



Highlights of [GAO-08-860](#), a report to the Ranking Member, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives

Why GAO Did This Study

In fiscal year 2005, the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP) was established to eliminate terrorist safe havens in northwest Africa by strengthening countries' counterterrorism capabilities and inhibiting the spread of extremist ideology. Funds obligated for TSCTP in fiscal years 2005 through 2007 and committed for fiscal year 2008 by the Department of State (State), the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Department of Defense (DOD) have amounted to about \$353 million for activities in nine partner countries. In this report, GAO examines (1) the distribution of funds for TSCTP and the types of activities supported and (2) the program's implementation, including the extent to which it is guided by a comprehensive, integrated strategy. GAO has reported previously on the need for a strategy that includes priorities and milestones that can help agencies collaborate in combating terrorism. GAO analyzed TSCTP-related documents and conducted work in Mali, Morocco, and Mauritania.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that the Secretary of State work with the heads of other partner agencies to develop a comprehensive strategy for TSCTP. GAO also recommends that the Secretaries of State and Defense issue joint guidance regarding DOD personnel operating in TSCTP partner countries. State and USAID concurred, and DOD partially concurred, with GAO's findings and recommendations.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on [GAO-08-860](#). For more information, contact Charles Michael Johnson, Jr., at (202) 512-7331 or johnsoncm@gao.gov.

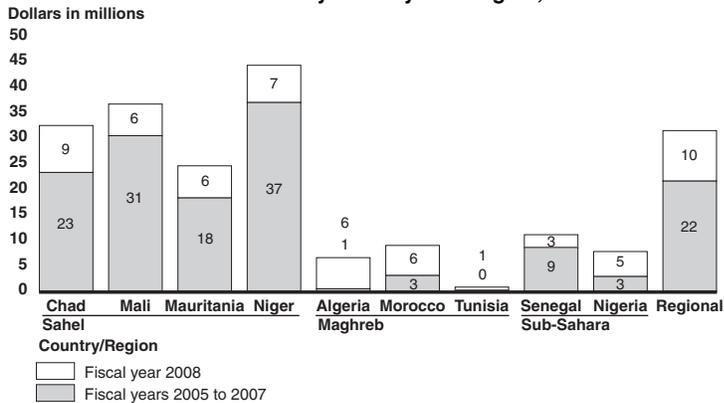
COMBATING TERRORISM

Actions Needed to Enhance Implementation of Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership

What GAO Found

In fiscal years 2005 through 2007, State, USAID, and DOD distributed about 74 percent of their obligations for TSCTP to Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger; about 3 percent to Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia; and about 8 percent to Nigeria and Senegal. The remaining 15 percent was distributed through regional assistance, such as military exercises in multiple partner countries. The agencies expected to distribute about half of total funds committed for TSCTP for fiscal year 2008 to Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger and the remainder among the other countries. State, USAID, and DOD have supported a wide range of diplomacy, development assistance, and military activities aimed at strengthening partner countries' counterterrorism capacity and inhibiting the spread of extremist ideology. For example, State—the lead agency for TSCTP—has hosted educational programs intended to marginalize violent extremists; USAID supported efforts to improve education and health; and DOD has provided counterterrorism training in marksmanship and border patrol to the militaries of partner countries.

Distribution of TSCTP Funds by Country and Region, Fiscal Years 2005-2008



Source: GAO analysis of State, USAID, and DOD data. Note: Commitments shown for 2008 are based on State, USAID, and DOD estimates as of June 2008.

Several factors have hampered the key agencies' implementation of TSCTP activities, in some cases limiting their ability to collaborate in working to combat terrorism. First, the agencies lack a comprehensive, integrated strategy for their TSCTP activities, and the documents used in planning the activities do not prioritize proposed activities or identify milestones needed to measure progress or make improvements. Second, disagreements about whether State should have authority over DOD personnel temporarily assigned to conduct TSCTP activities in partner countries have led to DOD's suspending some activities, for example, in Niger. Third, fluctuation in State's and USAID's distribution of funds for TSCTP resulted in suspension of a peace-building program in Mali. Fourth, although the agencies measure activities' outputs, such as the number of foreign military personnel trained, they do not measure their activities' outcomes in combating terrorism—for instance, any decrease in extremism in the targeted countries.