

BURKINA FASO



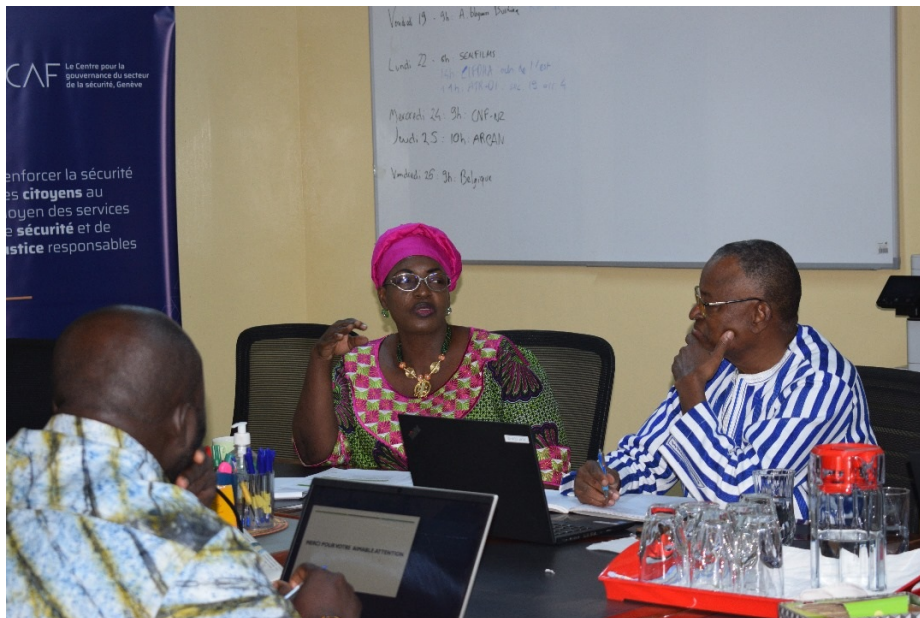
Training of the inspectors on control, audit and verification methodology and tools

From 4 to 15 December, the Higher Authority for State Control and the Fight against Corruption (ASCE-LC) organised, with the support of DCAF, a training course for security sector oversight bodies. Advisers to the Court of Auditors and technical inspectors from the ministries responsible for defence, security and justice attended the training. In Ouagadougou, thirty participants, including 11 women, participated in the two-week theoretical and practical training on the preparation, execution and follow-up of recommendations for control, investigation and audit missions. The training provided an opportunity to enhance the capacity of the security institutions' control bodies in terms of control, audit and verification methodology and tools. It was based on the methodological guide developed by the ASCE-LC and the risk management manual developed by DCAF.



4th session of the DCAF Consultative Committee

On 5 and 6 December, DCAF held a workshop to launch and plan its new programme "Strengthening accountability in the security sector in Burkina Faso". Organised in Ziniaré, the 4th session of the DCAF Consultative Committee brought together twenty partners, including 10 women. It provided an opportunity to lay the foundations for the partnership between the Swiss Cooperation Office (BUCO) and DCAF for the new programme and to promote exchanges with the various members of the committee which is formed by DCAF's national partner. The meeting offered the opportunity to all the participants to discuss the activities, implementation periods and deadlines, as well as the expected results of the programme covering the period 2023-2027.



Presentation of the CNDH's strategic plan

On 23 January, after the offering the best wishes for 2024, a meeting was organised with the team from the National Commission on Human Rights (CNDH), to coordinate their respective programming. The discussions focused in particular on the need, in a context of transition, to communicate and raise awareness of the functions and remit of an institution for the defence of human rights, as well as the complementarity with other State structures in the fight against violent extremism. Among the various programme priorities presented, the need to raise the institution's exposure to overcome the general public's lack of awareness of its missions will be given particular attention.

MALI



Official launch of the Communal Consultative Security Committees in the District of Bamako

On 7 December, DCAF supported the organisation of the official launch ceremony for the activities of the Communal Consultative Security Committees (CCSC) in the District of Bamako, which benefitted from the presence of the Commissioner for Security Sector Reform. The ceremony, chaired by the representative of the Governor of the District of Bamako, was attended by one hundred participants, including members of the Communal Consultative Security Committees, representatives of local authorities and institutional partners. With the launch of these six CCSCs in the Bamako district, the total number of Consultative Security Committee (CCS) set up increased from 32 to 38. The representative of the District Governor pointed out that "the success of the security sector reform (SSR) in Mali undeniably depends on the operationalisation and proper functioning of the communal CCSs, which are the foundation, as they are closer to the communities". The CCSs serve as a platform for the defence and security forces, the political authorities and civil society, to establish a dialogue and enable civil society to voice its security concerns. Following the ceremony, a debate exploring the role of consultative committees in inclusive governance of the security sector was broadcast on ORTM1 on 10 December. Over 1,200 people watched the debate which received much positive feedback.



Open Day on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) at the National Gendarmerie

As part of the annual international campaign "16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence Against Women and Girls", the Gendarmerie Nationale, in partnership with DCAF, organised an open day in the courtyard of its Compagnie Territoriale Rive Droite on 19 December. The event was co-chaired by Colonel Youssouf Otto Diallo, Commander of the Gendarmerie n°1 in Bamako, and the Head of the DCAF Office in Mali. The day was also attended military figures, retired soldiers, administrative and traditional authorities, and many civilians who were the primary beneficiaries of the event. The open day raised awareness and informed the population and local authorities about the role and responsibilities of the internal security forces in responding to gender-based violence and about the existence and operation of mechanisms for reporting GBV. Opening the doors of security institutions brings the population and the defence and security forces closer together so that the role and responsibilities of security providers are better understood.



National symposium on the protection and promotion of human rights

On 11 and 12 December, the National Commission on Human Rights (CNDH), with the support of DCAF, organised the 15th national symposium on human rights in Mali. This year's event occurred during the anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the Human Rights Month. For two days, the symposium brought together a total of 142 participants, including 43 women. Among them were national and international human rights experts, government members, human rights defenders and development partners. The event provided an opportunity to take stock of the situation and share good practices and prospects for respect for human rights in the context of a multidimensional crisis. The specific aims were to consider the place of human rights in the Constitution of 23 July 2023; to examine the legal framework for compensating victims of armed conflict in Mali; to discuss the protection of civil liberties in times of crisis; and to debate the human rights issues and challenges posed by the withdrawal of MINUSMA. The participants made a number of recommendations to conclude the symposium, including the constitutionalisation of the CNDH; the creation of a synergy of action between the defence and security forces, religious leaders and CSOs ; and the establishment of a mechanism to promote the enforcement of court rulings.

NIGER



Meeting of the actors involved in monitoring human rights violations in the Tahoua region

DCAF is supporting the NGO Youth Movement for Development and Civic Education (MOJEDEC) in the launching of a platform for monitoring cases of human rights violations in the Tahoua region. From 22 to 30 December, MOJEDEC and DCAF met with various stakeholders in the region to present the project, which obtained the full support of national, regional, departmental and local authorities. Eight municipalities were selected on the basis of human rights violation records and confirmed by regional governance bodies. Additionally, inclusive meetings were held in each of the selected municipalities with a total of 275 participants to discuss the project's objectives and determine the roles of the various players in its implementation. The inclusive and participatory approach was recognised as a key factor in obtaining the support of the authorities, particularly by the President of the Regional Council: "We appreciate the DCAF's approach of meeting with the authorities and aligning itself with the population protection needs identified in the various state strategies. This is very rare on the part of international partners, and we assure DCAF of our full support to ensure the success of the project".



Round table on the role of CSOs and the media in protecting and promoting human rights in times of crisis

The round table results from a collaboration between the Cercle de Réflexion et la Démocratie (CRD) and DCAF and was attended by the UK ambassador. The meeting was organised on 13 and 14 December in Niamey and brought together 46 people, including 15 women, from civil society organisations (CSOs), the media and academia. The main discussions focused on the challenges and opportunities of human rights work in the context of institutional change, highlighting the need to depoliticise CSOs and the media, to improve coordination between these entities and to broaden civic space. The round table stressed the importance of specialised training for journalists and members of monitoring committees to enhance their understanding and communication of human rights issues, particularly in times of crisis. Participants concluded the event with recommendations such as harmonising legal frameworks relating to cybercrime, promoting collaboration between CSOs and the media to disseminate accurate information, and advocating for greater participation of women and people with disabilities in public affairs. The use of digital platforms to disseminate critical information and engage in human rights dialogues during times of crisis was also highlighted.



Presentation of the CSO analysis and monitoring report on the implementation of Niger's Women, Peace and Security Action Plan

On 05 and 06 December 2023, the coordination of non-governmental organisations and women's associations in Niger (CONGAFEN), in collaboration with DCAF, organised the presentation of the 2022 report on gender inequalities. The presentation was attended by 29 women and 17 men from various women's civil society organisations (CSOs) from the eight regions of Niger. The 2022 report highlighted issues such as the under-representation of women in the security forces, low participation in the labour market, limited access to education for girls, and high maternal and infant mortality rates. The presentation also addressed harmful practices such as genital mutilation and child marriage. The participants examined the report and made suggestions and comments to enrich it. Recommendations included promoting girls' education, increasing the resources allocated to gender equality missions, raising community awareness of child marriage, improving women's access to justice and improving the representation of women in judicial roles. The report was unanimously validated by the attendees.

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