

Okay, here's the complete translation of the provided text from French to English:

****(Audio begins with indistinct music and chanting)****

****Speaker 1:**** Have you ever considered returning to the ADF?

****Speaker 2:**** No, because they only want to spill blood. And if you refuse to believe what they teach you, you are dead. I've seen them behead people. Sometimes I still have nightmares.

****Speaker 3:**** RFI - Major Report by François Balarrin. It's one of the deadliest and most mysterious armed groups in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, the ADF, an English acronym designating the Allied Democratic Forces. Founded 30 years ago by Ugandans, the group presents itself today as the branch of the Islamic State in Central Africa. Since 2021, the Ugandan army has partnered with the Bridgeway Foundation. In addition to military operations against the ADF, the foundation has set up a program of reintegration and de-radicalization for their former members. For the first time in March, the teams opened their doors to RFI. All names of the people interviewed have been changed for security reasons. In Uganda, we report on those who are trying to turn the page on the Islamic State group in Central Africa, a major report by Florence Maurice.

****Speaker 4:**** How are you? A white facade topped with barbed wire on the outskirts of Kampala. The exact location remains confidential for security reasons. Behind its walls live former members of the ADF jihadist group affiliated with the Islamic State.

****Speaker 5:**** My name is Noah Tumobaze. I am Noah Tumobaze. I run the two Al-Shifa Home centers. What does Al-Shifa mean?

****Speaker 5:**** Al-Shifa in Arabic means healing. So it's the House of Healing. It's a place where we rehabilitate former ADF/Islamic State fighters and their families.

****Speaker 5:**** And so, here is the building. The center currently hosts about fifty residents. Ugandans, Congolese, but also Tanzanians, Burundians and Rwandans. They have all recently come out of the jungle where the ADF live.

****Speaker 5:**** The military intelligence services are the ones who entrust them to us. Some have defected; others have been captured during military operations against the ADF.

****Speaker 3:**** The highest ranking members of the jihadist group are handed over to justice. The others can join this center and follow a de-radicalization program set up by the American Bridgeway Foundation. Frescoes decorate the walls, the atmosphere is peaceful, but soldiers in civilian clothes guard the entrance.

****Speaker 5:**** We also have of course extra measures. We have also installed cameras in the corridors, and we have supervisors who sleep in the rooms with them to ensure that everything

is okay. To make sure that everything is okay. The residents spend three months here. The goal at the end is to receive amnesty. Men and women live in two separate buildings. During their stay, no communication with the outside world is allowed.

****Speaker 6:**** You're dealing with people that are unpredictable anyway. We are dealing with unpredictable people who know how to handle weapons. Even if they have been deemed not dangerous, they are still part of a larger ideological group. They have links within the ADF, and we are not immune to the possibility that one of them might reveal the location of the center to the group, and that the ADF might decide to launch an attack here. We take security to be of high importance.

****Speaker 7:**** Three times a week, the residents take a course on Islam to counter the radical ideology propagated by the ADF. On the board is Sheikh Nasif. He's in charge of the de-radicalization component of the program. Facing him, about thirty former fighters listen wisely around a table. Among them, a young man with a scar on his face, which is evidence of his indoctrination. We will call him Issa.

****Speaker 8:**** We were told that if you want to go to paradise, you have to wage jihad and kill non-Muslims. They teach you to be heartless, merciless, and to kill; to consider every non-Muslim as an enemy.

****Speaker 7:**** The jihadists' strategy justifies extreme violence by relying on a reductive, distorted interpretation of the Quran, according to Sheikh Nasif, the teacher.

****Speaker 9:**** They narrow their understanding of Islam to a few ideas: if you don't wage jihad, you are not Muslim. Sharia is limited to fighting. While the Islamic concept of Sharia is much broader. It's a way of life, and so much more. But they instill their vision gradually, and someone who stays with them for four or five years becomes very indoctrinated, very indoctrinated.

****Speaker 7:**** Very few come out unscathed from the group, even when they were recruited by trickery or force. In these courses, Sheikh Nasif constantly returns to the original texts. The Sharia law that we have. Sharia also means preservation of life. Preservation of life. On the wall, two large sheets detail the alphabet and numbers in Arabic. Some were recruited very young, and many cannot read. We are utilizing the verses of the Quran. We are utilizing the same verses of the Quran that they have learned, but we are giving them the right interpretation. And most of them here do not know how to read the Quran themselves. They have only been taught to recite what they are told; they don't know the original texts. We also encourage them to read, to do research. In the ADF, they are not allowed to ask questions. There, there are trees everywhere, and you have to submit. Respect whatever they are saying.

****Speaker 7:**** After six weeks of courses, Issa testifies to his realization. for the youth. I feel very bad when I realize that I have been deceived, that I think about what we have done, having spilled the blood of innocent people. For six years, I was deceived with a false vision of what

jihad is. I was indoctrinated by an ADF leader. He had come to preach in my village, and I had decided to follow him. Now all those people.

****Speaker 7:**** Issa recognizes that he had adhered to the group's ideology, but others tend to deny it when they are arrested. Questions. To assess their degree of radicalization, each of them is asked questions. Our questions are actually... Here are our questionnaires. Here, in this file, for example, this one was completed on February 15, 2025. 2025. It comprises three parts: a journey within Islam, knowledge of religious texts, and Islamist ideology. Okay, for example, this one here. This one, for example, to the question: "Is jihad limited to fighting?" He answers, "Probably agree." Defining who is, or is not, a Muslim... Response: ADF, the members of the Islamic State. considers their faction to be the only legitimate one. The only ight. The lower the score, the more radicalized they are considered. A score of 75%. This is in the category of..., This one is in the moderate category. That one is low. Here, we have a score of 26%. This person is very, very radical.

****Speaker 7:**** The profile of the residents varies, depending on the defections and the army's operations. This month of March, the center is housing about ten particularly radicalized women. Many were wives of commanders within the ADF. They spent between two and fifteen years in the group and did not leave of their own free will. in comfort. I didn't want to leave the group. I had gotten used to life there. After six weeks in the program, Hawa, 24, still utters ambiguous words. There is a lot of difference between what I was told there and what we are taught here. It confuses me. I even explained it to the Sheikh. It's really, really different. of you. I don't quite know who I should believe.

****Speaker 7:**** It's impossible in a few weeks to erase years of life and indoctrination, but the essential thing is to open a breach, explains Bulama Bukarti, who is in charge of the program at the Bridgeway Foundation. A time goes as we expose them to. With time, as confidence is established and as we expose them to deeper interpretations of religious texts, and even to verses that they had never seen, they begin to doubt the interpretation of Sharia made by the Islamic State. And that's exactly where we want to bring them: to doubt. For the terrorist and extremist ideology relies on absolute certainties. Once they begin to doubt the righteousness of that cause, dying for it becomes much more difficult.

****Speaker 7:**** Psychological support is also central to this process. 85% of the people housed in the center have traumatic after-effects: phobias, depression, dissociation. Pskasir is a specialized therapist. She runs individual and group sessions. The difficult things are behind you. Everyone forgives you. You can confide. Surrounded by women sitting in a circle in a prayer room, she shakes a bottle of fizzy drink. It's an image that she uses to make them understand the importance of sharing their experiences, so as not to be overwhelmed by their emotions. it is difficult because. They have trouble talking because they carry the guilt and shame of the experiences and actions they participated in on the battlefield. These women have all witnessed extreme violence. Some have also been fighters. Hawa, under a shimmering green veil, spent five years in the group, recruited without knowing it, trapped by her husband. my life I can speak on it. My husband told me that we were going on vacation in a nature park.

Once in the jungle, I understood: nothing resembled the place he had promised me. After three months, Hawa's husband died in combat. A commander then forced the young woman to take up arms. During the first operation, they forced me to behead someone. I was afraid; I cried a lot. I felt that I couldn't do it. I even prayed to God to faint and be left alone, but it didn't work. One of the soldiers took the machete and said, "If you don't slit his throat, we're going to behead you." I thought of my children, and I did it. After that I was terrified and I cried a lot. They called the chief, I spoke to him on the phone and he told me that I had done exactly what I had to do. She said that she does have to do that. Elle said that she would speak on it. Afiya did say that she was a person that She's been. 17 years said.

****Speaker 7:**** Afiya, to be forgiven, she speaks of her experience without difficulty, but others resist for weeks. Apart from . Sometimes they are also afraid that if they share their experiences, it could cause them problems, lead them to prison. They are afraid of being seen as criminals. The traumatic aftermath complicates the teams' work. For someone who spends more than two years in an environment where they are confronted with crimes against humanity, at some point, in order to survive, the brain is as if anesthetized. It adapts and ends up finding things normal. If there are problems that this session has awakened, I am available to talk about them individually. When they become aware of the gap that separates them from the rest of society, the awakening is sometimes brutal. They feel less of a human. They feel dehumanized; their self-esteem is very low, and this represents a risk of recidivism.

****Speaker 7:**** In six weeks, these women will have to leave the center and reintegrate their communities. A real challenge. Some have spent 10-15 years totally cut off from society; married young, subjected to their husbands; many have stopped going to school at primary level and have never worked. These are failings that the ADF take full advantage of in order to recruit. In this center, Al-Shifa, men and women are trained through a series of workshops: sewing, mechanics, bookbinding, literacy. The goal is to arm them, to prevent them from being manipulated again. Above all, the Al-Shifa teams visit the original families of their residents, to imagine how they will be able to be reintegrated. This morning, we are leaving for eastern Uganda, in the sub-county of Maga Maga. The goal is to try to find the family of one of the residents. supervise the operation. It's overwhelming sometimes because we don't really know what we're getting into, especially when the person has disappeared for many years. We have absolutely no idea how the family will react. In two years, David has encountered all the scenarios. When you tell them that their relative has been with the ADF, are some in denial? That happens sometimes, but it's not because they don't want them, it's more out of fear. They fear that by welcoming a former ADF they could be arrested or lead other people to become radicalized. That's why we have to come and explain to them that they are no longer dangerous and that their return has been approved by the security services.

We are arriving in the village. The team hopes to find the house, but it has little information: the name of the parents, and that of a brother. That is all we have to go with. That's all we've got, and also a landmark: a large jackfruit tree. We hope we can find it.

On the spot, David and his team have a contact: Anna, a local security source. After a few minutes of discussion, she identifies the family. She says she knows where the house is, but she has reservations. The father is a radical; he's part of that network. The dad is the active at the moment. The father is currently an active recruiter. Several daughters from this family have been sent to the ADF. The team decides to stay in retreat and send Anna to test the waters first at the mother's house. Ten minutes later, she comes back with more bad news. She says she is insistent. She insisted for the husband to make first. She insists for it to move . I think that she is a little shocked. She says that she has a headache; that her tension is too high. The team hesitates to leave, then decides to attempt one last approach. Anna knows an uncle of the family; he's not radical, and to her knowledge, he could play the role of intermediary. His name is Moussa; she has him come. You stay with I as you have stated she has. Moussa, as you know, she disappeared a long time ago. During all these years, she was in the Democratic Republic of Congo within the jihadist group, the ADF, in the jungle. But by chance, thank God, she was able to be rescued. There's no outburst of emotion from Moussa; joy seems to be mixed with astonishment. I'm so glad because I thought she was dead; I had given up hope of seeing her alive again. Moussa tells them that four daughters from the family have disappeared in recent years in the same conditions. The father, suspected of complicity with the ADF, was indeed arrested and imprisoned for a year. The police interrogated him about the disappearance of but he was incapable of say where she was . So when he was released from prison, the family got together. And he says the family got together and what we did was we say she was . So she was for dead and we didn't and she's not here.

And after a lot of conversation we just said it you had the family and say what are we going to do about it ? After lengthy discussions, Moussa agrees to play the intermediary between the young girl's father and the Bridgeway team. you? A? He puts his niece on the phone. it sounds It's your uncle Moussa speaking. do you recognize this ? I recognize your face. You can't help recognize me? I recognize your voice a little, but I'm not sure. So very happy to hear good music I'm happy to know that you're alive. Before leaving, the team informs Moussa that his niece is coming back with two children. I do hope now that they won't be a pain in . I hope they're not boys because if they were born in the ADF, this is non . No, Moussa, they are girls. So not the only . It's non family I say. Well then , I don't want to family it does be a for sure.

That day, the team prefers not to reveal to Moussa that one of the girls had her right arm amputated after being wounded in combat. A month later, and after patient work to build trust, the young girl was able to find her family. The father seems to have returned to the right path, and has provided assurances. The team decides to give him a chance. But the work of reintegration continues; the former residents of the center are followed for two years after their release. Rejection, unemployment, and isolation are the main factors for recidivism. Since 2021, Noah Tumobaze, the director of the Al-Shifa Center, has learned of three former fighters who have attempted to re-offend. He remembers the first one particularly well. . He still looked at the group which had provided him... The group had offered him a kind of family, social ties, a feeling of belonging that he had not found in his community. That's why he tried to go back. The other aspect is mental health. Some people are still living with severe post-traumatic stress; they have

not really recovered from what they experienced in the bush. And that, too, can push them to return. the back to the Bush?

Three out of the