

NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2023

Sub-Saharan Africa Division
Regional Sahel Programme



In this final newsletter for 2023, DCAF Sub-Saharan Africa team extends best wishes for the holiday season.

BURKINA FASO



Regional conferences on the dissemination of new national security guidelines

From 20 to 24 November, DCAF, in partnership with the General Secretariat for National Defence (SGDN), held conferences to raise awareness of the national security reference frameworks, in particular the law on national security policy (PSN) and the national security strategy (SSN) in three regions: Centre-East (Tenkodogo), Centre-South (Manga) and Plateau-Central (Ziniaré). During these conferences, the regional actors in charge of implementation at decentralised level familiarised themselves with the legal and strategic reference frameworks for national security. More than 100 people, including nearly 55 women, attended these outreach tours. The audience was made up of regional governors, political, administrative and judicial authorities, military and paramilitary authorities, traditional and religious authorities, regional and provincial directors and representatives of development organisations in the said regions. These conferences enabled local stakeholders to understand the vision and strategic orientations of this national security policy, as well as the process for developing sectoral strategies and policies to operationalise this NSP. At the end of these conferences, the participants recommended the creation of regional consultation frameworks and the continuation of the dissemination of information at provincial and departmental level to ensure greater social ownership of the strategic axes of national security.

MALI



Training for members of the six Communal Consultative Security Committees (CCS) in the Bamako district

From 25 to 26 October, DCAF, in partnership with the Governorate of the District of Bamako, organised a training workshop for civil society organisations (CSOs) that are members of the Consultative Security Committees (CCS) of the communes and the District of Bamako on inclusive governance of the security sector. For two days, 32 CSO members, including 11 women, discussed a wide range of subjects including security, security sector reform (SSR), the missions of the security forces, community policing, the role of CSOs and the links between security and gender. This workshop enables participants to play their part in the consultative security committees at regional and communal levels. A participant's testimony shows the success of the training: "The workshop was a success because I learned that security is not just the responsibility of the defence and security forces but for everyone. The training enabled us to understand the different roles of civil society in SSR". The training was provided by a pool of trainers from DCAF and its partners, including the National Commission for Security Sector Reform (CNRSS), the Citizen's Alliance for Security Sector Reform (AC-RSS), the National Police and Gendarmerie Directorates-General and the Bamako District Governorate.



Training for female police commissioners and student commissioners

Training on female leadership, risk management, gender and gender-based violence for female staff of the special contingent of student commissioners took place from 6 to 10 November in Bamako. Organised by the National Police in collaboration with DCAF, this workshop enabled 86 future female commissioners to learn about and discuss the concept of gender, the fight against gender-based violence, female leadership and managerial skills, prevention and management of personal risks (e.g. harassment in the workplace, personal safety, socio-cultural constraints). The National Police recognises gender equality as essential to guarantee the security of all men, women, girls and boys, as the Deputy Director General of the National Police said: "Despite the complex and multi-faceted security crisis that our country, like others in the Sahel, is going through, the gender dimension within the National Police remains at the heart of the priority activities of the highest police authorities, as this workshop demonstrates".



First meeting of the Consultative Security Committee (CCS) for the San region

On 21 November, the governorate of the San region organised the 1st meeting of its regional

Consultative Security Committee with the support of DCAF. The meeting was attended by the prefects of San and Tominian cercles, the mayor of the urban commune of San, representatives of the governor's office and the Defence and Security Forces (DSF), the representative of the coordination of associations/NGOs and foundations operating in the San region, religious leaders, representatives of neighbourhood and village chiefs, the network of traditional communicators for the development of Mali (RECOTRADE), the dozos, the coordination of women's associations and NGOs in Mali (CAFO) and other members of civil society, for a total of 66 participants, including nine women. The committee meeting started with the DSF giving a presentation on the security situation in the region, highlighting major events, security challenges and the information and communication channels available to the population. Following the DSF, the other participants shared their security perceptions and concerns, a step in ensuring that the security sector responds to the needs of the population. Finally, the participants put forward recommendations to meet the challenges identified, such as the creation of a public awareness space in the form of television programmes, the development of public radio programmes in collaboration with the DSF to raise public awareness, the organisation of first aid courses in all primary and secondary schools, the teaching of the highway code in secondary, technical and vocational education, and the organisation of open days by the various DSF corps to support civilians' better understanding of their role. CCSs are planned at regular intervals to enable regular exchanges between security sector actors and the rest of society, and to monitor the implementation of recommendations.

NIGER



Support for the 16 Days of Activism against GBV against women and girls

DCAF carried out several activities in Niamey as part of UN Women's 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) against women and girls campaign, which ran from 25 November to 10 December. The first activity was organised around the screening of the Malian film "Mounyou ni Sabali", which tells the story of two Malian women who decide not to remain silent and expose the taboos associated with sexual violence. The 19 participants, including eight women, had the opportunity to raise their concerns and discuss possible solutions. A second activity took place on 4 December and consisted of a community dialogue organised in collaboration with the NGO SOS Femmes et Enfants Victimes de Violence Familiale (SOS FEVVF) in the Dan zama koira neighbourhood. The event provided an opportunity to raise awareness of GBV and the importance of breaking the silence around this important social issue.



Exchange and awareness-raising day on the fundamentals of SSGR

On 28 November, DCAF organised a day of exchange and awareness-raising on the fundamentals of security sector governance and reform (SSGR) for Nigerien civil society organisations (CSOs) in Niamey, marking an important milestone in DCAF's cooperation with civil society in Niger. Attended by 18 members of civil society, including eight women, the event, rich in discussion and reflection, focused on several key objectives. Firstly, DCAF shared the conclusions of the CSO interviews held in June 2023, providing perspectives on current challenges and laying the foundations for future strategies. Secondly, participants discussed the various issues at the heart of security governance, and in particular the impact of the exceptional context on the actions of civil society, seeking ways to maintain their significant contribution. Finally, the meeting provided an opportunity to assess the needs of CSOs, in order to gain a better understanding of the priority areas for developing targeted capacity-building actions.

Our colleagues write about the Sahel

Is there still a role for security sector reform in the Sahel?

Reflections on prospects for security sector governance and reform (SSG/R) in the Sahel through this article by Anne Bennett, Head of the Sub-Saharan Africa Division. Providing insights on the impact of recent coups in Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger on SSR, the article delves into the challenges of promoting democratic governance in contexts of non-constitutional changes in government. Highlighting strategies by DCAF, such as supporting civil society, the article underscores the importance of sustaining international engagement despite risks associated with military regimes. [Read the full article](#) to gain insights into the complexities shaping the political future of the Sahel.

Violence and insecurity in the Tillabéri region - Impacts on women and girls

Ornella Moderan, SSR Advisor at DCAF, explores the gender-related repercussions of the security crisis in the Tillabéri region of Niger, particularly the increase in gender-based violence. The article covers various topics such as child marriage, conflict-related sexual violence, and financial dependence as a source of vulnerability for women. Ultimately, the article proposes avenues centered on human security, incorporating community consultation and the collection of gender-specific data for a crisis response that considers the entire affected population, regardless of gender. [Read the full article here.](#)

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