

Border communities in the Sahel, especially in the Liptako-Gourma region that covers Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, are under increasing pressure in terms of armed violence, resource scarcity and inter-communal conflict, all of which are undermining the social cohesion in these marginalized areas. Danish Demining Group (DDG) and Danish Refugee Council (DRC) are implementing a Border Security and Management Programme in the Sahel to promote stability, build community and individual (especially among youth-at-risk) resilience to violent extremism, criminality, and dangerous migration. In the border areas of the Liptako-Gourma region DDG's approach entails ensuring effective, accountable and responsive border security and management, improved community safety and social cohesion (especially cross-border), and alternative livelihoods opportunities.

Objectives:

DRC-DDG designed the programme based on the findings of a Border Security Needs Assessment (BSNA) that it conducted in May-June 2014 in the Liptako-Gourma region, in association with border authorities, communities and other relevant stakeholders. Objectives are:

- Identify sources of conflict in border areas and work with local and national actors to strengthen community-based conflict prevention and management capacity
- Improve confidence, dialogue and information sharing between communities, security forces and authorities, including across borders
- Support the establishment of a comprehensive border management system
- Provide youth-at-risk in border areas with alternatives to displacement, criminality and armed violence
- Strengthen the capacity of border authorities

For more information concerning DRC/DDG's programming in the Sahel, please contact DDG Regional Manager, Yann Faivre : regional.manager@ddgwestafrica.org

Working with governments:

DRC-DDG is working with local and national border authorities (i.e. Police, Gendarmerie, Customs, Border Commissions) to strengthen their capacity to effectively manage their borders in collaboration with the communities. DRC-DDG provides:

- Technical expertise in armed violence and prevention and reduction through the provision of conflict management and mediation trainings as well as support to conflict prevention and management community mechanisms
- Policy advice at local and national levels on border security and management issues
- Support to cross-border cooperation between authorities and communities on each side of the border
- Process support for the development of information-sharing systems and interfaces between governmental agencies
- Support to rehabilitation or construction of small-scale border management infrastructure

Working with communities:

DRC-DDG uses a community-driven approach to border security and management by:

- Facilitating dialogue and partnership between security providers and communities to enable information sharing, build mutual understanding, and foster cooperation in response to insecurity
- Developing community safety planning capacity based on communities' own needs and resources
- Capacity-building for livelihoods in border areas through the provision of entrepreneurship training and income generating activities kits, strengthening economic platforms and rehabilitating markets
- Providing technical, material and logistical support to facilitate locally driven, cross-border conflict prevention and management initiatives
- Supporting communities in mitigating the threats posed by small arms, mines and other Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) in border areas

Areas of intervention:

Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger

Funding:

Government of Denmark, the Netherlands and the United States

Latest achievements

- 13 dialogue workshops facilitated between communities and security providers. 47 dialogue fora between community representatives and security providers held in 13 border locations.
- 13 Community Safety Plans (8 validated by community members and 5 under development)

- 1718 community members trained in conflict management in 13 communities
- 4 cross-border activities carried out between communities
- Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices survey on ERW and SALW in 12 communities and 159 risk education sessions reaching 2960 community members (2393 SALW and 567 mines/ERW).

- 3 trainings for security providers of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger in conflict prevention, management and analysis
- Programme staff trained in mediation and dialogue facilitation
- Trainings on Income-Generating Activities and Village Savings and Loans Associations provided to communities

