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USAID MALI

PEOPLE AT PEACE – ‘LAFIA’ PROGRAM

RESILIENCE TO CONFLICT & VIOLENT EXTREMISM

“Lafia”, meaning “People at Peace” in Bambara, is a two-year, \$1,500,000 program funded by USAID-CMM that aims to build the resilience of urban and rural communities in southern Mali to conflict and violent extremism. Through a people-to-people approach bringing together political and religious leaders and young men and women from different ethnic groups, LAFIA will increase local capacities to counter drivers of conflict and extremism through three interlinked objectives.

Under **Objective 1**, Lafia will work with rural and urban youth to reduce their susceptibility to participation in conflict and violent extremism. Lafia will support youth associations and vulnerable individuals to analyze and tackle drivers of conflict through mapping, “Sports for Change” activities and peacebuilding projects that will help youth to become meaningful participants in dispute resolution and advocacy activities under Objectives 2 and 3.

Through **Objective 2**, Lafia will bolster the capacity of political, traditional, religious and female leaders to resolve inter-group conflicts peacefully and reduce conflict drivers. Linked activities will strengthen existing dispute resolution structures, build skills in negotiation and mediation, adapt/develop Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) mechanisms, elevate the role of youth and women in conflict management, and facilitate joint violence prevention planning and action across conflict groups.

Finally, under **Objective 3**, the program will support the engagement of local communities with relevant government authorities and civil society actors in the implementation of national policies designed to prevent violent extremism and promote reconciliation.

LAFIA & USAID MALI STRATEGY

LAFIA will contribute directly to the USAID Mali Development Objective 2: Resilience and complement activities under Development Objective 1: Democratic Governance.

LAFIA PROJECT GOALS

Over the course of the project, Lafia will work to:

- Reduce youth vulnerability to conflict and violent extremism;
- Increase capacity of traditional, religious and women leaders, and government officials to resolve conflicts peacefully; and
- Actively engage local communities with relevant government officials and civil society actors in the implementation of national policies.