



Welcome to our newsletter highlighting DCAF's latest activities in the Sahel region. Dive into this edition to stay informed on our projects supporting a more accountable and effective security sector.

BURKINA FASO



Raising civil society's awareness of media use and misinformation

DCAF conducted a mission as part of the "Civic Space" project, for which it coordinates and supervises activities carried out by civil society organisations involved in countering disinformation and promoting social cohesion. During this mission, DCAF participated in two activities to ensure consistency with the programmatic objectives. The first activity, organised by the Information and Training Centre on Human Rights in Africa (CIFDHA), was held in Banfora from 11 to 13 February. It focused on the use of the media and social networks to promote the rights of women, young people, vulnerable people and victims of GBV and to promote gender equality. The second activity, organised by EduCommunik, took place in Bobo-Dioulasso from 13 to 14 February. It aimed at training local members of the Wayiyan - a movement of young activists supporting the regime - in media education. The session tackled timely issues such as critical thinking skills, the concepts and implications of false information and hate speech, and the use of verification tools to deconstruct false information.



Training of trainers in the use of the inspector's kit

From 18 to 25 February, the Higher Authority for State Control and the Fight against Corruption (ASCE-LC), in collaboration with DCAF, provided two training sessions for the Inspectorate General of the National Armed Forces (IGFAN) and the Technical Inspectorate of the Ministry of Security (ITS/MSECU). The training sessions brought together 20 inspectors and controllers from the IGFAN and 11 from the ITS/MSECU. The sessions focused on familiarising them with the inspector's kit and its user guide. The toolkit, developed with the support of DCAF, is a collection of relevant documents to conduct proper inspections, including legislation, standards and processes for preparing, conducting and reporting audits. The trainers are now responsible for disseminating the tool within their respective structures, thereby contributing to the professionalisation of inspections and eventually accountability.

MALI



Training for CNDH relays in the Sikasso region

From 12 to 14 February, the National Commission on Human Rights (CNDH), in partnership with DCAF, organised training for CNDH community relays in the Sikasso region on techniques for investigating and reporting cases of human rights violations. This activity contributed to building the capacity of the relays and partner civil society organisations to enable them to contribute actively to the implementation of the CNDH's mandate. The 25 community relays, 13 of whom are women, delved into data collection, victim and witness protection and tailoring interviews to the specific needs of their audience. In addition, issues particularly relevant in the region, such as the rights of people deprived of their liberty, conflict-related sexual violence and human rights on and around mining sites, were addressed. Thanks to the training, the relays have a better understanding of their role, the prevalent issues and the techniques for reporting and monitoring cases of human rights violations. As a result, they will support their communities in denouncing cases and reporting them to the CNDH, which is mandated to promote and protect human rights and investigate cases of violation.



Developing a protocol for dealing with cases of discrimination within the national police force

After collaborating with the National Police in the development of its gender action plan, DCAF is continuing its support during the implementation of this plan. From 18 to 21 February, the General Directorate of the National Police, in partnership with DCAF, organised a workshop to develop a guide to receiving and handling cases of discrimination, harassment and gender-based violence within the police force. Until now, although laws and regulations existed, they were not structured and articulated in a single document that guides the staff responsible for handling cases of discrimination and harassment. A working document compiling the existing information was drawn up before the workshop. Then, twenty police personnel, including eight women, from various departments of the National Police participated in the workshop to develop and formalise the mechanism for handling cases. The guide, finalised during the workshop, facilitates and professionalises the work of those responsible for dealing with cases of harassment and discrimination, to ensure that reports are handled seriously and impartially. The internal police document will thus provide better protection for the people and staff of the institution. The Ministry of Security and Civil Protection praised the document and plans to adapt it to other security institutions.



Training gendarmes in the prevention and management of GBV

The General Directorate of the National Gendarmerie, in collaboration with DCAF, organised a training session on the prevention and management of gender-based violence (GBV) from 4 to 8 February in Kayes. A total of 26 gendarmes, including seven women, from various gendarmerie units and departments in the Kayes region, delved into the types of GBV, their causes and consequences, as well as how to receive and refer victims. The training concluded with a day of exercises that enabled participants to put their new knowledge into practice. Three-quarters of the participants had never received specific training on the management and processing of GBV after their initial training. This shows the need and relevance of the activity for these men and women, who play a key role in responding to the scourge of GBV, which the complex security situation further exacerbates.

NIGER



Youth consultation as a prelude to the National Conference in Niger

On 14 February, DCAF supported the organisation of an exchange session between 140 young people, including 30 women, and ten representatives of the National Youth Council (CNJ). The CNJ is one of the youth organisations invited by the Niger authorities to the national conference from 15 to 19 February. By providing methodological support for the consultation, DCAF wanted to increase the chances of including young people's proposals in the report of the national conference. The session ensured the meaningful participation of young people, including girls and people with disabilities, to enhance the representativity of the CNJ's voice at the national conference. The participants agreed on the need to facilitate access to credit for young entrepreneurs, to create a specialised training centre for young people, to strengthen the independence and impartiality of the judiciary and to improve transparency and auditing of state expenditure. The representatives voiced these priorities to the national conference, a summary of which will be available in the coming weeks.



Training on the preparation of the UPR shadow report

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is an opportunity to assess a country's human rights record. As part of the drafting of Niger's UPR, DCAF, in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), trained 21 representatives, including seven women, from civil society organisations from 4 to 5 February. The training strengthens the involvement of civil society and the media in the drafting of the UPR and thus in the protection of human rights in Niger. In addition, the gathering of state, non-state, national and international human rights defenders enabled the creation of synergies between these actors which will strengthen the defence of human rights in Niger. The participants in the training course have begun to produce the shadow reports that will inform the UPR following the workshop.



Raising awareness among community radio presenters about the promotion and protection of human rights

In collaboration with the National Coordination of Community Radios (CN-RACOM) and the Journalists for Human Rights Network (RJDH), DCAF organised a human rights awareness-raising session for community radio presenters in the Maradi region from 28 February to 1 March. The 20 participants, three of whom were women, delved into the concept of human rights, the justice sector, access to information and journalistic ethics. Following the training, the participants committed to produce two programmes to raise awareness of human rights. Among the themes selected, some participants decided to broadcast content raising awareness of the fight against gender-based violence, while others are planning a programme presenting the complaint mechanisms in the event of human rights violations.

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