding the ability of young people to collaborate with other young people from different communities, 7% of respondents said it was very weak, 27% weak, 30% average, 29% strong and 7% considered it very strong.

**Figure 10:** Youth Ability to Collaborate with Peers in Other Communities

![Figure 10](image)

The graph confirms the data from the previous graph on youth engagement in a non-adversarial manner with each other. This weakness in youth capacity is justified by a combination of factors that respondents identified as:

- Lack of awareness of citizenship and politics;
- The low involvement of young people in the actions previously carried out;
- Insouciance towards the security problem;
• Persistent resentment resulting from a tumultuous cohabitation in the past
• Fear of aggravating already conflictual relationships;
• Unavailability related to individual occupations;

The capacity to collaborate is non-existent because they do not have the means to raise awareness and carry out rallying actions.

Respondent in Banibangou

"This ability of young people is really weak because someone who has killed a member of your family or looted your wealth and they ask you to stay with them, you're not going to feel very comfortable."
Answering to Abala

• Youth 3 -% of participants in U.S. government-supported programs designed to improve access to productive economic resources who are youth (15-29)

This indicator will be measured after the implementation of socio-economic initiatives for youth in the five municipalities targeted by the project. The activities to be supported will be based on the choice of the youth, and the youth will be encouraged and supported to ensure that their projects also encourage collaboration between groups, strengthening intra- and inter-community cohesion. Once these initiatives are in place, the final evaluation of the project will capture the percentage of the beneficiaries of these initiatives who are actually young people (under 30). As stipulated in the monitoring and evaluation plan, 60% of the beneficiaries of these initiatives must be young people.

• of community members involved in conflict mitigation initiatives and peacebuilding activities implemented under the project

This indicator will be measured at the end of the activities implemented in the project framework to ensure that communities can provide their opinion on the capacity of the activities to promote dialogue and social cohesion between community groups. To this end, the project implementation will include community peace-building activities that will be proposed by leaders (including youth) and leaders at the local level. So the evaluation of this indicator will make it possible to understand the extent to which these activities have improved social cohesion and peace among community members. The target for this indicator is 70% of the community members who will be surveyed at the final evaluation.

III.4.3. Support for youth initiatives

There is support from governmental and nongovernmental actors for youth initiatives against violent extremism. This support, most of it recent, has increased significantly but is insufficient as the security situation in the Tillabéri region deteriorates. The High Authority for the Consolidation of Peace (HACP) is the government actor working in these areas to build peace and promote initiatives that can counteract the region's worrisome conflict trend. It sets up and finances peace committees and
their initiatives despite the structural weakness of its resources. However, young people are not always fully involved because of their weak organizational capacities and low level. There are also initiatives supported by non-governmental actors, including international NGOs, to prevent violent extremism in the Tillabéri region. Although this support remains weak at present, it is intended to be diversified and covers areas such as the creation of IGAs through the provision of funding, strengthening entrepreneurial and conflict management/prevention capacities, large-scale awareness-raising initiated by youth structures, the organization of spaces for dialogue, and other actions.

**Table 2**: Baseline status of project indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Label of indicator</th>
<th>Disaggregating</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Total value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. 1.</td>
<td>% of target community members who report that youth are taking steps to become active and positive members.</td>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Man</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rental</td>
<td>Abala</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ayorou</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Banibangou</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bankilaré</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sanam</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. 1. 1.</td>
<td>% of targeted youth who believe they can engage constructively with their peers in a non-adversarial and non-violent manner.</td>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Man</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rental</td>
<td>Abala</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ayorou</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
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<td>Banibangou</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bankilaré</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sanam</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion**

The baseline study of the "On est ensemble" project established a baseline situation of the project indicators in the project intervention zones according to pre-established criteria. This exercise was carried out in a participatory manner in relation to the stakeholders on the side of the beneficiaries and target communities and the project implementation team within Search. To do so, the methodology used is based on a mixed quantitative and qualitative approach which has the advantage of allowing a triangulation of data through the diversification of sources. Thus, this approach also made it possible to establish a general overview of the security situation in this area of northern Tillabéri, to understand the dynamics of the conflicts, the factors of division and blockage as well as the opportunities for collaboration between the members of the different communities. The data collected also made it possible to calculate the various project indicators in order to have an idea of the gap that needs to be filled in order to achieve the project's objectives. This makes it possible to calibrate the project's approach through the recommendations that are formulated to adapt its strategy to the reality on the ground. The main characteristic of the security context in the region is its high volatility, which creates a climate of psychosis even in times of calm. Conflict resolution mechanisms also show their
limits because the situation in some localities reveals a lack of any contact between communities and the State services that have difficulty in establishing a lasting foothold. The "On est ensemble" project must continue its interventions while ensuring certain key points such as participation and inclusion in environments where female citizens and young people tend to be excluded from activities, taking into account the safety aspect by operationally integrating the precarious nature of lull situations.

Recommendations
Following this data analysis, recommendations are made to the project team to facilitate effective implementation of project activities in the region. These recommendations are as follows:

➢ Recommendations for gender mainstreaming
Women are much less represented than men in the activities even though they are the first to suffer the effects of the crisis. The "We are together" project, because of its social and economic ambitions, must maintain a vigilant eye on the involvement of women in the implementation of its interventions.

➢ Recommendation for implementation of all activities
Given the low capacity of young people to collaborate due to the different prejudices of belonging to a socio-cultural group, it is essential that the project takes this difficulty into account by setting up frameworks for dialogue for the joint implementation of activities.

➢ Recommendation for strengthening positive youth engagement
The commitment of young people as a positive consolidating actor remains weak. Therefore, the project must analyze the needs of young people and take into account their opinions in order to increase their commitment to social cohesion between the community groups in each of the communes.

➢ Recommendations related to the security aspect
A risk mitigation plan must be developed as part of the management of this project, which will address solutions to some of the uncontrolled uncertainty factors that are innumerable, especially in the early stages of project implementation. It will make it possible to decide on the actions needed to reduce or eliminate risks, particularly those with a high probability of occurrence and impacting the progress of the project. This plan will also make it possible to monitor risks so that management can be proactive.

➢ Recommendations for strengthening dialogue
The "On est ensemble" project must look at the inclusive process of all community groups in the communes in order to be effective in carrying out activities and achieving objectives. Indeed, it appears from this analysis that collaboration among youth in communities in conflict is weak and mistrust is pervasive. For several other reasons, previous projects have missed their objectives because members of minority and/or marginalized communities were not involved, severely limiting the impact of the results.

Appendices
Appendix 1: Methodology
The methodology used to conduct this Baseline study coupled with a market analysis will be based on a mixed approach (qualitative and quantitative) that will allow for a triangulation of data. The quantitative approach will consist of the use of a questionnaire that will be administered to a representative sample of community members who are young men and women (aged 18 to 35) from agricultural, pastoral, semi-nomadic and nomadic communities in conflict. But also traditional leaders
and locally elected officials, including displaced persons, refugees and host communities. This approach will be used to measure the indicators. The qualitative approach will use a discussion guide to conduct Focus Group Discussions, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and individual questionnaires for market analysis.

**Sampling and data collection tools**

**Quantitative questionnaire (Baseline study and market analysis)**

The quantitative part of this Baseline study will be based on a questionnaire that will be administered to community members in the 5 target communes of the project. This questionnaire will measure the baseline level of the indicators on which the overall performance of the project will be assessed at the final evaluation of the project.

**The indicators to be measured are:**

- % increase in the number of members of the target community who report that youth are taking steps to become active and positive members.
- % increase in the number of members of the target community who report that youth are taking steps to become active and positive members.
- of community members involved in conflict mitigation initiatives and peacebuilding activities implemented under the project
- of participants in U.S. government-supported programs designed to improve access to productive economic resources who are youth (15-29)

Taking into account a 5% confidence interval CI, a Z-score of 1.96 and a proportion of 50%, the sample size for a 95% level of significance is 384 people to be surveyed.

The sample of 384 was distributed according to the weight of the population in each community. That is, the sample per community is determined by multiplying the proportion of the population in each community by the sample size (384) to obtain the number of persons to be surveyed in each community.

The questionnaire will be set up on the Kobo Collect server so that the collection can be carried out on smartphones via the application adapted to this server. This approach offers the advantage of a daily follow-up of the data collection in order to monitor the performance of the teams and the evolution of the field data collection. The data sent daily will be monitored to ensure its quality. These data can then be exported to Excel for reconciliation, processing and analysis.

The table below gives the distribution of the population of the target communes by gender.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communes</th>
<th>Population (According to INS-2016)</th>
<th>Share in total population</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
<th>Men (50%)</th>
<th>Women (50%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abala</td>
<td>91357</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayorou</td>
<td>40397</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Banibangou</td>
<td>80667</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bankilare</td>
<td>102288</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanam</td>
<td>82495</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Focus Group Discussions (Market Analysis)

FGDs target a group of 6 to 8 people with generally similar characteristics (gender, age, ethnicity, etc.). The FGD is a research tool to stimulate and generate rich discussions. FGDs are based on the desire to communicate certain issues, perspectives and opinions. This will allow us to have more depth of information fairly quickly and at a lower cost on the problems, perspectives and opinions of the population, in order to understand the dynamics that prevail in relation to a given situation. Within the framework of this baseline, the FGDs will make it possible to collect information on conflicts that constitute a high risk to peace and aggravate tensions between community members. The information collected also covers economic opportunities and vocational training for young people with high potential for success specifically in each of the communes.

The FGDs will be carried out by two team members, one of whom will take notes and the other will facilitate exchanges. The discussions will be conducted by the facilitators, who will be carefully selected and who will have undergone 2 days of intensive training. Three homogeneous focus groups will be conducted per locality:

- 01 FGD: Of women including 6 to 8 women.
- 01 FGD: Of men comprising 6 to 8 men.
- 01 FGD: Youth including 4 girls and 4 boys.

Each FGD will be composed of a maximum of 8 people. A total of 15 FGDs will be realized.

The table below shows the distribution of FGD participants by municipality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locations</th>
<th>Ayorou</th>
<th>Abala</th>
<th>Banibangou</th>
<th>Bankilaré</th>
<th>Sanam</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl and boy</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key Informing Interviews (Market Analysis)

KIIs with key individuals are essential for gathering in-depth information on a particular topic or context. Key individuals are respondents with relevant information on the current situation in the communes in relation to the project theme. In addition, having separate conversations with different informants will allow us to verify the information given, and to be able to target certain actors who have a lot of knowledge individually. Within the framework of this study, we will have 3 categories of respondents for whom 3 discussion guides have been developed according to their specificity and the type of information we wish to collect from them.
The KIIIs target key stakeholders in each selected intervention area as follows.

### KII local authorities and community leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locations</th>
<th>Ayorou</th>
<th>Abala</th>
<th>Banibangou</th>
<th>Bankilaré</th>
<th>Sanam</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KII</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefect / SG prefecture</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayor / Vice Mayor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of canton</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint leader man</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woman leader</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young leader</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO actor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace Committee Leader</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional leader</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For this category of respondent, the aim will be to analyze the context in relation to the dynamics of conflict and the barriers and dividing lines that generate violent conflict within communities. It will also collect information on socio-economic opportunities that would empower youth and strengthen their resilience in the face of violent extremism. As part of the empowerment we will also collect information on vocational training in trades that young people can do in their communities in order to have an income.

**Team building:** The investigation was generally supervised by the DM&E officer of SFCG / Tillabéry. A team of 15 people was in charge of data collection, i.e. 2 interviewers and 1 supervisor per commune. In order to create synergy with another data collection being carried out as part of...
another SFCG project that already had a team of 4 interviewers, including the 4 SFCG field officers, 6 interviewers were recruited. It should be noted that supervisors were also responsible for conducting key informant interviews.

**Introduction, contact and appointments**: An official letter was sent to the local authorities to inform them of the days when the interviewers would be in the communes. The mission schedule was shared with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the military positions in the area so that they could be informed of the arrival of the teams and guarantee their protection throughout the mission, given the unstable security context.

**Prevention COVID-19**

In order to ensure sensitivity to VIDOC-19 prevention, provision has been made for the availability and use of barrier measures. To this end, the teams were provided with protective masks and briefed on their use. Given the amount of maintenance to be carried out, hand washing was prioritized over the purchase of gel kits. Participants in the FGD discussions were also provided with protective masks to ensure barrier measures among respondents who would take part in data collection.

**Team training**: A 3-day training including practical exercises on the use of interview and focus group tools was organized. All of the tools developed for conducting this evaluation were reviewed to enable the interviewers to understand the meaning of each of the questions. Then a practical session on smartphones enabled the teams to master the use of the Kobo Collect software. Inter-active sessions allowed the interviewers to simulate each other in pairs by asking the question in the best possible way in French and in the local language and by proposing several rephrases that could be useful for some respondents to understand the meaning of the question. All participants in the training sessions were subjected to the use of covid-19 safeguards. The training placed particular emphasis on the use of these barrier measures throughout the training and data collection.

**Data Collection**: Supervisors provided technical and organizational support to the survey team during data collection. They ensured the application of barrier measures against VIDOC-19 during data collection. For respondents who did not wish to have contact with the field teams, telephone interviews were conducted to collect the data. At the end of each collection day, the DM&E officer gave an update on the information collected and the difficulties encountered by the interviewers. The collection period was 8 days for the team in charge of covering the communes of Abala and Ayorou and 4 days for the teams in Banibangou, Bankilaré and Sanam.

**Data entry and analysis**: The DM&E team is responsible for data compilation and analysis. The data collected from the various discussion guides were extracted on Excel databases in order to be exported to SPSS as needed for certain analyses. The qualitative data extracted on Excel were subject to a qualitative analysis based on the content of the discussions carried out in the field. The latter were analyzed and structured on Word according to the previously defined objectives.
Writing of the interim and final report: The DM&E team is in charge of writing the report. The first version of the document will be reviewed internally by the ILT team and the program associate. Once validated internally, the document will be shared with the USAID donor technical team in charge of monitoring the project's implementation. Once the donor's comments have been taken into account, the Country Director will make a final check before validating the document and sharing the final version of the document with USAID.

Share
Debriefing sessions will also be scheduled with key stakeholders in the project's target communities. These feedback sessions will also enable the project team to reorient project activities based on feedback from stakeholders and more specifically from youth. The report of the feedback from the baseline evaluation will be shared with the USAID technical team for adaptation of the intervention strategy to the real needs and current problems of the communities targeted by the project. This restitution workshop will take place in the Tillabéri region.

Appendix 2: Quantitative questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Interviewer :</th>
<th>1.</th>
<th>2.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

|---------------------|------------|-------|-------------|-------|-------|

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex :</th>
<th>1. Man</th>
<th>2. Woman</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age :</th>
<th>1. Less than 20 years old</th>
<th>2. 20-24 years old</th>
<th>3. 25-29 years old</th>
<th>4. 30-34 years old</th>
<th>5. 35-39 years old</th>
<th>6. 40-44 years old</th>
<th>7. 45-49 years old</th>
<th>8. 50-54 years old</th>
<th>9. 55-69 years old</th>
<th>10. 60 years old and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>1. Married</th>
<th>2. Single</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Hello,

Thank you for having us here today and for giving us some of your precious time.

My name is ________________________________________. In a few words, the interview to which we invite you today is part of a survey initiated by Search For Common Ground. Search for Common Ground is an international NGO whose goal is to transform the way we manage conflict. We are conducting a survey to gather information to identify and understand the changing context of conflict, tensions and risks as well as the opportunities and mechanisms for peace and collaboration that exist in your country. We seek to better understand and obtain your opinion and perspective on these issues.

The information we collect will help a range of national and international actors active in the Mali-Niger border area to understand and find solutions to current problems of collaboration between communities and security defense forces. The main objective of these interviews will be to gather your ideas, opinions, perspectives and suggestions as an individual in this community on these issues.

You have been selected for this survey in order to collect your personal perception and analysis on this subject as well as your proposals for solutions. There will be no remuneration for your participation today, but the information you will provide will be taken into account to improve Search's activities within the framework of these interventions in your municipality.

The information provided about you and your community will remain strictly confidential and anonymous and will only be used for professional purposes. While counting on your availability, we assure you that participation in this survey is voluntary. Should I ask a question that you do not want to answer, please let me know and I will move on to the next question; you are free to suspend the interview at any time.

Are you willing to participate in this interview?
OUI [ ] NO [ ] (Check the respondent's answer)

The duration of the maintenance is about 45 minutes to 1 hour maximum.

Before we begin, do you have any questions for me?

AID014: Baseline Study (Baseline Indicators)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q1</th>
<th>AID014: Indicator 1</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Search for Common Ground | NIGER
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q1.A</th>
<th><strong>AID014</strong>: Why do you think this?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AID014</strong>: Do you think that youth are taking sufficient actions/actions to become active and positive members of the community?</td>
<td>DK</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q2</th>
<th><strong>AID014</strong>: How would you rate the level of youth contribution to peace and security in your community?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AID014</strong>: Very big contribution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AID014</strong>: Great contribution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AID014</strong>: Average</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AID014</strong>: Low contribution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AID014</strong>: Very low contribution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q2.A</th>
<th><strong>AID014</strong>: Why do you think this? Can you give us one or two examples?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AID014</strong>:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q3</th>
<th><strong>AID014: Indicator 1.1</strong> Do you think that you can collaborate with young people from other communities (Haoussa, Peulh, Zarma, Tuareg etc.) in social and economic activities for social cohesion?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AID014</strong>: Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AID014</strong>: No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AID014</strong>: DK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Q3.A | **AID014**: Justify your answer |
|------|---------------------------------
| **AID014**: What is the capacity of young people from different communities (ethnic, cultural, etc...) to participate together in community activities? |
| **AID014**: Very strong |
| **AID014**: Forte |
| **AID014**: Average |
| **AID014**: Low |
| **AID014**: Very low |

| **AID014**: Why do you think this? |
Discussion Guide Administrative Authority and Leaders

Hello,
Thank you for having us here today and for giving us some of your precious time.
My name is ___________________________. In a few words, the interview to which we invite you today is part of a survey initiated by Search For Common Ground. Search for Common Ground is an international NGO whose goal is to transform the way we manage conflict. We are conducting a survey to collect information to identify socio-economic initiatives with high potential for success in your community. This will enable Search to better tailor all interventions related to income-generating activities in your community to strengthen community resilience against violent extremism. The data collected will also allow us to understand the changing context of conflict, tensions and risks as well as the opportunities and mechanisms for peace and collaboration that exist in your community. We seek to better understand and obtain your views and perspectives on these issues.

The information we collect will help a range of national and international actors active in the Mali-Niger border area to understand and find solutions to current problems of collaboration between communities and security defense forces. The main objective of these interviews will be to gather your ideas, opinions, perspectives and suggestions as an individual in this community on these issues. You have been selected for this survey in order to collect your personal perception and analysis on this subject as well as your proposals for solutions. There will be no remuneration for your participation today, but the information you will provide will be taken into account to improve Search's activities within the framework of these interventions in your municipality.

The information provided about you and your community will remain strictly confidential and anonymous and will only be used for professional purposes. While counting on your availability, we assure you that participation in this survey is voluntary. Should I ask a question that you do not want to answer, please let me know and I will move on to the next question; you are free to suspend the interview at any time.

Are you willing to participate in this interview?
OUI ☐ NO ☐ (Check the respondent's answer)

The duration of the maintenance is about 45 minutes to 1 hour maximum.
Before we begin, do you have any questions for me?

Communes of Niger :

1. Bankilârê
2. Ayerou

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### AID 014 Project Baseline Study Report

#### Type of interviewee:
1. Man
2. Woman

#### Professional title:
1. Prefect / SG prefecture
2. Mayor / Vice Mayor
3. Head of canton
4. Joint leader man
5. Woman leader
6. Young leader
7. CSO actor
8. Peace Committee Leader
9. Traditional leader
10. Youth council representative

### Questions

**AID014: Analysis of Inter and Intra-Community Conflict Dynamics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q1. A</th>
<th>What are the most recurring conflicts encountered in your community? How do these conflicts manifest themselves? How are young people involved in these conflicts?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1.C</td>
<td>What are the effects/consequences of these conflicts on communities and especially on youth?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2. A</td>
<td>What are the interests and motivations of the communities in conflict in your locality?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4</td>
<td>Triggers: What do you think can lead to an increase, development or escalation of the conflict?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5</td>
<td>In your opinion, what is the state of collaboration between youth in the different communities in your locality?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6</td>
<td>What are the blocking factors to the good collaboration between the youth of these different communities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor behaviour of other communities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of a meeting place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other reasons: (specify)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What mechanisms exist for conflict resolution in your community? Who are the actors?

**Q7** What are the connecting factors between actors that can foster social cohesion? What can bring young people in the communities together?

**Q8** What initiatives or activities can we carry out to strengthen the commitment of young people to work for peace in the locality?
Appendix 4: Focus Group Discussion

AID014: Focus group discussion guide for men/women/youth

Hello,

Thank you for having us here today and for giving us some of your precious time.

My name is ________________________________. In a few words, the interview to which we invite you today is part of a survey initiated by Search For Common Ground. Search for Common Ground is an international NGO whose goal is to transform the way we manage conflict. We are conducting a survey to collect information to identify socio-economic initiatives with high potential for success in your community. This will enable Search to better tailor all interventions related to income-generating activities in your community to strengthen community resilience against violent extremism. The data collected will also allow us to understand the changing context of conflict, tensions and risks as well as the opportunities and mechanisms for peace and collaboration that exist in your community. We seek to better understand and obtain your views and perspectives on these issues.

The information we collect will help a range of national and international actors active in the Mali - Niger border area to understand and find solutions to current problems of collaboration between communities and security defense forces. The main objective of these interviews will be to gather your ideas, opinions, perspectives and suggestions as an individual in this community on these issues.

You have been selected for this survey in order to collect your personal perception and analysis on this subject as well as your proposals for solutions. There will be no remuneration for your participation today, but the information you will provide will be taken into account to improve Search's activities within the framework of these interventions in your municipality.

The information provided about you and your community will remain strictly confidential and anonymous and will only be used for professional purposes. While counting on your availability, we assure you that participation in this survey is voluntary. Should I ask a question that you do not want to answer, please let me know and I will move on to the next question; you are free to suspend the interview at any time.

Are you willing to participate in this interview?
OUI [ ] NO [ ] (Check the respondent's answer)

The duration of the maintenance is about 45 minutes to 1 hour maximum.

Before we begin, do you have any questions for me?

| Date and duration of the interview : |  |
| Country : | 1. Niger |
| Communes of Niger : |  |
AID 014 Project Baseline Study Report

1. Bankilaré
2. Ayerou
3. Banibangou
4. Abala
5. Sanam

Type of FGD:
1. Men
2. Women
3. Youth (mixed)

Number of people by gender in the FGD

Number of men: ______
Number of women: ______

Introduction

Questions

**AID014: Intercommunity Conflict**

What are the most recurring conflicts encountered in your community? How do these conflicts manifest themselves? How are young people involved in these conflicts?

What are the dividing factors among community members? How do community divisions aggravate conflict?

What are the effects/consequences of these conflicts on communities and especially on youth?

What initiatives or activities can we carry out to strengthen the commitment of young people to work for peace in the locality?

Thank you for your participation!