

Annual Review - Summary Sheet

PROGRAMME TITLE: Sahel Conflict Reduction*		
Country/Region:	Sahel	
HMG Partners (LEAD in bold)	Department for International Development (lead up to September 2016), Foreign and Commonwealth Office	
Total Budget:	Overseas Development Assistance (ODA): £1.18m	Non-ODA: None
Start Date: September 2015		End Date: December 2016
Outputs		Score
Produce and broadcast nationwide factual, balanced, impartial, professional news and information programmes in Niger, so as to promote dialogue between communities.		A+
The democratic process is strengthened in the Sahel region with trainings on electoral coverage and programmes specially designed to allow every citizen to understand what is at stake in elections and to take part in elections.		A+
Capacities of Studio Kalangou journalists and employees, journalists from partner Nigerien radio stations (production and broadcast capacities) and Nigerien journalists and journalism students are strengthened.		B
Improved media coverage in Niger and Mali of shared, trans-border issues such as refugees, migration, and security		B
Target communities and authorities report cases of terrorist/extremist violence and identify and document trajectories of radicalisation.		A
Target communities understand the link between extremist/terrorist violence and political, social and economic grievances, and identify relevant response actions		A
Target communities act upon identified threats of radicalisation and violence in coordination with customary, religious, political authorities, through inclusive economic and other initiatives		C
Outcomes:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased professional, journalistic capacity contributes to good governance, democratic processes, security, dialogue, and shared identities between populations in the Sahel region. • Increased awareness about extremist/terrorist violence enables the development of locally-owned reporting and response mechanisms. 		
Outcome Score: B		Risk: Medium

Summary of Programme Performance

Year	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Programme Score	N/A	B	
Risk Rating	N/A	Medium	

What support is the UK providing?

The Sahel CSSF programme (£4.45m) contributes towards the National Security Council (NSC) strategy through work on three strands: Conflict Reduction and Stabilisation (£1.18m); Borders, Security, Migration and Crime (£1.67m) and Multilaterals (£2.2m).

The NSC strategy sub-objectives relevant to this programme are:

- Long-term international support for political settlements and processes, including local level peace-building and the reintegration of armed groups secured

This annual review focuses on the Conflict Reduction and Stabilisation strand, which comprises two projects:

1. A £450,000 project to build capacity for effective radio journalism in the Sahel, implemented by Fondation Hironnelle in Mali and Niger (both nation-wide). The project started in September 2015 and closed in June 2016.

2. A £731,142 project to help target groups understand and manage their conflicts peacefully and work with local government for inclusive economic development, which from April 2016 changed its focus to increasing awareness and documentation on the scale and type of extremist violence. It was implemented by a Consortium involving two Malian organisations, led by International Alert. It had started in July 2015 and closed in December 2016.

Summary of progress and lessons learnt/actions taken since last review

The 15/16 review found that the UK capacity building project delivered the expected outputs and paved the way for other donors, notably Denmark, EU, Sweden, Switzerland and United States, who continued with the project when the UK phased it out. The review reported that the conflict reduction and inclusive development had created assets (e.g. light conflict analysis and mediation/conflict prevention skills) that are being further invested in, and used. While it highlighted that recommendations to work with the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) Trust Fund and both UK-funded and non-UK funded programmes were not acted on, it points that seventy-five percent of the recommendations from the previous annual review was implemented. This includes the scaling up of the UK presence, which will facilitate the implementation of future recommendations in full.

Lessons learned and recommendations for the next year:

- Context and geographic focus: the social, political and security landscapes in the Sahel are highly volatile. Future CSSF programmes should retain flexibility to target the most critical regions as the situation evolves, both in Mali and throughout the Sahel. The focus will need to take into account the fact that networks can spread across the Sahel from both the North (Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin) and South (Boko Haram) and destabilise any of the four Sahel countries (Burkina Faso, Chad, Niger and Mali). There is a need to target more critical regions in coordination with some of the main international donors.
- Working with others: the UK could play a very important role in promoting a more conflict-sensitive approach and influencing these actors. With the increased UK presence and CSSF funding in the Sahel, there is a real opportunity to build a network of donors and project partners, through which we should be able to better define the UK niche and ensure our work is coordinated with others. It is clear the UK has expertise to offer in this area and it could be better served by working with partners to influence a larger pot of money (e.g. World Bank projects and the MINUSMA Trust Fund).
- Organisation of strands and synergies with other UK-funded actions: the CSSF portfolio, although low value at £4.5m, is split across three strands of activity: Borders Security, Multilaterals and Conflict Reduction. The programme team may wish to consider reorganising their programme under fewer strands to reduce bureaucracy and promote synergy.
- Project management: project and financial management should shift to the team in Bamako. Project management would also benefit from better organisation of documentation.
- Approach: there is a need for further reflection on (i) what works in the Sahel context, what counter-narratives are effective, and how to target the main influencers on would-be recruits; (ii) what can short-term and targeted actions achieve, and how they could connect to longer-term ones; (iii) whether more of the same (community-level conflict resolution) or new more targeted ones would be more transformative.
- Timeframe: six-month projects in local peacebuilding do not represent value for money considering the time it takes to set up partnerships, build trust with communities and build social cohesion.

*To note that there is no programme summary as this programme finished 31 December 2016.