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U.S. EMBASSY DAKAR

PROGRAM RECAP

Train Bajenu Gox for early prevention of violent extremism in the border areas between Senegal and Mali

"Taagaat Bajenu Gox yi nguir sunu Karangué"

Presented by PARTNERS WEST AFRICA SENEGAL

June 2026



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I

SECTION I

Why was this program created?

The project “**Train Bajenu Gox for the early prevention of violent extremism at the borders between Senegal and Mali,**” or “*Taagaat Bajenu Gox Yi Nguir Sunu Karangué,*” is part of the contribution of the NGO Partners West Africa - Senegal to the efforts led by the Senegal government to succeed in its security-watch posture.

This posture is marked by the primacy of intelligence and dictated by the need to anticipate the threat knocking at our doors, now durably settled in our immediate neighborhood.



A particularly exposed South-East

The South-East - the **administrative regions of Tambacounda and Kédougou** - is more exposed because it borders Mali. It therefore constitutes fertile ground for recruitment or the establishment of rear bases.

It is the same issue of artisanal gold mining that draws major crime there. The security question takes on a particular resonance, as it is at once social, economic, and environmental.

Social

Community pressures and local vulnerabilities

Economic

Gold mining and major cross-border crime

Environmental

Pressure on the resources of border areas



II

SECTION II

Why the Bajenu Gox?

- Women are, generally speaking, the pillars of our societies. They play a central role that gives them access to many confidences and a keen sense for spotting small details.
- Among them, the Bajenu Gox - now a national institution - are indispensable actors in maternal and child health, and notably in combating gender-based violence (GBV).
- Moreover, a security-watch posture cannot thrive without community ownership of security efforts, which can no longer be the preserve of dedicated forces alone.



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The bridge that was found

The bridge is then clear: add a violent-extremism prevention component to the agenda of the Bajenu Gox and other women leaders.

1

Inform

Make these women aware of the existence of the threat

2

Train

Recognize certain early warning signs

3

Alert

Notify security forces without endangering themselves, via the toll-free numbers of the Police and Gendarmerie

4

Scale up

Supervise their relay activities in the field

5

Sustain

WhatsApp group and audiovisual materials in local languages



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III

SECTION III

Training methodology used

The various activities took place over varying durations in the **departments of Kédougou, Saraya, Tambacounda, and Bakel**, with Bajenu Gox, women leaders, neighborhood delegates, imams, truck drivers, motorcycle and tricycle riders, and youth, depending on the case.

The teaching followed an interactive pedagogy oriented toward learning by doing and favoring a participatory approach, in line with the principles of andragogy. Translators and educational videos produced in the national languages (Saraya, Bakel) helped account for local speech patterns and ensure smooth exchanges.



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A pedagogy rooted in lived experience

During the sessions, participants worked through role-play exercises close to their daily lives. These demonstrations, discussions, and exchanges of experiences and good practices enabled a better understanding of the themes covered.

The methodology thus combined participatory adult-training techniques with an approach adapted to the values and socio-cultural realities of the participants, who also benefited from educational videos in local languages and the use of interpreters whenever needed.



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IV

SECTION IV

What were they trained in?

- Grounding in the notions of border, crime and mobility, and violent extremism;
- Modi operandi of VEOs across different types of organizations;
- Cross-border mobility and income-generating activities;
- The local consequences of cross-border mobility;
- The possible roles of communities in preventing VE;
- The dangers of social media use;
- The financing of violent extremism through women's and youth groups.



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Skills strengthened (cont.)

- Community collaboration with the authorities for reporting;
- The drivers of, and strategies for, preventing VE;
- The qualities of a good leader: effective communication, credibility, empathy, promotion of collaboration, legitimacy, etc.;
- Precautions to observe when setting up and selecting members of security-watch and alert structures;
- The “do no harm” approach.





SECTION V

Activities carried out and statistics

Activities	No.	Locations	Headcount	Target groups
Dialogue sessions	02	Tambacounda, Kédougou	72	BG – Community leaders – CSOs
Training: leadership, communication, and “do no harm”	02	Tambacounda, Kédougou	50	BG – Women leaders
WhatsApp group creation	01	Tambacounda, Kédougou	103	Single activity for the entire South-East
Training: VEO indicators, reporting mechanisms, and P/CVE	04	Tambacounda, Kédougou, Saraya, Bakel	103	BG & women leaders – Women leaders of Guidimakha – Service heads



Field activities (cont.)

Activities	No.	Locations	Headcount	Target groups
Tea-debate sessions	06	Tambacounda, Kédougou, Saraya	141	Truck drivers and motorcycle riders
Community radio broadcasts	06	Tambacounda, Kédougou, Saraya, Koumpentoum, Bakel	—	Populations in the coverage areas of the radios used
Talks with community leaders	03	Tambacounda, Khossanto, Salémata	70	BG – Neighborhood delegates, village chiefs, security forces, etc.
Multi-stakeholder dialogue sessions	02	Kédougou, Kidira (Citizenship & Good-Neighborliness Center)	87	BG – Imams – Neighborhood delegates – Youth – Security forces
Experience-sharing session	01	Tambacounda	37	Bajenu Gox from the 07 departments



A snapshot in figures

+643

direct beneficiaries trained

103

WhatsApp group members

07

departments covered

At the end of these multifaceted field activities, the program trained more than 643 direct beneficiaries and set up a WhatsApp group of 103 members. This space consolidates the gains through close support, by periodically opening discussions around educational videos shared on a regular basis.



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SECTION VI

Program impact

The activities carried out enabled the Bajenu Gox and other beneficiaries to:

- Gain a better understanding of the concepts related to violent extremism and terrorism;
- Detect certain early warning signs or anomalies;
- Become aware of the need not to bow to social pressures to the point of pushing or helping their children embark on risky, often deadly ventures.

Observed effects (cont.)

- Show their determination to be more vigilant and cautious toward non-state funding and unsolicited promises of benefits;
- Increase the number of reports made by women, enabling earlier detection of risks and a faster response from local authorities;
- Recognize the imperative of maintaining good cooperative relationships with the security forces, becoming reliable real-time information relays without endangering themselves, thanks to the widely circulated toll-free numbers of the Police and Gendarmerie.



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A cross-border dynamic

- Lead awareness-raising activities on violent-extremism prevention themselves
- Strengthen cross-border cooperation between community leaders of Bakel and Guidimakha: this operational synergy on early warning, social cohesion, and the monitoring of VEO-related indicators improved the effectiveness of prevention efforts at the local level
- Draw attention to the strategic importance of the tri-border areas Senegal shares with its Malian, Guinean, and Mauritanian neighbors, highly coveted by terrorists seeking to turn them into lawless zones

In this regard, Partners West Africa – Senegal has, through earlier programs, conducted capacity-building sessions, multi-stakeholder dialogues (community leaders and security forces), and simulation exercises in these areas, via the Citizenship and Good-Neighborliness Centers made available by the National Army through the CNGF.



VII

SECTION VII

How to sustain and strengthen these gains?

A — Measures expected from the State of Senegal

Provide financial security to the women involved, notably by:

- releasing the payment of their allowances;
- funding micro-projects on their behalf, to ensure financial autonomy, stable income, and coverage that allows them to travel on behalf of the organization discreetly, without arousing suspicion.



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Bringing the State closer to communities

Make community policing effective

Improve relations between security forces and communities by opening up to them, for example through:

- open-house days to foster cohesion;
- neighborhood forums on current topics, held at the homes of neighborhood delegates to restore their role as relays.

Value border communities

To better resist temptation, border populations must feel Senegalese and receive the same treatment as their fellow citizens. It is necessary to:

- significantly improve the number and quality of basic socio-economic infrastructure.



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Developing and monitoring the territories

- Set up development projects that generate jobs for young people whom idleness and lack of professional qualifications expose to all kinds of risky ventures.
- Improve access to areas cut off and isolated during the rainy season, by building adequate farm-to-market roads.
- Improve GSM network coverage by closing the many dead zones, to facilitate early warning to the security forces and the authorities.

Reorganize and monitor the two-wheeler sector

Two-wheelers (bicycles and motorcycles) and tricycles are the most widely used means of transport in Tambacounda and Kédougou, where they serve multiple functions: carrying passengers, goods, and various commodities.

B — Support from Technical and Financial Partners

Technical and Financial Partners (TFPs) could fund complementary VE-prevention programs for:

- youth movements, Quranic teachers, neighborhood delegates, and village chiefs, to familiarize them with security realities and prepare them to play their role;
- security forces serving in Tambacounda and Kédougou, to build their capacity to detect signals of VEO activity, with a view to replacing skills posted outside the project area;
- instructors at the Police and Gendarmerie training schools, to prepare the introduction of modules into the curriculum of new recruits, who would thus be initiated from the outset into the reflexes the current situation demands;
- the Bajenu Gox and women leaders already trained, to carry out the action plan developed for the South-East at the close of the Bajenu Gox PVE project;
- the periodic publication, in the media and on social networks, of reflections on the prevention of violent extremism.



Thank you

for the appreciated collaboration

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Project implemented by Partners West Africa – Senegal, in collaboration with the State of Senegal, with funding from the U.S. Embassy in Senegal.



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