

WELCOME



VULNERABILITY AND RESILIENCE ASSESSMENT INITIATIVE TO COUNTER VIOLENT EXTREMISM (VRAI)

**Implemented by Mercy Corps in Burkina Faso and Niger, in partnership with
CGD and Karkara**

Funded by USAID/West Africa Regional Office

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16 May 2018



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MERCY CORPS

*5,000 strong, we live and work
in more than 40 countries...*

*Meeting urgent needs
and building a stronger tomorrow.*



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Possibility.

*Mercy Corps
Niger is
Strengthening
livelihoods,
boosting
resilience &
empowering
communities*

REDUCING VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Mercy Corps: Measuring Peace and Conflict Programming

Youth
and
conflict
TOCs
(2010)

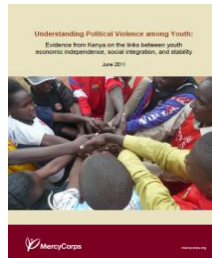
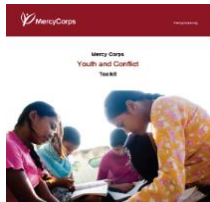
Kenya
research
(2011)

Somalia
study
(2012)

Sub-
Saharan
Africa
analysis
(2013)

Afghanistan
impact
evaluation
(2014)

3 country
case
study
(2015)



REDUCING VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Foreign Fighters in Jordan (2015)

Somalia Impact Evaluation (2016)

Boko Haram Youth & Violence (2016)

Iraq Governance and Perceptions (2016)

Youth Violence in Mali (2017)

Impact evaluation in Afghanistan (2018)



CRITICAL CHOICES
Assessing the Effects of Education and Civic Engagement on Somali Youths' Propensity Towards Violence



"MOTIVATIONS AND EMPTY PROMISES"
Voices of Former Boko Haram Combatants and Nigerian Youth



INVESTING IN IRAQ'S PEACE:
How Good Governance Can Diminish Support for Violent Extremism



"WE HOPE AND WE FIGHT"
Youth, Communities, and Violence in Mali



CAN ECONOMIC INTERVENTIONS REDUCE VIOLENCE?



VRAI Niger and Burkina Faso (2018)



VRAI PROJECT

VRAI Project

Mercy Corps' Vulnerability and Resilience Assessment Initiative to Counter Violent Extremism (VRAI)

- › Promote peace and stability in West Africa through the *development of innovative and adaptable tools that identify community vulnerabilities and resilience capacities to inform effective CVE programs.*
 - Tools that measure vulnerability and resilience while taking into account gender issues and local knowledge.
- › Disseminate the process and lessons learned to be improved and adapted



VRAI PROJECT

Niger: Diffa and Tillabery Regions



Map Sources: ESRI, UNCS.
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Map created in Nov 2011.

Burkina Faso: Sahel Region, Gorom-Gorom



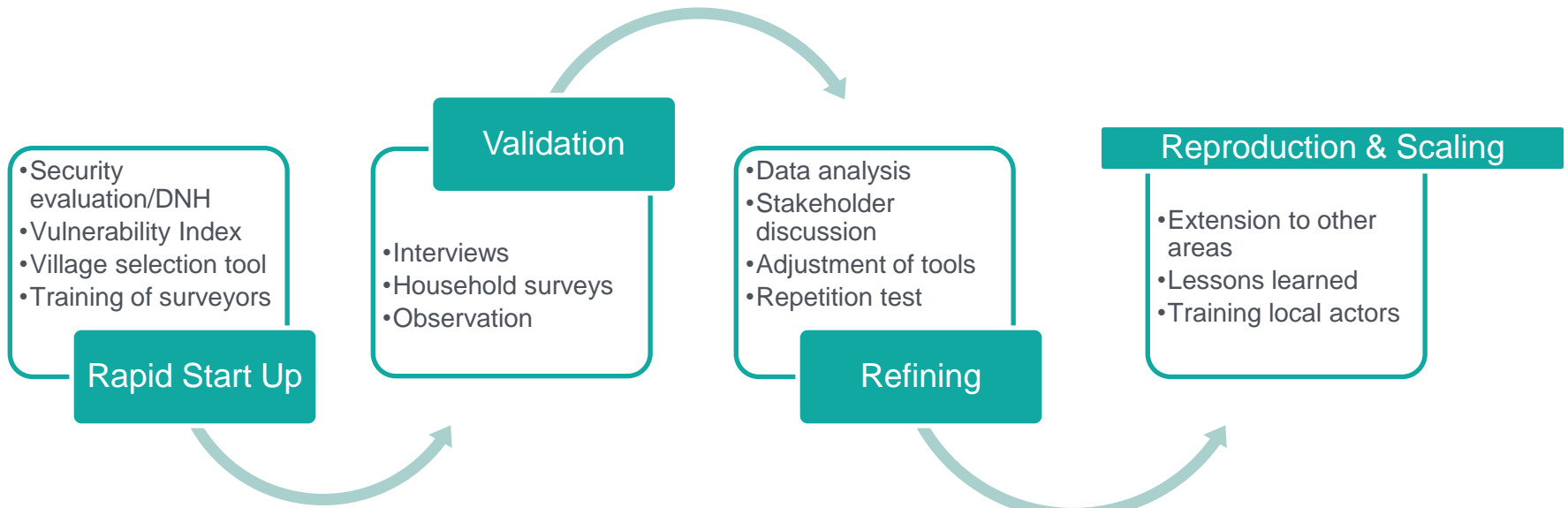
Map Sources: UNCS, ESRI.
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Map created in Sep 2013.



Geographic Targeting

Country	Region/ Province	Commune	Reason for choice
Niger	Diffa	Diffa and Maïné-Soroa	Situated on the Niger-Nigeria border, which runs along the Komadougou-Yobe river. Significant recruitment from ISIS/WA, originating in Nigeria, has been noted in this area. For example, the village of Tam had more than 400 people recruited (estimated between 2014-2015, but most were recruited before the first Diffa attack in 2014) based on the statistics provided by the Town Hall of Maïné-Soroa. During the first few months of 2017 the area was relatively calm and therefore a good target for the study.
	Tillabéry	Banibangou and Tondikiwindi	Areas situated along the border with Mali penetrated by VEOs originating from Mali. These VEOs' influence in Tillabéry has increased in the last two years. The security situation has become tenser and attacks are frequent. For the safety of staff, partners and community members, daily security reviews and adjustments to targeted villages will take place, as needed. As the situation is rapidly changing, we need to evaluate the situation and had to make adjustments to the study based on October 2017 attack of Nigerien and American forces.
Burkina Faso	Oudalan	Gorom-Gorom	An area in the triangular region between Burkina Faso, Niger, and Mali, which is also experiencing complex security issues that need to be recorded and analyzed. Last year the region saw the emergence of the local extremist group Ansarul Islam in the Soum Province, which neighbors Oudalan province. ISGS came to the forefront in late 2016 by attacking security posts in Markoye and Intagom.

Process



Phase 1: Diffa, Niger (tools refined, adjusted and streamlined)

Phase 2: Gorom-Gorom, Burkina Faso

Phase 3: Tillabery, Niger

VRAI Project Methodology

- › The VRAI toolkit: 6 participatory community assessments that seek to measure community vulnerability – and resilience – to recruitment by VEO
- › Primary Tool: the Village Selection Tool (VST), includes 23 criteria:
 - Set of vulnerability and resilience criteria, which a committee of community stakeholders use to rank villages in a particular region by their perceived vulnerability.
 - Following this ranking exercise, 10 villages are selected for further data collection with five villages from the perceived “more vulnerable” group and five from the “less vulnerable” group; next step: implement the 6 participatory assessment tools.

<u>Tillabery</u> (revised after security incident)	Village	Vulnerability Score (higher scores equals greater vulnerability)	<u>Diffa</u>	Village	Vulnerability Score (higher scores equals greater vulnerability)
Tondikiwindi (Oullam)	Fanaka Koira	31	Diffa	Koursari	30
	Koma Bangou	32		Ligaridi	30
	Korombara	32		Bagara	49
	Cewane	35		Diffa Koura	49
	Boutouri	42			
Banibangou	Milyado Koira Zeno	33	Mainé Soroa	Grémadi	32
	Kodey Koira	40		Abdouri	46
	Banibangou Haoussa (quartier de Banibangou)	43		Yabal	50
	Wiyé (quartier de Banibangou)	43		Boudoum	53
	Banibangou Zarma (quartier de Banibangou)	43		Abounga Souleyri	54
				Tam	59

Diffa Key Findings

- › Participants **perceived socio-economic factors as the most significant** category of vulnerability in Diffa.
- › The **individual vulnerability factor identified by the greatest number of participants was: difficulty in marrying or attaining a position of respect within communities (85%)**; this was followed by degradation of traditional educational values (83%);
- › *Interestingly, no governance-related factor received more than a 38% response rate.*
- › The **resilience factor identified by the greatest number of participants was having a religious conviction that opposes ISIS/WA (94%)**.
- › This factor was followed by **having a culture of non-violence (68%)**, which also would provide a bulwark against recruitment messages provided individuals in communities have a general understanding of the violent tactics of ISIS/WA.



VRAI PROJECT

EXPERIENCE OF A YOUNG MAN FROM ABDOURI, DIFFA

“One day, two friends from the village asked me to drop them off by the banks of the Komadougou. I told them I did not have any gas, so they paid for the gas. When I wanted to go back to the village, they ordered me to stay with them and told me they had kidnapped me on behalf of Boko Haram. I started talking to them and promised to leave my motorbike, but they told me I had to stay and join the movement. When I tried to resist, one of the young men drew a gun on me and ordered me to take my bike and follow them. We got on the road for their base in Nigeria. I could see that it was very organized, with a health center here, a garage over there, preaching areas, food supplies... basically it felt like a real guerrilla camp...”

Tillabery Key Findings

- › Unlike in Diffa and Gorom-Gorom, only one individual vulnerability factor stood out significantly in Tillabéry: easy access to financial and personal gain (90%).
- › The resilience factor identified by the greatest number of participants was inter- and intra-community dialogue (51%)
- › The majority of participants expressed general agreement that religious factors are not key factors for people joining VE (95%). Also, 99% of respondents expressed their discontent and disagreement with religious preaching for hate and violence, similar to results in Oudalan Province of Burkina Faso.
- › Local communities are confident in the ability of the security forces and authorities to face the challenge of VEOs (97.5%). However, communities are concerned about the inability of security forces to effectively resolve tensions between communities.



Tillabery, Niger: Local Authorities

› What are strategies and measures community members use to cope with the violence, to survive?

Advice/counsel to youth

Adopt resilience measures

Bring people together to discuss issues and develop decisions together...

Inter-community solidarity

Praying to God and for solidarity – keep communicating

Sensitize the community

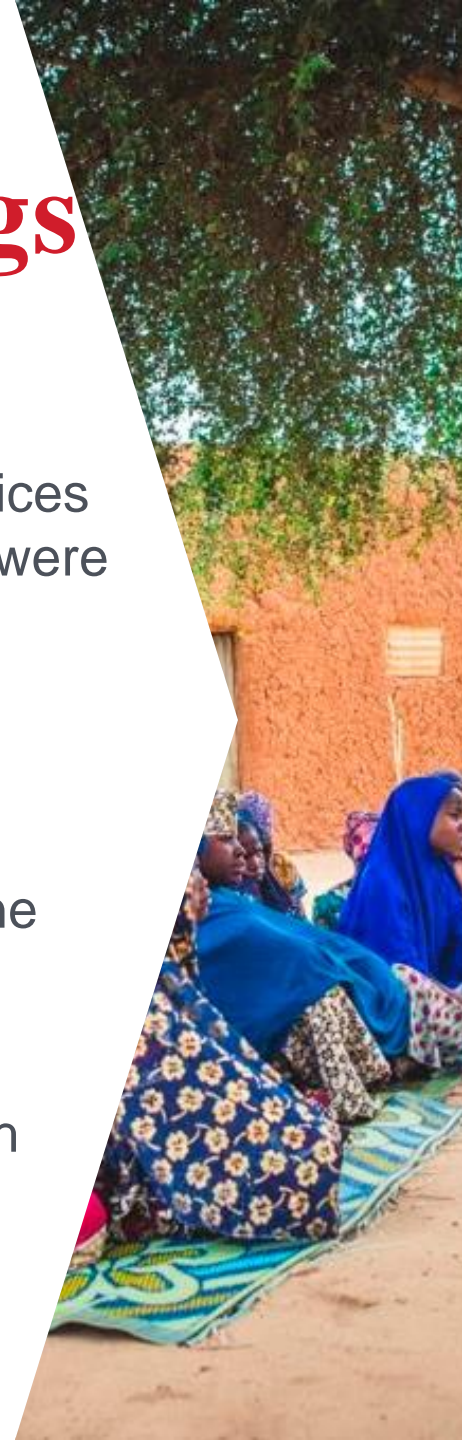
Sensitize community with relevant information, community union, denounce suspicious people...

Patriotism – we can not help others who don't want to help [their country]; good understanding [of the situation] and good education.



Burkina Faso Key Findings

- › Respondents indicated grievances, negative sentiments toward the central government that could be exploited
- › Respondents who cited either a lack of government services or ineffective services tended to come from villages that were perceived as vulnerable on the VST.
- › The individual vulnerability factor that the majority of respondents noted was “*easy access to financial and personal gain,*” which was identified by 63% of surveyed households. Local Authority responses were similar/in-line with respondents.
- › The resilience factor identified by the greatest number of participants was having a “*culture of non-violence,*” which was identified by 70% of surveyed households.



VRAI PROJECT

Key Findings: Burkina Faso Communities Speak

Grievances toward Government could be exploited:

“There are infrastructure problems in more populated areas and the issue gets worse when the only water fountain is broken. It is difficult to get it repaired in a short period of time so more installations are needed [but not available] to increase accessibility to water...”

“It must be emphasized that these terrorists take advantage that the Sahel is a marginalized area in the management of the government and the population feels the need to ‘revolt’, so they [VE] use this point in their sermons to push people to adhere to their struggle”



VRAI Project Sites

Sahel Region, Burkina Faso

Tillabery Region, Niger

Diffa Region, Niger

January 2018



Légende

- peu vulnérable
- moyennement vulnérable
- très vulnérable
- extrêmement vulnérable



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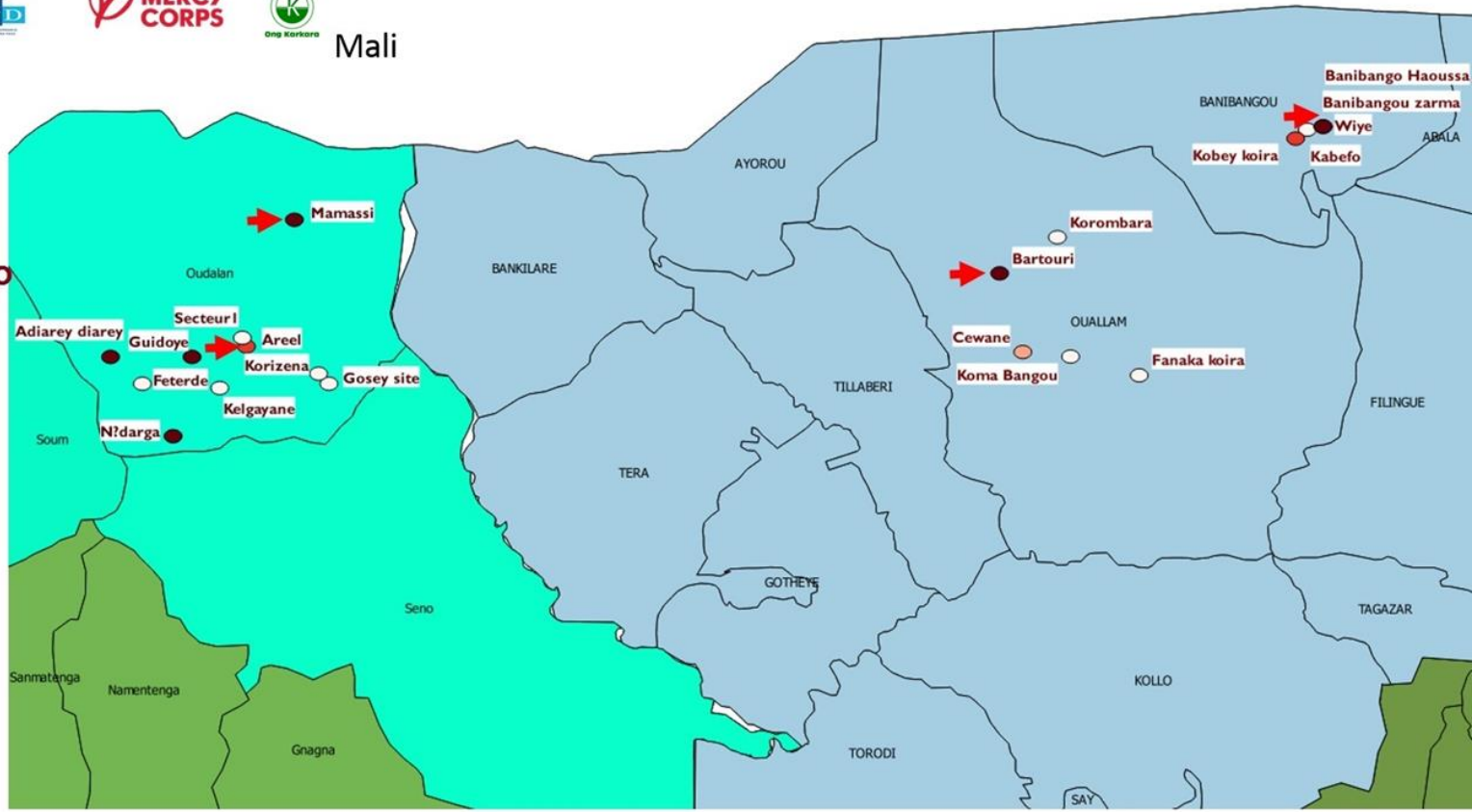


Mali

VRAI Project

Sahel, Burkina Faso and Tillabery, Niger

January 2018



- Légende**
- peu vulnérable
 - moyennement vulnérable
 - très vulnérable
 - extrêmement vulnérable
 - ➔ Attaques en 2017

Reflections on the Tools

- › Reluctance on the part of respondents to share information about the sensitive topic of VEO recruitment
- › Include a question on which VEOs are operating in the respondent's area.
- › Detailed feedback on removing/revising questions in HH survey, Focus Groups
- › The survey and focus group discussion tools asked respondents to share perceptions of drivers of VEO participation in general in their communities
- › Because the purpose of VRAI is to develop tools that are replicable and scalable, identifying and seeking current or former members of armed groups was not feasible; third-party perspectives carry specific limitations
- › Security situation in Diffa and Tillabery; availability of skilled interviewers
- › Data collection for Gorom-Gorom and Tillabéry took place using digital tablets, versus data collection in Diffa via paper



Recommendations – Programs and Tools

- › Provide alternative options for youth to earn money, enter into adulthood, and advance in society; strengthen quality of formal and informal education.
- › Expand on existing dialogue efforts between communities that appear to be making an important positive impact on community resilience to VE.
- › Strengthen relationships and social cohesion across ethnic groups.
- › Strengthen the existing culture of non-violence through community-based activities and campaigns that reinforce peaceful behavior.
- › Focus on governance-related interventions that are most salient to vulnerability to VE – access to services is not enough; participatory decision-making, feedback; increase quality and administration of justice



Responding to Challenges

- › Constantly re-assess security; security monitoring through data collection; local guidance on security; adaptive, remote management
- › Engage local expertise and knowledge: participatory process – the process is as important as the results; document the process effectively with all levels of stakeholders, including observations
- › Refine tools and re-assess criteria at each stage/each new location
- › Engage global and regional technical experts to support analysis and presentation of results, in the context of other research in the country or region
 - Leadership of local teams in partnership with global and regional experts



Tillabery Region - Discussion

› Current security situation: *VEO, Inter-ethnic Conflict, banditry...*

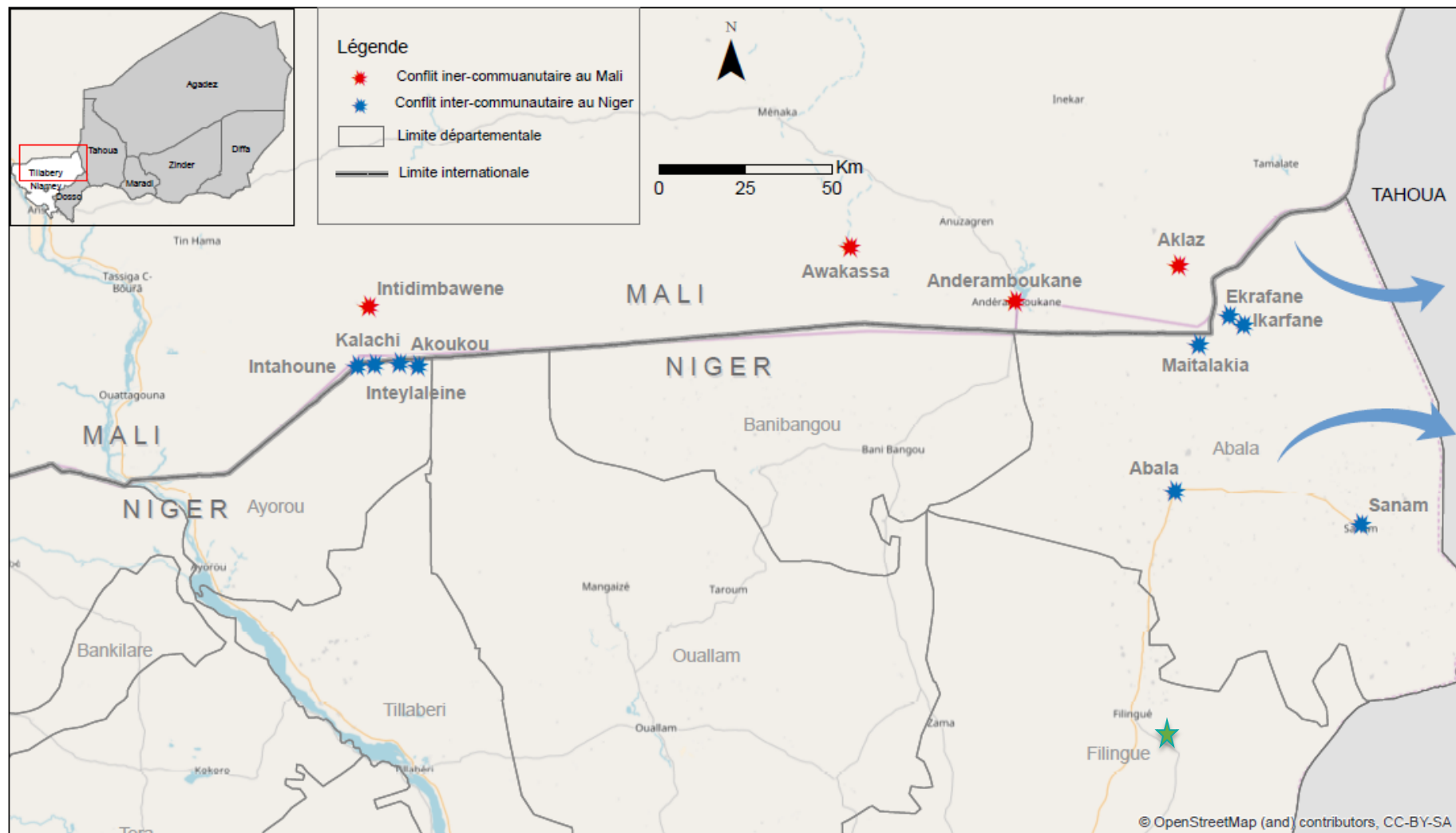
- The security situation in the northern parts of the Tillaberi region is extremely volatile, unpredictable and difficult to manage because of the nature of the conflict - non-State, VEO, armed groups; kidnappings;
- The tactical retreat of non-state armed groups to Niger whenever military operations are launched against them in Mali by Barkhane and the Malian army;
- A renewed inter-community/ethnic violence between Peulhs, Tuaregs and Arabs; a revival of banditry, including the theft of cattle and the looting of property.

› The implementation of the state of emergency measures in five departments of Tillaberi (Ouallam, Ayorou, Bankilaré, Abala and Banibangou) including, among others, curfew, banning of motos/transport, the closure of weekly markets and the dysfunction of schools and health centers, has greatly contributed to exacerbate the humanitarian situation in this area.

- ~10,000 people current internally displaced; over 57,000 Malian refugees (3 camps)
- Potential for 40,000 - 80,000 people displaced if security situation continues to decline (OCHA, protection cluster, GON)



NB: LES COORDONNEES GPS DE CERTAINES LOCALITES NE SONT PAS GARANTIES SANS ERREUR

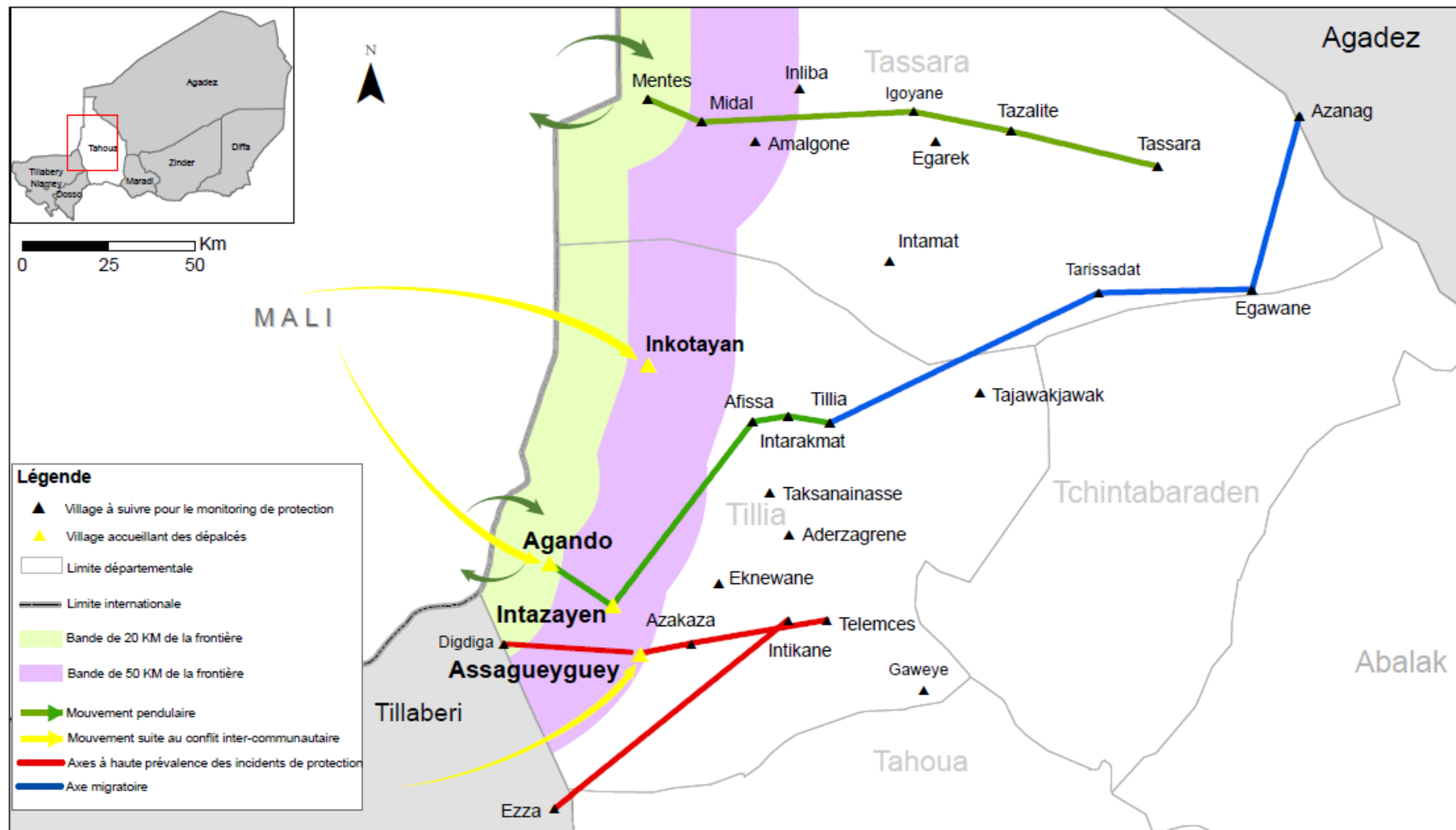


Les noms et les limites utilisés sur cette carte n'impliquent aucune acceptation ou reconnaissance du Cluster Protection.

Date de création: 4/5 2018 Source: Monitoring de protection Auteur: Cluster Protection Feedback: Valérie Svobodova, svobodov@unhcr.org Nom du fichier: NER_TILLABERI_CONFLIT_COMMUNAUTAIRE_2_MAI_2018

Pour plus d'information visitez: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/niger/protection>

A la date du 1 mai 2018



Les noms et les limites utilisés dans cette carte n'impliquent aucune acceptation ou reconnaissance du Cluster Protection.

Date de création: 2/5/2018 Source: Monitoring de protection Auteur: Cluster Protection Feedback: Valérie Svobodova, svobodov@unhcr.org Nom du fichier: NER_TAHOUA_MOUVEMENT_1_MAI_2018
 Pour plus d'information visitez: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/niger/protection>

Thank you!

A group of five women standing in a field of green plants. They are wearing colorful traditional clothing, including headscarves and patterned dresses. The background shows a vast field under a clear sky.

*Working together
Building potential
Empowering communities*



**MERCY
CORPS**

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