SECRETARY-GENERAL'S PEACEBUILDING FUND
PROJECT DOCUMENT TEMPLATE

PBF PROJECT DOCUMENT
(Length: Max. 12 pages plus cover page and annexes)

Country (ies): Niger
Project Title: Youth Action for Social Cohesion in Tillabéri (Youth ACT)   **Project Number from MPTF-O Gateway (if existing project):**

PBF project modality: **X** IRF ☐ PRF	**If funding is disbursed into a national or regional trust fund:** ☐ Country Trust Fund ☐ Regional Trust Fund **Name of Recipient Fund:**

List all direct project recipient organizations (starting with Convening Agency), followed type of organization (UN, CSO etc):   Mercy Corps, international non-governmental organization with registration in Niger   **List additional implementing partners, Governmental and non-Governmental:**   Cercle Dev, national CSO in Niger   Jeunesse-Enfance-Migration-Développement (JMED), national CSO in Niger

Expected project commencement date[1]: 01/12/2018   **Project duration in months:[2]** 18   **Geographic zones for project implementation:** Tillabéri region, Niger (Ayorou, Banibangou, Bankilaré and Tera)

Does the project fall under one of the specific PBF priority windows below: ☐ Gender promotion initiative   **X** Youth promotion initiative   ☐ Transition from UN or regional peacekeeping or special political missions   ☐ Cross-border or regional project

Total PBF approved project budget* (by recipient organization):   Tranche 1: $ 525,000   Tranche 2: $ 525,000   Tranche 3: $ 450,000   **Total: $1,500,000**   **The overall approved budget and the release of the second and any subsequent tranche are conditional and subject to PBSO's approval and subject to availability of funds in the PBF account. For payment of second and subsequent tranches the Coordinating agency needs to demonstrate expenditure/commitment of at least 75% of the previous tranche and provision of any PBF reports due in the period elapsed.*   Any other existing funding for the project (amount and source): NA   Project total budget: **$1,500,000**

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[1] Note: actual commencement date will be the date of first funds transfer.

[2] Maximum project duration for IRF projects is 18 months, for PRF projects – 36 months.

PBF 1st tranche:	PBF 2nd tranche*:	PBF 3rd tranche*:	
Cercle Dev: $ 98,114	Cercle Dev: $ 98,114	Cercle Dev: $84,098	
JMED: $ 98,114	JMED: $ 98,114	JMED: $ 84,098	
Mercy Corps: $ 328,772	Mercy Corps: $ 328,772	Mercy Corps: $ 281,804	
Total: $525,000	**Total: $525,000**	**Total: $450,000**	

Two-three sentences with a brief project description and succinct explanation of how the project is time sensitive, catalytic and risk-tolerant/ innovative: This project responds to the urgent need to address recruitment of Nigerien youth by violent extremist organizations (VEOs) on the border region of Tillabéri in Niger. Based on research carried out by Mercy Corps in Tillabéri in 2017 that piloted a tool to target communities most vulnerable to recruitment by these groups, the program will implement a package of activities to increase social cohesion between different ethnic groups and increase youth voice in governance and peacebuilding.

Summarize the in-country project consultation and endorsement process prior to submission to PBSO, including through any PBF Steering Committee where it exists: Mercy Corps established contact with communities in Tillabéri during the piloting of its VRAI village selection tool in October of 2017. We developed this proposal in partnership with our two local partners Cercle Dev and JMED through a series of meetings from February to August of 2018. Mercy Corps and both partner organizations have pre-existing connections in the target zones, and Cercle Dev has already been in contact with youth associations with an interest in participating in the program.

Project Gender Marker score: _2__ [3]
Specify % and $ of total project budget allocated to activities in direct pursuit of gender equality and women's empowerment: **_$636,510 (42%)____**

Project Risk Marker score: __0___ [4]

Select PBF Focus Area which best summarizes the focus of the project *(select ONLY one)*: _2.3____ [5]

If applicable, **UNDAF outcome(s)** to which the project contributes:

If applicable, **Sustainable Development Goal** to which the project contributes:
Goal 5: Gender Equality
Goal 16: Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies

Type of submission: **X New project** ☐**Project amendment**	**If it is a project amendment, select all changes that apply and provide a brief justification:** **Extension of duration:** ☐ Additional duration in months:

[3] **Score 3** for projects that have gender equality as a principal objective
Score 2 for projects that have gender equality as a significant objective
Score 1 for projects that contribute in some way to gender equality, but not significantly (less than 15% of budget)
[4] **Risk marker 0** = low risk to achieving outcomes
Risk marker 1 = medium risk to achieving outcomes
Risk marker 2 = high risk to achieving outcomes
[5] **PBF Focus Areas** are:
(1.1) SSR, (1.2) Rule of Law; (1.3) DDR; (1.4) Political Dialogue;
(2.1) National reconciliation; (2.2) Democratic Governance; (2.3) Conflict prevention/management;
(3.1) Employment; (3.2) Equitable access to social services
(4.1) Strengthening of essential national state capacity; (4.2) extension of state authority/local administration; (4.3) Governance of peacebuilding resources (including PBF Secretariats)

	Change of project outcome/ scope: ☐ **Change of budget allocation between outcomes or budget categories of more than 15%:** ☐ **Additional PBF budget:** ☐ Additional amount by recipient organization: USD XXXXX **Brief justification for amendment:** *Note: If this is an amendment, show any changes to the project document in RED colour or in TRACKED CHANGES, ensuring a new result framework and budget tables are included with clearly visible changes. Any parts of the document which are not affected, should remain the same. New project signatures are required.*

SIGNATURES DU PROJET :

AGENCE RECIPIENDAIRE[1]	**Représentant du gouvernement national**
Nom du représentant : CRAIG REDMOND *Signature* *Nom de l'agence :* MERCY CORPS *Date et visa :* 2018-09-25	*Nom :* Général de brigade Mahamadou Abou *Signature* *Titre :* Président HACP *Date et visa :*
Coordonnateur résident *Nom :* Bintou Djibo *Signature* *Date & visa :*	**Bureau d'appui à la consolidation de la paix (PBSO)** *Nom du représentant :* Oscar Fernández-Taranco *Signature* Sous-Secrétaire général pour l'appui à la consolidation de la paix *Date & visa :* 26 Nov 2018

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[1] Veuillez inclure un bloc de signature dans le tableau pour chaque agence bénéficiaire du projet.

I. Peacebuilding Context and Rationale for PBF support (4 pages max)

a) A brief summary of **conflict analysis findings** as they relate to this project, focusing on the driving factors of tensions/conflict that the project aims to address and an analysis of the main actors/ stakeholders that have an impact on or are impacted by the driving factors, which the project will aim to engage. This analysis must be gender- and age- sensitive.

Violent extremist organizations (VEOs) are moving into new territory in West Africa - merging, splintering and re-forming in new iterations. With them comes a deterioration of social cohesion, community harmony, and inter-community relations and dialogue. These developments present a serious threat to security and impede peacebuilding and humanitarian efforts in an already-fragile region with a growing majority of youth who are searching for their place in society but often lack education, opportunities, or a strong voice to advocate for themselves and stability. Their grievances provide VEOs with ample tools to manipulate and mobilize youth by exacerbating social and political cleavages. Bordering seven countries, including the territory of numerous VEOs, Niger is at the confluence of these broader trends. To its west is Mali, where the VEO landscape continues to evolve despite the signature of the 2015 Peace Accord, while Boko Haram has been active in Nigeria south of its border with the Diffa region since 2009. The presence of these groups is a destabilizing factor, and their activities hamper development and trade, amplify underlying community and inter-generational tensions, and feed criminal activities such as the trafficking of drugs, humans, and firearms. In Tillabéri, this project's target region, a state of emergency has been declared due to the impacts of VEO activity, and was extended in March of 2018.

The proposed **"Youth ACT" (Youth Action for Social Cohesion in Tillabéri)** program aims to implement an integrated package of peacebuilding activities in Tillabéri, targeting communities where the risk of recruitment by VEOs and the deterioration of social cohesion is particularly high. It will engage male and female youth aged 15-29 in socioeconomic and governance activities alongside community leaders and governance actors that support their social, economic and political insertion for increased peace dividends. The program responds to the findings of research carried out by Mercy Corps in the fall of 2017 through its Vulnerability and Resilience Assessment Initiative to Counter Violent Extremism (VRAI)[7] in Tillabéri region, which tested a methodology to rank villages by their vulnerability to recruitment by VEOs and offered insight into vulnerability and resilience factors related to VEO recruitment in Tillabéri. It also builds on

Conflict drivers in Niger				
Political / Governance	Economic	Ecological	Social	Security
Central government plagued by unstable relationships and tensions between the government, the opposition and civil society Poor management of natural resources and unclear laws governing ownership and use (including particularly land, water, and mineral extraction) Low level or unequal distribution of government service provision	High youth un- or under-employment Restricted cross border trade, closed markets and freedom of movement to markets impacted by insecurity	Increasingly frequent droughts, environmental degradation, and scarcity of pasture Impingement of pastoral zones by agricultural lands Demographic pressure aggravating resource availability	Dormant ethnic tensions that can be aggravated by fights over resources or influence of external actors Growing Islamic extremism and fundamentalist influences despite historic tendency towards tolerance Intergenerational inequities	Increasing influence of extremist groups from border countries causing recruitment or creation of local self-defense groups Proliferation of banditry and arms/drug trafficking following past rebellions and instability Presence of displaced persons (both internal and refugee) as a result of insecurity

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[7] More information on VRAI.

the experiences of Mercy Corps and its partners Cercle Dev and *Jeunesse-Enfance-Migration-Développement* (JMED), which have highlighted the need for programs that support socio-economic integration of youth, (re)build community relationships and increase inclusive dialogue in governance. The sections below examine each of these factors for resilience to youth participation in VEOs, offering a contextual analysis that forms the basis of Youth ACT design.

The importance of the socio-economic integration of youth in Tillabéri
Youth in Tillabéri region are faced today with a deteriorating economic outlook. As security has worsened, the government has closed markets to cut down on illicit activity, and other markets are unreachable due to attacks on the road. About 50% of Tillabéri inhabitants currently do not have adequate access to food.[8] As in the rest of the country, Tillabéri is undergoing rapid population growth in the context of growing environmental scarcity, at the same time as its economy is fueled by natural resources-dependent occupations like agriculture, pastoralism and fishing. For youth who have few resources to begin with, this translates into a lack of opportunity to develop sustainable livelihoods and fully integrate into society. Young women are particularly vulnerable: only 25% of young women in Tillabéri aged 20-24 have an occupation, against 72% of young men. Women are also more likely not to have completed any level of schooling than men (66.2% of women; 50.3% of men), and this figure is higher for women who are married (80% of women), likely a product of the high rate of early marriage and childbearing.[9]

During household surveys, the pilot of Mercy Corps' VRAI tool in Tillabéri found a clear link between the lack of economic opportunity and local perceptions of the reasons youth have for joining VEOs. "Easy access to personal and financial gain" was the highest ranked individual vulnerability factor in Tillabéri, named by 90% of the 207 participating households surveyed across 10 villages, followed by the lack of employment opportunities (29%) and the poor quality of education (27%).[10] A study on youth and peacebuilding in Niger carried out by Search for Common Ground in 2017[11] reflected similar findings during 18 focus group discussions held with youth aged 18-30 around the country. Youth in Tillabéri particularly emphasized the importance of economic factors in peace and security, explaining that involvement in the activities of violent groups can provide quick income that is unavailable elsewhere.

Since the Tuareg rebellions of the 1990s, these economic conditions have combined with the growing arms trafficking along the border region to create a "*métier des armes*"[12] – opportunities for young men to make a living as mercenaries in one of the regional conflicts or involvement in other violent or criminal activities. Beginning in 2012 with the crisis in Mali, young men have had an increasing menu of extremist groups to choose from, starting with the MNLA and later al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, the MUJAO militant movement and others. Some youth become long-term members of these groups, while others are infrequent supporters. They often benefit from their participation in the form of access to pastures, water, or arms for self-defense.[13] VEO participation also brings multiple social benefits, including a sense of belonging and life purpose, and reinforces masculine norms equating aggression with strength and honor.[14]

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[8] ACAPS Niger Crisis update
[9] Republic of Niger, 2016. Monographie de la Région de Tillabéri.
[10] Mercy Corps Niger, December 2017. "VRAI Phase III Assessment Report Tillabéry, Niger."
[11] Search for Common Ground, September 2017. "Youth Consultations on Peace and Security: Findings from Focus Group Discussions and Individual Interviews Including Hard to Reach Youth in Niger."
[12] International Crisis Group, 2018. *Frontière Niger-Mali: Mettre l'outil militaire au service d'une approche politique.*
[13] Ibid.
[14] Upcoming USAID contracted, Mercy Corps implemented research, no: AID-OAA-TO-14-00048, analyzing the drivers of participation in VEOs in the Middle East and North Africa, and criminal gangs in Latin America

The potential of the role of increased social cohesion for peacebuilding dividends

In addition to pressing socio-economic needs, the current context of Tillabéri presents the risk of a breakdown in relationships between and within different groups in the region. Resource-related disputes between farmers and herders or between different groups of herders can deepen ethnic divisions, and these disputes intermingle with VEO activity in the area. VEO group membership is largely though not exclusively aligned with ethnicity. The government's strategy for addressing the security situation has utilized alliances with groups like MSA and Gatia, dominated by Tuareg, while the Fulani are often associated to the MUJAO. Clashes between these groups have escalated, amplifying tense public dialogue about who is at fault.[15]

Despite this, traditionally and historically, numerous sources of social cohesion[16] have contributed to reducing conflict and violence in Tillabéri. Inhabitants of the region are accustomed to regular interactions across ethnicities through various economic and social activities. Many speak the language of multiple ethnic groups, and integration with communities across the border is strengthened by economic inter-dependency and familial links. Cultural practices like joking cousinry provide accepted ways of settling interpersonal disputes. As well, the form of Islam practiced across Niger historically, Malekite Islam, teaches tolerance for people of different groups and religions.[17] Results from the VRAI pilot in Tillabéri found that community members saw inter and intra-community dialogue as the top source of resilience to recruitment by VEOs (mentioned by 51% of the household survey participants), followed closely by religious conviction (46% of participants). This suggests that facilitation of relationships and interactions through traditional practices could be key to preventing youth recruitment and reducing conflict.

Youth as peacebuilders and the imperative for their voices to be heard

Peacebuilding work in Tillabéri and work to counteract VEOs will inevitably need to meet the needs of multiple groups and tackle complex issues ranging from natural resources management to local populations' protection and security. As groundwork for this, strong and inclusive governance is essential. Informed by past experience, Mercy Corps' approach to conflict prevention rests on increasing social cohesion through dialogue among community members to reach shared consensus about important issues. In Tillabéri, this dialogue takes place in numerous spaces, from village associations and local civil society organizations to village and town-level fora. With the process of decentralization, commune and regional level governance has been reinforced, although there are still major gaps in the capacity of these structures and the transparency with which they operate. The national government is often characterized as unstable and biased towards the ruling party, but numerous structures do exist to address issues of conflict, security and peacebuilding such as the *Haute authorité à la consolidation de la Paix* (HACP), the *Conseil national de dialogue politique* (CNPD), and the SDS Sahel Niger. [18]

Youth in Niger, including in Tillabéri region, often describe their frustration at their lack of voice in governance, despite the fact that those aged less than 24 years old made up 66% of the population as of the 2012 census. Youth, and women in particular, have played a role in sensitizing their communities around peacebuilding in the past, organizing campaigns using

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[15] International Crisis Group, 2018. *Frontière Niger-Mali: Mettre l'outil militaire au service d'une approche politique.*

[16] Mercy Corps describes social cohesion as: "The state of relationships within a community based on the behaviors, attitudes, levels of trust, and collaboration that promote and foster commitment to and cooperation among the overall community." Social cohesion operates through the mechanism of group members' sense of solidarity within the broader community.

[17] UNDP, November 2014. "*Analyse des facteurs de conflits au Niger.*"

[18] Ibid.

media of various sorts.[19] However, there is a lack of meaningful youth engagement and formalized youth initiatives. Nigerien society puts strong emphasis on the role of older adults in governance and conflict resolution, isolating youth from the formal and informal governance and social structures where they could make their needs and perspectives known. Female youth have even less voice, and are often preoccupied by household work and obligations that prevent their full participation in decision making and peacebuilding at the same time as they are particularly exposed to violence. Male youth, on the other hand, are often blamed for violent or criminal activities and are actively recruited by groups in the region.[20] For governance in Tillabéri to become truly inclusive, negative perceptions of youth must be corrected and youth need to have a chance for real influence over decision making in their communities.

b) A brief description of how the project aligns with/ supports **existing** Governmental and UN **strategic frameworks,** how it ensures **national ownership** and how the project complements/ builds on any other relevant interventions in this sector/area, including any lessons from previous PBF support.

Governmental frameworks and national ownership: This activity is a local extension of and links to policies and plans at the national level implemented, among others, by the HACP, the Minister of Interior - Public Security and Decentralization, the Minister of Defense and SDS-Niger Sahel. It is well-aligned to the third objective of the HACP's 2014-2018 Vision and Plan of Action, "Effectively prevent conflicts and crises" through its support for inclusive governance and reflects the approach of tackling security and development concurrently advocated in the country's Vision for Development 2035. Concretely, Youth ACT will sign MoUs with relevant agencies to align the interventions with their efforts and broker their interest in further investment in or coordination with the communities served by this project when it phases out.

United Nations Frameworks: Youth ACT will contribute to the *Peacebuilding Priority Plan for Niger*, in particular the following priority areas: 1) Addressing socio-economic needs of youth at risk at the border regions of Niger and 2) Supporting local governance institutions' capacity to build peace and promote social cohesion. Activities under Youth ACT's Outcome 1 are designed to involve youth directly in their community's socio-economic development. Under Youth ACT Outcomes 2 and 3, the program will increase the ability of community leaders and government officials to promote peace and mitigate conflict at all levels of governance.

Previous UNPBF and other local peacebuilding projects: Youth ACT will consult with UNPBF and other relevant organizations at program startup as to the benefits or disadvantages of working in geographies that have been covered by similar previous programming. It will build on past success of UNPBF projects in Niger, keeping in mind lessons learned such as working primarily at the local community level to affect changes in attitudes, behaviors, and social relationships, and will provide young men and women with sex and age-specific support. It also builds on lessons learned from the PDEV II program which incorporated radio media programming to successfully change perspectives on questions of violent extremism in Niger, Burkina Faso and Chad. The program will seek to actively coordinate with other actors and programs in Tillabéri, including the *Programme de Cohésion Communautaire au Niger* (PCCN), the Voice4Peace program and Karkara, GIZ, HACP, SDS Niger, Search for Common Ground and local nonprofit organizations.

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[19] Search for Common Ground, March 2014. "*Analyse des determinants de conflits dans les communes de Tchintabaradan et Tassara.*"
[20] UNDP, November 2014. "*Analyse des facteurs de conflits au Niger.*"

II. Project content, strategic justification and implementation strategy (4 pages max Plus Results Framework Annex)

a) A brief **description of the project content** – in a nutshell, what results is the project trying to achieve, and how does it aim to address the conflict analysis factors outlined in Section I (must be gender- and age- sensitive).

Mercy Corps Niger and partners Cercle Dev and JMED propose the 18-month, $1.5 million Youth ACT program, which will contribute to increased social cohesion and stability through youth-focused, gender-inclusive socio-economic support and inter-ethnic peacebuilding processes. Through Youth ACT, 2,500 youth aged 15-29 (1,000 young women and 1,500 young men), 300 adult men and women, 200 local leaders, 100 regional or commune level decision makers and civil society stakeholders, and 50 national level leaders (total 3,250 beneficiaries) will develop and lead interventions of direct and immediate relevance to the peacebuilding process. To do this, Youth ACT will implement activities under three main outcomes:

1) Youth across diverse ethnic groups in 30 villages increase their positive social and economic engagement in communities. Activities under this outcome will build life and leadership skills, encourage positive engagement in communities, and support the personal economic aspirations of youth, organized under two tracks: (1) Young men's and women's associations: Youth association activities will support young women and men aged 15-29 to increase their economic outlook and contribute to the socio-economic development of their communities. The program will work with pre-existing groups where possible, and create new ones where groups are not already in existence. Based on past experience, we expect pre-existing, youth-specific associations in the target zone to be predominately male. These often come in the form of traditional *fada*, which have garnered a negative image in recent years as they are sometimes associated with illicit activities. On the other hand, while women's associations are common, they tend to be dominated by older women who have time and resources to participate. To effectively reach young men, the program will seek to build the capacity of *fada* or other young men's associations. In the case of young women, it will solicit support of pre-existing women's associations while organizing new associations or sub-groups that are exclusive to the program's age group; (2) Adolescent girls' safe spaces and young men's positive masculinity groups: In the past, Mercy Corps has successfully implemented safe spaces and positive masculinity group activities with younger adolescent girls and boys in Niger to improve their confidence and psycho-social well-being at this critical point in life when transitions like marriage, completion of schooling and new livelihoods activities often begin. Youth ACT will create similar structures to provide extra support for young women and men aged 15-20 participating in the program, guided by a community mentor.

The exact mix of groups to be created or strengthened within each community will depend on initial discussions between Youth ACT partner staff and members of the Village Steering Committee (see beneficiary targeting section for more information on this committee). The program will seek to engage groups with ethnically diverse membership to increase interactions between different groups. Once formed, young men and women's associations will be provided with organizational capacity building (establishing a mission statement, managing group governance, fundraising, team work, etc.), while young women and men involved in safe spaces and positive masculinity groups will participate in activities like sessions on leadership skills, literacy training or shared recreation based on a modified/simplified version of Mercy Corps' past curriculums. While safe spaces and positive masculinity groups will benefit from a permanent mentor to lead activities, all associations will be assigned a young adult focal point (aged 30-40) who will serve as a resource for the group, participating in or leading certain

activities and playing a loose mentoring role with the guidance of program staff. Upon their formation, youth associations will be guided using Human-Centered Design (HCD) methodologies to identify their economic aspirations, and program staff will solicit ideas for activities like vocational training, small-scale entrepreneurial endeavors or savings and loan systems that could be supported by the program, based on opportunities available in the community and resulting in a set of personal and group action plans. Within their groups, all youth in this outcome will take part in a bi-weekly (gender segregated) discussion series led by Cercle Dev that introduces them to topics like gender-based violence, their rights and responsibilities as citizens, the concepts of stereotyping and discrimination, and human rights. Finally, the program will finance each association's action plan to partake in activities for the economic development of group members and small community projects.

2) Diverse male and female youth increase their voice at the community level, partnering with civil society, local and government leaders. Activities under Outcome 2 form the groundwork for the governance and voice aspects of Youth ACT's peacebuilding approach, equipping youth with the capacity to participate in and facilitate productive dialogue, particularly at the community level. Outcome 2 operates through a combination of mentoring and training for youth mediators and facilitated entry of youth in community decision-making structures. Cercle Dev will train 120 ethnically-diverse youth mediators (at least 30% young women) on the subjects of non-violent communication, mediation and negotiation. The program will also identify and train 120 mentors, seeking young adults aged 30 and older who are actively engaged in their communities. Mentors will be of the same gender as mentees. Concurrent to these training and mentorship activities, Youth ACT will work with community leaders to identify local governance structures and secure a role for youth to increase their influence in local decision-making. Outreach to community leaders will include sensitizations by program staff about the benefits of including youth in decision-making. The youth mediators/mentees will also help organize town halls where the wider youth community can express their needs, and together take part in lesson-sharing and violence prevention fora.

3) Diverse youth support actions for peacebuilding between different groups at all level of governance. As a final step, the program will support youth influence in governance, fostering their role in local consensus building and increasing their advocacy around peace planning at the commune, regional and national levels. To achieve this, 60 youth leaders (at least 20% young women) will be selected to receive a training organized by JMED and including the participation of local government, Civil Society Organization (CSO) and peacebuilding leaders on advocacy, governance and peacebuilding. The program will seek to bring woman leaders in to speak to the youth during this training, so they can share their experiences as role models for young women. Following the training, youth leaders will organize sessions within their community to create peace action plans, which will be informed by the results of a conflict mapping process carried out at the beginning of the program. Once the plans are finalized, youth will share them with commune-level government officials and international donors to advocate for their inclusion in commune-level planning. Youth leaders will also attend regional and national level learning forums to advocate for their needs and learn about governance at these levels. Finally, Outcome 3 includes peacebuilding sensitization activities involving youth from the wider community – including youth association members from Outcome 1 and mediators from Outcome 2 – to plan inter-ethnic peace campaigns and caravans that promote peace messaging through a variety of media. Niger's High Commission of Information and New Technology (HCNTIC) has been approached to collaborate on a social media component. This activity will sensitize the wider community on the benefits of collaborating across ethnicities and highlight the positive contributions of youth in their communities.

b) **Project result framework**, outlining all project results, outputs, activities with indicators of progress, baselines and targets (must be gender- and age- sensitive). Use **Annex B**; no need to provide additional narrative here.

c) Provide a **project-level** '**theory of change'** – i.e. how do you expect these interventions to lead to results and why have these interventions been selected. Specify if any of these interventions are particularly risky.

The program's Theory of Change is: **IF** diverse male and female youth from villages in Tillabéri where the VE and inter-ethnic conflict risk is elevated become more economically, socially and politically engaged **AND** platforms and mechanisms are created and/or strengthened to support inclusive peacebuilding and development processes **AND** youth and communities advocate for their interests and concerns at all levels of government, **THEN** social cohesion will improve, youth vulnerability to participation in violence and extremism will decrease, and communities will become more resilient to conflict trends in the region.

As is outlined in the conflict analysis, Tillabéri region today is faced with a range of challenges to maintaining peace and social cohesion within and across communities. Inter-group relationships are deteriorating as VEO activities multiply and conflicts over natural resources and livelihoods activities mount, while within communities inclusivity in economic, social and political matters is lacking. At the same time, forums for exchange, ranging from marketplaces to functioning governance structures, are under threat. Within this context, youth have the potential to contribute to or impede strides towards increased stability. Youth ACT bases its approach on the premise that youth who are given increased economic opportunities and feel that they have a positive role to play in their communities will be less likely to engage in violence. Working through youth as change makers, the program will support increased dialogue and a culture of nonviolence as a means to build resilience to VEO recruitment and other sources of conflict – this approach is supported by the findings of our VRAI study that communities see potential of these kinds of interactions for decreasing vulnerability to VEO and broader instability trends. By bringing youth from different communities together and engaging them in strengthening governance, encouraging positive interactions across ethnic groups, and supporting cooperation of the whole community for peacebuilding and development aims, the program will rebuild the social cohesion has traditionally maintained stability in the region.

d) **Project implementation strategy** – explain **how** the project will undertake the activities to ensure most effective and efficient achievement of results, including justification for geographic zones, criteria for beneficiary selection, timing among various activities, coherence between results and any other information on implementation approach (must be gender- and age-sensitive). No need to repeat all outputs and activities from the Result Framework.

Overall strategy and coherence between activities: Youth ACT is guided in its approach to implementation by Mercy Corps' CATALYSE framework, an eight-step mobilization methodology that helps communities identify and organize around priorities, secure resources, implement projects and influence leaders. The framework defines our implementation approach from startup through closeout: *Steps (1) Prepare to mobilize and (2) Organize together:* During the program's startup phase, Mercy Corps and partners will hold initial meetings with department and commune-level officials to explain the program and understand any concerns. Then, the VRAI village selection tool (VST) will be used to collect information on a geographic area defined with input from these authorities. The VST results will inform final targeting of villages determined to be most vulnerable to VEO recruitment, while the process will facilitate initial contact with communities. Youth ACT will also begin an iterative process of holding introductory meetings and establishing relationships with different community stakeholders, such

as local government, traditional and faith leaders, peace committees, etc. MOUs will be established with key government actors. *Steps (3) Assess needs together, (4) Prioritize needs together, and (5) Plan for action together*: Youth ACT will engage communities in participatory processes at multiple points during the program to assess and prioritize needs and plan for action. At the start of implementation, a youth and community-led community conflict mapping will engage a wide range of community members to analyze the challenges to peace in their communities. HCD methods will be used to help youth groups formulate group and individual action plans, while youth will express their needs at town halls under Outcome 2, and Outcome 3 peace plans will identify points of consensus in the wider community for action around conflict prevention. *Step (6) Act together:* Following the needs identification and planning process, the activities under each of the three outcomes will be sequenced to build upon one another over the course of the program's 18 months of implementation. Outcome 1 activities will provide a base of leadership and organizational skills among youth, Outcome 2 activities will facilitate youth's capacity and opportunity to participate in local decision-making structures; and Outcome 3 will give them a leadership role in peace advocacy and sensitization. The suite of activities will foster new social connections among youth and between youth and the wider community, and engage them in dialogue to address points of division. *Steps (7) Monitor and learn together and (8) Determine next steps together:* The program will undertake participatory monitoring at different stages to involve youth in the program implementation and solicit feedback. As the program comes to an end, closeout meetings will create space for reflection and plan for the future needs.

Justification for geographic zones: The consortium plans to implement the program in Tillabéri region, where it has experience and a base of contextual knowledge from both Mercy Corps' work under VRAI and from past and present programming. Given the deteriorating security and increased VEO activity, Tillabéri is a priority for this type of programming. The VRAI VST will additionally help to target villages that are vulnerable to VEO recruitment. During the pilot of the tool, Mercy Corps received positive feedback from authorities on the use of the tool for targeting, as it brings greater transparency to the process of village selection.

Beneficiary criteria and targeting: To manage selection of beneficiaries, a Village Steering Committee will be formed following village selection with feedback from community leaders, its members validated by the community to ensure transparency and upload principles of Do No Harm. This committee will be comprised of community leaders (including women leaders and village peace committee members), along with male and female youth volunteers (at least 60% youth, ethnically diverse). It will be responsible for selecting beneficiaries of the program and will also help organize certain community-wide events such as the conflict mapping activity. Committee members will rotate partway through the program to address issues of motivation/lack of time and allow more youth to participate. The committee will have regular contact and support from Youth ACT. To identify program beneficiaries, Youth ACT will first hold focus group meetings with male and female youth and community leaders to understand what different groups of youth exist in the community and their characteristics (level of income, education, age, ethnicity, etc.), in order to tailor an outreach approach that will be used to generate a list of potential participants. Youth ACT will provide an initial list of beneficiary criteria to the Village Steering Committee, which will elaborate on them and validate with the community (provisional criteria below). The committee will select beneficiaries based on these criteria and validate the list with Youth ACT and the community.

Pre-existing Youth Associations	Youth group individual recruits	Youth Mediators	Mediator Mentors	Youth Leaders
Official or unofficial Demonstrated motivation to participate actively Age 15-29	Demonstrative motivation for active participation Age 15-29	Demonstrated motivation for active participation Empathetic, unbiased, good communicator Age 15-29	Positive referrals Aware of and adheres to protection and sexual harassment concerns Age 30 and up Empathetic, unbiased, good communicator	Demonstrated motivation for active participation Past leadership roles Age 15-29

III.   Project management and coordination (4 pages max)

a) **Recipient organizations and implementing partners** – list direct recipient organizations and their implementing partners (international and local), specifying the Convening Organization, which will coordinate the project, and providing a brief justification for the choices, based on mandate, experience, local know-how and existing capacity.

Mercy Corps, the **direct recipient and convening organization,** is a leading humanitarian and development organization working to build secure, productive and just communities in more than 40 countries around the world. Mercy Corps has operated in Niger since 2005, implementing projects to respond to humanitarian crises, improve food security, empower adolescent girls, and increase resilience. It has almost 20 years of combined experience working in the border regions of Mali and Niger conducting highly relevant research, tackling conflict drivers of at-risk youth, promoting the role of women in governance and peacebuilding, and building resilience to food security. Mercy Corps' value-add is to ensure overall quality programming, that all levels of government and stakeholders at the national level are fully engaged and to build the capacity of the two partner organizations to effectively receive and manage a significant amount of donor funds. Mercy Corps provides national and global-level technical assistance, cross-region and country learning, and wide dissemination of the work and results of the joint partnerships to meet the outcomes.

Cercle Dev is a Nigerien organization that was started in 2014 and has piloted new approaches for community mobilization for local development. The organization's mission is to create conditions for an innovative development based on the mobilization of local resources and capacities. With a focus on youth, Cercle Dev encourages a culture of volunteerism and citizenship. It seeks to support quality education and professional training, constructive dialogue and the values of peace, nonviolence, citizenship and democracy. The organization operates across the regions of Niger with funding from a range of national and international donors, in partnership with national government and other local nonprofits. Cercle Dev has a central office in Niamey with its Executive Director and support staff, with staff operating out of Tillabéri.

JMED contributes to the socio-economic development of Niger by offering youth viable options for sustainable livelihoods, and to engender respect for human rights, particularly for youth, children and migrants. It specializes in increasing youth awareness of migration risks and facilitates public forums and advocacy with various stakeholders to discuss rights-based issues for returning migrants. JMED works at the national level with regional branches and has previously partnered with Mercy Corps Niger through the European-Commission funded AMIPA program (*Appui pour une migration informée et positif en Afrique*).

The two local partners will both work on community mobilization components, splitting their efforts by geography. These components include: community entry, targeting, capacity building of youth associations, conflict mapping, youth mediation and mentoring, peace campaigns and development of peace action plans. With its background in constructive dialogue, Cercle Dev will be primarily responsible for the discussion series with youth groups under Outcome 1 and will also lead trainings on mediation under Outcome 2. JMED will train youth leaders on advocacy under Outcome 3. Mercy Corps will lead safe spaces and positive masculinity groups, oversee the funding of youth association action plans, and generally provide oversight and backup support of implementation of all activities.

b) Project management and coordination – present the project implementation team, including positions and roles and explanation of which positions are to be funded by the project (to which percentage). Explain project coordination and oversight arrangements. Fill out project implementation readiness checklist in **Annex C**.

Mercy Corps will ensure the overall financial management and oversight of the project and will work with partners to improve their capacity throughout implementation. We conduct assessments of each partner's financial and operational systems prior to signing sub awards, in order to identify any weaknesses and tailor sub-award requirements to include extra mechanisms for oversight as needed. The Portland headquarters-based Sub-Award Compliance Officer drafts all sub-awards based on in-depth knowledge of donor regulations and Mercy Corps' experience with sub-awardees worldwide. During implementation, Mercy Corps maintains close contact with the sub-awardees and if poor management of funds are detected, steps are outlined that must be taken as corrective action. If these steps are not taken or in cases of fraud, corruption or sexual exploitation or abuse, program support is cut off and the agreement canceled.

At the Mercy Corps Niger level, the program implementation team will consist primarily of the CVE and Peacebuilding Coordinator (30%), who oversees a portfolio of peace and conflict projects, and a Peacebuilding Program Manager (50%), who will have primary authority over the budget and be responsible for day-to-day management. In Tillabéri, a Program Officer, Program Assistant, and M&E Assistant will be funded 100% by the program to carry out field activities and work with partner field staff, and an M&E Officer will be covered 50% by the program. Funds will also cover a percentage of time of other staff at the Niamey and Tillabéri levels to ensure the overall direction of Mercy Corps Niger (Country Director, Deputy Country Director), its financial administration (Finance and Compliance Director) and the management of day-to-day logistical, operational and financial administration support (for the full list of support staff, please refer to the detailed budget). The program will also cover part of the salary of a Gender Advisor (10%) and Youth Advisor (30%) at the Niamey level. Mercy Corps may hire local consultants with special knowledge in the area of social cohesion or conflict to provide support on specific projects.

Each of the partners' budgets will similarly cover a portion of the salary of their directors and support staff. Each partner will hire a Program Lead at 100%, and each will have a Program Officer and Program Assistant in the field, covered at 100%. Mercy Corps Niger staff will conduct program planning and oversight with partners in the office in Niamey on a regular basis, and collaborate in the field in the implementation of activities. The teams will meet frequently to review lessons learned and troubleshoot issues and challenges as they arise.

c) Risk management – assess the level of risk for project success (low, medium and high) and provide a list of major project specific risks and how they will be managed, including the approach to updating risks and making project adjustments. Include any Do No Harm issues and project mitigation.

Overall, the level of risk for project success is low, given the contextual knowledge and experience of Mercy Corps and its partners. Youth ACT will put in place measures to ensure that Do No Harm practices are upheld, including transparent methods of beneficiary selection and the creation of a Community Accountability Response Mechanism (CARM). During initial community entry, Youth ACT will hold assemblies to explain the use of the CARM and beneficiaries will receive information on its no-tolerance stance on sexual exploitation and abuse. As a part of its Minimum Standards for Program Management, Mercy Corps requires that each program keep a risk register and issues log. The register below is a draft that will be integrated into Youth ACT planning documents and updated quarterly by the consortium.

Risk	Prob.	Impact	Mitigation
Youth who not chosen to engage in certain program activities feel excluded, resulting in conflict or violence	Low	Moderate	The Village Steering Committee will be made up of a representative group of youth and will rotate partway through the project to allow for more to participate. This committee will be engaged to oversee the selection process in a transparent manner, with feedback from Youth ACT and participation from community leaders. Youth ACT also plans to put a CARM mechanism in place that will be available for all community members to register complaints.
Parents are unsupportive of adolescent girls' participation or they lack time to participate	Low	Moderate	Just before the process of beneficiary selection begins, Youth ACT will carry out facilitated discussions with family members of women to take part in the program, to explain the benefits of their participation to the family and respond to any concerns. We have found through past programming and research in Niger that this is an effective way of increasing participation by women and decreasing their time burden, as it can motivate household members to rearrange the distribution of household labor.[21] We will also ensure that meeting places for activities including young women are in safe locations not too far from home.
Youth from nomadic groups are unable to participate in activities year-round	Moderate	Moderate	Youth ACT sees the participation of these youth as essential given its focus on social cohesion among ethnic groups. As the calendar of movement during periods of transhumance is fairly well known, how to accommodate these populations' participation will be a topic for discussion with communities during community entry.
Increased violence and instability, either localized or more widespread	High	Medium	Acceptance of the programs and activities by communities is the primary security management strategy. We also proactively manage team security by being well-informed of security risks and adapting the strategy to context, as well as ensuring that team members are recruited from within local communities. If violence or instability does occur and cannot be contained for a period, Mercy Corps and partners will delay activities and focus on the regional and/or national levels as appropriate until on-the-ground activities can resume.
Resistance of community elders to youth engagement in decision-making	Low	Medium	Mercy Corps has conducted extensive consultations with community leaders and young people in the design of this and other programs, and will secure the buy-in of community leaders for the proposed activities upon community entry. Program activities will build acceptance and support of community leaders for youth participation and contribution to social cohesion and peace and overall community governance.
Armed actors feel threatened by the anti-violence messaging and seek to obstruct activities	Low	High	Youth ACT will engage closely with a range of political and peace-building actors to secure their support for the activities, and we will draw on these relationships as needed to secure support from armed actors for our program. We will carefully craft communication messages and engage in fully participatory activities concerning the program to focus on the positive engagement with youth around peacebuilding and will avoid antagonizing armed groups.
Protection concerns as regards the rights of young women or men participating in the program	Low	High	All community members will receive information on the existence of the CARM and Youth ACT's policy of no tolerance towards sexual exploitation and abuse. The selection criteria for adults working with youth or older youth working with younger youth as mentors or in other capacities will include a reference check and mentors will be clearly briefed on the subject during their initial training. Mercy Corps staff also are required to receive training on these topics, and Mercy Corps will sensitize partner organization staff on this subject.

d) **Monitoring and evaluation** – What will be the M&E approach for the project, including M&E expertise in the project team and main means and timing of collecting data? Include a break-down of M&E budget that the project is putting aside, including for collection of baseline and end line data for indicators and independent evaluation, and an approximate M&E timeline. Ensure at least 5-7% of the project budget is set aside for M&E activities.

Startup (Quarter 1): At the program outset, a full M&E plan will be developed/validated (log frame, indicator plan, indicator performance tracking table, beneficiary counting sheet and complaint management sheet). Youth ACT will hold an M&E kickoff meeting with partners and program teams aiming to ensure a common understanding of the M&E system, and key decision points around the baseline/endline (including approach and sampling methodology). **Initial Assessment and Data Collection (Quarter 1):** The program will collect information on initial

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[21] For more information see the report on research on the impact of facilitated household dialogue on women's mobility and time burden carried out in Niger and Nepal through the Building Resilience Through the Integration of Gender and Empowerment (BRIGE) program.

status of communities primarily through application of the VRAI VST and implementation of the baseline study. The VRAI VST consists of a set of vulnerability and resilience criteria, which a committee of community stakeholders uses to assess their home communities, resulting in a composite score that is used to rank all the villages taking part in the targeting exercise. Based on the results of this ranking, the necessity for the collection of additional data at the village level using a suite of participatory tools (quantitative and qualitative) to collect additional information and refine selection will be determined. The data collected through this process will provide an initial top-line view of key indicators around social cohesion and vulnerability to recruitment by VEOs in the villages that are eventually selected. Following this, the baseline study will be carried out to collect data on the indicators in the results framework. Certain indicators have been adapted from Mercy Corps' Social Cohesion Index, which tracks levels of trust, interactions, benefits of cooperation, tolerance with diversity/difference, collective action and social inclusion. **Ongoing monitoring and reflection (Quarters 2-5):** The Mercy Corps monitoring and evaluation team will be responsible for ongoing monitoring of program results, regular review of lessons learned and data quality assurance. Mercy Corps, with its partners, will identify and train local data collection teams (mainly male and female youth) from the communities where we work to ensure leadership of implementation is owned by young people. Output indicator data will be collected and reported on a quarterly basis, and a data quality assessment will take place midway through the program in the third quarter. Mercy Corps' TolaData database system will be used to store data and evidence collected and the implementing partners will have access to the platform. The M&E team will hold quarterly meetings to reflect on the data with Mercy Corps, its partners, and at certain points with program beneficiaries - which will allow the team to actively solicit their input into program implementation. **Endline and Final Program Evaluation (Quarter 6):** After phaseout of activities, Youth ACT will carry out the final endline indicator data collection. An external evaluator will be engaged to supplement this information with qualitative data collection and will complete a review of program documentation. Youth ACT will share the suite of VRAI participatory assessment tools with the evaluator in case it is determined to be advantageous to collect comparison data to the initial application of these tools at the beginning of the program.

e) **Project exit strategy/ sustainability** – Briefly explain the project's exit strategy to ensure that the project can be wrapped up at the end of the project duration, either through sustainability measures, agreements with other donors for follow-up funding or end of activities which do not need further support. If support from other donors is expected, explain what the project will do to try to ensure this support from the start.

The CATALYSE community mobilization methodology applied to implementation under the three program outcomes will increase the sustainability of the program from the outset by implicating community members and a range of stakeholders in the development of solutions to the problems they face in their communities. While funds for follow up activities from other donors are not anticipated at the outset, Youth ACT will seek to sign MoUs with government agencies such as the HACP and the Ministry of Youth and Sport, and to connect youth associations to support organizations such as the *Conseil National de la Jeunesse du Niger*. The program's capacity building components and their focus on advocacy will also equip youth with tools and ideas to seek out new funding for their activities. The Youth ACT program team will proactively conduct discussions with youth in their different associations and groups midway through the program about a plan for sustainability of their activities. To facilitate the end of program transition, the team will conduct closeout meetings and reflections on lessons learned with youth associations, mentors, community leaders, and among implementing partners. The timely conclusion to program activities will be ensured through regular and thorough work planning throughout implementation as well as the creation of a 90-day closeout plan.

IV.   Project budget

Please provide a brief justification for the proposed budget, highlighting any specific choices that have underpinned the budget preparation, especially for personnel, travel or other indirect project support, to demonstrate value for money for the project. Proposed budget for all projects must include funds for independent evaluation. Proposed budget for projects involving non-UN direct recipients must include funds for independent audit.

Staffing (24%): Mercy Corps plans to engage only one expatriate manager (at 30%) for this program and all other full-time positions and the majority of implementation will be done by Mercy Corps national staff or our two local Nigerien partner organizations. It is critical for Mercy Corps and part of our mission to engage individuals from the target areas, which also provides a baseline for community trust and promoting effective implementation on-the-ground. In addition, the majority of staff and partners will be based in or are already living in the areas where we are implementing, further allowing for trust and strong relationship building. Mercy Corps and partners are already staffed fully for support and offices are functional, thus making staffing and cost-sharing easy and efficient. Importantly, Mercy Corps has core program and operations/finance, M&E staff who are tasked with support and mentoring of local partners to ensure capacity is built and quality is high. Mercy Corps international staff are only budgeted for very small percentages, which will allow for effective cross program/country learning and overall oversight and monitoring.

Operational costs (8%): Mercy Corps and our partners will undertake a number of strategies to maximize value for money through the life of the program on the operational side, such as minimize equipment and assets purchases, and prioritize local procurement. The implementing team already has a number of shared assets that will contribute to the successful implementation of the project. Local procurement will be undertaken in all cases, based on a transparent and rigorous procurement process in which price is a primary consideration. In addition Mercy Corps and partners have existing programming and field offices in all of the target areas which will enable us to share costs related to operations across several projects. We use a cost allocation policy based on the number of staff supported on each project out of each office in order to fairly allocate costs across projects. Our existing systems and experience in the area also means that we can minimize startup time that might be spent on office setup. Lastly, Mercy Corps will minimize expenditures to those essential for program implementation and hold partners to the same rigorous value for money considerations. Partner expenses will be closely reviewed and subjected to the same rigor as Mercy Corps expenses and will include regular partner monitoring, support and technical assistance.

Indirect project support (7%): We have applied an indirect cost rate of 7% to the project, which is the level of support that is typical to our United Nations-funded programming. Indirect costs go to global support for Mercy Corps as an international organization, covering salaries of headquarters technical staff to advise on program implementation and ensure quality program management. It also covers a range of support functions such as the development and regular application and review of policies for risk management (for example related to corruption and sexual exploitation and abuse) and quality financial management.

Monitoring and Evaluation (5.2%): Monitoring and evaluation is an essential part of our program's success and we have therefore reserved 5.2% of the budget to go to monitoring and evaluation expenses. Monitoring and evaluation activities include the baseline, endline and external final evaluation, as well as regular and participatory monitoring. Mercy Corps' Niamey-

based Monitoring and Evaluation Manager oversees quality implementation of the program's monitoring and evaluation activities, and will review and elaborate on the full monitoring and evaluation plan. JMED and Cercle Dev monitoring and evaluation staff will furthermore be covered in part by the program. A final external financial audit has been budgeted for at $5,000, and the final program evaluation for $20,000.

Gender (42%): The program seeks to address the specific needs of male and female youth of all ages and genders. To this end, we have included safe spaces and positive masculinity groups to meet the needs of younger adolescent boys and girls, and have budgeted for and will target 40% of our youth association activities towards female youth. For youth leadership and mediation activities, we aim to reach 20% young women. Funding has also been included for curriculum development, a portion of which will be centered on ensuring our work with youth associations and youth leaders/mediators is gender-sensitive.

Partners (39%): As implementing partners with previous experience on the ground and expertise in community mobilization, Cercle Dev and JMED will receive 39% of the full project budget. This is in alignment with Mercy Corps' philosophy for our work with local partners, which seeks to build their experience in program design and implementation through their significant role in our programming. Throughout implementation, we will provide guidance and capacity building, and ensure proper management of funding.

Please note: Mercy Corps confirms that no project funds will be directed to our for-profit entity in Kyrgyzstan.

Fill out two tables in the Excel budget **Annex D**.

<u>**Annex A.1**</u>: **Project Administrative arrangements for UN Recipient Organizations**

(This section uses standard wording – please do not remove)

The UNDP MPTF Office serves as the Administrative Agent (AA) of the PBF and is responsible for the receipt of donor contributions, the transfer of funds to Recipient UN Organizations, the consolidation of narrative and financial reports and the submission of these to the PBSO and the PBF donors. As the Administrative Agent of the PBF, MPTF Office transfers funds to RUNOS on the basis of the signed Memorandum of Understanding between each RUNO and the MPTF Office.

AA Functions

On behalf of the Recipient Organizations, and in accordance with the UNDG-approved "Protocol on the Administrative Agent for Multi Donor Trust Funds and Joint Programmes, and One UN funds" (2008), the MPTF Office as the AA of the PBF will:

● Disburse funds to each of the RUNO in accordance with instructions from the PBSO. The AA will normally make each disbursement within three (3) to five (5) business days after having received instructions from the PBSO along with the relevant Submission form and Project document signed by all participants concerned;

● Consolidate the financial statements (Annual and Final), based on submissions provided to the AA by RUNOS and provide the PBF annual consolidated progress reports to the donors and the PBSO;

● Proceed with the operational and financial closure of the project in the MPTF Office system once the completion is completed by the RUNO. A project will be considered as operationally closed upon submission of a joint final narrative report. In order for the MPTF Office to financially closed a project, each RUNO must refund unspent balance of over 250 USD, indirect cost (GMS) should not exceed 7% and submission of a certified final financial statement by the recipient organizations' headquarters.);

● Disburse funds to any RUNO for any costs extension that the PBSO may decide in accordance with the PBF rules & regulations.

Accountability, transparency and reporting of the Recipient United Nations Organizations

Recipient United Nations Organizations will assume full programmatic and financial accountability for the funds disbursed to them by the Administrative Agent. Such funds will be administered by each RUNO in accordance with its own regulations, rules, directives and procedures.

Each RUNO shall establish a separate ledger account for the receipt and administration of the funds disbursed to it by the Administrative Agent from the PBF account. This separate ledger account shall be administered by each RUNO in accordance with its own regulations, rules, directives and procedures, including those relating to interest. The separate ledger account shall be subject exclusively to the internal and external auditing procedures laid down in the financial regulations, rules, directives and procedures applicable to the RUNO.

Each RUNO will provide the Administrative Agent and the PBSO (for narrative reports only) with:

Type of report	Due when	Submitted by
i-annual project progress report	15 June	ning Agency on behalf of all implementing organizations and in consultation with/ quality assurance by PBF Secretariats, where they exist

ial project progress report	15 November	ning Agency on behalf of all implementing organizations and in consultation with/ quality assurance by PBF Secretariats, where they exist
of project report covering entire project duration	hin three months from the operational project closure (it can be submitted instead of an annual report if timing coincides)	ning Agency on behalf of all implementing organizations and in consultation with/ quality assurance by PBF Secretariats, where they exist
ial strategic peacebuilding and PBF progress report (for PRF allocations only), which may contain a request for additional PBF allocation if the context requires it	1 December	Secretariat on behalf of the PBF Steering Committee, where it exists or Head of UN Country Team where it does not.

Financial reporting and timeline:

Timeline	Event
30 April	Annual reporting – Report **Q4 expenses** (Jan. to Dec. of previous year)
Certified final financial report to be provided by 30 June of the calendar year after project closure	

UNEX also opens for voluntary financial reporting for UN recipient organizations the following dates

31 July	Voluntary Q2 expenses (January to June)
31 October	Voluntary Q3 expenses (January to September)

Unspent Balance exceeding USD 250, at the closure of the project would have to been refunded and a notification sent to the MPTF Office, no later than six months (30 June) of the year following the completion of the activities.

Ownership of Equipment, Supplies and Other Property

Ownership of equipment, supplies and other property financed from the PBF shall vest in the RUNO undertaking the activities. Matters relating to the transfer of ownership by the RUNO shall be determined in accordance with its own applicable policies and procedures.

Public Disclosure

The PBSO and Administrative Agent will ensure that operations of the PBF are publicly disclosed on the PBF website (http://unpbf.org) and the Administrative Agent's website (http://mptf.undp.org).

Annex A.2: **Project Administrative arrangements for Non-UN Recipient Organizations**

(This section uses standard wording – please do not remove)

Accountability, transparency and reporting of the Recipient Non-United Nations Organization:

The Recipient Non-United Nations Organization will assume full programmatic and financial accountability for the funds disbursed to them by the Administrative Agent. Such funds will be administered by each recipient in accordance with its own regulations, rules, directives and procedures.

The Recipient Non-United Nations Organization will have full responsibility for ensuring that the Activity is implemented in accordance with the signed Project Document;

In the event of a financial review, audit or evaluation recommended by PBSO, the cost of such activity should be included in the project budget;

Ensure professional management of the Activity, including performance monitoring and reporting activities in accordance with PBSO guidelines.

Ensure compliance with the Financing Agreement and relevant applicable clauses in the Fund MOU.

Reporting:

Each Receipt will provide the Administrative Agent and the PBSO (for narrative reports only) with:

Type of report	Due when	Submitted by
...ual project progress report	15 June	...ning Agency on behalf of all implementing organizations and in consultation with/ quality assurance by PBF Secretariats, where they exist
...ual project progress report	15 November	...ning Agency on behalf of all implementing organizations and in consultation with/ quality assurance by PBF Secretariats, where they exist
...of project report covering entire project duration	...hin three months from the operational project closure (it can be submitted instead of an annual report if timing coincides)	...ning Agency on behalf of all implementing organizations and in consultation with/ quality assurance by PBF Secretariats, where they exist
...al strategic peacebuilding and PBF progress report (for PRF allocations only), which may contain a request for additional PBF allocation if the context requires it	1 December	Secretariat on behalf of the PBF Steering Committee, where it exists or Head of UN Country Team where it does not.

Financial reports and timeline:

Timeline	Event
28 February	Annual reporting – Report **Q4 expenses** (Jan. to Dec. of previous year)
30 April	Report **Q1 expenses** (January to March)
31 July	Report **Q2 expenses** (January to June)
31 October	Report **Q3 expenses** (January to September)
Certified final financial report to be provided at the quarter following the project financial closure	

Unspent Balance exceeding USD 250 at the closure of the project would have to been refunded and a notification sent to the Administrative Agent, no later than three months (31 March) of the year following the completion of the activities.

Ownership of Equipment, Supplies and Other Property

Matters relating to the transfer of ownership by the Recipient Non-UN Recipient Organization will be determined in accordance with applicable policies and procedures defined by the PBSO.

Public Disclosure

The PBSO and Administrative Agent will ensure that operations of the PBF are publicly disclosed on the PBF website (http://unpbf.org) and the Administrative Agent website (http:www.mptf.undp.org)

Final Project Audit for non-UN recipient organization projects

An independent project audit will be requested by the end of the project. The audit report needs to be attached to the final narrative project report. The cost of such activity must be included in the project budget.

Special Provisions regarding Financing of Terrorism

Consistent with UN Security Council Resolutions relating to terrorism, including UN Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001) and 1267 (1999) and related resolutions, the Participants are firmly committed to the international fight against terrorism, and in particular, against the financing of terrorism. Similarly, all Recipient Organizations recognize their obligation to comply with any applicable sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council. Each of the Recipient Organizations will use all reasonable efforts to ensure that the funds transferred to it in accordance with this agreement are not used to provide support or assistance to individuals or entities associated with terrorism as designated by any UN Security Council sanctions regime. If, during the term of this agreement, a Recipient Organization determines that there are credible allegations that funds transferred to it in accordance with this agreement have been used to provide support or assistance to individuals or entities associated with terrorism as designated by any UN Security Council sanctions regime it will as soon as it becomes aware of it inform the head of PBSO, the Administrative Agent and the donor(s) and, in consultation with the donors as appropriate, determine an appropriate response.

Non-UN recipient organization (NUNO) eligibility:

In order to be declared eligible to receive PBF funds directly, NUNOs must be assessed as technically, financially and legally sound by the PBF and its agent, the Multi Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTFO). Prior to submitting a finalized project document, it is the responsibility of each NUNO to liaise with PBSO and MPTFO and provide all the necessary documents (see below) to demonstrate that all the criteria have been fulfilled and to be declared as eligible for direct PBF funds.

The NUNO must provide (in a timely fashion, ensuring PBSO and MPTFO have sufficient time to review the package) the documentation demonstrating that the NUNO:

➢ Has previously received funding from the UN, the PBF, or any of the contributors to the PBF, in the country of project implementation
➢ Has a current valid registration as a non-profit, tax exempt organization with a social based mission in both the country where headquarter is located and in country of project implementation for the duration of the proposed grant. (**NOTE**: If registration is done on an annual basis in the country, the organization must have the current registration and obtain renewals for the duration of the project, in order to receive subsequent funding tranches)
➢ Produces an annual report that includes the proposed country for the grant
➢ Commissions audited financial statements, available for the last two years, including the auditor opinion letter. The financial statements should include the legal organization that will sign the agreement (and oversee the country of implementation, if applicable) as well as the activities of the country of implementation. (**NOTE**: If these are not available for the country of proposed project implementation, the CSO will also need to provide the latest two audit reports for a program or project based audit in country.) The letter from the auditor should also state whether the auditor firm is part of the nationally qualified audit firms.
➢ Demonstrates an annual budget in the country of proposed project implementation for the previous two calendar years, which is at least twice the annualized budget sought from PBF for the project[22]
➢ Demonstrates at least 3 years of experience in the country where grant is sought
➢ Provides a clear explanation of the CSO's legal structure, including the specific entity which will enter into the legal agreement with the MPTF-O for the PBF grant.

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[22] Annualized PBF project budget is obtained by dividing the PBF project budget by the number of project duration months and multiplying by 12.

Annex B: Project Results Framework (MUST include sex- and age disaggregated data)

Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification/ frequency of collection	Indicator milestones
Outcome 1: Youth across diverse ethnic groups in 30 villages increase their positive social and economic engagement in communities		Outcome Indicator 1 a Percentage of youth who believe the use of violence in support of a social or political cause is never justified (disaggregated by age/sex) Baseline: TBD Target: BL+10%	Baseline, Endline	BL + 10%
		Outcome Indicator 1 b Number and percentage of youth (disaggregated by sex and age) who experience positive interactions with others in the community Baseline: TBD Target: BL+20%	Baseline, Endline	BL+20%
		Outcome Indicator 1c Percentage adults who agree that youth contribute to secure and productive societies (disaggregated by sex/age) Baseline: TBD Target: BL+10%	Baseline, Endline	BL + 10%
	Output 1.1: Community entry facilitated through creation of Village Steering Committee and association/group selection and formation **List of activities under this Output:** 1. Creation of Village Selection Committee 2. Selection and creation of associations and groups by Village Steering Committee and program staff	Output Indicator 1.1.1 Number of village selection committees created Baseline: 0 Target: 30	Interim and final reports	BL+ 30
		Output Indicator 1.1.2		
		Output Indicator 1.1.3		
	Output 1.2: Youth capacity built in life skills, organizational management, citizenship, and	Output Indicator 1.2.1 Number of male and female youth actively engaged in young men's or young women's	Interim reports, endline	BL+ 2,500

	respect for diversity and human rights **List of activities under this Output:** 1. Training for youth associations focal points/mentors 2. Training of safe spaces and positive masculinity mentors 3. Training for associations on organizational capacity and leadership 4. Safe spaces and positive masculinity meetings/activities for young women/men including life and leadership skills 5. Weekly or bi-weekly discussion sessions – human rights, gender based violence, citizenship, discrimination, non-violent communication	associations (disaggregated by sex/age) Baseline: 0 Target: 1,000 young women, 1,500 young men		
		Output Indicator 1.2.2 Number of girls and boys aged 15-20 actively engaged in safe spaces and positive masculinity groups (disaggregated by sex) Baseline: 0 Target: 600 young women and 400 young men	Interim reports, endline	BL+ 1,000
		Output Indicator 1.2.3 Number of youth associations trained on organizational capacity Baseline: 0 Target: 120 associations	Interim reports, endline	BL+ 120
		Output Indicator 1.2.4 Number of safe spaces and positive masculinity groups created (disaggregated by organization type) Baseline: 0 Target: 30 safe spaces 20 positive masculinity groups	Interim reports, endline	BL+ 50
	Output 1.3: Youth across ethnic divisions participate in and promote economic and development activities in their communities	Output Indicator 1.3.1 Number of action plans created Baseline: 0 Target: 120	Interim Reports, Endline	BL+ 120
	List of activities under this Output: 1. Youth creation of personal and group action plans 2. Financial, technical and operational support for implementation of plans 3. Participatory monitoring and follow up with youth and groups	Output Indicator 1.3.2 Number of youth training or livelihoods strengthening projects carried out with financial support Baseline: 0 Target: 110	Interim Reports, Endline	BL+ 80
		Output Indicator 1.3.3 Number of community development projects carried out with financial support Baseline:0 Target:40	Interim Reports, Endline	BL+ 40

Outcome 2: Diverse male and female youth increase their influence at the community level, partnering with civil society, local and government leaders.		Outcome Indicator 2 a Percent of youth indicating that local authorities take their needs and opinions into account (disaggregated by age and sex) Baseline: TBD Target: BL+ 15%	Baseline, Endline	BL + 15%
		Outcome Indicator 2 b Percent of youth who recognize the benefits of cooperating with conflicting communities. (disaggregated by age and sex) Baseline: TBD Target: BL+15%	Baseline, Endline	BL+15%
	Output 2.1: Young people access and influence decision-making bodies and share information, resources, and tools to engage and promote systemic changes in the promotion of peace and social cohesion and equality in their communities (on the ground and virtually with HCNICT) **List of activities under this Output:** 1. Undertake participatory (VRAI) Village Selection Tool 2. Hold meetings/town halls for male and female youth to express their needs to leaders 3. Work with local leaders to identify structures to include youth 4. Youth participation in structures supported by mentors	Output Indicator 2.1.1 Number of decision-making structures with space reserved for participation of youth Baseline: 0 Target: 45	Interim and final reports	BL+ 45
		Output Indicator 2.1.2 Number of meetings/town halls for male and female youth to express their needs to leaders Baseline: 0 Target: 30	Interim and final reports	BL+ 30
		Output Indicator 2.1.3 Number of initiatives undertaken by local decision-making structures that directly respond to the development or security needs of youth Baseline: 0 Target: TBD	Interim reports	TBD
	Output 2.2: Youth leaders trained in mediation, negotiation and non-violent communication **List of activities under this Output:** 1. Identify and train 120 male and female youth in mediation and negotiation 2. Information and lesson sharing forums for youth mediators	Output Indicator 2.2.1 Number and percentage of youth leaders (disaggregated by sex and age) who report increased capacity to engage negotiation and violence prevention with local stakeholders Baseline: 0 Target: 120, 80%	Interim reports	BL+ 120, 80%
		Output Indicator 2.2.2 Number of Baseline: Target:		

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		Output Indicator 2.2.3 Baseline: Target:		
	Output 2.3: Local young adult leaders mentor youth in their efforts to promote sustained peace and dialogue between different groups in their communities	Output Indicator 2.3.1 Number of local leaders (disaggregated by sex) identified, trained and engaged with mentees Baseline: 0 Target: 120	Interim and final report	BL+120
	List of activities under this Output: 1. Identify and train mentors 2. Link youth to community mentors 3. Mentors monitor growth and development of mentees	Output Indicator 2.3.2 Number of youth mentored by local leaders (disaggregated by sex and age) Baseline: 0 Target: 120	Interim and final report	BL+ 120 (at least 30% female)
		Output Indicator 2.3.3 Baseline: Target:		
Outcome 3: Diverse youth carry out actions for peacebuilding between different groups at the commune, regional and national levels		Outcome Indicator 3 a % of youth (disaggregated by sex/age) who believe they have influence within their community Baseline: TBD Target: BL+20%	Baseline, Endline	BL + 20%
		Outcome Indicator 3 b Percent of people who believe community planning addresses peace and conflict concerns (disaggregated by sex/age) Baseline: TBD Target: BL+ 20%	Baseline, Endline	BL + 20%
		Outcome Indicator 3 c Percentage of youth leaders indicating the success of at least one advocating action (disaggregated by sex/age) Baseline: NA Target: 75%	Endline	75%
	Output 3.1 : Youth lead and participate in commune, department and regional forums (at least 12 forum/assemblies), as well as advocacy meetings at the	Output Indicator 3.1.1 Number of community meetings held to share results of youth projects Baseline: 0 Target: 30	Quarterly report	BL+ 30

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	regional and national level (at least 2 meetings), to share lessons and plans with key decision-makers and civil society stakeholders, linking with the mediation efforts at the national level.	Output Indicator 3.1.2 Number of youth receiving training and information on advocacy (disaggregated by sex/age) Baseline: 0 Target: 60	Quarterly report	BL+ 60 (at least 20% female)
	List of activities under this Output: 1. Share results of community and local association projects at community meetings 2. Youth receive training and information on advocacy from government, peacebuilding and CSO leaders to enhance social cohesion and peacebuilding work at sub-national level 3. Two youth leaders from each community/commune participate in national and regional level learning exchange and advocacy forums	Output Indicator 1.1.3 Number of decision makers and civil society stakeholders reached by lessons shared meetings Baseline:0 Target: 100	Quarterly report	BL+ 100
	Output 3.2: Youth and leaders together across communities and communes, develop community action plans that feed into the commune plans, to promote peace and tolerance	Output Indicator 3.2.1 Number of community mapping processes carried out Baseline: 0 Target: 30	Interim report, final report	BL+ 30
	List of activities under this Output: 1. Undertake youth-led conflict mapping with community members 2. Develop or enhance 30 community peace action plans and share out for integration in local planning	Output Indicator 3.2.2 Number of community action plans developed, promoted and implemented to promote peace and tolerance Baseline: 0 Target: 30	Interim report, final report	BL+ 30
	3. Link plans and youth leaders to other civil society stakeholders and organizations and private stakeholders for plan rollout 4. Monitor and continue to build capacity of youth and associations to promote action plans	Output Indicator 3.2.3 Number of commune plans fed by community action plans Baseline:0 Target:20	Interim report	BL+ 20
	Output 3.3: Youth promote messages (with support of HCNTIC) across social media,	Output Indicator 3.3.1 Number of people reached or have received peace building messages through media and	TBD depending on type of media – can be reported in	BL + 3,000

	events, radio, print, etc. on best practices on the societal issues that prevent societal cohesion and sustainable development.	events (disaggregated by type of media/events) Baseline: 0 Target: 3,000	interim/final reports	
	List of activities under this Output: 1. Support youth to plan inter-ethnic peace campaigns using a wide variety of media including technology in 30 communities 2. Support youth to implement and evaluate peace campaigns in conjunction with technical expertise from HCNTIC (ANSI)			

Annex C: Checklist of project implementation readiness

Question	Yes	No	Comment
1. Have all implementing partners been identified?	X		
2. Have TORs for key project staff been finalized and ready to advertise?	X		
3. Have project sites been identified?		X	See explanation of targeting using VRAI Village Selection Tool
4. Have local communities and government offices been consulted/ sensitized on the existence of the project?	X		Our partners have reached out to certain actors on the ground in Tillaberi, eg youth associations. We also established contact with communities during the piloting of the VRAI VST.
5. Has any preliminary analysis/ identification of lessons learned/ existing activities been done?	X		
6. Have beneficiary criteria been identified?	X		Will be elaborated on further during startup and community entry.
7. Have any agreements been made with the relevant Government counterparts relating to project implementation sites, approaches, Government contribution?	X		We are preparing an MOU with the President's Office of Information/Technology (ANSI) around the community peace sensitization/social media component; we have support and coordination with HACP. Mercy Corps, Cercle Dev, JMED all have strong ties with local/community governance bodies, as well as commune and regional structures.
8. Have clear arrangements been made on project implementing approach between project recipient organizations?	X		In addition to engaging in design processes together with our partners from the beginning

			(including discussions on management of the program and division of responsibilities), we shared the proposal document with them in French to solicit their feedback and have signed teaming agreements that clearly outline roles and responsibilities. We have signed teaming agreements with the partners that clearly outline roles and responsibilities in the program's implementation.
9. What other preparatory activities need to be undertaken before actual project implementation can begin and how long will this take?		N/A	We will need to sign sub-awards with our local partners which can take up to a month given administrative requirements. We have already begun the process of sub-awardee financial and operational evaluation to help define the terms of the sub-awards. We will also need to conduct kickoff meetings with sub-awardees

Annex D: Detailed and UNDG budgets (attached Excel sheet)