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INTERNATIONAL RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT

Final Performance Report of USAID Peace through Development II (PDev II)

2011 – 2016

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The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development of the United States Government.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

International Relief & Development (IRD) launched the Peace through Development II (PDev II) project in 2011, grounded in lessons learned from the work completed under the Peace through Development project in Chad and Niger. IRD built upon this work in Chad and Niger, and expanded the project into Burkina Faso as well. Over the course of five years (2011-2016), PDev II established and empowered a network of messengers to counter the appeal of violent extremism (VE). The Program demonstrably built resilience against socioeconomic, political, and cultural drivers of VE through four strategic objectives: making youth more empowered, increasing moderate voices, increasing civil society capacity, and strengthening local government.

Key USAID staff played a critical role to support and shape PDev II's work: Leslie-Ann N'Wokora, Noel Bauer, and Stephanie Garvey. IRD is grateful for their encouragement, critical thinking, and support.

This regional project was led by multiple Chiefs of Party and Country Directors over its lifetime, working to ensure that the needs of communities, countries, and regions were addressed in a timely and effective manner in order to mitigate and reduce the factors that could lead to VE. Of particular note are IRD's Country Directors for Burkina Faso and Niger, Salamata Ouedraogo and Aminou Laouli, respectively. These individuals led with skill, honor, and passion for their work and the people they supported. Additionally, staff across all offices should take pride in their efforts to reduce the risk of instability of communities in Burkina Faso, Chad, and Niger, while increasing their resilience to VE.

In 2014, the Mitchell Group conducted an assessment of the risk of VE in Niger for USAID, as a response to USAID's interest in better understanding the drivers leading to VE in Niger specifically. The report was released when PDev II was in the end of its fourth year of implementation, thus limiting the opportunity for IRD to integrate findings into PDev II programming. Nonetheless, the collaboration and discussion with the Mitchell Group and its staff was both welcomed and appreciated. Through their work, and this Final Report, we hope that practitioners and implementers can learn from PDev II's successes and lessons learned.

Throughout PDev II's duration, representatives from Ministries in Burkina Faso, Chad, and Niger provided support, leadership, and encouragement to ensure PDev II met its objectives. Their support was instrumental, and appreciated.

Appreciation is also due to non-governmental leaders, including leaders and members of community development committees and community action committees, as well as religious, traditional, and community leaders in all three countries. The youth leaders, journalists, radio station personnel, leaders of Listening Clubs, and civil society organization leaders who took part in and helped advance the messages and activities of PDev II took on important roles, demonstrating their commitment to their communities and helped improve this project so it could meet donor and beneficiary needs at every step. By participating in assessments and training, and providing feedback on project activities, they invested in their futures and that of their countries.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Award Number	AID-624-A-12-00001
Office Locations	Burkina Faso, Chad, and Niger
Total Estimated Award Amount	\$61,255,800
Total Obligated Amount	\$59,793,119
Period of Performance	11/2011 – 12/2016
Start - End Dates	11/2011 – 12/2016 (Niger); 11/2011 – 10/2016 (Chad); 10/2012 – 6/2016 (Burkina Faso)
Agreement Officer	Leslie-Ann Nwokora
Agreement Officer's Technical Representative	Noel Bauer
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ABBREVIATIONS

AEN	Association des Éleveurs et Nomades	FDC	Fondation pour Le Développement Communautaire
AFD	Agence Française de Développement	FOG	Fixed Obligation Grant
AFDF	Association Féminine pour le Développement de la Femme D-Laagm-Taaba	GED-GAO	Groupe Éducatif pour le Développement Durable
AJER-FS	Association des Jeunes et Enfants Vivant dans la Rue Face à leur Sort	IR	Intermediate Result
AMMIE	Association Appui Moral et Intellectuel des Enfants	IRD	International Relief & Development
ATPIR	Action Tchadienne pour la Promotion des Initiatives Rurales	IRI	International Republican Institute
ATURAD	Association des Témoins, des Urgences, et des Actions de Développement	IVR	Interactive Voice Recording
CAC	Community Action Committee	LGCI	Local Government Capacity Index
CAG	Content Advisory Group	M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
CDC	Cadre de Concertation or Community Development Committee	MONUSCO	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
CENI	Independent National Elections Commission	NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
CFGCT	Centre de Formation en Gestion des Collectivités Territoriales	NDI	National Democratic Institute
CFPT	Centre de Formation Professionnelle et Technique	NECS	Niger Education and Community Strengthening
CNTA	National Association of Municipalities of Chad	NEWS	National Early Warning Systems
COP	Chief of Party	NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
CSO	Civil Society Organization	OCAT	Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool
CVE	Countering Violent Extremism	OS	Operating System
EA	Equal Access	PDev	USAID Peace through Development
EAN	Association des Eleveurs et Nomades	PM	Program Manager
EMAIR	L'Ecole des Mines de l'Air	PPRG	Good Governance and Political Party Program
ENAM	L'École Nationale d'Administration	PRG	Participatory Responsive Governance—Principal Activity
EU	European Union	PSA	Public Service Announcement
		RAIL	Réseau d'Appui aux Initiatives Locales (Network of Local Support Activities)

ABBREVIATIONS

REGIS-AG	Resilience and Economic Growth in The Sahel – Accelerated Growth
Salam	Salam Institute for Peace and Justice
SD	Secure Digital
SFCG	Search for Common Ground
SMS	Short Message Service (text messaging)
SO	Strategic Objective
TTAP	Tailored Technical Assistance Package
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

USAID/WA	United States Agency for International Development/West Africa
USG	United States Government
VE	Violent Extremism
VEO	Violent Extremist Organization
VIE	Volontaires pour l'Integration Éducative
VOIP	Voice-over-Internet Protocol
WANEP	West Africa Network for Peacebuilding
YALI	Young African Leadership Initiative

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Building on the success of Peace through Development (PDev I, 2008-2011), PDev II was a five-year program (2011-2016) that reduced the risk of instability of communities in Burkina Faso, Chad, and Niger, while increasing their resilience to violent extremism (VE). Implemented by International Relief & Development (IRD), in collaboration with partners Equal Access (EA), Search for Common Ground (SFCG), and the Salam Institute for Peace and Justice (Salam), PDev II established and empowered a network of messengers to counter the appeal of VE. The Program demonstrably built resilience against VE's socioeconomic, political, and cultural drivers through four strategic objectives (SOs): making youth more empowered, increasing moderate voices, increasing civil society capacity, and strengthening local government.

Each SO was broken down further into Intermediate Results (IR) that targeted a specific resiliency. For example, expanding youth livelihoods was an IR under the first SO, empowering youth. Considerable emphasis was placed on defining IRs and developing activities that were gender-conscious and integrated to ensure broad participation and maximum impact.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: YOUTH MORE EMPOWERED

PDev II offered training and material support in leadership, participatory theatre, mobile cinema, social media, and political empowerment to youth leaders to enable them to be more active and effective messengers for a counter narrative to VE within their communities, and act as ambassadors for civic advancement and social harmony. Credible voices at the grassroots level were identified and empowered to counter the everyday messaging of Violent Extremist Organizations (VEOs). These youths were encouraged to actively participate in national and regional forums to speak out against VE messaging and advocate for democratic and peaceful national elections. Access to education was improved for 110,185 youth through “Local Heroes” projects, functional literacy training, public campaigns for removing barriers to girls’ education, classroom renovations, and the provision of school equipment and didactic materials totaling \$1,117,149. Finally, youth received vocational and income-generation training that enabled them to meet their basic needs and resist the financial incentives offered by VEOs.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: INCREASED MODERATE VOICES

PDev II enabled 76 partner radio stations to deliver information more effectively by administering technical training and support, providing equipment and materials, and constructing radio stations in underserved areas. This was a key element in delivering strategic, positive narratives to counter VE to a broader audience, and introducing and reinforcing moderate messages and themes into the public discourse. A broad spectrum of trainings was offered, including ethics in journalism, production of countering VE (CVE)-themed radio programs, equipment repair, and community reporting. Equipment provided by PDev II included sound systems, digital recorders, computers, and microphones, with an aggregate value of \$693,810. By improving and increasing the capacity of radio stations, PDev II increased access to quality information for millions of listeners within the broadcasting range of Program-affiliated radio stations. CVE messaging was conveyed through a variety of radio programs targeted at generating and delivering youth-based content for counter narratives to VE: *Manegr Soré* (‘Voice of Youth’), *Pinal Sukabè* (‘Voice of Youth’), *Chabab-al-Haye* (‘Youth Alive’), *Gwadaben Matassa* (‘Youth Boulevard’), *Zansong Sore* (‘Citizen’s Voice’), *Dabalaye* (‘Meeting Place’), and *Sada Zumunci* (‘Solidarity and Fraternity’). To maximize listenership in the areas most affected by VE, PDev II produced numerous broadcasts in local languages, including Arabic, French, Fulfuldé, Hausa, Mooré, Kanuri, Tamasheq, and Zarma.

Under this SO, PDev II also carried out inter-faith and inter-generational workshops to address religious and generational tensions and misunderstandings that could contribute to factionalism and undermine community cohesion. The participative workshops brought together Christian and Muslim leaders and their followers so they could all gain a better understanding of the value in community diversity and in tolerance, which served to advance community resilience and offer a bulwark against groups that endorse antisocial behavior or violence.

Public events gave moderate imams a voice to strengthen their ability to reach out to vulnerable populations while offering a counter narrative to that of VE. In total, PDev II gave financial and technical support to 2,413 moderate religious leaders who were then able to influence and foster peaceful co-existence within their communities through intra- and inter-faith dialogues. One instructional material developed by PDev II for this intervention, the *Ouagadougou Roadmap Against Violent Extremism*, outlined how religious leaders could fight VE through educating, guiding, and mentoring youth to become agents of positive change in their communities.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: INCREASED CIVIL SOCIETY CAPACITY TO ADDRESS COMMUNITY ISSUES

PDev II enabled civil society organizations (CSOs) to better address community issues through training and capacity-building support that improved their ability to develop strategic plans, as well as design and implement initiatives to address VE and other community challenges through 95 Program-issued grants, totaling \$435,154.

Seventy-eight Community Action Committees (CACs) were established as advocates of local populations on matters that engaged with local government officials. Prior to PDev II, Community Development Committees (CDCs) with a similar role had been created by the regional governments, but had limited functionality in decision-making and community development. With PDev II support, all such community-based committees became better-established groups with competency in integrating PDev II activities with government initiatives.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: STRENGTHENED LOCAL GOVERNMENT

PDev II strove to improve local government capacity, increase transparency and accountability in decision-making, and foster participatory development – all elements critical to strengthening legitimacy, visibility, and building trust between local authorities and the communities they serve. Activities such as town hall meetings sought to increase transparency and accountability in local decision-making, in turn creating responsibility and ownership, building trust and confidence in government, and mitigating feelings of disenfranchisement and unresponsiveness.

PDev II-affiliated municipalities made gains in adopting best practices in governance including:

- Developing municipal budgets in a participatory manner;
- Holding open discussion sessions between citizens and local authorities in town hall settings and/or through radio broadcasts;
- Providing public access to municipal annual reports;
- Recording and broadcasting working sessions of municipal councils; and
- Establishing channels of routine dialogue between municipal councils and community representation groups (CACs and CDCs).

Achievements also include the successful allocation of funds and other resources for the effective functioning of CACs and CDCs, pledges from national and local government officials in Burkina Faso, Chad, and Niger to continue to improve their local management practices, and the completion of 69 community-development projects. In addition, the Program undertook small-scale construction and rehabilitation activities that provided positive, tangible benefits to targeted communities across all four SOs, including 33 school classrooms, five community radio stations, five radio towers, and 11 community wells, totaling approximately \$954,000.

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability was built into the Program’s holistic, community-led approach to address the drivers of VE. This is showcased through the following achievements:

- The formation and continued function of CACs and CDCs;
- The development and dissemination of reference guides;
- The network formed amongst PDev II participants and beneficiaries;
- Participatory theater troupes securing continued, external funding; and
- The knowledge and skills gained by PDev II staff being applied in their new job roles within their governments and on other development and peacebuilding initiatives.

CHALLENGES & LESSONS LEARNED

PDev II covered a vast geographic area in three countries comprising 101 “core” and “non-core” intervention zones (although programming never reached 12 “non-core” zones) where nearly five million people reside, and where VE has been present at varying magnitudes. This complex and evolving Program required IRD and its implementing partners to address significant challenges.

How these challenges were addressed and, in most cases, converted into opportunities is detailed in the “Challenges and Lessons Learned” section, pages 35 through 41. The corrective actions taken, and the implications of lessons learned on programming as it was being implemented, and potentially for future programming, are also detailed.

OBSERVATIONS

Over the course of the Program, several key observations related to intervention implementation were made. For instance, in the Program region, costs need to be weighed against gains when introducing new technologies. Ideally, a new technology will be mostly intuitive to users and not require internet access or a specific smartphone model or operating system for use. Further observations related to programming, imam outreach, social media, work plan periods, construction activities, and content distribution methods are detailed in the “Observations” section of this report, pages 42 and 43.

INTRODUCTION

Building on the success of Peace through Development (PDev I, 2008-2011), PDev II was a five-year program (2011-2016) that reduced the risk of instability of communities in Burkina Faso, Chad, and Niger, while increasing their resilience to violent extremism (VE). As the U.S. Agency for International Development/West Africa's (USAID/WA's) implementing partner, International Relief and Development (IRD) applied a holistic, community-led approach to address the socioeconomic, political, and cultural drivers of VE, with a focus on youth who are at greatest risk to being targeted or recruited by violent extremist organizations (VEOs).

To measure PDev II's success against the Program's goal, i.e., increased community resilience against VE, IRD designed the following three sub-goals:

Goal 1: Improvements in Social Cohesion through the generation of norms and networks that enable collective action; increased trust within networks and among strangers; and the improved ability of communities to communicate amongst each other and with other communities.

Goal 2: Enhanced Resilience to VE through reduction of risk to vulnerable individuals who could become radicalized by strengthening factors that enable individuals to resist attitudes toward violence and extremist ideologies; and through community leadership, and social and political engagement.

Goal 3: Improvements in Youth Outlook through active participation in economic activities, civil society, and local decision-making; non-violent conflict mitigation and management; improved individual and collective vision (expectations) on education, healthcare, other social amenities, general well-being, and on their future and that of their country.

The theory of change underlying these goals was that communities whose members are tolerant, mutually supportive, and hopeful of a more promising future are altogether less likely to succumb to extremism and violence. Program design was based on a holistic, community-led approach that had four mutually reinforcing Strategic Objectives (SOs):

SO 1: Youth More Empowered through expanded livelihoods, vocational, and entrepreneurial skills training, civic education, capacity building for youth associations, and leadership training to increase participation in local decision-making by young men and women;

SO 2: Moderate Voices Increased through integrated radio, social media, civic education, and conflict-resolution activities, as well as enhanced access to quality and credible information, and positive, public dialogue;

SO 3: Civil Society Capacity Increased through formal and informal training, strengthened advocacy skills, citizen-led accountability initiatives, and issue-based campaigns integrated with radio and social media and enhanced through CSO coalitions and networks; and

SO 4: Local Government Strengthened through capacity enhancement of local representative groups and CSOs; training in public administration, transparency, advocacy, government outreach, and greater citizen participation, with dialogue disseminated through radio.

Each SO was formulated to identify and measure progress towards a specific resiliency determined to be critical in addressing the socioeconomic, political, and cultural drivers of VE. Activities were particularly focused on young men and women, and were designed to be gender-conscious and integrated to ensure broad public participation and to strengthen the resilience of entire communities.

All activities carried out under PDev II worked to achieve the four SOs and could be categorized as either sub-awards (grants) or direct implementation. Activities associated with sub-awards were those largely conceptualized, planned, and implemented in close coordination with PDev II staff by Program-affiliated community-based groups, such as CACs, CDCs, youth groups, religious leaders, school administrators, and CSOs.

Examples of sub-awards include financial support for trainings given to:

- At-risk youth (vocational);
- CSOs (principles of good governance for monitoring public policies; conflict prevention and resolution); and
- Municipal Council staff (transparency and accountability in administrative decision-making).

Direct implementation activities were conceptualized, planned, and undertaken through close coordination involving Program and Country Management staff and the targeted communities. They were carried out primarily under the supervision of PDev II personnel in coordination with CACs, CDCs, and other stakeholder community groups.

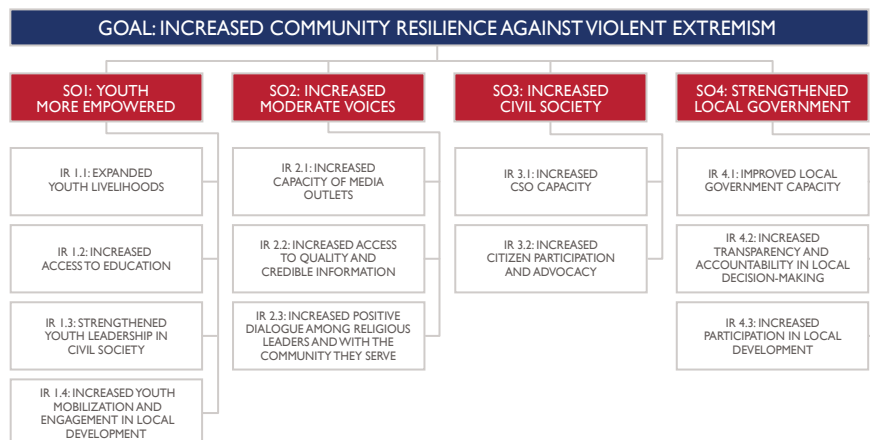
Examples of direct implementation activities include:

- Trainings to youth on participatory theatre techniques for resolving recurrent community conflicts;
- Trainings to media outlets on radio operations;
- Trainings to CAC members on participatory development and financial management of grants; and
- Support for the live broadcasting of mayoral candidate debates.

RESULTS FRAMEWORK

The PDev II Results Framework targeted specific resiliencies and ensured that interventions were cross-cutting and integrated for maximum impact.

The strategic approach of PDev II was reflected in its results framework, depicted below:



While USAID/WA provided strategic guidance and contractual oversight, IRD was responsible for operationalizing the Program’s SOs and coordinating implementing partners’ activities within the context of annual work plans that had been approved by USAID/WA. IRD’s responsibilities also included the training of staff, managing relations with local communities in the Program intervention zones, and providing feedback so that both USAID/WA and PDev II implementers had the most current information and ground-level analysis with which to assess Program effectiveness and make sound strategic decisions.

IRD implemented PDev II in partnership with three international partners—Equal Access (EA), Search for Common Ground (SFCG), and Salam Institute for Peace and Justice (Salam)—as well as numerous local partners. The international partners had specific roles spanning all three PDev II countries, while scopes of work (SOWs) for local partners varied by organization and country. A list of major partners and their specific roles within PDev II can be found below. In addition, IRD directly implemented and oversaw the youth-empowerment activities not implemented by SFCG, including increasing access to education and youth vocational training, as well as all capacity-building support activities for CSOs, community representation groups, and local government officials. IRD also engaged with local and regional non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Program planning and implementation.

MAJOR IMPLEMENTING PARTNER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	
ORGANIZATION	SCOPE OF WORK
International Implementing Partners	
Equal Access (EA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build the capacity of radio stations • Develop quality radio program content through youth reporters • Engage women, CSOs, and local government to support and reinforce behavior and attitude change • Build capacity in CVE messaging with radio stations
Search for Common Ground (SFCG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase youth membership in, and strengthen the capacities of, youth CSOs • Create social networks that incorporate EA’s radio programming with participatory theatre and youth-development activities
Salam Institute for Peace and Justice (Salam)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train religious leaders and teachers in conflict resolution and peace-building • Organize a regional peace-builders’ network • Foster positive inter- and intra-faith dialogue • Continue with Koranic curriculum reform (started under PDev I)
Local Implementing Partners	
<i>Burkina Faso</i> – Fondation pour le Développement Communautaire (FDC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct capacity assessments of CSOs and local authorities • Develop training modules • Administer capacity-building training and provide technical assistance to CSOs and local authorities
<i>Chad</i> – Association des Eleveurs et Nomades (EAN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement PDev II activities across each SO through sub-awards to CACs and local CSOs • Administer capacity-building training and provide technical assistance to CACs and CSOs
<i>Chad</i> – Action Tchadienne pour la Promotion des Initiatives Rurales (ATPIR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement PDev II activities under SO 3 • Conduct capacity assessments of CSOs and local authorities • Develop training modules • Administer capacity-building training and provide technical assistance to youth, CACs, and CSOs
<i>Chad</i> – Association des Témoins, des Urgences, et des Actions de Développement (ATURAD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement PDev II activities under SO 3 • Conduct capacity assessments of CSOs and local authorities • Develop training modules • Administer capacity-building training and provide technical assistance to youth, CACs, and CSOs

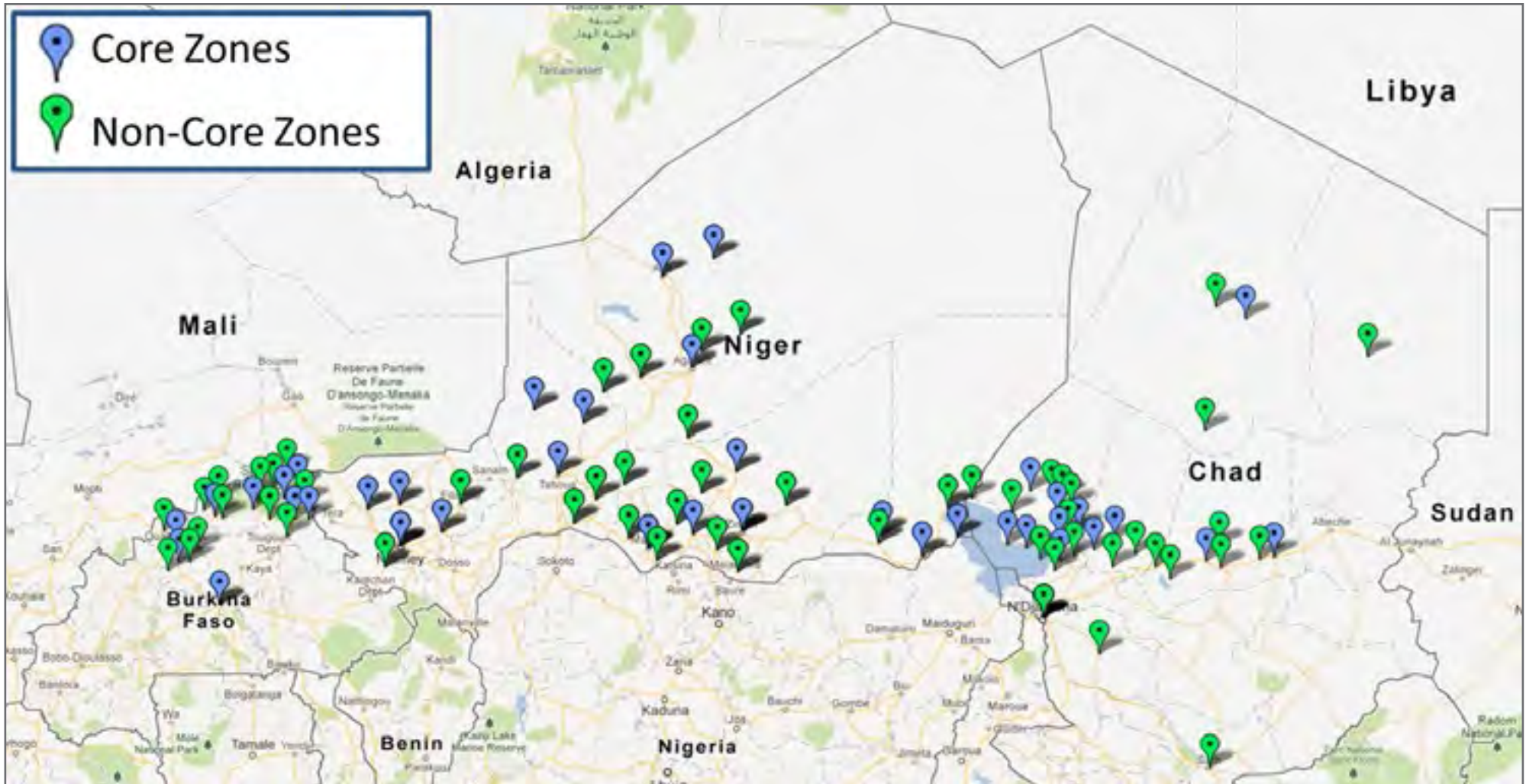
MAJOR IMPLEMENTING PARTNER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	
ORGANIZATION	SCOPE OF WORK
Niger – Réseau d'Appui aux Initiatives Locales (RAIL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement PDev II activities across SO 3 and 4 through sub-awards to CDCs and local CSOs Administer capacity-building training and provide technical assistance to CSOs
Niger – L'École Nationale d'Administration (ENAM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct capacity assessments for CSOs and local authorities Develop training modules for CSOs Administer capacity-building training and technical assistance to CSOs
Niger – Karkara	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on youth-led processes for mapping and assessing VE factors and resiliencies Implement community grants in targeted areas
Niger – Volontaires pour l'Intégration Éducative (VIE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide literacy training to youth
Niger – Groupe Éducatif pour le Développement Durable (GED-GAO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide literacy training to youth
Niger – L'École des Mines de l'Air (EMAIR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide vocational trainings for at-risk youth (Tuareg army combatants)
Niger – Université of Diffa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase research on CVE issues
Niger – Centre de Formation Professionnelle et Technique (CFPT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide vocational trainings to youth
West African Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize activities to empower youth as ambassadors for peace, social cohesion, and development

AREAS OF OPERATION

PDev II covered a large number of communities stretched over an immense geographic expanse, with considerable cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic diversity. Program interventions were limited to those communities with the highest VE risk factors; these core zones were determined through assessments conducted at the Program's outset. The selection of core versus non-core zones was based on three criteria: assessment scores, population density, and the potential for synergetic results from other, key CVE, and democracy and governance programs. PDev II operated in 45 core zones across the three Program countries: 10 in Burkina Faso, 15 in Chad, and 20 in Niger. Core zones received the full spectrum of PDev II interventions, while other, non-selected communities lying within the geographic areas were considered to be in "non-core zones" and did not benefit from all program interventions. By the close of the Program, PDev II radio programming reached 44 non-core zones.

The estimated population living within the Program's core zones at the onset and close of the Program was 4.2 million and 4.9 million people, respectively, based on PDev II baseline population estimates, population growth estimates, and internet-based fact-checking on the Program countries' annual population growth rates.

CORE & NON-CORE ZONES



Country	PDev II Regions	# Core Zones	# Non-Core Zones
Burkina Faso	Ouagadougou, Ouadalan, Seno, Soum	10	13
Chad	N'Djamena, Bahr El Ghazal, Kanem, Batha, Borkou, Ennedi, Tibesti	15	23
Niger	Niamey, Tillaberi, Agadez, Tahoua, Zinder, Maradi, Diffa	20	20

PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS BY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

A) STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE I: YOUTH MORE EMPOWERED

PDev II engaged nearly 110,000 youth in the three Program countries through interventions to increase access to education, as well as the provision of trainings and practical experiences in leadership, participatory theatre, mobile cinema, social media, film research and development, and vocational trades.

IR 1.1 Expanded Youth Livelihoods

Vocational training and income-generating activities: PDev II provided vocational training, income-generating activities, and internships to help youth resist the financial incentives offered by VEOs, enabling them to use their newly acquired skills to help meet their basic economic needs. A total of 1,506 youth benefited from PDev II-funded vocational training and internships across the three countries, representing approximately two-thirds of those who had been targeted (cumulatively, as well as within each country). Areas of vocational training included tailoring, baking, metalworking/welding, carpentry, electrical wiring, and motor vehicle repairs. Each participant also received business skills training such as opening and managing a bank account, registering as a business, paying taxes, re-investing for business growth, and enhancing customer service. Whenever possible, youth were given starter kits containing tools/supplies upon completion of their training, encouraging them to promptly put their new skills to use. As an example of the potential impact of these interventions, a group of Program-trained bread-makers in Mao, Chad were collectively earning over 5 million CFA (approximately \$9,000) per month, while in Moussoro, Chad, jewelry-makers were earning 100,000 CFA (approximately \$180) per month. Throughout the life of the Program, PDev II provided more than \$460,000 to support vocational training at 10 training centers.

IR 1.2 Increased Access to Education

Increasing enrollment and retention: A “Local Heroes” initiative commenced in Year 3, with the intent of creating a counter narrative to the negative discourse being used by extremists on secular education. Program interventions were implemented in all three countries to promote academic excellence and to encourage students to stay in school by introducing them to known, influential, and successful members of their community (i.e., entrepreneurs, members of the armed forces, academics) who could serve as role models. Through arranged speaking events, these “Local Heroes” shared their life experiences and spoke persuasively on the importance of education for success in earning a livelihood and providing for one’s family. Over the course of the Program, “Local Heroes” events were held at 41 schools, reaching over 6,000 spectators. To reinforce academic excellence, the top-performing students at each event (total of 500) were honored with prizes consisting of various didactic materials.

Public campaigns to promote girls’ education were held with community leaders and local authorities to raise their awareness on the value of education for girls. This initiative was undertaken specifically to counter Boko Haram’s strictures on secular education, especially for young females. Such campaigns in Chad and Niger assembled members of the local community, school staff, and local government authorities (administrative and traditional) to discuss this matter at length, covering topics such as root causes for girls’ limited schooling and proposed solutions for improving their enrollment and retention. Other activities included workshops to identify issues and propose solutions to increase girls’ enrollment; public conferences on what community members and municipal governments could do to increase enrollment; and public caravans to raise awareness and disseminate information. Over 14,000 people (49% females and 51% males) participated in these activities.

Functional literacy: This activity was undertaken in all three Program countries based on the premise that education and critical thinking reduce the vulnerability of at-risk populations to extremist narratives. Literacy classes organized by the Program were completed by 2,957 people (32% males and 68% females). In Niger, 57% of those who completed the coursework were able to write, read, and calculate in French (basic levels) and national languages. The remaining 43% could send and read simple phone text messages and read basic texts in elementary French.

The activity was phased out as a standalone intervention in December 2014, as the Program and USAID/WA mutually determined that the value of literacy training in terms of preventing VE was modest in relation to the cost and in comparison to other Program activities.

Classroom construction and the provision of equipment and supplies: Schools in the Program region face many shortages, including books, furniture, and equipment. The lack of these supplies, as well as dilapidated classrooms, are key reasons for poor academic performance, low retention rates, and disruptive behavior in schools, all of which contribute to a vicious cycle of ever-diminishing value for education, which lends itself to further depreciation by extremists. To combat this dynamic, PDev II consulted with the Ministries of Education in target countries and provided material support to schools to enable them to become more conducive environments for learning. Materials included basic classroom furniture, textbooks, dictionaries, school bags, maps, geometry drawing supplies, computer equipment, and solar-panel systems for improved indoor lighting. Sports equipment was also distributed to support local leaders in organizing tournaments that promoted healthy competition amongst students from various ethnic and religious backgrounds in a safe space.

The Program also engaged in school construction projects, building 33 classrooms, new lavatories and drinking fountains, and establishing four libraries. In total, \$1,117,149 was expended for interventions that benefited a total of 91,236 learners (42% female, 58% male) at 153 schools.

IR 1.3 Strengthened Youth Leadership in Civil Society

Throughout the duration of PDev II, 3,299 youth received 114,213 hours of training in leadership, participatory theatre, and/or multimedia production.

Youth leadership program: PDev II selected promising youth in core zones to take part in a training program comprised of formal and informal exercises in leadership, youth mobilization, community engagement, and conflict analysis and resolution. Following the initial trainings, attendees developed action plans and designed concept notes for 75 small grants worth more than \$430,000 on behalf of their communities to identify and address local problems related to CVE. These youth leaders helped raise awareness and find solutions to problems associated with lack of employment and social services, drug and alcohol use, terrorism, manipulation of youth by politicians and extreme religious leaders, violence in society, natural resource management, and youth education. Other pursuits included the promotion of communal peace, advocacy for the potential role of youth as positive civic models, and the formulation of implementation plans for community development initiatives.

Participatory theatre performances: Drawing on the Sahel’s longstanding cultural ties to oral communication and artistic expression of shared cultural values in communal settings, participatory theatre performances were conducted to engage youth in their communities while directly addressing key themes related to VE. Over the course of the Program, PDev II trained over 400 youth in participatory theatre, empowering them to reach out to their communities, identify and analyze key conflicts and VE issues facing the population, and develop targeted and strategic theatre performances to address the issues they uncovered.

Often tackling sensitive and/or taboo topics, PDev II theatre troupes mobilized audiences and presented theatrical performances showcasing ways to peacefully resolve local issues. During each performance, at the height of the staged “conflict,” youth invited spectators to join in and act out constructive solutions. Performances were followed by lively audience feedback (Q&A) sessions, where facilitators led discussions with audience members on how their perceptions may have altered due to the performance.

Over the life of the Program, PDev II formed 29 participatory theatre troupes in both rural and urban core zones (9 in Burkina Faso, 7 in Chad, and 13 in Niger). With PDev II support, these troupes held over 1,200 performances. Informal questionnaires administered throughout the Program showed an appreciation for the performances, as well as anecdotal evidence of positive changes in knowledge and perception by spectators. Several PDev II participatory theatre troupes became sustainable organizations after the close of the Program, with ongoing solicitation and funding from a range of development and commercial partners. In 2016, the Diffa participatory theatre troupe won a ‘best social entrepreneurs’ award in Niger.

Mobile cinema projections: Mobile cinema projections were held to engage communities in discussions about key issues related to VE and put youth at the forefront of CVE engagement. Youth trained as facilitators in mobile cinema were coached on how to mobilize their communities, set up projection screens and sound systems, show films, and hold community discussions. These locally produced film screenings addressed the drivers of extremism within communities’ own storylines and served as a unique platform for discussing key issues that represent the sensitive and often taboo issues faced by young adults in target communities. Trained in how to tackle these hard-hitting issues, youth used fictitious situations and analogies drawn from the films to spark controlled debates, which allowed community members to share their perspectives and opinions while offering solutions to the problems presented. Youth carried out two types of screenings: large community screenings for audiences of 200–1,000, and smaller screenings for groups of 15–50. Over the course of the Program, youth carried out 967 mobile cinema events throughout the three Program countries. In Niger, over 900 spectators were asked a series of questions that tested their knowledge both before and after the screenings to gauge what they had learned. For the medium-length films, spectators’ knowledge levels on issues related to violence and community resilience rose, on average, by 25% and in some communities by as much as 60%. For short films, over the course of 30 mobile cinema projections, spectators showed an average 32% increase in knowledge on key themes relating to the content of the films.

Film and video: Visual media, when developed in a contextually grounded and purposeful way, holds the potential to shape information streams consumed by target communities. In Years 2 and 3, in partnership with local cinematographers, PDev II began the development of six medium-length films (39-45 minutes each). PDev II experts, local film producers and script writers, and youth partners came together with youth, civil society, and religious and community leaders, as well as other integral members of society to identify and analyze key themes that the films should prioritize. From this starting point, a collaborative process of script development, pre-production, production, editing, review, and validation took place that resulted in the content used for mobile cinema projections. In Years 4 and 5, capitalizing on lessons learned, a similar process took place, but for this interval, youth themselves took the lead role in film development. Working with local and international filmmakers, youth were coached through the process of developing 25 original short films.

Social media: With social media increasingly being viewed by practitioners and policy-makers as the next “front line” for CVE and radicalization, PDev II conducted trainings in Years 4 and 5 of the Program to train youth and community leaders on how to use social media (mainly Facebook and Twitter) to disseminate CVE messaging and for facilitating an online community of diverse voices. The trainings focused on the basics of these platforms, as well as more advanced functions, such as creating and managing groups and pages, as well as how to spread moderate messages and share community engagement stories. Furthermore, the trainings strengthened the ability of individuals to diversify and expand their messaging streams, and to advocate for community and youth concerns. Following the trainings, social media gained traction amongst PDev II-affiliated youth, especially in Burkina Faso and Niger. Youth in both countries continue to use Facebook pages developed during PDev II to create posts, share photos, and comment on their own activities, as well as those related to PDev II.

In the final year of the Program, PDev II launched a four-month Digital Community Initiative in Niger. The goal of this pilot was to use aggregated Facebook usage data to better understand the habits and tendencies of users, and see if it was possible to create a self-sustaining, online network of moderate youth in the Sahel. The initiative selectively targeted Nigerien men and women between the ages of 16 and 36, the age group determined to be the most vulnerable to recruitment by Boko Haram and other militant groups in the region. By analyzing the use of varying combinations of content types (text, photo, video, audio) and messaging types (politics/news, questions, emotional appeal, etc.) the Program identified the most effective way to interact with social media users in Niger. Results showed that posts are the most effective at drawing interaction from viewers when they contain embedded videos and photos, provide real-time news, pose direct questions, have a strong emotional appeal, relate directly to youth/community issues, and/or contain an element of national pride.

Through this initiative it was revealed that, despite connectivity rates that are lower than in more developed countries (according to EA’s *New Media Survey*, in province capitals of intervention core zones 38% of individuals have access to the internet), social media is an effective, cost-efficient way to reach large, at-risk populations and to build and sustain positive conversations related to peace and security in Niger, especially among youth. Over the course of four months, 26,126 individual accounts “liked,” shared, or commented on a post from one of two PDev II-affiliated Facebook pages and more than 536,000 people were reached by PDev II messaging. For each of these Facebook pages, youth aged 18–24 were the most engaged (45% and 52%, respectively).

IR 1.4 Increased Youth Mobilization and Engagement in Local Development

PDev II worked with youth beneficiaries to develop planning and community organizing skills to address VE issues affecting their communities. Youth-led community development activities were aligned with local government and civil society initiatives, and also included those listed under IR 1.3. Activity themes focused on issues such as conflict resolution strategies, electoral violence, land disputes, interpersonal and resource-based conflicts, drug abuse, community participation in development, and unemployment.

Youth forums: PDev II held both national and regional youth forums that convened hundreds of PDev II-trained youth to amplify their voices and bolster their capacity for influence in the Program region. National youth forums were held in each country to develop youth networks so that experiences and lessons learned could be shared. The forums generated insights that resulted in key changes for PDev II, for example a shift from professionally led creation of medium-length films to more inclusive, youth-led short film production.

In Burkina Faso, the national conference resulted in the idea and eventual implementation of youth leaders serving as election observers. In Niger, the 2015 forum served as an opportunity for youth from across the country to discuss and lay out action plans to address the religious violence erupting in the country. It also served as an opportunity for youth and PDev II technicians to consolidate a strategy for managing social media platforms. The inclusion of Ministry of Youth officials in these events further strengthened ties between youth actors and their local ministry representative, which in many cases did not exist prior to the forums.

During Year 5, PDev II organized a regional youth forum in Niamey, Niger for 150 youth from Burkina Faso, Chad, and Niger. Plenary sessions covered regional challenges facing youth in the Sahel, roles and responsibilities regarding youth in elections, ways to increase local and national government accountability, strategies for reducing VE and youth vulnerability to violent groups (e.g., gangs, VE groups), and the opportunities presented by social media.

Group discussions revealed that youth from rural zones in Burkina Faso, Chad, and Niger shared more challenges in common than with youth from urban zones in their own countries. Some of the common challenges included land and herder/pastoralist conflicts, early marriage, resource conflicts, and lack of educational and employment opportunities. The forum also served as a unique opportunity for youth to discuss challenges and initiatives related to national elections, which took place in all three countries between 2015 and 2016, and allowed for members of comparable associations, such as the national youth councils, to establish linkages and develop cross-border networks. Youth leaders from these nations also formed a Youth CVE Council comprised of regional representatives that remained intact beyond the close of the Program.

Sub-awards: Community grants/sub-awards were a key implementation mechanism of PDev II. Sub-award activities were largely conceptualized, planned and implemented by PDev II-affiliated community-based groups such as CACs/CDCs, youth groups, religious leaders, school administrators, and CSOs, in close coordination with program personnel. Over the course of the program, PDev II awarded more than 460 sub-awards worth more than \$6.9 million. The activities associated with the awards were designed to cut across Strategic Objectives (SO) to achieve a layering effect in core zones and mutually reinforce Intermediate Results (IR). For example, organizing and engaging a CAC on the development of a youth livelihoods activity (IR1.1) contributed to increased citizen participation and advocacy (IR3.2), increased transparency and accountability in local decision-making (IR4.2), and more participatory local development (IR4.3). Other sub-awards funded activities including campaigns for peace awareness, youth leadership and vocational trainings, and participatory theater initiatives aimed at conflict resolution.

Peaceful election campaigns: With national elections being held in all three Program countries during the life of the program, several activities were conducted to promote peaceful youth participation.

Burkina Faso: In Burkina Faso, the Program collaborated with the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), under its USAID-funded *National Early Warning Systems* (NEWS) program, and the *Association Alliance Pour la Santé par les Activités Physiques et le Sport* (2APS), to organize Peace Weekends that encouraged youth to actively participate and assume responsibility in promoting free and transparent elections during Years 4 and 5. During Peace Weekends, youth implemented activities aimed at conveying messages of peace and tolerance to young people, encouraging them to participate peacefully in upcoming elections. Activities included conferences, soccer games, participatory theatre performances, and mobile film screenings in all 10 core zones, as well as in three of the non-core zones.

Peace Weekend activities commenced April 20, 2015, with a “train-the-trainers” initiative that lasted for seven days. Following an opening ceremony, 13 individuals were trained in electoral conflict management, based on WANEP’s *Practical Guide to Electoral Conflict Management*, which is used in a number of West African countries. These 13 individuals then trained 10 youth from each of the 10 core zones, and 10 youth from three non-core zones, for a total of 130 youth. Ultimately, 22,477 people attended the events (7,185 females and 15,292 males).

PDev II also partnered with the Young African Leadership Initiative (YALI), International Republican Institute (IRI), National Democratic Institute (NDI), and WANEP in the undertaking of diverse projects for peace messaging and election monitoring conducted in connection with the legislative and presidential elections in Burkina Faso in 2015. One such peace-messaging project, *My Voice, My Vote*, trained youth on electoral processes and strategies for sensitizing the public on peaceful elections, and enabled youth leaders to make nationwide appeals (through radio and television) to encourage peaceful, fair, and transparent elections.

Niger: Demonstrating the nascent sustainability of the established network, beginning in Year 5 of the Program, PDev II youth in Niger undertook activities to promote peaceful, democratic, and transparent elections both independently and in collaboration with other USAID-funded programs (e.g., IRI, NDI, WANEP, and YALI). For example, PDev II youth independently launched a music video espousing peace, development, and stability in Niger in a song composed by youth from all eight regions of the country. The song, titled “*On Est Ensemble*” (We are Together), was launched on February 10, 2016 in an event attended by a large cross-section of the major media outlets in the country, the USAID Mission Representative, and key personnel from the U.S. Embassy in Niger, among others.

PDev II provided 16 of the radio and TV stations in attendance with free copies of the video on DVD and USB keys, and asked them to include it in their programming. The video was also posted on [YouTube](#). Youth were encouraged to disseminate it via WhatsApp and online through social media platforms. The song subsequently became a hit music video in Niger, and five television stations (Anfani National, Tambara Television, Tenere Television, Saraouania Television, and Niger 24) played it 139 times between February 21 and March 30, 2016.

The collaboration with IRI, NDI, WANEP, and YALI also provided funds and personnel to operate a national election “situation room” monitoring center in connection with the presidential and legislative elections in Niger in 2016. The center was operated in close coordination with the Independent National Elections Commission (CENI). Election observers (consisting of PDev II youth leaders and WANEP personnel) worked in teams within each of the eight regions of the country, visiting polling booths within their assigned areas to observe and report back on any irregularities noted during the proceedings, including logistics (e.g., availability of voting materials and operation of voting centers), the atmosphere within and around voting areas, freedom of movement to the polls, and the balloting process. Each report was submitted to the monitoring center for analysis, with all irregularities and other problems reported to those managing those polling stations.

PDev II partnered with IRI, a partner in the USAID *Good Governance and Political Party Program* (PPRG), to conduct eight workshops (one in each of the eight regional Nigerian capitals) between youth engaged in civil society and those in the youth wings of various political parties. The aim of the workshops was to create an open, neutral, and inclusive framework that would allow youth from the different regions to discuss their needs and priorities. In order to ensure equal and representative participation, the implementation team made sure that workshop participants were both from the ruling (majority) and opposition political parties, as well as a diverse range of CSOs. This resulted in a positive atmosphere and workshop discussions that were open, dynamic, and results-oriented. Approximately 50 people attended each workshop (for a total of 400 across the eight workshops), which were held between July 30 and August 30, 2015.

The forums also gave youth an opportunity to develop strategies and commitments for organized and peaceful involvement in the 2017 municipal elections.

B) STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: INCREASED MODERATE VOICES

PDev II contributed to efforts for promoting moderate voices in social, political, and economic dialogue through its support to media outlets, moderate religious leaders, and informal educational institutions. Radio is the main form of mass communication in all three Program countries; according to EA's *New Media Survey*, more than two-thirds of respondents stated that they listen to the radio on a regular (daily or weekly) basis and more than 45% of listeners regularly discussed topics they heard or learned about through PDev II radio programming with friends or family members. Radio therefore provides a readily accessible means for disseminating crucial information, including both factual accounts of current events and socially oriented messages to a wide range of people. PDev II-supported radio series and complementary media support activities were designed to spur dialogue on topics relevant to local communities; play a role in influencing social norms; forge connections between communities; and inspire positive action. Within these high-quality radio programs, a range of issues were examined to address the full range of drivers that contribute to intolerance and conflict, including humiliation, corruption, perceptions of unfairness, and a lack of means to address grievances peacefully. By promoting dialogue amongst the population, which included groups divided by tribal lines, vocational roles, religious beliefs, socioeconomic status, or other boundaries, the Program demonstrated an avenue for listeners to develop their communities through peace and stability.

PDev II was among the top promoters and funders of community radio development and operation in the three Program countries, and was reported to be the largest supporter of radio programming in Niger.²³ By the end of Year 5, the Program was working with a total of 73 partner community radio stations and broadcasting in seven local languages.

IR 2.1 Increased Capacity of Media Outlets

Community radio station networks: A total of 744 unique members of the media (i.e., journalists, radio station managers, and community reporters) received 33,269 hours of training through PDev II funding and technical assistance. Trainings covered a wide array of technical, administrative, and business management topics, including CVE program content development, equipment repair, and community reporting. Media personnel also received training in journalistic ethics and reportorial balance.

A total of \$693,810 in equipment was provided to 73 PDev II radio partners in the three Program countries. The equipment included sound systems, digital recorders, computers, and microphones, all of which enabled the recipients to more effectively deliver information and provide a widely accessible forum for sharing ideas.

Beginning in Year 4, "Radio Circles" were formed from 55 of PDev II's partner radio stations to strengthen the exchange of information, and to harmonize their programming efforts so that their broadcasts would more efficiently and sustainably counter VE. During Radio Circle meetings, the PDev II Media Team guided the participants (journalists and radio station managers) in building scripts and conducting interviews, which were then developed and produced for airing as regionally relevant, radio magazine programs. The 13 Radio Circles (four in Burkina Faso, three in Chad, and six in Niger) were encouraged to rely on each other for expertise, mentorship, and best practices, so that they could co-produce a series of regionally relevant broadcasts across multiple stations. At the conclusion of the Program, these stations were provided with a comprehensive, reference handbook in French, Hausa, or Arabic language as appropriate, which outlined the main teachings of EA's approach to radio production.

Listening Clubs: A total of 76 community members, who were trained and equipped with radio equipment and tablets, organized 38 Listening Clubs (10 in Burkina Faso, 8 in Chad, and 20 in Niger) that enabled people to listen to PDev II-supported radio programming and exchange their thoughts and opinions with other community members. This allowed them to assess the content and usefulness of PDev II-supported radio programs in their communities, give feedback, and sensitize their communities to respond positively to CVE messaging by partner radio stations.

Radio competitions: PDev II organized 10 competitions for partner radio stations to compete on the production and dissemination of CVE messaging through radio programming. Criteria used to assess the productions included relevance of the theme to CVE messaging; clarity and overall quality of sound; quality, diversity, and thoroughness of interviews; organization and cohesiveness of issues covered; and length of production. Winners received computer equipment, software, and radio equipment.

Small-scale construction activities: PDev II increased communities' access to moderate messages in the form of media programming through approximately \$440,000 in small-scale construction activities. The Program constructed five community radio stations in Niger to air moderate messages and radio programs listed in the following section that educated and informed the local population, encouraged nonviolent conflict resolution, and, in general, supported the community's socioeconomic development and resilience to VE. In addition, the Program installed five radio towers to facilitate the dissemination of these programs in Niger.

IR 2.2 Increased Access to Quality and Credible Information

National and regional radio programming: PDev II encouraged the broadcasting of desired, socially oriented content by holding annual competitions among partner radio stations where awards were given for excellence in CVE messaging. For example, in Burkina Faso in Year 4, Community Reporters submitted 14 different soundbites in Mooré and Fulfuldé that consisted of in-depth interviews and monologues related to CVE messaging. After listening to and analyzing all of the entries, a jury selected two winners who were later honored in a ceremony and awarded trophies and tablets. To ensure standards for professionalism, quality, and relevance, PDev II also formed content advisory groups (CAGs) of government, religious, and local leaders, as well as local journalists to advise on the formulation and content of radio messages.

The Program supported radio programming and public information campaigns that incorporated CVE themes across each SO to promote community resiliency. PDev II-produced radio programs were constructive, promotive of social unity, and popular because they were presented in a manner that was positive, free of misinformation, and engaging, as they touched on topics with widespread acceptance: community cohesion, equality, peace, stability, good governance, freedom of information, diversity, human rights, and national development. PDev II produced half-hour radio series on good governance in all three Program countries: *Zansong Sore* ['Citizen's Voice'] in Burkina Faso (Mooré and French language); *Dabalaye* ['Meeting Place'] in Chad (Chadian Arabic); and *Sada Zumunci* ['Solidarity and Fraternity'] in Niger (Hausa and Kanuri, the latter in Year 5).

PDev II also produced half-hour radio series on youth — *Manegr Soré* ['Voice of Youth'] and *Pinal Sukabè* ['Voice of Youth'] in Burkina (Mooré and Fulfuldé, respectively); *Chabab-al-Haye* ['Youth Alive'] in Chad (Chadian Arabic), and *Gwadaben Matassa* ['Youth Boulevard'] in Niger (Hausa and Zarma). These youth programs transitioned to a soap opera format in Year 3 in Niger and Year 4 in Chad, while retaining their titles. In the case of Niger, the languages of Kanuri and Tamasheq were added. In addition, a regional series, *Reflets du Sahel* ['Sahel Reflections'], was produced in French.

According to the *New Media Survey*, more than 90% of radio listeners in the Program countries found PDev II-supported radio programs to be trustworthy, appealing, and reflective of local culture; they reached an estimated 7.2 million radio listeners, with a regular listenership of 3.5 million. PDev II Media Teams and partner radio stations produced 1,104 programs that were broadcast and re-broadcast for an overall total of 13,295 hours.

Interactive Voice Response (IVR) System: The Program used an integrated communications strategy to multiply impact by promoting PDev II outreach into targeted communities. EA's previous experience in using behavioral change communication to increase community resiliency showed that local ownership of the programming and relevance of messages was critical to overall success. Therefore, PDev II sought to build local support for community radio and to encourage listener discussion of CVE themes through dialogue platforms including call-in programs in all three countries, toll-free text messaging (SMS) in Chad and Niger, and IVR systems in Burkina Faso and Niger. These approaches enabled the PDev II Media Team in each country to receive direct feedback from listeners of PDev II radio programming. According to the *New Media Survey*, 89% of individuals in the Program region own a mobile phone, and 97% either own or have access to a mobile phone through a family member. Additionally, it revealed that SMS usage is high within each country, with 78% of Burkinabe, 77% of Chadians, and 89% of Nigeriens stating that they use SMS regularly.

In 2015, PDev II partnered with the Ghana-based social enterprise, VOTO Mobile, to upgrade the SMS and IVR systems in each of the three Program countries. The new software allowed the Program to receive qualitative voice feedback, conduct regular polls, and host radio excerpts for audiences to listen on-demand via IVR. Nearly two-thirds of listeners called in to listen to radio content. Listeners could access this content at any time of the day and at numerous times, if so desired, while also being able to share these digitally recorded broadcasts with others. The increased functionality of the IVR system immediately garnered a large increase in calls received from radio program listeners. Over the life of the Program, the IVR system received 27,897 calls, 9,095 voice messages, and 4,964 SMS messages.

After an initial period of toll-free, unlimited access to this service, its popularity was offset by its financial unsustainability; accordingly, the Media Team implemented a toll-free number for each radio program for polling and voice messaging and another, user-paid number for listeners wishing to listen to radio excerpts on-demand via their phones.

Focusing on mobile voice-based services allowed even the most marginalized groups in each country an opportunity to give their feedback and make their voices heard. In this way, IVR provided a chance for people to participate in meaningful dialogue about how they could improve their lives, while radio amplified their voices through mass media.

During the final year of the Program, calls were received from 6,731 individual phone numbers in Burkina Faso, 7,909 in Chad, and 3,030 in Niger. Language preferences for each country were as follows*:

- Burkina Faso: Mooré (66%), Fulfuldé (25%), and French (8%);
- Chad: Chadian Arabic (88%) and French (13%); and
- Niger: Hausa (88%), French (6%), and Zarma (5%).

*All figures have been rounded

As compared with its PDev II neighbors, Niger received fewer calls on average each week, but far more text messages, with a total of 4,414 SMS messages received in the Program’s final year. After the decision was made to separate content between a toll-free line and a user-paid line, incoming calls decreased significantly (see table below). Callers in all three countries were predominantly young males. While more research would need to have been done to determine the cause of this gender imbalance, it may be reflective of the economic and/or social barriers to mobile phone access faced by women.

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE CALL-IN ACTIVITY			
	Burkina Faso	Chad	Niger
Average number of calls received during initial toll-free period	1,500 per week	2,500 per week	175 per week
Average number of calls received after initial toll-free period on toll-free line	1,000 per week	1,000 per week	125 per week
Average number of calls received after initial toll-free period on user-paid line	100 per week	20 per week	6 per week

Alternative content delivery systems: In Year 5, the EA Chad and Niger teams piloted two new mechanisms for content distribution: secure digital (SD) memory cards and wireless media hubs.

In Chad, a total of 300 SD cards containing over 100 episodes of *Chabab Al-Haye*, *Dabalaye*, and *Reflets du Sahel* were distributed through nine partner radio stations in the towns of Ati, Mao, Amtiman, Bol, Moussoro, Nokou, Mondo, Palmeraie, and Oum-Hadjer. In Niger, more than 400 SD cards loaded with 180 Hausa-language episodes of *Gwadeben Matassa* and *Sada Zumunci*, as well as 105 other-language episodes (50 in Kanuri, 50 in Tamasheq, and 5 in Zarma). They were given to Listening Clubs, Radio Circles, and partner radio stations for distribution within each community. One female farmer who lived more than 20 kilometers from her community radio, shared that once she learned of the distribution of the SD cards, she dropped everything she was doing and hurried to the radio station to get her copy. When asked about her SD card she stated, “The mobile SD card is a huge success! As soon as I got back home, I inserted the SD card into my phone and my home has been literally taken over by neighbors. Word spreads fast! I’ve also shared the SD card with a neighbor who copied the content on his computer and later shared it with even more people.”

In late August through early September 2016, the PDev II Media Team conducted a small pilot to field-test the feasibility of different technologies for a “hub server” which would allow radio audience members with smartphones to easily download episodes at will and share their files with family and friends. This initiative required wireless access to content of PDev II radio shows to be stored on micro-servers located at partner radio stations. PDev II Media Teams worked in conjunction with two radio stations in both Chad and Niger for this pilot: Dja FM and FM Liberté in Chad, and Radio Dallol FM and Radio Murya Talaka Filingué in Niger. They were provided with computer equipment to allow for downloading of several ‘best-of’ episodes in the soap opera, magazine, and regional series.

Access to content on the hub servers was tested through two distribution methods: SanDisk flash drives (non-internet based) and wireless transmission (using an Android tablet). The majority of audience members who participated in the pilot successfully uploaded the episodes and found it relatively easy to do, and all participants expressed their intent to share the episodes with others and to download new content on their own from hub servers.

Television production: Prompted by the results of the *New Media Survey*, which indicated high rates of television viewership in Niger and widespread appreciation of EA's Nigeria-based Hausa channel, AREWA24, the Program included television production in the Year 5 Work Plan. In November 2015, a delegation of media professionals from Niger traveled to Nigeria to attend a workshop hosted by the AREWA24 production team in Kano. Over the course of two weeks, the Niger delegation was introduced to production techniques and approaches, which strengthened their capacity to develop strong narratives and produce quality programs.

Over the final year of the Program, the PDev II Media Team in Niger produced 21 installments of *Rahotanni Daga Kasar Nijar* ('The View from Niger') series. Themes of the segments focused on the challenges and the realities faced by vulnerable groups, especially women and youth. All segments were incorporated into the popular AREWA24 morning show, *Gari Ya Waye*, and broadcast multiple times via the AREWA24 satellite to Hausa audiences across Africa, Europe, and the Middle East.

Segments were also broadcast on two private national television networks in Niger to reach viewers without a satellite. Segments were broadcast and rebroadcast on Mondays on Anfani TV and Wednesdays on Dounia TV between April and October 2016. Additionally, the segments garnered more than 30,000 views on the AREWA24 YouTube page, and posts about them on the channel's Facebook page reached more than 56,000 people and inspired almost 1,000 engagements (likes, shares, comments) with the content.

The partnership developed between PDev II and AREWA24 provided the Hausa community in Niger with an opportunity to see themselves and their values represented on television, and to better understand and celebrate their culture and traditions. The relationship developed by the production team at the community level fostered a strong sense of cultural pride amongst the Hausa populations in Niger. The production of television content in Hausa is not common in Niger, despite the fact that more than half of the population speaks it, most of whom exclusively. The PDev II segments were a welcome addition to the entertainment lineup that met a very real need for high-quality, local language television content.

IR 2.3 Increased Positive Dialogue among Religious Leaders and with the Communities They Serve

Civic education: PDev II provided funding and technical support through civic education, didactic materials, and trainings on civic values and virtues for informal educational institutions in at-risk areas, most of which were Koranic schools. The materials and trainings improved the capacity of teachers to promote positive civic values and for them, in turn, to train additional teachers in their communities. More than 932 Koranic schoolteachers received training, through which the Program attempted to reach some of the most disaffected populations.

Intra- and inter-faith dialogue: Faith plays a large role in the three Program countries, and religious and community leaders are major voices within their communities. For this reason, PDev II provided funding and technical support to enable religious and community leaders to regularly engage in a wide range of trainings, conferences, and other activities to promote intra- and inter-faith dialogue, religious tolerance, peace and arbitration, and non-violent conflict resolution. Over the course of the Program, 2,413 religious and community leaders (20% female, 80% male) received training and 79 inter-faith activities were implemented.

Inter-faith and inter-generational workshops were held to address the issues of generational and religious tensions and misunderstandings that can contribute to negative social behavior and undermine social cohesion. The participative workshops brought together young and old Christian and Muslim leaders for them to gain a greater appreciation for, and understanding of, diversity and tolerance as a source of community resilience that can prevent susceptibility to groups that endorse violence or engage in destructive social behavior.

In Year 3, PDev II conducted a training of trainers in Burkina Faso for 29 moderate religious leaders, followed by a two-day advanced training for 20 participants to reinforce key content and contextualize the material for core zones. The local trainers then carried out 23 training sessions in the 10 core zones for 494 moderate religious leaders, including two all-female cohorts. Each trained leader gained skills in conflict analysis, conflict resolution, and positive dialogue, and reinforced their influential role as a model of moderation within his or her community. As a result of these trainings, some religious leaders drafted concept notes to seek funding for peace promotion and inter-faith dialogue activities. For example, religious leaders conducted a sensitization campaign in the Ouagadougou 9 municipality to prevent land tenure conflicts in this core zone, which led to a Memorandum of Understanding presentation with the Mayor. Furthermore, PDev II inaugurated efforts to launch the Peacebuilding Network through a workshop for 40 Christian and Muslim leaders.

In Chad, PDev II conducted a comprehensive six-day training for the 24 members of the Chad Peace Network, who received advanced training on multiple CVE-related themes, including the identification of root causes leading to VE, means for establishing dialogue among divergent groups, conflict resolution, and techniques for fundraising in support of activities that promote societal harmony. The aim of the workshop was to help regional association leaders and their network members develop strategies for raising greater community awareness of CVE-related issues. The training introduced anti-extremist advocacy, and developed the network's capacity to cover operational costs and develop external links, and improved its potential to serve as an advocate for tolerance in a self-sustaining way. PDev II also carried out a week-long, rapid-response workshop in N'Djamena for 20 local leaders (13 Muslims and 7 Christians), among them imams, pastors, university professors, and NGO leaders. Participants learned methodologies to identify potential regional conflicts before they escalate, initiate mediating steps, and share best practices and solutions with other rapid-response members.

Religious leaders' national action plans: In Year 4, PDev II held its first regional conference for religious leaders, which was attended by 50 religious leaders from across all three countries. Conference delegates developed the *Ouagadougou Roadmap Against Violent Extremism*, which outlined how religious leaders could become more active participants in the fight against VE. Within the document, the leaders outlined their intentions: develop the capacity of local religious leaders to enable them to become agents of change in their respective communities; educate, guide, and mentor youth in their communities to become active in local development; and play vital roles in discouraging political, ethnic, and religious partisanship.

Upon returning to their respective communities, delegates were asked to sensitize their religious followers and hold in-country workshops to develop specific action plans for implementing the *Ouagadougou Roadmap*. Religious leaders in all three countries then developed specific action plans for taking concrete steps towards addressing the root causes of youth susceptibility to VE. They named their plans after the respective places where those resolutions had been enacted: the *Dori Action Plan* (for Burkina Faso), the *Bakara Action Plan* (Chad), and the *Zinder Action Plan* (Niger).

Religious leaders in Niger were able to implement more of their activities than those in Burkina Faso and Chad due, in part, to the lack of time in Burkina Faso (the Program closed there at the end of June 2016), and the change in personnel in Chad (it took a few months for the Vatican to nominate a new Archbishop, and the *Plateforme Interconfessionnelle*, which developed the *Bakara Action Plan*, did not want to move forward unless all actors were present).

During Year 5, religious leaders developed action plans to enable them to become more active advocates for youth employability and to implement initiatives to minimize the impact of financial benefits that VE groups offer to attract recruits. Participants acknowledged that, due to increasing youth exposure to VE and extremist groups that use religion as a recruiting mechanism, helping youth become more resilient to VE would require working with a wider stratum of society, including families, communities, local and national governments, national and international development organizations, the media, and the private sector. Such strategies and plans also focused on increasing youth employment, community integration, participation in local affairs, and leadership.

In May 2016, religious leaders in Niger organized regional workshops and conferences under the broad theme of *Public Programs to Educate Youth on Employment and Self-Employment Opportunities*. Participants included religious and traditional leaders, youth, parents, CSO leaders, national and international NGOs, regional chambers of commerce, and local government officials. Together, as depicted in the following table, they identified the major causes of youth unemployment and determined the roles and responsibilities of parents and other groups within the community in assisting youth. Also discussed were specific solutions to the multiplicity of problems facing youth and ideas on how they could work together towards solving such problems as part of the *Zinder Action Plan*. Following the launch of the Plan, religious leaders used financial and technical support provided by PDev II to begin putting these ideas into practice.

MAJOR CAUSES OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT & ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN ASSISTING YOUTH	
Major Causes of Youth Unemployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth lacking the skills needed by many employers in the public and private sectors, and by the NGO community Severe shortage of functional vocational training centers in the country Lack of guidance for youth towards economic and employment opportunities Limited availability of employment and self-employment opportunities for the vast majority of youth Attitudes of many youth who want to live well without having to work hard leading them not to take advantage of the self-employment opportunities near them, especially in industries such as agriculture, livestock, and fisheries Youths avoiding certain open jobs because they are deemed “low status”
Roles and Responsibilities of Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serve as positive role models for children Assume full responsibility for education at the base (i.e., good upbringing of children in all respects, including educating them about the negative consequences of poverty, ignorance, unemployment, and idleness) Support formal and informal education of all children Eliminate educational and all other forms of discrimination against girls and other females Avoid early marriages of girls and female genital mutilation
Roles and Responsibilities of Religious Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize awareness campaigns in places of worship and neighborhoods and through television and radio programs, and newspaper publications Regularly preach sermons in churches and mosques, and hold discussions in neighborhoods on the diversity of economic (i.e., employment and self-employment) opportunities available for youth Regularly preach sermons and hold discussions in neighborhoods to sensitize youth against crime and VE

MAJOR CAUSES OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT & ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN ASSISTING YOUTH	
Roles and Responsibilities of the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage education and entrepreneurship for youth • Engage youth in decision-making and active participation in community development • Eliminate educational and all other forms of discrimination against girls and other females
Roles and Responsibilities of NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training, funds, and other resources in support of youth entrepreneurship • Provide internships for graduates in a diversity of career areas • Promote and support business and employment opportunities for youth
Roles and Responsibilities of the Private Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide internships for graduates in business operations • Contribute to solidarity funds to help youth initiate income-generating activities • Provide micro-credits to enable youth to start small income-generating activities
Roles and Responsibilities of State Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide internships for graduates in a diversity of career areas • Reduce making unfulfilled promises to youth • Promote and support national policies that strengthen decision-making, sociocultural, political, and economic integration of youth • Train youth in entrepreneurship and finance their small-scale business proposals to promote self-employment • Make necessary resources available to public schools • Recruit capable young graduates into the civil service • Eliminate educational and all other forms of discrimination against girls and other females • Work closely with religious and traditional leaders, CSOs, NGOs, and the private sector on the resolution of problems facing youth

C) STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: INCREASED CIVIL SOCIETY CAPACITY TO ADDRESS COMMUNITY ISSUES

Recognizing the critical role of civil society in building community resistance to VE, PDev II worked actively to organize Community Action Committees (CACs) in Burkina Faso, Chad, and Niger. There were 78 total CACs established, with at least one in each core zone of the three PDev II Program countries. CACs consisted of one representative (11 total members in Burkina Faso, 13 in Chad, and 8 in Niger) from each of the following: City Council (elected), technical services of municipalities, the private sector, traditional chiefs, religious leaders, women's associations, youth organizations, and local radio stations. These committees were volunteer-based and organized to engage a broad range of local stakeholders in building community relationships, resolving conflict, increasing the capacity of CSOs, and strengthening the effectiveness of local government. Members were selected through town hall-style community meetings, at which information was provided on recommended interventions for local VE risk factors.

PDev II also worked with pre-existing CSOs and adopted a three-pronged approach to working with them: 1) capacity-building to improve their effectiveness in serving their communities; 2) technical assistance on developing concept notes; and 3) review of project proposals for grants to enable them to undertake community projects funded by the Program, the EU, *Agence Française de Développement* (AFD), and *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* (GIZ) to name several others.

CSOs performed three sets of functions:

- Articulating citizens' interests and demands;
- Defending citizens' rights; and
- Providing goods and services directly in cases where state agencies were unable.

IR 3.1 Increased CSO Capacity

PDev II used the well-known Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT) to help assess CSO operational capacity and identify strengths and areas for their improvement based on comparison to widely held best practices in strategic planning, financial and project management, institutional structure and operations, and internal capacity for addressing community needs. OCAT requires direct interviews with key CSO management members to assess and measure organizational performance progress on a scale of 100; it also lent itself as a means for further developing CSO capacities and linking them to specific types of community grants.

The OCAT process for PDev II consisted of three steps:

1. Document overview. PDev II's Team Leader for SO 3 gathers administrative, financial, and operations-related documents from a CSO and reads them carefully for insight as to how the organization has been functioning.
2. OCAT session. An OCAT session is held with 6–12 participants, with the PDev II Team Leader acting as a facilitator. Their responses to OCAT questions provide the basis for how the CSO is assessed, with a consensus sought to ensure general agreement to the findings.
3. OCAT reporting. A report is produced by the Team Leader that highlights the CSO's existing capacities and recommended area(s) for improvement.

Multi-faceted training: Since OCAT results informed the training(s) that each organization received, the trainings were described as Tailored Technical Assistance Packages (TTAPs). The five main areas of TTAPs for CSO capacity improvement were: strategic planning; project management; institutional structure and operations; finance (i.e., bookkeeping and accounting for CSO management); and capacity to address community needs (through advocacy, implementation of other projects, etc.). Additional areas of training included citizenship rights and responsibilities, advocacy techniques, strategic planning, project appraisal, mobilization of funds, participatory development, budgeting and accounting management, communication and negotiation skills, electoral and other non-violent forms of conflict resolution, conflict identification, management of human resources, and citizen control of public action (government delivery of goods and services). In total 1,967 CSO members (170 in Chad, 307 in Burkina Faso, and 1,490 in Niger) received a total 65,555 hours of training.

Based on their average OCAT scores between Years 2 and 3 of the Program, CSOs from all three countries showed improvement in their functional capacity, with Burkina Faso showing the greatest overall gain. The annual comparative assessment of each CSO continued thereafter only in Niger, where 80 CSOs were tracked in Year 4, which showed further increases in OCAT scores among an even greater proportion of these CSOs. However, this activity of assessing CSOs tapered considerably in Year 5, with fewer than 10 studied. Refer to the summary table below, with findings of Year 5 omitted.

CSO & OCAT SCORES BY YEAR										
	YEAR 2		YEAR 3		YEAR 4		YEAR 3 v YEAR 2		YEAR 4 v YEAR 3	
	# CSOs Assessed	Avg. OCAT Score	# CSOs Assessed	Avg. OCAT Score	# CSOs Assessed	Avg. OCAT Score	# Same CSOs Assessed	% CSOs Scoring Better Year 3 > Year 2	# Same CSOs Assessed	% CSOs Scoring Better Year 4 > Year 3
Burkina Faso	36	50%	40	71%	0	--	36	88.9%	0	--
Chad	45	64%	39	66%	0	--	30	53.3%	0	--
Niger	87	61%	80	63%	80	75%	72	48.6%	80	72.5
TOTALS	168	60%	159	65%	80	75%	138	65.0%	80	72.5%

It should be mentioned that PDev II involved CACs and CDCs in the trainings that were being provided to CSOs and local governmental officials, so that they (CACs and CDCs) could better serve as liaisons between communities and government and non-government actors.

Financial and technical support: The provision of grants to PDev II-affiliated CSOs, CACs, and CDCs to undertake community projects related to CVE began in Year 2 of the Program.

PDev II's support to CSO capacity-building bore fruit over time as more CSOs were able to effectively design and implement projects to address community issues. The top three problems CSOs themselves faced were insufficient resources, weak organizational structure, and a lack of strategic plans, which PDev II worked to address through training and technical assistance.

Over the duration of PDev II, 95 grants worth \$435,154 were awarded to CSOs that had submitted proposals for such projects as vocational training, provision of equipment for schools and radio stations, conflict resolution and anti-drug campaigns, workshops on accountability in decision-making, establishment of an Arabic newspaper, and other initiatives that promoted peaceful coexistence, local leadership, project management, and communication.

IR 3.2 Increased Citizen Participation and Advocacy

CACs and CDCs: Initially all committees established by PDev II were referred to as Community Development Committees (CDCs); however, in Year 1, the Program changed the term from ‘CDC’ to ‘CAC’ (Community Advisory Committee) to avoid confusion with the pre-existing, governmental entities that were using the same acronym. The structure and purpose of the committees established by PDev II remained the same as they continued to serve as the primary tool for building relationships, resolving conflict, increasing CSO capacity, and strengthening local government. In Niger, CACs were transformed to government-recognized CDCs, once having completed, with technical assistance from the Program, the legal and administrative processes required for achieving official, community development status, pursuant to the country’s decentralization law (Local Legal Code, Articles 14 and 204). As a result, they became entities established within the local governance framework.

The formation of CACs and CDCs working towards the overall development of their communities was a key priority in PDev II’s first year. In an overwhelming majority of municipalities within the PDev II core zones at the onset of the Program, no community representation groups had been organized, and those in existence had negligible roles in decision-making and played minimal roles in their communities.

The Program provided funds and technical support for CACs and CDCs to hold regular (monthly) meetings to identify and analyze community issues, propose ways to solve community problems, assess progress on the implementation of their activities, and to discuss community concerns and other issues. They also developed action plans to address community issues and outline how communities could work with local authorities and other actors. In addition, PDev II provided funding and technical support for 372 members of CACs and CDCs to receive various types of training, including internal and external communication techniques and strategies to improve their visibility and functions. Once established and functioning, CACs and CDCs served as programmatic contacts and guides for all of the activities that took place in the core zones. For example, in Niger, using the PDev II-established selection of beneficiaries, CACs and CDCs ensured that all vocational trainings were targeted towards at risk youth, who would need follow-up counseling and support.

A total of 372 members of CACs/CDCs received training in leadership, project and organizational management, and community development. Furthermore, they received funding to undertake various types of local development projects (e.g., community cleanup initiatives; public education campaigns for free, fair and peaceful elections; and integration of returnees from war-torn countries, such as Libya, into their communities).

By the close of PDev II, some CDCs in Niger began receiving financial and material support from their local governments, which enabled them to better serve in their ascribed roles. In Burkina Faso, CACs had created a strong network and were seeking formal recognition from the government. In Chad, CACs had less member participation and were therefore not as well-established or as able to empower their communities as CDCs/CACs in Niger and Burkina Faso.

PDev II's technical assistance to CACs and CDCs enabled them to:

- Promote communities' active participation in local development activities;
- Develop and share action plans and reports on CAC and CDC activities with elected officials and other municipal actors;
- Identify potential drivers of VE present in communities;
- Identify ways to strengthen local community resilience and prevent and manage conflict;
- Advocate on behalf of communities with respect to the promotion of improved local governance (accountability, transparency, and citizen participation);
- Participate in the development, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of community development budgets and plans; and
- Develop relationships with all actors working in their municipalities (a key factor for the sustainability of CACs and CDCs).

Four factors served as indicators of the likely sustainability of CACs and CDCs post-closeout:

- A solid foundation of participatory governance was established;
- Some CDCs successfully sourced funding and provided technical support to outside organizations, such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), and the Red Cross of Niger;
- All CACs and CDCs, through the involvement of local officials, were integrated into their municipal governments; and
- A national CDC guide in Niger was produced and disseminated, to serve as a reference tool for municipalities outside the PDev II core zones on how to set up and manage CDCs.

Based on the actions described above, PDev II solidified the status of CACs and CDCs as the central channel of information and the main point of contact between local government officials, citizens, and all other partners.

Free, fair, transparent, and democratic elections: General elections (legislative and presidential) were held in all three Program countries in Year 5. Some of the CSO projects undertaken with PDev II funding and technical support were the organization of workshops, sporting and cultural events, and public caravans on the election process. Each project focused on democratic processes and the roles of the different entities represented at the events in planning, implementing, and upholding of those processes. Public and media-based roundtable discussions (debates) on the indispensability of a free, objective, and socio-politically sensitive press were also held. More than 900 such events were organized in Burkina Faso and more than 1,100 in Niger, while the Chadian government severely limited the number of such public gatherings to fewer than 20.

In Burkina Faso, popular young musicians toured the country with PDev II's Caravan for the Promotion of Peace through Culture, under the anthem "*Violence Stops with Me.*" The caravan passed through provincial capitals within the core zones, treating audiences of more than 3,000 to musical performances and speeches by artists, authorities, and community leaders that promoted peace and the importance of social cohesion.

Radio and television programs, and newspaper pieces (e.g., debates, spots, and program broadcasts) produced by partners in the PDev II network of radio stations and other media outlets focused on themes similar to those discussed at workshops, conferences, and cultural and sporting events. For example, PDev II was able to leverage its radio resources for a quick response to the need for information presented by the elections, beyond its normal programming. At the request of the U.S. Embassy in Burkina Faso, the media team produced a total of three radio public service announcement (PSA)-style “spots” and one dialogue-driven “micro-program” that were broadcast through the month of November 2015. In just 48 hours, the Burkina Faso team was able to develop scripts, identify actors, record, mix the productions, and distribute them to the network of PDev II radio partners for broadcast across the Program’s core zones. The spots and micro-programs emphasized the importance of the historic elections and encouraged people to participate. At the same time, they fostered a peaceful atmosphere of political tolerance and transparency.

In another example, the *CSO Association Appui Moral et Intellectuel des Enfants* (AMMIE) implemented a grant to train local leaders in ways to ensure peaceful elections, and an awareness raising campaign for citizens on their roles and responsibilities during the election period. A total of 104 facilitators from 15 districts and 37 villages were trained in Ouahigouya on facilitation and leadership during the election process. As a part of the same grant, a separate, two-week public campaign was carried out at the end of August 2015 through early September on citizens’ roles and duties during elections which reached 19,015 people (9,585 females and 9,430 males). The activities in the grant concluded with two radio programs that included Germain Ouedraogo, the Deputy Mayor of the town, speaking on the importance of peaceful elections. These two programs were aired on *Radio Voix du Paysan* and *Radio Wendpanga*.

In Niger, the Program conducted a campaign titled, *Let Peace Be the Biggest Winner*. As wrestling is the most popular sporting and cultural event in Niger, PDev II embedded its CVE message into the national wrestling championship in Dosso in January 2016, just two months before the elections. PDev II promoted hugely-popular wrestlers Issaka Issaka and Abdou Adamou as role models for fair play in competition, including elections and politics. The two led a national caravan on awareness and advocacy for national unity and peaceful elections that included preparatory meetings, caravans of vehicles through high-population areas, wrestling competitions, and CVE messaging and speeches from local government authorities, and traditional and religious leaders. Across the eight regions, over 20,000 Nigeriens attended, more than half of them youth. Participant feedback indicated a preponderance of male interest in the campaign, though women did follow the campaign by radio. Focus group participants were also asked about their personal commitment to conflict mitigation, and 80% of men and 40% of women indicated they were committed. As stated by Mr. Abdou Dan Mallam, the Minister of Youth and Sports, “The initiative of PDev II is absolutely brilliant, innovative, and relevant, ... because wrestling is symbolically and exactly the same thing as political elections. In both competitions, there are rules to follow, there are competitors, but only one will be National Champion.”

During and following the presidential elections in Chad, serious tensions threatened instability between ruling and opposition parties over the electoral process. PDev II undertook a number of activities, including training youth to be agents of peace during elections, and promoting the use of social media for pre- and post-election messaging and mobilization. PDev II also worked with nationally recognized soccer players to produce PSAs on the importance of peaceful elections. The spots were broadcast on partner radio and television stations in French and Arabic.

D) STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: STRENGTHENED LOCAL GOVERNMENT

PDev II worked to increase transparency and accountability in decision-making, and foster participatory development through activities coordinated between local governments and civil society. To achieve this objective, PDev II targeted local government officials with training and capacity-building assistance to improve service delivery, increase transparency and accountability, and enhance participatory decision-making—all elements critical to strengthening legitimacy and building trust between local authorities and the communities they serve. Through CACs and CDCs, PDev II built a solid foundation of participatory governance. By incorporating community grants, PDev II helped local governments bring tangible benefits directly to targeted communities, further bolstering trust and helping communities as a whole achieve their local development goals.

IR 4.1 Improved Local Government Capacity

Developed the capacity of local government authorities: PDev II developed and used a tool known as the Local Government Capacity Index (LGCI) to develop and measure improvements in local government capacity. This instrument relied upon self-reported assessments from local government officials on their performance in four areas:

- Development of Community Development Plans;
- Budgeting for Community Development Plans;
- Establishment and collaboration with CDCs; and
- Project management.

Responses to the 24 assessment questions were scored on a four-point Likert Scale. Self-appraisal of performance was based on work practices that evinced competence in civic administration, resource management, service delivery, operational transparency, accountability, and community engagement. The tool was finalized and pilot-tested in Year 1, and was implemented thereafter, although not consistently, across all three Program countries. In the 10 core municipalities in Burkina Faso, comparison scores for nine showed a 27% score improvement between Years 2 and 3. In Chad, only two municipalities submitted to the assessment and showed an increase of 24.75% between Years 5 and 6. Finally, in Niger, all municipalities submitted to the assessment more than once, showing an average increase of 9% between Year 3 and Year 5.

Findings from available scores were analyzed to inform the content of trainings by which to address specific capacity shortcomings of local government officials. A total of 1,211 local government officials received instruction during the lifespan of the Program. Training topics included the rights and duties of citizens, community participation in political processes and other decision-making mechanisms, violence prevention, conflict mitigation, and management of human resources and finances.

In Burkina Faso, the Program forged a strategic partnership with the Ministry of Decentralization, which not only supported participation in the LGCI, but was also involved in preparing and validating tailored training modules that incorporated LGCI findings. Underscoring his support, the Minister of Decentralization expressed the importance of PDev II and governance capacity-building in stating, “This type of training should be emulated by other international organizations and become a best practice.”

In April of 2013, PDev II Niger began working with the Ecole Nationale d'Administration (ENAM) to develop and finalize training manuals for local government officials. The manuals were adapted to the unique capacity development needs of CACs, as determined through the LGCI. ENAM is the government agency tasked with supporting the decentralization effort and the only group in Niger authorized to approve training activities and manuals. The Niger team and ENAM collaborated throughout April 2013 on the adaptation of existing manuals to better meet the needs of the Program, which also included civil society actors and emphasized basic level budget preparation, transparency, accounting and financial management, action planning, public outreach, and service delivery.

IR 4.2 Increased Transparency and Accountability in Local Decision-making

Promotion of best practices: Forty-three best practices in participatory, accountable, and transparent local decision-making were identified and incorporated in training and technical assistance initiatives carried out by PDev II.

To magnify the importance of transparency, accountability, and citizen engagement in local affairs, PDev II Burkina Faso launched a competition titled *Gouvernance Locale et Paix* ('Local Governance and Peace') in Year 3, to stimulate healthy competition amongst PDev II communities in their level of adoption of best practices. Eight communes applied to be judged on their functional performance in participatory planning of local activities, budgeting, public funds procurement, provision of public services, project management, and conflict prevention and resolution. A panel of judges evaluated contestants using, in part, focus group and street interviews (113 people, comprising 105 men and 8 women) to ensure that public opinion contributed to the overall assessments. Contestants were judged based on the following criteria: established procedures and systems in accountability, examples of innovation, level of success in improving socioeconomic conditions, the sustained practice of social inclusiveness, gender sensitivity, sustainability, and replicability.

The communities of Ouahigouya and Djibo were ranked first and second, respectively. Staff from each commune were mobilized and participated in a one-day study trip to Djibo to observe best practices in action and learn about the ongoing decentralization process. There, they learned more about Djibo's initiative to convene public meetings with agents from local government service bureaus (health, education, agriculture, livestock, etc.) to discuss issues and problems openly and to find consensus on how to collectively address them. In addition, Djibo instituted the placement of "idea boxes" in public spaces so that ordinary citizens could freely raise issues of concern and make suggestions for tackling them, and began broadcasting municipal council deliberation sessions on the radio, "*La Voix du Soum*" ('The Voice of Soum').

Replicating *Gouvernance Locale et Paix* from Burkina Faso in Year 3, in Year 4, PDev II in Niger organized its first national competition on peace and best practices in local governance. Ten core zones (Diffa, Bosso, Mainé Soroa, Agadez, Arlit, Tillaberi, Ballayara, Ouallam, Niamey IV, and Niamey V) participated in the competition. Best practices that were appraised included: transparency in participatory design and management of community projects; promotion of citizen control of public action; participatory budgeting; sharing of the annual report with citizens; and integration of climate change in municipal development plans. The competition took place in two stages: 1) regional meetings held to determine the winning community in each region, and then 2) the winning communities were invited to competitively present their best practices during a national gathering in the capital city of Niamey, where the winners were selected and announced. Niamey V won the competition, cited for having shared its annual report with the population and its success in developing projects with other development partners. Niamey V pledged to advance to an even higher level of good governance, and announced that it would institutionalize its practice of sharing the annual report and annual investment plan with its constituents, even prior to its submission for approval to the City Council.

In Chad, activities in Year 5 focused on identifying local governance best practices. A competition was held to identify best practices in local governance in seven municipalities in Program core zones: Doum-Doum, Ngouri, Baga-Sola, Michémiré, Chaddra, Oum-Hadjer, and Nokou. The good governance criteria for the competition were: transparency in the management of local affairs, social inclusion, openness to citizen participation, and accountability in the development and expenditures of municipal budgets. The competition was financed by PDev II and was organized and judged in collaboration with the National Association of Municipalities of Chad (CNTA), the Ministry of Decentralization, and PDev II. The jury prepared survey questionnaires based on the aforementioned criteria, which they administered to local government focus groups made up of 15 individuals (including mayors) and citizen focus groups consisting of at least 10 citizens.

The jury then compiled and analyzed the results and selected three winners: Doum-Doum, Nokou, and Oum-Hadjer. The three municipalities were recognized at a ceremony held in N'Djamena in September 2016, in the presence of mayors, municipal councilors, and citizens from each competing municipality, representatives of the organizations that served on the jury, a representative of USAID, and CAC members from each competing municipality. Each of the three winners received \$2,300 worth of equipment and material for their respective municipal government (e.g., cabinets, desks, computers, generators).

Production of guides: In Year 5, at the national meeting on the establishment and roles of CDCs held in Niamey, a recommendation was made to develop a guide so that other communes would be able to establish their own CDCs. Local partner RAIL assisted in developing the “*Guide on the Implementation, Function, and Role of CDCs*” to serve as a reference tool on how other communes and communities can establish their own CDCs to strengthen transparency, accountability, and community resilience to VE at the local level.

The development of the guide consisted of four steps:

1. Holding informational meetings in the seven targeted regional capitals of PDev II in Niger;
2. Developing and administering surveys to collect information on the implementation process and the operation and impact of the work of CDCs;
3. Drafting a preliminary guide with consultants from the *École Nationale d'Administration et de Magistrature* (ENAM, National School of Administration and Magistracy) in collaboration with the *Centre de Formation en Gestion des Collectivités Territoriales* (CFGCT, the National Training Center for Management of Local Authorities); and
4. Holding a national validation workshop, during which the guide was reviewed and validated for production and distribution.

One-thousand copies of the guide were printed for distribution to state institutions, partners, local authorities, and members of CDCs and CSOs. As the second vice-mayor of Tessaoua stated, “It’s really a good thing to have initiated this guide because it will be a tool for other municipalities that have not had the chance to be supported by PDev II.”

Additionally, in both Chad and Niger, manuals entitled “*Best Practices in Local Government*” were produced and distributed to local communes, partner Government Ministries, and sub-national officials. These simple and practical manuals give concrete examples of what communes in the PDev II core zones have done to promote transparent and accountable local government. A ceremony in Chad was held to officially present the guide to the Ministry of Decentralization. In his remarks, the Deputy Secretary General of the ministry thanked PDev II, and added that the guide could serve as an inspiration for all local governments as they continue their efforts of decentralization and of improving their accountability and transparency.

IR 4.3 More Participatory Local Development

Community development: PDev II worked with CACs and CDCs to implement community-prioritized development activities that strengthened community resiliencies. Activities were implemented through fixed-obligation grants (FOGs) or in-kind grants. Initiatives brought tangible, concrete benefits directly to communities, demonstrating the benefit of participatory decision-making.

CACs and CDCs submitted simple project concepts and budgets for funding consideration. Action plans and budgets were then assessed by PDev II and approved based on the following criteria: impact on community resiliencies, number of youth involved in the proposed action plan, level of involvement of CAC and CDC members, consistency with the PDev II strategic framework, in-kind contributions, and the involvement of marginalized groups.

Once the CAC or CDC signed the grant agreement, they were required to present the project and budget to their community in an open town hall-style meeting to announce the successful funding of the project and to ensure that community members were aware of the project budget and timeline. Presenting the project in this manner ensured that CACs and CDCs engaged with their communities and allowed communities to hold the CACs and CDCs accountable for successful project implementation. The PDev II Media Team publicized these grants and disseminated information on them in subsequent town hall meetings. Examples of funded grants include public discussions on the roles of municipality leaders and the rights and responsibilities of citizens in peaceful co-existence, radio broadcasts of public debates on local governance issues, call-in radio shows featuring local officials, and communal campaigns for budget transparency. In total, 69 community development projects were successfully completed with PDev II assistance.

In order to highlight the work that PDev II had done in Niger to encourage more participatory governance, and to more broadly share lessons learned and best practices, a national conference was held November 11–12, 2015 in Niamey. This gathering was organized with 25 officials from the Ministry of the Interior on hand and representation from each of the Program's 20 core zones (a member from each CDC, other local government officials, local CSOs, and NGOs). Also in attendance were donors who likewise work in the good governance sector in the Program region (French Cooperation, German Bilateral [GTZ]). This national conference was the first of its kind in Niger. Among the key topics discussed were: strategies for making CDCs operational in the other Nigerien communities (the only communes where the CDCs were active were in the 20 PDev II-supported communes, the other 235 did not have working CDCs despite their presence being mandated by law), measures for ensuring the autonomy of CDCs, better approaches for collaboration with international donors, and the establishment of routine, working relationships with local government authorities. Following the national conference, a number of regional conferences were held, convening CDC members, local government authorities, and local CSOs. The meetings provided a framework for exchanges between local government officials and CDCs on issues of importance to their municipalities. In total, 223 people attended these meetings, of whom 38 were women.

Small-scale construction and rehabilitation: Community development projects included small-scale construction and rehabilitation activities that provided positive, tangible benefits to targeted communities across all four SOs, totaling approximately \$954,000. Activities ranged from classrooms, as stated under IR 1.2, to the construction of radio stations and towers in Niger, mentioned under IR 2.1., and grants issued to CACs, CDCs, and CSOs.

Furthermore, the Program installed 11 community wells totaling approximately \$108,000 in Chad. The wells reduced conflict over competition for access to water and provide access to water for community members who were significantly affected by a lack of accessible, potable water. In these communities, the inability of the local government to provide adequate access to clean water had created tension, intolerance, and conflict among the communities and local authorities. The perception of these communities was that the government ignores their basic needs, which resulted in a climate of frustration and a crisis of confidence in local government support and services. By assisting the local government in providing these inputs, PDev II served to build local government capacity, and to decrease one cause of violence in these communities.

One of the wells in N'Djamena was inaugurated in the presence of the mayor of N'Djamena 7, the Director of Village and Artisanal Wells of the Ministry of Water, CAC representatives, and members of the community. In his speech, the mayor highlighted the fact that the well, built in a leper colony, was the first water access point in the colony since its establishment more than three decades ago. Before the construction of this well by PDev II, those with leprosy had to rely on friends or relatives to go to nearby wells to draw water, as they themselves were not allowed to approach the wells.

E) CROSS-CUTTING ACHIEVEMENTS

Collaboration with other U.S. Government (USG)-funded Projects: Throughout the life of the Program, PDev II collaborated with other USG-funded projects to effectively leverage resources and to maximize impact. In addition to the elections-related collaborations referenced previously in the report, examples of other collaborations include:

- PDev II Program coordination with the USAID-funded *Niger Education and Community Strengthening* (NECS) program to organize “Local Heroes” presentations to increase retention rates at participating schools. These gatherings provided opportunities for students to hear role models speak about ways to succeed, and for their parents to be informed on how they can support their children’s academic success. Traveling to Agadez, Arlit, Tessaoua, Diffa, and Maine Soroa, five of the most vulnerable regions of Niger, the Program conducted participatory theatre performances, a poetry contest for peace, public reading competitions, and award ceremonies with NECS teams to celebrate Education Days.
- Coordination with USAID-funded *Niger Community Cohesion Initiative*, among other initiatives, for amplifying CVE messaging during the Cure Salée, an annual, national event in Niger that marks the end of the rainy season and draws tens of thousands of political, religious, and traditional leaders, as well as representatives from national and international organizations, civil society, and the private sector.
- Joint implementation with the U.S. Department of State of a technology camp for increasing digital literacy and critical-thinking skills among youth, journalists, civil society activists, religious and community leaders, and others and to help them use digital media for combating the spread of misinformation, conspiracy theories, and VE narratives. The 65 camp participants consisted of youth, religious leaders, and civil society activists from Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, and Senegal. The camp’s theme was *Voices for Peace*. PDev II conducted a follow-up social media campaign in Chad in April 2016 with 25 camp youth and used social media, connectivity (e.g., availability of electricity), digital access (e.g., internet service providers [ISPs] and smartphones), and CVE messaging. The training also entailed uploading and disseminating spots on CVE, and messaging by major religious leaders. Participants were asked to share their training with other youth, including via the Facebook page.
- To prevent the risk of political and social unrest, PDev II Niger supported Interfaith Dialogue Committees in Diffa, Zinder, Maradi, Niamey, and Agadez, established by the EU *Revalorisation du Vivre Ensemble* project, to organize awareness sessions and promote peace during the elections, held February 11 to March 9, 2016.
- Through PDev II support, interfaith dialogue committees organized five, one-day orientation workshops, eight awareness conferences, and one open letter publication encouraging peaceful elections. The orientation workshops organized in each regional capital were attended by 170 participants, including 49 men, 21 women, and 100 youth. The awareness conferences and the open letter publication mobilized a total of 2,850 participants (800 women, 900 youth and 1,150 men).

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability was a key component in the Program’s holistic, community-led approach to address the socioeconomic, political, and cultural drivers of VE. The key indicator of Program sustainability can be found in the network that was created throughout the course of the Program. PDev II connected people and empowered them to build their own network for peace. Through material and capacity-building support for radio stations, social media training and support, and locally organized community events, community members of all ages, backgrounds, and religious affiliations now possess the tools and resources to continue and advance CVE and non-violent discourse.

Other signs of Program sustainability can be found in the following:

- **CACs and CDCs:** The PDev II-organized, volunteer-based CACs and CDCs were designed to build community relationships, resolve conflict, increase the capacity of CSOs, and strengthen the effectiveness of local government. At the close of the Program, the strong network of CACs in Burkina Faso was working towards receiving formal recognition from their government. Furthermore, the government-recognized CDCs in Niger began receiving financial and material support from their local governments allowing them to continue to better their communities post PDev II.
- **Reference Guides:** Two “*Best Practices in Local Government*” manuals and a “*Guide on the Implementation, Function, and Role of CDCs*” were developed and can now serve as reference tools for communities, local organizations, and government bodies when implementing development projects at the local level or when working towards establishing CDCs. In addition, comprehensive, reference handbooks were developed and distributed to radio stations in French, Hausa, or Arabic, as appropriate, which outlined the main teachings of EA’s approach to radio production, and continue to serve as reference tools. Finally, in collaboration with SFCG, youth guides incorporating methods, techniques, principles, and examples for mobile cinema, participatory theater, and leadership were developed. These guides continue to assist youth in organizing and implementing projects in their communities.
- **Participatory Theatre Troupes:** By the end of PDev II, some Program-supported participatory theatre troupes had evolved into sustainable entities and were receiving ongoing funding from external development and commercial partners.

In addition to training and building the capacity of local beneficiaries, PDev II staff members went on to apply their CVE expertise in their new critical positions in government and civil society, including the following former PDev II staff members:

- The former Niger Country Director for IRD went on to serve as the Senior Technical Supervisor of the *Niger Hope Project*, an EU-funded two-year CVE initiative implemented in Niamey, Maradi, Zinder, and Diffa. He also serves as the international counter-terrorism expert to support the EU-funded *College Sahelien de Sécurité* project, designing regional training programs for Mauritania and Mali.
- The former PDev II Senior Program Officer-Religious Affairs became the Social Communications Program Manager (PM) for *SOS Civisme Niger*, a CSO engaged in a five-month CVE project in Diffa that is designed to increase collaboration between the army, security staff, and local communities.
- The former PDev II Regional Civil Engineer in Niger transitioned to work for MONUSCO.

- The former PDev II Senior Program Officer-Religious Affairs was hired on as Religious Affairs National Technical Advisor of the Niger Ministry of Security.
- The former PDev II Finance Assistant went on to serve as Finance Manager for USAID-NASA SERVIR center in Niger.
- Former Field Coordinators gained employment with Counterpart International on the *Participatory Responsive Governance—Principal Activity* (PRG), which is jointly funded by USAID and the Swiss Cooperation Agency.
- The former PDev II Youth Coordinator went on to serve as the Niger Project Coordinator for USAID's *Partnerships for Peace* project, which is focused on CVE and peacebuilding.
- The former Chad Deputy Country Director became a consultant to the Ministry of Economic and Planning Development for a project funded by the World Bank.

Furthermore, EA is now implementing five projects in the Sahel, leveraging the experience and knowledge in CVE media production that they honed under PDev II. These projects include the \$25 million USAID-funded *Voices for Peace*, a regional communication and media strengthening program that leverages both traditional and new media to counter VE and promote democracy, human rights, and governance. This further demonstrates the sustaining and continuing impact of the overall Program.

CHALLENGES & LESSONS LEARNED

Listening Clubs

Challenges: Listening Clubs thrived in Niger due to the pre-existing culture of *fadas*, groups of youth who gather informally to socialize, hold discussions, and drink tea. As such, it was very easy for *fadas* to be converted into Listening Clubs. Unfortunately, it was much more difficult to start Listening Clubs in Burkina Faso and Chad. In Burkina Faso, effort was made to have them run by student groups, most of which excelled at coordinating their activities with the Program; however, the organizational structure of these Listening Clubs was not formal enough to allow them to operate on a long-term basis. Listening Clubs were the least successful in Chad, where there was an unsustainable expectation of financial compensation for participation.

Tracking the incidence and discussion threads of Listening Clubs proved to be a challenge in all three countries. Paper forms were often lost in the mail or not filled out at all, and the CommCare tablet-based system that EA had attempted to implement in Year 4 was not successful, as its use required constant, online connectivity and a certain level of literacy and technical competency among the Listening Club facilitators.

Corrective Actions: The PDev II Burkina Faso team traveled to each Program core zone to meet with the members of Listening Clubs, while EA producers visited those in Chad in order to sit in on their discussions. These meetings reinforced a sense of partnership and provided opportunities for both Listening Club facilitators and the Program to discuss frustrations and assistance needed.

Lessons Learned:

- Form Listening Clubs within the context of institutions that are at least semi-formally organized or within societally approved, cultural traditions.
- Maintain continuous and active engagement with Listening Clubs through social media, IVR, periodic meetings, requested participation in other Program activities, and targeted access to Program micro-grants to retain their motivation and interest.
- Pilot IVR as a fast, easy, and cost-effective way for tracking Listening Clubs and compiling feedback from them; IVR is likely to be a better alternative than paper forms, which need to be received from unreliable postal systems, and tablets, which are dependent on constant internet access and certain computer skills of Listening Club facilitators.
- Invest more resources in Listening Clubs, and use them to conduct trainings for reinforcing ways for generating broader community and regional collaborations; regional gatherings should allow for cross-border Listening Clubs whose members are of the same ethnicity to meet and connect from across national borders.
- Do not invest in Listening Clubs in Chad.

Government Engagement

Challenges: The Program was designed to focus on community-level engagement and it was only several years into implementation that IRD and USAID realized that PDev II impact expansion opportunities were being lost by not engaging national governments and working on national systems. With little visibility and virtually no support from government officials in Ouagadougou, N'Djamena, and Niamey, much of the work and activities remained at the very local level, which did not allow for much impact beyond Program intervention areas.

Additionally, throughout the life of PDev II, which reported directly to USAID's Regional Office in Accra, it was unclear to the Program how to address the needs and interests of the USAID representatives in each of the three countries where the Program was based, and how to build on efforts of other USAID-funded projects being carried out there (at least in Burkina Faso and Niger).

Corrective Actions: During the last two years of the Program, much more effort was made to engage the national ministries in activities such as public campaigns for peaceful elections; support of education, particularly for girls; and technical training for youth. The increased support of ministries including the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Youth Employment, the Ministry of Communications, and the Prime Minister, resulted in greater visibility for the Program and a wider impact of many of the activities.

Lessons Learned:

- Establish consistent working relationships with technical teams at national and sub-regional levels.
- Build and maintain strong bonds with government and local leadership (including traditional and religious leadership) to achieve legitimacy in the eyes of target communities, facilitate programming in the short and long term, and ensure sustainability.
- Involvement and commitment from national governments, as well as coordination among technical staff in the USAID Missions and Offices in the region, are all necessary for effective implementation of a program of PDev II's size and scope.
- Produce French-language reports from each quarter to facilitate local government review and increase their level of knowledge of, and engagement with, the Program.

Interactive Voice Recording (IVR) System

Challenges: The unexpected success of the IVR system quickly exhausted much of the initially-allocated budget for IVR, since airtime costs were high. The IVR system was initially supported by a toll-free line that was reverse billed to EA. It quickly became apparent that paying the costs of the airtime was unsustainable.

Corrective Actions: The Program established one toll-free and one user-paid line in each country. In addition, rather than allowing the IVR system to support multiple calls simultaneously as before, PDev II limited the number of open phone lines to two. The toll-free line allowed listeners to call in and answer polls as well as leave qualitative voice feedback, while the user-paid line allowed callers to listen to radio segments on-demand.

Lessons Learned:

- Integrate IVR with media programming for social change, but adapt its content in duration and formatting to meet the IVR platform's specifications and capitalize on its value and utility as a communications resource.
- Refrain from using Frontline SMS and Freedom Fone in future initiatives; while free, they are neither reliable nor user-friendly. Instead, consider using VOTO; despite the initial, expensive hardware investment with the EI lines, this offers a more sustainable and affordable (for the end user) IVR solution than one requiring SIM boxes or tablet-enabled voice-over-internet protocol (VOIP) systems operating with Telerivet.
- Launch IVR models in the future as user-paid platforms from the onset in order to avoid incurring budget overruns and misleading users' expectations.

- Design toll-free systems in such a way that total call duration is limited, whether by building in hang-up points, restricting the number of times content can be accessed, or developing other user-time restrictions.
- Pilot and develop more robust means for using IVR for monitoring the range of the general public's responses to Program broadcasts or responses of those participating in Listening Clubs that are led by Program-trained facilitators; consider using IVR as a tool for tracking behavior/attitude changes over time among those in a pre-selected select group of listeners.
- Design a system that allows an individual phone number to be used only once when responding to a poll question so that there will be less inherent bias in survey data.
- Add a brief advisory for consent at the beginning of the IVR system so that listeners are alerted that their comments and opinions might be used in programming; likewise, listeners should be made aware that their participation as broadcast audience members and responders is encouraged and being monitored.
- Integrate feedback from IVR when airing follow-up segments to former broadcasts or when determining new content topics for programming; consider segments from "listener questions" and "voices from our audience," or the results from weekly polls and audience commentary as programming material.
- Allocate significant financial and human resources towards building and maintaining a robust IVR system.
- Expand IVR to engage in active polling and push messaging in addition to accessing content and seeking audience participation.
- Create toll-free numbers on SD cards for IVR so that use of the cards and its file sharing history can be tracked more easily. Competitions or requirement of SD usage to access special broadcast content should be done to encourage calls. Unique, easily-identified material distributed solely through an SD card (such as a song) could be provided as initial content, so that overall dissemination of material can be monitored.

Security

Challenges: There were varying degrees of instability and violence in all three Program countries throughout the life of the Program. Terrorist attacks, poor governance, weak democratic institutions, and a lack of development and economic opportunity were the primary causal factors. Given the porous borders in the region, a political, security, or other humanitarian crisis in one country was often a serious threat to its neighbors.

The continued instability in Libya following the downfall of the Khaddafi regime had a spill-over, cross-border effect on Chad and Niger, including influxes of returnees and refugees, infiltration of suspected Boko Haram militants, and increases in drug and arms trafficking, all of which negatively impacted Program implementation in northern core zones within both countries.

During Year 3, Boko Haram terrorists carried out several suicide bombings in N'Djamena. Those attacks, coupled with continued attacks along the border, resulted in the Chadian Government banning public gatherings. That restriction limited Program activities, such as mobile cinema projections, participatory theatre performances, and community mobilization events. In both Chad and Niger, a number of core zones remained off-limits to expatriate staff, placing heavy reliance on host national staff and on remote management oversight, while also slowing down implementation.

In Burkina Faso, violent protests in 2014 surrounding then President Blaise Compaoré's proposal to alter term limits in the constitution, his eventual resignation, and the military coup of the transitional government that followed (September 2015) were all major setbacks to national stability. Although the protests and the coup were relatively short-lived, they greatly destabilized all aspects of life in the country, including activities implemented by the Program. This was subsequently compounded by the terrorist attacks in Ouagadougou in January 2016 (Year 5). Furthermore, attacks by Boko Haram in Years 4 and 5 caused death and destruction, internal displacement of people, and other instabilities in Niger and Chad, and hindered Program implementation in the affected regions. In Year 5, suicide bombings against military installations and the civilian population, and attacks on prisons where detainees accused of extremist acts were being held (in Diffa), added to the volatile security situation in the Diffa Region of Niger. Attacks in the Lake Chad area caused temporary regional office closings in both Niger and Chad during the life of the Program, ranging from a few weeks to more than a year.

In Chad, Program staff also faced armed banditry and carjacking threats when traveling to certain core zones. Two vehicles that were transporting personnel working on project activities were carjacked in the last two years of the Program, and personnel were robbed at gunpoint.

In addition, in all three countries during the final 18 months of the Program, unrest surrounding presidential campaigns and elections interrupted implementation in various core zones, and often required re-planning of activities in order to respond to challenges of instability and security risks.

Corrective Actions: The Program took a range of measures to synchronize activities with the security realities in each host country. In the latter part of Year 2, PDev II revised the travel policy to provide Program vehicles for staff use, and considered the option of internal flights to remote or insecure areas, rather than travel by car. That was a reversal of the policy during the earlier part of Year 2, when the PDev II Senior Management Team approved a travel policy that reduced operations and logistics costs. Under that policy, staff members were required to use cost-efficient public transportation whenever possible.

During Year 3, the Program worked closely with USAID Activity Managers and government authorities to monitor the security situation in all countries. Movements outside capital cities in all three countries required Chief of Party (COP) approval, in coordination with IRD's Regional Security Manager in Niger.

To mitigate the impact of the ban on large public gatherings in Chad, PDev II organized smaller gatherings in closed public spaces, such as youth centers, municipal chambers, private conference halls, and training rooms. Mobile cinema events were limited to small groups rather than the usual mass, open air showings. In Diffa, mobile cinema events were shifted from evening projections to daytime projections held inside.

In addition, as a result of the car-jackings and robberies in Chad, the travel policy was amended to require two vehicles to travel together. This increased the financial and human resources needs for each planned activity, but seemed to address security concerns, as no further vehicles were car-jacked.

In cases where travel to certain zones was impossible, youth were brought to a nearby core zone with less security concerns. Finally, ahead of each activity, staff and youth leaders were required to engage with community leaders (or armed services where appropriate) to inform them of the activity and attain permission ahead of time.

Lessons Learned:

- Design programs to be more adaptive in their programming strategies and budgeting, in light of changing, often volatile conditions on the ground. Civil, political, and economic unrest had been festering, which was exploited by extremist groups (like Boko Haram) and by political parties and candidates. Future programs should target interventions in a time-sensitive manner, rather than relying on advanced planning, to bring community members together to address the underlying issues that are causing feelings of anger and resentment and desire for violent retribution.

Television & Radio Production

Challenges: The Program experienced challenges in selecting topics, recording, and producing broadcasts. Brainstorming and selection of radio program topics became quite challenging by the end of the Program, as producers felt that the focus on CVE content limited their choice of themes. Producers complained that they often had themes suggested to them by CAG members and Program beneficiaries, which they felt they must reject, despite their importance or timeliness, since they were not directly related to CVE.

The regional series, *Reflets du Sahel*, was administratively and logistically difficult to produce, requiring collaboration and transmission of materials between several offices and convening CAGs in all three countries multiple times for each episode.

The increase in languages used for radio programming led to new challenges — the need to incorporate each new language in the IVR system; the need to arrange for alternate, remote means of production for radio programming in the Kanuri language, due to a lack of native speakers among PDev II staff and its implementing partners; and the need to record each episode in multiple languages, which resulted in increased demands and costs placed upon production, especially with multiple acting crews needed for soap opera productions.

Corrective Actions: To allow for more diversification in content and address the challenge of limited content options, the Program transitioned from youth magazine shows to include youth soap operas. This allowed for greater content and diversity in style and approach to material.

In order to streamline the production and transmission of materials such as *Reflets du Sahel*, PDev II staff began transferring audio files using Google Drive. This change decreased both costs and effort. Additionally, to increase collaboration and agreement on themes for programming, in February 2015 IRD held a regional production retreat to ensure all involved producers were in agreement on regional coordination and regionally relevant themes.

Strict production schedules and quarterly trips to Diffa for intensive production sessions in Kanuri alleviated some of the issues related to the use of multiple languages, ensuring the material was produced in a timely and high-quality manner.

Lessons Learned:

- Continue CVE-related public programming on both radio and television, as it allows programs to effectively educate and inform citizens at local, regional, and national levels. These messages should continue to be enhanced through the use of social media.
- Broadcast programming should be more regionally-focused, which would require increased coordination among radio stations across Program countries, as well as translation of content in minority languages that are spoken in the region.

- Focus less on topics for CVE and more on examining the drivers of VE, such as limited economic opportunities, job-seeking migration, sense of political disenfranchisement; these are topics that more significantly address individuals' daily lives, and are more likely to be relatable and memorable. Also, an effort should be made to balance entertainment with information, as could be done with the addition of soap operas and mini dramas and with the boosted use of audience engagement initiatives.
- Diversify content through live radio programming broadcasts in public forums, quiz shows, or roundtable discussions with local community and government leaders.
- Offer continuing trainings on topics of broadcast production, scheduling, and management to radio station managers in order to better ensure sustainability of their radio stations. Offer training on financial management with instruction on Excel for data record-keeping, and skills building in the writing of proposals, contracts, and schedules.
- Budget substantial funds for production and broadcasting costs to increase television content in the form of soap operas, which are very popular and perhaps more effective in social message communications, although they are admittedly more expensive to produce in comparison to radio magazine programs.

Staffing

Challenges: Finding quality staff with an understanding of CVE interested in programming in harsh, remote areas for extended periods of time proved to be difficult. At the onset of PDev II, staffing of key positions on the Regional Management Team (RMT), critical to rapid roll out of Program activities, was delayed when the proposed COP and Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP) rescinded their commitment to IRD. Although eventually joining the Program, the DCOP remained at post for less than three months. Other key personnel proved unable to manage the breadth of responsibilities required for a complex, three-country program and were removed, some of whom were never replaced. These staffing difficulties slowed Program momentum and led to a lack of supervision and coordination, among other issues.

Corrective Actions:

- In the absence of a Regional M&E Director, in Years 4 and 5, IRD's Applied Learning Unit provided remote support to the country M&E teams, as well as short-term technical assistance (STTA) to address problems. This included the regional M&E workshop that was held in March 2015 in Niamey, convening the three M&E teams to review and update the Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) of each country, and subsequent temporary duty assignments.
- Following the departure of Chad's Country Director in Year 4, no replacement was identified who could gain USAID approval. The DCOP subsequently served as Chad's Acting Country Director for the last 18 months of the Program.

Lessons Learned:

- Greater resources need to be put towards recruitment when seeking candidates for multiple year postings that are in remote and harsh locations to assure that staff quality and retention remain high.

Local Implementing Partners

Challenges: Since local implementing partners were thought to have a strong knowledge of community issues and community actors, they were assigned significant roles in bringing together civil society, traditional authorities, and local government representatives. Unfortunately, most were unable to sufficiently staff their teams, meet basic financial and administrative reporting requirements, or meet other requirements for community-grant activities, such as effectively organizing key stakeholders in targeted areas, conducting training, and other Program interventions.

Corrective Actions: During Year 2, PDev II identified CSOs in the three Program countries with the requisite capacity to be effective local implementers. These included *Fondation pour Le Développement Communautaire* (FDC) in Burkina Faso and two organizations in Chad — *Association des Témoins, des Urgences et des Actions de Développement* (ATURAD), and *Action Tchadienne pour la Promotion des Initiatives Rurales* (ATPIR). PDev II engaged them to conduct training for CSOs and local Government officials. In Niger, PDev II collaborated with the *École Nationale d'Administration* (ENAM) on local Government training. The Program also sought out the *Association des Éleveurs et Nomades* (AEN) in Chad and *Réseau d'Appui aux Initiatives Locales* (RAIL) in Niger as local partners for conducting training and implementing grant activities related to SO4.

Lessons Learned:

- Provide training to national staff on VE/CVE concepts so that they can effectively provide capacity development and training to CAC and CDC members and grantees during the life of the Program.
- Involve key stakeholders in communities more significantly in the development of work plans and the design of CVE activities; these include youth leaders, CSOs, CACs and CDCs, religious leaders, partner radio stations, and local Government authorities, who should also receive training to serve as proxy monitors and reporters of Program activities.
- Collaborate intelligently with a variety of stakeholders, taking into consideration the current power dynamics among local stakeholders and assess these conditions consistently throughout implementation. While inviting more powerful and connected stakeholders risks the marginalization of less prominent organizations or individuals, who may be actually more effective, inviting less prominent stakeholders also risks eliciting a reaction from the more powerful that could threaten program reputation, approvals, and access to participants. Even when a combination of both approaches is used, there are challenges in navigating the power dynamics in the room such that everyone's ideas and voice are freely shared. A balance of partnering with both prominent and marginalized individuals and organizations should be struck with transparency, strong relationships, good communication, and awareness.
- Tap into the prior experience and connections of organizations and projects already active on the ground.
- Engage and leverage the skills and knowledge of the trainers, beneficiaries, CSOs, etc. who were a part of PDev II on future programming in the Sahel, as there has been a significant investment in building their capacity.

OBSERVATIONS

Programming: Target one or two interventions that are truly applicable throughout the Program region. In the case of PDev II, while a focus on countering the VE perpetrated by Boko Haram was relevant for work in Niger and Chad, it was not as relevant in Burkina Faso. Inter-religious tensions between Christians and Muslims (and even among Muslim sects) have been much more obvious in Niger than those found in Burkina Faso and Chad, although the latter country has more recently experienced Christian-Muslim conflict. However, in all three countries, land tenure and land usage are very much growing issues of concern, as climate change and desertification have been wielding an increasingly devastating impact on farmers' and herders' livelihoods.

Imam Outreach: Build upon previous exchange visits between American imams and local religious leaders to discuss religious tolerance and peaceful co-existence among Muslims, Christians, and citizens, and to address misconceptions used by VEOs about American attitudes towards Islam. The overall objective would be to strengthen relationships between the U.S. and local Muslim communities, while promoting an open CVE dialogue. The audience for the visitors' engagements should include religious, Government, youth, and civil society leaders and authorities.

Social Media:

- Create a sense of ownership through the use of locally generated content obtained from postings by youth who have been identified through Facebook and other social media platforms.
- Seek out social media content from the community, perhaps by incorporating images, recorded songs, and video clips from audience members, as well as eliciting their responses to public polls, crowdsourcing, and other forms of audience engagement.

Work Plan Periods: Develop work plans that are realistic and flexible. For youth CVE programming, a 12-month work plan can become redundant as the context and priorities for CVE programming can change very quickly.

CSO Support: Engage CSOs and provide grants for additional community development projects to reinforce their resilience to VE and promote local development. In all three Program countries, the single greatest problem facing CSOs is a lack of access to finance, which severely hampers their ability to address the needs of their communities. Consequently, low capacity to address community needs is the second most important problem they face.

Construction Activities: Place more importance on program initiatives that support construction and rehabilitation of buildings or resources in communities, such as schools, radio stations, and community wells; although often the most expensive and time-consuming, such work is widely well-received and it offers a visible and lasting sign of the U.S. Government's interest in addressing the communities' needs and in supporting the professed value in education, information, and Government transparency.

Content Distribution Methods:

- Consider using the SanDisk flash drive with Micro-USB connector as a means for providing digital copies of pre-organized radio programming content for access by any device with the Android operating system (e.g., smartphone, computer, or tablet) without the need of internet access. Note that a branded application, which can be provided on the same flash drive, is required to be installed first.
- Explore the possibilities of promoting other data-sharing technologies through test-piloting, as had been done with the Wi-Fi Direct service that, although offered on smartphones running on Android 4.0 (the dominant operating system [OS] in the Sahel market) and higher versions, was seldom used when content was being passed between two such smartphones. Instead, users defaulted to Xender, a third-party application, or Bluetooth.
- Weigh more carefully costs against gains arising from the introduction of new technologies for file-sharing, as suggested by PDev II's experience in trying to scale up the use of media hubs; ideally a new technology, if such exists, should be mostly intuitive to users and not require internet access or a specific smartphone model or operating system.
- Re-examine the difficulties experienced with the Program's introduction of SD cards and media hubs at select radio stations, both of which were pilot tested. Media hubs relied upon radio partners to take a very active role in informing listeners of the availability of the files, maintaining (and continuously powering) file storage equipment, and facilitating users' downloading of files of digitized broadcast content; this turned out to be a much taller order than a simple distribution of SD cards. Cooperation from radio stations in Chad came at a financial price—a potentially inhibiting factor in future initiatives—while radio stations in Niger were not paid to render this service, which was reflected in their lack of commitment to the initiative. Overall, user rates were low in both countries, averaging only about 10 listeners per station during the pilot period.

ANNEXES

- A) [Performance Monitoring Plan](#)
- B) [Country Activity Trackers](#)
- C) [Photo Banks](#)
- D) [Final Digital Community Strategy Report](#)
- E) [PDev II Brochure](#)
- F) [PDev II Microsite](#)
- G) [“Building Peace Through Radio” Infographic](#)
- H) [PDev II Core Zones](#)
- I) [New Media in Burkina Faso, Chad and Niger: Survey Results and Analysis](#)

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