



BURKINA FASO: CONFLICT SCAN

HUMAN RIGHTS AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN BURKINA FASO

Central North Region – Municipalities of Kaya, Kongoussi, and Tikaaré

FEBRUARY 2023

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ACRONYMS

CVD	Village Development Council
DHAJ	Human Rights and Access to Justice
CCFV	Village Land Conciliation Commission
CSPS	Health Center for Social Promotion
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GEV	Violent Terrorist Groups
KII	Key Informant Interview
ONAPREGECC	National Observatory for the Prevention and Management of Community Conflicts
ONEA	National Office of Water and Sanitation
ONG	Non-Governmental Organization
OSC	Civil Society Organization
PDI	Internally Displaced Persons
SEARCH	Search for Common Ground
SONABEL	National Electricity Company of Burkina

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This report is made possible thanks to the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through Award No. AID-720-685-19-00009, and under the Human Rights Support Mechanism (HRSM) Leader and Associates. The content is the responsibility of Search for Common Ground (Search) and does not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the US government.

1. Executive summary

The “Human Rights and Access to Justice in Burkina Faso” program implemented by the Rule of Law Initiative of the American Bar Association (ABA ROLI), Freedom House, Search for Common ground

and Pact, is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for a period of three years. It aims to “strengthen the state’s capacity to prevent and punish human rights violations and increase public awareness and access to remedies leading to reparations.”

During the execution of this program, Search led to a series of conflict scans in the 4 regions of participation of the program, namely the North Center, the Sahel, the North, and the East to ensure conflict sensitivity during implementation.

This conflict scan, carried out in the North Center region, specifically in the towns of Kongoussi, Kaya, and Tikaré, interviewed **65 people in the communities**(including 35 men, 20 women, and 10 young people.) The main results show that the surveyed populations report a deterioration in the security situation since the last winter season (May 2022) because of attacks and threats of incursions, which have weakened the spheres of socio-economic production, thus motivating the departures of populations to perceived more secure host localities. The region is experiencing a resurgence of attacks targeting mainly civilians, who have become easy-to-reach targets, but also the social infrastructure that can improve the living conditions of the population, such as the drinking water distribution station in the city of Kaya.

Analysis of the evolution of conflicts shows the recurrence and persistence of tensions around access to natural resources and land, whose triggers and aggravations are **violent extremism, lack of institutional jurisdiction and climate change**. **Violent extremism** leads to a deterioration in the security situation, which leads people, including farmers and herders, to exploit plots close to agglomerations deemed more secure.

The perception of a lack of formal jurisdiction is a corollary effect of the situation of insecurity in a region where state symbols are the first victims of violence by extremist groups (GEV). An institutional absence that impacts the dynamics of the region, given the recurrence of community tensions, requires a strong and legitimate institution to manage disputes. The feeling of injustice induced by this institutional absence, shared by the populations, becomes a motivating factor to join the GEV.

Climate change further exacerbates pressures on scarce resources (water, land, grazing), creating more tensions between farmers and herders. Tensions amplified by the polarizing tendencies on the roles of Peuls (herders) in the worsening of the security situation in the region.

In the current context, the program participants face risks in carrying out their field activities, although these should not be a target in principle. They may be victims of threats and intimidation, kidnappings, and targeted attacks by some Violent Extremist Groups (GEV).

Program activities expose members of the targeted community to various risks, such as kidnapping, and threats. **The establishment of protection mechanisms and the strengthening of participants focused on ethics and protection**, the strengthening of the capacities of state actors on human rights and conflict-sensitive communication are the main recommendations.

2. Context

2.1. Introduction

The program "**Human Rights and Access to Justice (DHAJ)** ", funded by the U'S Agency for International Development (USAID) for three years (3), aims to *«reinforce the capacity of the state to prevent and punish human rights violations, and to increase awareness and access of the population to remedies leading to reparations.»*

Since 2015, the country has been experiencing an unprecedented security and humanitarian crisis caused by repeated armed violence, particularly against civilians, which has resulted in massive population displacement, loss of life, material damage, closures of basic social services, and a negative

impact on socio-economic development. The multidimensional crisis affects all sectors of state governance. The human rights sector and access to justice are thus affected by the situation of fragility.

The last¹ conflict scan conducted in the region noted that in the North Central region, conflicts were identified that were exacerbated after the political change on January 24, 2022, namely: **armed conflicts** between armed groups and the FDS, populations, and VDPs; and **conflicts related to natural resources** (land tenure, farmer-breeders, water points, gold, etc.) sometimes linked to the situation of farmer communities² and IDPs over access to resources. This conflict scan also relates the **influence of conflicts on the human rights situation. The conflicts fuel the insecurity that engenders human rights violations** and forms the basis for segregation, hatred, revenge, and disrespect for human dignity. Insecurity has worsened since the political change, leading to the closure of some public institutions in a context where the already fragile institutional legitimacy requires a strong need for judicial services for law enforcement and respect for human rights. However, **with these closures, the situation has deteriorated further and is prejudicial to citizens' right of access to justice**, thus contributing to deviance, non-respect for human rights, to the culture of violent claims of rights and duties through personal and/or collective settlements of account

2.2. Purpose of conflict scan

As part of this program, Search has been conducting a series of conflict scans since 2021 to ensure conflict sensitivity. This is the 4th conflict scan conducted in the North Central Region, which aims to understand the evolution of conflicts since May 2022 as well as their interactions with the "Human Rights and Access to Justice" program to provide relevant recommendations to adapt the program and ensure conflict sensitivity. Specifically, it aims to:

- understand how the conflict dynamics have evolved in each region since May 2022;
- identify how these conflicts may affect the implementation of activities (and vice versa), the project staff, and the program participants in each implementation area;
- propose recommendations to the actors implementing the DHAI program to ensure the protection of the participants and the staff involved and the sensitivity to conflicts.



2.3. Methodology

The conflict scan is based on a qualitative approach. To do this, **6 discussion groups of 8 people and 11 individual interviews** were conducted in the towns of Kaya, Kongoussi, and Tikaré. In total, these discussion groups and individual interviews made it possible to reach **65 people (including 35 men, 20 women, and 10 youths)** from the host and internally displaced communities, as well as from civil society organizations and decentralized government services.

¹ Completed in May 2022

² Prejudices accuse the farmers of being the main perpetrators of insecurity and perceive them as second-class citizens

3. Results

3.1. Evolutions of the context

3.1.1. The security situation

The security situation was assessed differently depending on the exposure of localities to GEV attacks and their consequences on the security of goods and people. The main results show that the surveyed populations report a deterioration in the security situation since the last winter season (May 2022) because of attacks and threats of incursions, which have weakened the spheres of socio-economic production, thus motivating the departures of populations to perceived more secure host localities. The last scan conducted in the region had also noted this deterioration of the security environment. This was due to the increase in attacks by armed groups, the resurgence of community clashes, the rise of violent extremism, and the killings in Yirgou, Barsalogo, and Bourzanga in the Center-North region, all of which showed the deep social unrest in the community relations (scan May 2022)

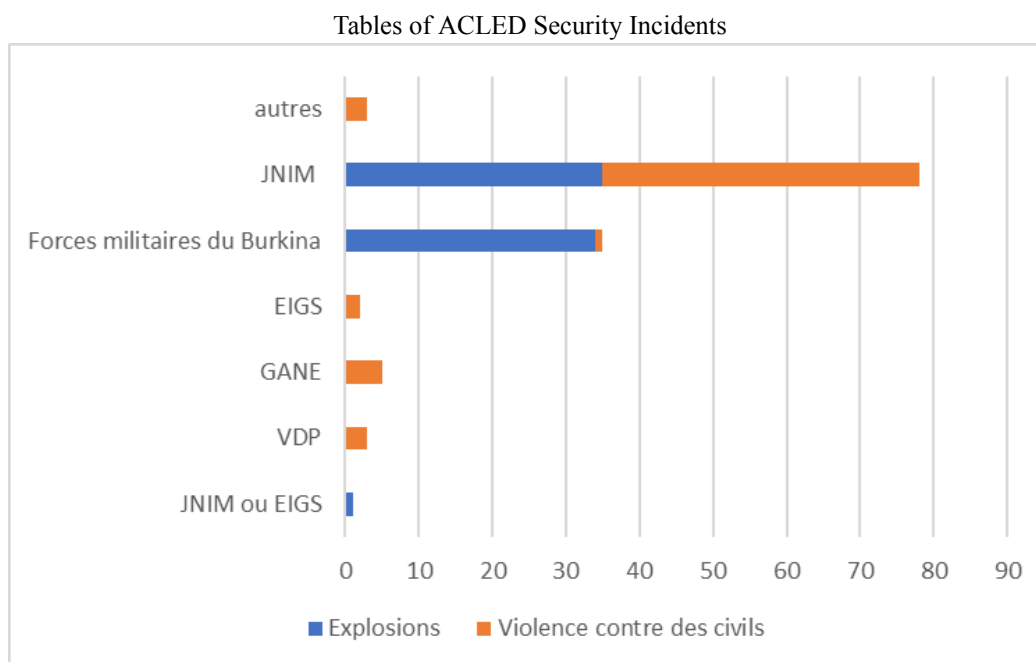
Like Kaya, the capital of the North Central region, Kongoussi remains a place that hosts many IDPs who have left the surrounding villages attacked by the GEV³. *"The security situation has worsened in our areas over the past several years, and this deterioration has had consequences, particularly since the beginning of the winter season. There have been so many events that have disrupted our peace of mind and our way of life together, including the atrocities of armed groups and organized crime⁴."* The security situation remains precarious and worrisome in several localities in the Center-North, especially since some localities are experiencing GEV attacks and incursions.

- **An increase in attacks targeting civilian populations, causing massive displacement of the population**

The region is experiencing an upsurge in attacks aimed primarily at civilians, who have become easy targets. The North Central region is regularly attacked by Violent Extremist Groups (GEVs); for example, from May 2022 to February 2023, there were **70 explosions and 56 cases of violence against civilians** in the Sahel region. The JNIM (Jamā'at nuṣrat al-islām wal-muslimīn) and military forces were reported to be the majority perpetrators of the violence.

³ In Kaya, people from Dablo, Pensa, Tougouri, Delga, Damané, Zorkoum, Zandogo, Fanka, Koutolo and many other towns flock to the social services in search of humanitarian aid. If in the past, the displacement flows concerned the distant areas of the commune of Kaya, today, the surrounding localities of this commune are also experiencing waves of departure. In Kongoussi, we find IDPs from localities such as Nasseré, Tanmoga, Kele, Zimtenga, Bourzanga, Bam village, Kilou, Sakou, Sika, Noah, and Wampêga. In Tikaré, the security context has evolved negatively because the villages of Vato, Sance, and Yoba have experienced GEV attacks; also, the Tikaré health center was vandalized by GEVs in January 2023.

⁴ FGD, Kongoussi IDP community



Others = Dozo Communal Militia (Burkina Faso) - Koglweogo Militia - Military Forces of France (2017) Military Forces of Togo (2005) Burkina Faso Police Force (2022) Burkina Faso Police Force (2022) Gendarmerie

By creating psychosis among the populations through their presence, their aggressiveness and the imposition of their way of life (through Sharia law), the GEVs have unbalanced the socio-economic systems which supported life in communities. In their flight, the populations abandon, for example, the land around which their social and economical ways of life were organized.

The displacement of populations is the result of this insecurity (human and economic) in the attacked localities, where populations move to urban centers such as Kaya and Kongoussi to escape the GEV attacks and gain access to socio-economic infrastructure and development opportunities. However, the arrival and settlement of IDPs in host localities remains difficult, as these IDPs face challenges in meeting their social needs, such as food, health care, drinking water, and education. Beyond these difficulties, the problems in accessing socio-economic opportunities, such as the exploitation of land and natural resources are the main cause of existing tensions between IDPs and the host community. The difficulties in integrating IDPs and the fear of GEV attacks in their host sites have resulted in new departures of IDPs to other destinations, particularly those on the roads leading to Ouagadougou⁵.

- **The basic social services as a target for the GEVs**

The GEV strategy seems to target state infrastructure⁶, the symbol of the state. Indeed, since the advent of the GEVs, state services have been the main victims; currently, the GEVs are also attacking communications and social infrastructures⁷. *"In September, there were disruptions in the supply of*

⁵ A comparative analysis of IDP statistics provided by CONASUR for the periods of April 31, 2022, and January 31, 2023, shows a decrease in employment in Kongoussi of 36,735 and Kaya of 2592. On these same dates, the number of IDPs increased from 2089 to 36426 in Ouaga.

⁶ Recently, the attack on the Tikaré health center is considered an attack on the access to the right to health by the populations of this town.

⁷ The cell phone towers, the installations of the water supply company (ONEA) in Dem

*drinking water to the city because the station that supplies the city was attacked by the HANI. The population has been suffering for three to four months to obtain water."*⁸

These destructive operations of the infrastructure have directly affected the populations of these localities, depriving them of certain needs that are useful for their development and their existence, and this has provoked more community tensions around the questions of access and management of social infrastructures

3.1.2. Evolution of recent conflicts

Tensions over access to natural resources and land

Previous conflict scans have explained that cross-cutting causes can lead to natural resource conflicts. These causes are related to administration⁹, economics¹⁰, and the lack of knowledge of land rights, leading to poor governance of the agro-pastoral area and causing various tensions between the resource users (IDPs, farmers, herders, etc.) This is especially true since, with the scarcity of arable land, the market value of land has risen exponentially, encouraging double sales and allocation of land, and causing recurrent community tensions.

This 2022 conflict scan shows three main new manifestations around tensions over land and natural resources: violent extremism, a crisis of institutional legitimacy and gold mining.

- **Violent extremism as a factor aggravating tensions related to the access to land and resources**

This conflict scan emphasizes the link between the presence of the GEVs and the security consequence of moving the community to areas deemed more secure. A situation that resonates with the recurrence of community tensions over the competition for natural resources, particularly the access to land in different communes. In other words, the advance of the GEVs affects the security situation in different areas, causing the displacement of the population. Displacements, which add further pressure on already scarce resources and a social environment marked by community divisions based on ethnic identity.

The scarcity of fertile land has exacerbated the competition over access to natural resources in the context of violent extremism, where the fragility of social cohesion is severely tested. In fact, the threat of the GEVs has convinced the population not to visit or to restrict their presence in the fields to avoid punishment and demands. The fields have thus been abandoned, often at advanced stages of agricultural production, in favor of land close to settlements that are less extensive than the fields located in the farming villages. The vast spaces are thus abandoned in favor of the spaces located around the villages, which do not manage to satisfy the needs of the community families since they themselves are numerous that also request these spaces.

The displacement of IDPs to other areas amplifies these resource tensions over resources throughout the region, as they (the IDPs) face the same difficulties in accessing land as a result of the land pressure exacerbated by their presence.

- **Non-compliance with legal land use clauses by the "occupants" encouraged by a perceived lack of neutral institutional jurisdiction**

⁸ KII, kaya

⁹ Lack of public services adapted to the needs of the population, dysfunction of the administration, laxity, corruption, impunity, lack of authority

¹⁰ Inappropriate allocation of economic resources, lack of economic governance, misappropriation of public resources

Previous conflict scans report the specific causes of rural land conflicts as the low availability of land in relation to demand due to high population growth; the problem of field boundaries; strong competition over limited resources; damage to fields by animals; cultivation of pastoral areas; difficulty in reconciling customary law and land law; and the misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the land law. In effect, the non-respect of land use clauses by these occupants leads to community tensions between the farmers and the landowners. Because of the scarcity of arable land, some participants do not respect the "contracts" resulting from an arrangement subsequent to the current generations, pertaining to a form of "temporal loan for use", which, however, obeys community rules. For example, some respondents to this conflict scan report cases where *the occupants refuse to return land that they have been offered to use*¹¹ These community tensions over land are further exacerbated by the feeling of impunity and injustice among certain populations, who consider the State's support for resolving land conflicts to be insufficient. The justice system is often accused by families who have suffered expropriation or who feel aggrieved as being partisan because the verdicts in this type of dispute are always in favor of families who hold a land title, according to the respondents, but these families are only operators and not owners. This perception of partiality becomes one of the arguments of reluctance and mistrust of the people towards justice. The families feel that the justice system is not equitable and takes away their property, as this excerpt from a statement suggests *"For example, a Mr X comes to tell us that he bought our land from our deceased father, and he turns to the judicial structures in exchange for bribes. These judicial structures come to take our home with falsified documents as proof that you can see is very sad."*¹²

- **Recurrence of tensions between farmers and breeders during the winter season**

The occupation of pastoral areas by farmers, the obstruction of livestock tracks by fields, and the failure to respect harvesting calendars have greatly deteriorated relations between sedentary farmers and transhumant herders. This favors the outbreak of conflicts related to the damage of fields during the passage of transhumants. These tensions are often manifested against a backdrop of ethnic divisions between the herders and other communities. *"During the winter season, we have a lot of this type of conflict because the time is right for it. However, during the dry season, we encounter fewer and fewer of these conflicts."* Violent tensions because they impact on the financial resources of the actors in conflict, particularly farmers who feel they are losing production quantities due to the damage caused by animals".

- **Gold mining: tensions between landowners, indigenous and foreign operators**

The existence of gold in the region attracts various actors, which affects community life in different ways. On the one hand, if traditional gold miners exploit the land with the agreement of the landowners, the non-respect of the delimitation is a source of conflict because of the invasion of gold miners into the agricultural areas. On the other hand, beyond the intrusion of gold miners into the fields, conflicts are frequent between gold miners from the locality and those from elsewhere in the competition to find gold. Also, the populations criticize the use of chemical substances in these traditional extraction areas, which can harm the health of the populations and the livestock.

The traditional exploitation sites have become zones of insecurity with the sale of narcotics and other illicit substances, child labor, delinquency and banditry.

Inter-community tensions induced by a strong polarization on the roles of the herders within the GEV in the Region

The resurgence of the GEV in the region continues to be associated with the herder community by other community groups as vectors and responsible for the arrival of the GEV. If the existence of herders among the members of the GEV proves to be true, the polarization of the entire herder community as

¹¹ KII, kaya

¹² KII, kaya

being "terrorists" and the association of herders and GEV only consolidate the feeling of stigmatization towards the herders. This polarization and logic forged from stereotyped representations lead to distrustful community attitudes towards the herders, who are excluded from all community life and access to socio-economic opportunities. Indeed, several accusations have been made that point to the herders as the leaders of this asymmetric war. *"People tend to blame one ethnic group"¹³* because the herder community is blamed for the arrival of terrorism and the deteriorating security situation in Burkina Faso. Since the Yirgou incidents¹⁴, the herder community, which was visibly targeted by the reprisals, has been trying to protect itself and even to assert and convince the local populations that they are also suffering the same consequences from the GEV attacks.

3.1.3. Influence of conflict dynamics on insecurity

- **conflict dynamics leading to an increase in community violence**

The community conflicts have served as fertile ground for the emergence of insecurity because the adversity that has developed within communities between different actors who clash at several levels accentuates the insecurity, as it involves several actors (farmers, herders, landowners, and members of landowning families, land occupants and operators, the host community, the IDP community), depending on the issues.

The violence orchestrated by conflict produces consequences in terms of loss of life and property.... The aggrieved parties of the conflicts respond with reprisals, which are justified by some communities as being the result of a legal proceeding in the region; which always rekindles the tensions between the protagonists and takes on greater proportions when it is a question of ethnic communities (Peulh and Mossi) or professional communities (farmers and herders) clashing. Conflicts have thus created a negative climate where individual and collective aggressions are rampant, as was the case in Yirgou, leading the population to arm themselves as a form of protection.

- **sense of injustice as a motivating factor for joining the GEVs**

Verdicts judged to be unsatisfactory, or even absent, by certain members of the community, especially when dealing with rural land disputes, provoke risks of reprisals and vengeance, while at the same time putting the justice system at risk. The losing parties sometimes show their dissatisfaction by physical violence. Justice is called partisan because, according to the people, it is a "social injustice", giving more favor to the most affluent, to the disregard of the vulnerable populations. This social injustice serves, according to the populations, as a reason to join the GEV and as an argument for personal revenge in conflicts.

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¹⁴ Following the assassination of six people, including Kouka Sawadogo, town councillor and customary chief of the village of Yirgou (located in the commune of Barsalogho, Sanmatenga province, North-Center region) by armed men. This was followed on January 1, 2019, by reprisals by the local self-defense groups for three days against the herder community, accused of complicity with the terrorists. The official death toll is 49. in <https://cenozo.org/burkina-faso-massacres-de-yirgou-2-ans-apres-les-tueries-la-justice-se-fait-toujours-attendre/>
<https://www.vooafrique.com/a/au-moins-210-morts-lors-du-massacre-du-1er-janvier-selon-un-collectif/4771648.html>

3.2. The human rights situation and access to justice

In such a context of generalized insecurity, there is no doubt that human rights are violated, and access to justice by the population remains difficult.

3.2.1. Influence of conflict and security dynamics on the human rights situation

Violence is seen as a response to situations encountered by the conflicting actors, according to the populations surveyed. However, they fuel the cycle of conflict that greatly affects the human rights situation. The populations resort to violence and justify its use because of dissatisfaction with the role played by the authorities in resolving conflicts or the departure of the state administration. Some respondents attest to the slowness of legal proceedings *"the customary and administrative authorities are slow to react to these conflicts."*¹⁵ Faced with the slowness of judicial procedures, they prefer to administer their own justice of vengeance at the risk of violating human rights. Especially since the hold of the GEVs transgresses the principles of human rights even more. *"You talk about human rights; let me tell you that these people have no human respect. They kill people without any compassion. Because of them, the health centers are closed, and the schools as well; our children do not go to school anymore as they have no way to get to school. It is really sad"*¹⁶. The destruction of health centers, schools, and water facilities by the GEV has deprived populations of their right to access health, education, and drinking water.

In addition, IDPs fleeing from GEV abuses and leaving behind their possessions usually face poverty in their host communities. There is a large number of IDPs who do not have shelter and do not have the means to meet their most basic needs, such as food, clothing, etc.

*"The impacts of these events are recurrent insofar as we talk about human rights, especially the right to life. However, in our areas, we are without faith or law, and it is always the strongest who crush the weakest without any problem. For example, there is a mineral deposit in a field. As the past rainy seasons approached, individuals destroyed the owner's seeds to reach the gold. Worse still, there are kidnappings of individuals every day without cause. As a result, the administrative structures have left the area, and in other localities, they are almost non-existent to ensure the well-being of the population"*¹⁷.

3.2.2 Influence of the conflict and security dynamics on access to justice

- **The closure of justice services as a source of impunity**

The departure of administrative agents in some localities has led to the closure of state services, which in turn has led to the dysfunction of the judiciary¹⁸. The populations are thus left to their own devices in a context of insecurity where the FDS services have had to redeploy to other areas. Thus, many offenses and criminal acts often go unpunished. Indeed, the populations that are victims of violations of their rights do not know where to turn for the resolution of conflicts. In this context of insecurity, they make do with endogenous mechanisms such as recourse to customary authorities and other traditional forms of dispute resolution. But for the most part, victims retaliate with acts of violence, while some victims prefer to keep their differences quiet for fear of further retaliation.

- **Bias in the justice system and slowness of the processing procedures as reasons for disavowing the justice system**

The populations recognize the free access to judicial services (if they are present), but they criticize the impartiality of the latter and the slowness of the procedures which are real obstacles in their opinion. For them, the judicial structures *"act in favor of the well-to-do, which creates a mistrust towards them"*¹⁹.

¹⁵ Extract of KII data

¹⁶ KII, kaya

¹⁷ KII, Kongoussi

¹⁸ The Kongoussi TGI has been closed since last year.

¹⁹ KII, Kongoussi

They believe that the slowness of the procedures is prejudicial to them, as it leaves room for any intentional "corrupt" interventions. They question the existence and reliability of justice. This idea is echoed by a respondent who is himself part of a judicial body: *"Legal institutions are not credible in their eyes because they are inaccessible and almost non-existent. There are always oppressed people on every corner. The slowness of the justice system in dealing with grievances means that people oppress their fellow man without concern, and the legal structures do not listen to the poorest but plead the cause of the wealthiest. For them, the best way is violence as the only recourse²⁰."*

3.3. Analysis of "Do no harm"

3.3.1. Risk analysis and mitigation measures

In the current context, program actors face risks in the implementation of their field activities. Although they should not be a target in principle, they may be victims of kidnapping and targeted attacks by certain Violent Extremist Groups (GEV). Recently, humanitarian actors have become potential targets for the GEVs, as in recent months, they have been observed to be targeted several times by GEVs, particularly on the Kaya-Dori axis. These recent events show that program-implementing partners must now consider all risks before beginning their activities.

The risks developed and the recommendations in the following table are based on the analysis from conflict scans and a brainstorming session with program partners.

Principal activities of the program	Risks	Mitigation Measures/Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct investigative missions on the allegations of human rights violations in the four target regions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Threats and intimidations by the FDS, VDP, and GEV to those involved in the investigative mission because the investigating officer or respondent is at risk of being considered a spy, enemy, or possessing or disseminating sensitive information - Kidnapping / Arbitrary arrest - GEV attack on participants - Inaccessibility to some areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inform the authorities in advance about the conduct of the mission - Strengthen the capacity of state actors on human rights and conflict-sensitive communication. - Strengthen the capacities of the investigating agents in "protection" to initiate them to the mechanisms of protection and ethics to be conducted. (Take measures to protect the identity of the respondents so as not to expose them and the implementation of a communication mechanism to ensure the protection of the interviewed persons.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visit prisons in the four target regions to monitor prison conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Refusal of judicial authorities because of the sensitivity of the information and its use (linked to the lack of a clear protection and accountability mechanism) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthen communication and advocacy with authorities on the objectives of the visit, - Put a data protection mechanism in place (consent - anonymous -etc...)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Train village-based focal points on data collection on human rights violations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Threats and intimidation of focal points as they may be misunderstood by state actors and their communities - Kidnapping of trainers or participants - GEV attacks on the participants - Assassinations of the participants by the GEV; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Train focal points on security and conflict-sensitive communication; - Conduct outreach to their communities so that the focal points are accepted and recognized; - Create a framework for collaboration between focal points and local actors

²⁰ KII, Kongoussi

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Infiltration of the GEV; - Prohibition of the activity by the GEV. 	(government representatives, community leaders, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interview (the trained focal points) victims and witnesses of human rights violations and abuses to collect evidence of violations and abuses in order to produce documentation reports (including with GEV victims and witnesses) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Endangerment (kidnappings, assassinations, etc.) of focal points and victims, - Refusal of victims to collaborate because of a lack of understanding by the population of the work of human rights actors and fears that the focal points will not respect confidentiality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continuously build the capacity of the focal points on the protection mechanisms (various points related to the collection or processing of evidence, ethics); - Create a confidential complaints procedure or mechanism, - Maintain a database of reported incidents, - Document the progress related to prevention and protection - Actively promote the safety and well-being of those participating in the activities, - Ensure that all internal or external program communications adhere to the core principles of Best Interest: Do No Harm, Conflict Sensitivity. - Ensure that ethical and protective principles are followed in the conduct of the activity so as not to expose the participants.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hold meetings with authorities and community leaders to present the main findings of the documentation and recommendations prepared for better protection of human rights. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Refusal to participate by some actors due to a lack of understanding of the activities - The particularity of the current conflicts that have a community connotation can generate misunderstandings between the participants or the actors implementing the project can be threatened or intimidated; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information and advocacy with the authorities; - Awareness of the community leaders;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hold community awareness sessions, particularly for IDPs, on basic human rights concepts, the functioning of justice institutions and the actors offering legal and judicial assistance to vulnerable people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tension between IDPs and host populations; - Non-adherence of IDPs to the sessions because the issue of human rights may be relegated to the background by IDPs because of their priority given to the food issue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider IDPs and host populations in awareness sessions,
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate a legal clinic in Dori, Kaya, Ouahigouya, and Fada to provide legal advice to community members and legal assistance to victims of human rights violations, including victims of GEV 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Non-participation of community members due to a poor perception of human rights and GEV - Risk of exposition of the victims; - Risk of being accused of bias. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raise community awareness on the promotion of human rights - Facilitate access to certain texts by translating them into local languages;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organize radio programs on basic human rights concepts and the importance of the work of human rights defenders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Threats and retaliation from violent extremist groups; - Infiltration of people of bad faith; - Language differences in interactive programs; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Train journalists in conflict-sensitive journalism before conducting interactive programs (risk of infiltration or attacks given the context)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Threats/intimidation/kidnapping of media personnel - Attack against the radio station - Refusal of the radio station to host this type of program 	
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3.3.2. Opportunities

- Existing initiatives in the promotion of human rights and access to justice

ONAPREGECC, the CCFV²¹ are local initiatives for the promotion of human rights, access to justice, and conflict transformation whose members are customary and religious leaders.

Members of these structures are invited to training or awareness activities organized by the organizations. The participation of religious and customary leaders, land chiefs and VDCs in these capacity-building initiatives is a guarantee of the populations' enthusiasm.

The members of these structures work in synergy to resolve the conflicts that are submitted to them. Considered a reliable structure, members of ONAPREGECC have seen their capacities strengthened in this sense by social cohesion organizations such as Search. A human rights defender states: *"There is no shortage of (conflict transformation) initiatives. There are crisis resolution cells set up at the local level by associations, human rights organizations, or state structures²²."*

4. Conclusion

The North-Central region is one of the highest security risk regions and is ranked as the region with the most IDPs. While security deterioration is assessed according to the attacks and forced migratory movements, the majority of the populations surveyed believe that the situation has deteriorated further. This deterioration is characterized by an increase in attacks targeting civilians, causing them to move to less affected urban centers. Kaya, Kongoussi, and Tikaré have thus become reception areas for displaced populations.

The data analysis shows that, despite the widespread insecurity caused by the GEVs, there are conflicts; the most recurrent in the region are those over natural resources such as gold, water, and land. It is also seen that there are conflicts between farmers and herders, cohabitation conflicts between IDPs and host populations, intercommunity conflicts (between different ethnic groups, between different religious groups, between IDPs and host populations)

These conflictive dynamics affect the security environment, which in turn affects the promotion of human rights. In such a context of generalized insecurity, there is no doubt that human rights are violated and that the population's access to justice remains difficult. Conflict actors blithely trample on human rights with a level of functionality that helps judicial bodies.

The Human Rights and Access to Justice (HRAJ) program has an influence on the current context insofar as it allows the populations of the beneficiary localities to know their rights and the means of obtaining justice in case of violation of their rights. However, the program should pay attention to the identified risks to conduct its activities better to achieve results.

²¹ Village Land Conciliation Commission

²² KII, kaya