

Burkina Faso

Capacity statement (2022)

Organizational Profile

Search for Common Ground (Search) is an international organization committed to conflict transformation. Since 1982, we have led programs around the world to help societies channel their differences away from adversarial approaches and towards collaborative solutions. Our long-term programming in **34 countries with over 900 employees, 95% locally recruited and 839 local partner organizations, enabled us to reach over 309,430 participants from artists and media professionals to political and religious leaders to deliver powerful messages of peace.** Search's work is recognized globally, as reflected by its nomination for the 2018 Nobel Peace Prize. Through our extensive collaboration with 313 radio stations and 26 TV stations world-wide, we estimate that we have reached 39.3 million people through media programs in many of the world's most challenging conflicts.

Our actions are based on the **Common Ground Approach (CGA)** which is a methodology designed to transform how we respond to conflict, away from confrontation and violence and toward collaboration. Its guiding principles inform the design and application of peacebuilding programs, which generate tangible, positive outcomes.

Search's Work in Burkina Faso

Search has been working in **Burkina Faso since 2011**, promoting constructive youth leadership and engagement, as well as dialogue between communities and authorities. Between 2011 to 2016, Search has contributed to the cross-border Peace through Development (PDEV) II project in Burkina Faso, Niger and Chad) to reduce the risk of instability and increase resilience to violent extremism.

Since January 2020, Search has had a permanent **office in Ouagadougou and two sub-offices in Dori and Kongoussi** with over 40 staff. With 8 programs currently implemented in the **Centre, Centre-North, North, Sahel, Boucle du Mouhoun, Hauts-Bassins and East regions**, Search is actively working to promote constructive youth leadership, support effective peacebuilding media and empower government and civil society to jointly address challenges and promote social cohesion.

As part of its Sahel-wide strategy, our approach in Burkina Faso draws on our **five key interrelated objectives** that address salient factors in the conflict system, and to which Search is well positioned to contribute substantially:

- Strengthen social and economic interdependence across dividing lines
- Advance equitable and inclusive management of land and water resources
- Transform the way that states respond to security threats so that they collaborate with local stakeholders to address the root causes of conflict
- Strengthen inclusive governance and improve equitable access to public services
- Create conditions for the success of an inclusive political settlement to the conflict in Mali

Ongoing projects

1. Strengthen social and economic interdependence across dividing lines

PROGRESS “Programme de résilience et de cohésion sociale au Sahel” (2020-2024). As part of the "Emergency program for the stabilization of the cross-border spaces of the G5 Sahel" and funded with 5,857,000€ by the European Union Trust Fund (EUTF), PROGRESS holds a consortium of several NGOs, including Search, ACTED, and Action Against Hunger. Through this cross-cutting project in the most fragile border regions between Mali, Burkina-Faso and Niger, Search collaborates with humanitarian and development partners, to strengthen long term cohesion and resilience horizontally (inter-community) and vertically (state-populations) by improving living conditions in a context of conflict and vulnerability. In Burkina Faso, the project aims to train 810 **youth leaders** in inclusive leadership, conflict transformation and positive communication while strengthening access to health services, resilience to food, nutrition insecurity and social cohesion between communities and local institutions. Search is also responsible for integrating and disseminating best practices in conflict sensitivity, based on regular conflict analysis with all consortium members and stakeholders, and developing participatory, inclusive, and responsive local governance frameworks through training of community mobilizers in dialogue facilitation and the realization of a Mass Media Awareness Campaign to counter misinformation.

Woumtaaba - “Terrain d’Entente” : Réduire la violence inter-communautaire et renforcer la cohésion sociale dans les régions du Centre Nord et Sahel au Burkina Faso (2021-2023). The project, funded by the [Peace and Stabilization Operations Program \(PSOPs\)](#) up to \$1,800,000 (CAN), is designed to reduce inter-community violence and strengthen social cohesion in regions affected by population displacement in the Center-North and Sahel regions. To prevent and respond to the immediate risks of violence, the project will support an inclusive group of young men and women leaders in implementing conflict prevention and community protection initiatives, in collaboration with formal and informal authorities, security actors and conflict management structures in a sustainable manner. The project will support stabilization efforts by integrating peacebuilding and development objectives.

2. Transform the way that states respond to security threats so that they collaborate with local stakeholders to address the root causes of conflict

Trust building and cooperation for stability and security in border regions (2019-2021). Funded with \$427 509,00 by [DANIDA](#), this cross-border program is working to improve communication and collaboration between security providers and community actors for effective border management and enhanced security across the Liptako Gourma region. Search's experience in restoring mutual trust between communities and the SDF is actively contributing to an improved response to local security issues, enabling greater violence prevention, and addressing the root causes of instability and violent conflict in the region. Through activities such as training in nonviolent communication for security providers, joint capacity building and peace initiatives, social communication tools and media programming, the project works towards dialogue and accountability in a way that emphasizes mutual benefits for civilians and security providers. Hence, the overall goal will be to help security forces better fulfill their protection mandate and support community-led stabilization efforts in areas affected by conflict and military operations.

Kogl Taaba (Protégeons nous) : Ensemble pour la sécurité (2021-2023). The project funded by [the European Union](#) with 505,000€ aims to improve trust and collaboration between defense forces, local authorities, and populations to prevent conflict and strengthen the protection of civilians in the communes of Bourzanga and Sollé (Center-North and North). In order to meet the basic needs of the population and improve their collaboration with the security and defense forces, civil-military activities (CMAs) will be

selected and implemented based on a consultative and highly inclusive process, while at the same time training will be implemented to improve their ability to interact in a constructive and non-confrontational manner.

3. Strengthen inclusive governance and improve equitable access to public services

Support Youth-led Dialogue for Peace and Stability in the Sahel - phase 1 (2020-2022). Funded with 369,000€ by [the PATRIP Foundation](#), this project supports youth leaders and key community stakeholders to work collaboratively with local authorities to design infrastructure projects and implement peace and dialogue initiatives in Northern Burkina Faso (North and Sahel regions).

Strengthen Women and Youth Resilience towards Conflicts and Climate Change - phase 2 (2022-2023). Funded with 1,096,417€ by [the PATRIP Foundation](#), this project builds on phase 1 by promoting economic, political, social and environmental stabilization and community resilience in the border localities of Burkina Faso and fostering local conflict resolution and the prevention of violent extremism. The project will mainly focus on building infrastructures for agro-pastoral use to strengthen equitable access to and sustainable management of resources.

Burkina Faso Human Rights and Access to Justice Program (2020-2023). This project is funded by [USAID](#), up to \$300,000. For this project implemented in partnership with Freedom House and the American Bar Association (ABA-ROLI), Search is responsible for mainstreaming conflict sensitivity into the project's activities through advising the program on conflict analysis, sensitivity, and outreach to communities. Search is in charge of the **initial Conflict Assessment**, an in-depth analysis of conflict context, push and pull factors, and vectors of peace and conflict, enabling a detailed understanding of context and providing a basis for responsive programmatic decision-making, assessment of risks to project implementation and target populations, and monitoring of project progress.

Education in Emergency (2020-2022). Funded with 345,000€ by [the Belgium Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#) and implemented in partnership with Plan International, this project aims to restore an environment for peaceful coexistence between displaced persons and host communities, and the realization of children's right to education in the Centre-Nord region.

COVID19: RCCE Capacity Building Support for Emergency Operation Centers (2020-2022). Funded with \$985,555.00 by the [Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation](#), this project aims to build the capacity of government health officials to implement collaborative CREC interventions to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and future disease outbreaks. It is currently being deployed in the Sahelian border regions and points of vulnerability related to COVID-19 in the Central and Hauts-Bassins regions.

Search Approach

Search's transformative dialogue and engagement approach is designed by expert facilitators trained to effectively engage diverse or antagonistic groups to foster understanding between them by focusing on their commonalities and humanizing the "other" to build relationships that support joint win-win solutions to critical issues and grievances.

Capacity Building workshops. Our trainings, tailored to the needs and concerns of specific target groups and our partner CSOs and CBOs, typically include modules designed to provide project participants with tools and knowledge to jointly identify and address conflict in a non-adversarial, inclusive, and collaborative way (such as [conflict analysis and transformation](#), [community-based mediation](#), human security, interest-based advocacy, and strategic communication). Together, they define

locally anchored means to strengthen societies' capacity to deal with conflicts constructively, emphasizing the benefits of non-violence, cooperation and pragmatic long-term processes of conflict transformation.

Evidence-based approach to address root causes and ensure contextualized, accountable and transparent programming that is responsive to community needs. The global institutional learning team and in-country monitoring and evaluation (M&E) teams have extensive experience with assessment and M&E tools designed to analyze context, conflict dynamics, rapidly and regularly scan target areas for contextual changes, and identify barriers, entry points, and stakeholders to address and leverage for successful intervention. All of our evaluations are made public to support wider learning across the sector through our public website and our dedicated platform www.DMEforPeace.org.

Conflict sensitivity. Search ensures that every project we build on a "Do no Harm" conflict sensitivity approach to understand and analyze the context in which we work and how our operation will interact with it. We act on this understanding to minimize the negative impacts of our interventions on the context and maximize the positive impacts for communities.

Gender and youth empowerment. Informed by our methodologies for gender inclusion and our Children and Youth Department experts, toolkits, and methodologies, Search ensures that gender and youth is mainstreamed throughout all components of all projects. Some projects place a specific focus on ensuring that women are strongly represented and actively involved in leading local mediation initiatives and crafting and disseminating radio messages.

Media-based and art-based Approaches for Change. Search is a leader in catalyzing change and strengthening access to information through creative media tools to transform exclusive processes to inclusive ones, and to ensure reliable, unbiased, and timely access to information for all. We have built the capacity of hundreds of media professionals and produced hundreds of hours of original radio programming each month that has reached several million listeners, using formats such as drama, reality shows, round tables, and magazines.

A Unique Access and Trust

Over the last eight years of committed support in Burkina Faso, Search has earned a unique level of trust and access at all levels of government leadership: at the **national, regional and departmental level**, with a variety of ministries such as the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, or other governmental organizations such as the National Observatory for the Prevention and Management of Community Conflicts in Burkina Faso (ONAPREGECC). A key noteworthy partner in our programming is also the National Youth Council that operates at all administrative levels. At the **local and community level**, we have successfully engaged youth, religious and traditional leaders and local authorities, who have all welcomed our activities. Through our interventions, we aim to establish and/or strengthen locally-based structures and key individuals within the structures that will last beyond our programs and allow for the sustainability of our activities.

Our work in Burkina Faso is made possible by the support of our generous donors:

