

Effect of Media & Communication on Political Security

Media and communication interventions under PDEV II produced a small effect on political security, improving political knowledge but with limited impact on community engagement.

Geographical region: Sub-Saharan Africa

Effect: Small effect ($g=0.05$)

Confidence in study findings: Low (1 study with 4 effect size)

Short summary

The Peace through Development II (PDEV II) program showed a small effect on political security. While radio listeners reported increased political knowledge, the intervention had limited impact on broader community engagement and civic participation. The small effect highlights modest improvements in political understanding, but longer-term or large-scale changes remain uncertain. Confidence in this cell is low due to the single study.

Long summary

The Intervention

The PDEV II program combined media and community-based activities to enhance resilience to violent extremism. Key components included radio programs designed to promote governance, tolerance, and peaceful coexistence; vocational and leadership training for youth; interfaith dialogue and capacity-building workshops for civil society; and Community Action Committees to strengthen local governance structures. These components were designed to foster knowledge, social cohesion, and political awareness within communities.

How the intervention is expected to work

The intervention is expected to improve political security by increasing political knowledge, empowering youth with leadership and vocational skills, and strengthening civil society and local governance. Radio programs expose audiences to information about governance and tolerance, encouraging reflection and dialogue. Youth programs aim to reduce vulnerability to extremist ideologies, while civic engagement initiatives create opportunities for collaboration and trust-building. Collectively, these activities are intended to enhance understanding of political processes, reduce susceptibility to extremist messaging, and promote nonviolent participation in governance.

Evidence Base

The cell consists of one medium to high confidence Impact Evaluation conducted in at-risk communities across Burkina Faso, Chad, and Niger.

Evidence findings

The PDEV II radio component produced a small positive effect on political security, specifically increasing political knowledge among listeners.

Included studies:

The cell consists of one study/IE. the detailed summary thus provided as below,

Finkel (2018) evaluates The Peace through Development II (PDEV II) program, implemented from 2011 to 2016, aimed to enhance resilience to violent extremism (VE) in at-risk communities across Burkina Faso, Chad, and Niger. It focused on four strategic objectives (SOs): empowering youth, amplifying moderate voices, strengthening civil society, and improving local governance. The program combined community activities with media efforts, notably radio, to reach wider audiences.

Under SO1, "Youth Empowered," PDEV II offered vocational training, leadership programs, and literacy support. SO2, "Moderate Voices Increased," focused on media capacity-building, public campaigns, and interfaith dialogues. SO3, "Civil Society Capacity Increased," aimed to strengthen civil society organizations through training and the formation of Community Action Committees (CACs). SO4, "Local Government Strengthened," improved the skills of local officials in public administration and governance.

The program targeted 83 zones, with core zones receiving full interventions, non-core zones focusing on radio, and no-activity zones having limited engagement. It used high and low-intensity zones to prioritize resources and activities for deeper community engagement. The evaluation of the radio component of the PDEV II program highlights that non-radio listeners to the radio programs are more interested in community affairs, while radio listeners tend to have better political knowledge. The study is rated as medium to high quality confidence.

Confidence assessment

Overall, the cell has a low confidence due to single study.

Other outcomes in this study

Social cohesion/Feeling of trust & security

Human security/Economic security

Community & state governance/Civic participation.

Violence & atrocity prevention/social norms regarding violence or atrocity