THE STATE OF SAHELIAN COUNTRIES

Social, Economic, and Environmental Realities

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This text is an English translation, with permission, of the French original, *L'état des pays du Sahel: De quelques réalités sociales, économiques et environnementales*, published by Presses universitaires de Dakar, 2025, ISBN: 978-2-494601-31-5.

Presses universitaires de Dakar

Dépôt légal: deuxième trimestre 2025

ISBN: 978-2-494601-31-5

EAN: 978 2 494601 31 5

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List of Acronyms

ACLED	Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project
ADF	Forces Démocratiques Alliées
AFD	Agence Française de Développement
AOF	Afrique Occidentale Française
APD	Aide Publique au Développement
AQMI	Al-Qaïda, au Maghreb islamique
ASS	Afrique Subsaharienne
BH	Boko Haram
BID	Banque Islamique de Développement
BMS	Banque Malienne de Solidarité
BTP	Bâtiment et Travaux Publics
CAM	Conventions d’Assistance Mutuelle
CAMES	Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l'Enseignement Supérieur
CARFI	Comité Arbitral des Recours Fiscaux
CCAP	Contrôle Citoyen de l’Action Publique
CCD	Council of Canadians with Disabilities
CEDEAO	Communauté Économique des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest
CERCAP	Centre d’Étude et de Renforcement des Capacités d’Analyse et de Plaidoyer
CESE	Conseil Économique Social et Environnemental
CFA	Communauté Financière en Afrique
CFEE	Certificat de Fin d’Étude Élémentaire
CGAP	Consultative Group to Assist the Poorest
CM1	Cours moyen 1re année
CM2	Cours moyen 2^{me} année
CNAECS	Collectif National des Associations des Ecoles Coraniques du Sénégal
CNLTP	Comité National de Lutte contre la Traite des Personnes
CNSS	Caisse Nationale de Sécurité Sociale

CODESRIA	Conseil pour le Développement de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales en Afrique
CRDI	Centre de Recherches pour le Développement International
CSTFP	Collectif des Daaras pour le Trilinguisme et la Formation Professionnelle
DAFCT	Dotation pour l’Appui au Fonctionnement des Collectivités Territoriales
DALN	Direction de l’alphabétisation et des langues nationales
DAT	Dotation pour les Appuis Techniques
DEA	Division de l'Enseignement Arabe
DGCT	Direction Générale des Collectivités Territoriales
DGECT	Dotation pour la Garantie des Emprunts des Collectivités Territoriales
DIC	Dotation pour l’Inter-collectivité
DIME	Development Impact Evaluation
DIN	Dotation d’Investissement des Collectivités Territoriales
EDB	Economic Development Board
EFA	Ecoles Publiques Franco-arabes et de la Formation
EGEF	États Généraux de l’Éducation et de la Formation
EMOP	Enquête modulaire et permanente auprès des ménages
FCFA	Franc Communauté financière en Afrique
FCV	Fragility, Conflict & Violence
FEPS	Foundation for European Progressive Studies
FICT	Fonds pour l’Investissement des Collectivités Territoriales
FMI	Fonds Monétaire International
FNACT	Fonds National d’Investissement des Collectivités Territoriales
FNAECS	Fédération Nationale des Associations d’Ecoles Coraniques du Sénégal
GCOZA	Groupe de Coordination des Zones Arides
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GFSI	l'Indice Mondial de Sécurité Alimentaire
GIE	Groupement d'Intérêt Economique
GIEC	Groupe d'Experts Intergouvernemental sur l'Évolution du Climat
GIZ	

GPE	Partenariat Mondial pour l'Education
IDH	Indice de Développement Humain
IED	Innovation environnement développement
IFAN	Institut fondamental d'Afrique noire
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
IJRESS	Internal Journal of Research in Economics and Social Sciences
IMF	International Institute for Environment and Development
INSEE	Institut National de la Statistique et des Études Économiques
INSTAT	Institut National de la Statistique
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
MUJAO	Mouvement pour l'Unité et le Jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest
NIF	Numéro d'Identification Fiscale
NTIC	Nouvelles Technologies de l'Information et de la Communication
OCDE	Organisation de Coopération et de Développement Economiques
OCHA	Bureau des Nations Unies pour la Coordination des Affaires Humanitaires
ODD	Objectifs de Développement Durable
ODHD	Observatoire du Développement Humain Durable et de Lutte contre la Pauvreté
OMD	Objectifs du Millénaire pour le Développement
ONG	Organisations Non Gouvernementales
ONU	Organisation des Nations unies
ORTN	Radiotélévision du Niger
OSC	Organisations de la Société civile
PAMOD	Projet d'Appui à la Modernisation des Daaras
PAQUEEB	Projet d'amélioration de la qualité et de l'équité de l'éducation de base
PARRER	Partenariat-Association pour le Retrait et la Réinsertion des Enfants de la Rue
PDEF	Programme de Développement de l'Education
PDSEC	Plan de Développement Économique Social et Culturel
PhD	Philosophiæ Doctor

PIB	Produit Intérieur Brut
PME	Petites et Moyennes Entreprises
PNR	Exploitation des Dossiers Passagers
PPA	Parités de Pouvoir d'Achat
PRED	Plan pour la Relance Durable du Mali
RNB	Revenu National Brut
RNDH	L'Observatoire du Développement Humain Durable et de la Lutte Contre la Pauvreté
RPCV	Renseignements Préalables Concernant les Voyageurs
SCRS	Strategic Research Center for Security
SIDA	Syndrome d'Immunodéficience Acquise
SMIG	Salaire Minimum Interprofessionnel Garanti
SNPE	Stratégie Nationale de Protection de l'Enfant
SPL	Social Protection and Labor
TICs	Technologies de l'Information et de Communication
TMM	Taux de Mortalité Maternelle
UCAD	Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar
UCM	Union Culturelle Musulmane
UEMOA	Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest-Africaine
UK	United Kingdom
UNESCO	Organisation des Nations unies pour l'Éducation, la Science et la Culture
UNICEF	Fonds des Nations Unies pour l'Enfance
USA	Les États-Unis
USAID	Agence Américaine pour le Développement International
USD	Dollar américain

SOMMARY

PRÉFACE

The Sahara has never been an impassable barrier but rather a vast, dynamic inland sea that has always invited passage from one shore to another. When insecurity linked to extremist violence first appeared in Maghreb societies, its spread south of the Sahara was to be expected. Yet analysts of the region seemed so reactive that it took the unexpected Libyan crisis and the sudden fall of Gaddafi to remember that the spatial limits imposed by certain dominant geopolitics no longer made sense when viewed from a long-term historical perspective.

The Arabic word *Al-Sâhil,* which gave its name to this geographical area, literally means "shore," referring to the other bank of the great desert. It represents that vast expanse connecting the harshness of the Saharan desert to the promises of the sub-Saharan savannas, just before the forest. Once studied for its economic, historical, and cultural dynamism as a space of knowledge and a crossroads of civilizations, this region has, for more than a decade, been described as one of crises, where insecurity, informal economies, environmental challenges, and social recompositions intertwine.

Yet, to reduce this region to its fragilities would be to misunderstand its historical depth and its potential for transformation, adaptation, and resilience.

This book ***The State of the Sahelian Countries: On Certain Social, Economic and Environmental Realities***, edited by Ahmadou Aly Mbaye, Lamine Ndiaye, and Nancy Claire Benjamin, offers an ambitious, multidimensional, yet lucid reading of these realities—refusing to simplify them to the point of distortion.

By adopting a holistic approach, the book rightly refuses to dissociate vulnerability factors—armed conflicts, weak governance, climate change—from resilience levers that, rooted in endogenous dynamics, bear witness to the capacity of Sahelian societies to reinvent themselves.

More than a simple diagnosis of entrenched determinisms, this work is a true plea to recognize, on a scientific basis, the dignity of local approaches as genuine solutions—by placing them in a long historical perspective and opening forward-looking prospects for a future that, while uncertain, remains full of possibility.

To understand the Sahel and grasp its realities requires embracing its complexity within a living dynamic, where current crises are rooted in centuries-old legacies while projecting futures yet to be explored.

The introductory chapter of this collective work, for example, shows how a traditional social contract—once the guarantor of peaceful coexistence between farmers and herders—was weakened by uprisings amplified by new conditions, new actors, and factors that facilitated the erosion of state authority and governance systems.

This vulnerability, exacerbated since 2012 by the Libyan and then Malian crises, through the proliferation of militias and transnational trafficking, as shown in Chapter Five on illicit trades, represents only one facet of a mixed and plural reality.

At the same time, Sahelian populations display remarkable resilience—often invisible to outside observers and rarely captured by macroeconomic indicators designed to shape what the Sahel "should be," according to standards sometimes unintelligible to the societies they purport to describe.

Chapter Four, based on empirical data from Mali and Niger, shows how informality and its socio-economic foundations—though fueled by conflict—remain spaces of adaptation where households and local populations reorganize their livelihoods in the face of collapsing formal structures.

This capacity to cope, rooted in a long history of ingenuity and meaningful solidarity within societies that have not surrendered to the paradigmatic triumph of methodological individualism, deserves recognition as a solution in itself—not merely as a phenomenon to be fought or eliminated.

This book offers an opportunity to rediscover, with renewed perspective, a Sahelian environment so close to us that the insights it reveals can seem almost blinding. Through its collective reflection—whose components may at first appear dispersed—it invites us to an exercise in coherence, considering the multiple facets of a reality whose diversity gives it coherence and vitality in the face of global challenges.

The book illustrates this duality through concrete examples. Chapter Seven, exploring the impact of climate change, shows how desertification increases tensions over pastoral resources, but also how rural communities, faced with the aridification of their lands, diversify their activities and pool efforts to preserve livelihoods.

Similarly, the account of Boko Haram's establishment in Diffa, detailed in a dedicated chapter, exposes the fractures—feelings of marginalization among the Budumas and Kanuris, absence of public services—that facilitated the rise of the group that has bloodied the Lake Chad basin.

Yet, focus groups conducted in 2017 to document this process reveal a local aspiration for social justice and equitable state presence—proposals emerging from the populations themselves.

These examples highlight a crucial point: resilience mechanisms are not mere passive or resigned reactions but active strategies rooted in knowledge and practices that Sahelian history has forged and refined over the centuries.

Restoring dignity to endogenous approaches means recognizing that they are not mere stopgap measures but legitimate and powerful responses to contemporary challenges.

Chapter Ten, on decentralization, offers an eloquent illustration: despite limited resource transfers—only 30% in Mali after two decades—the authors see in this process an opportunity to respond to the frustrations of marginalized groups, such as the Fulani or Tuareg, by strengthening local governance grounded in the realities of the field.

This idea resonates with traditions of community regulation that, long before modern states, made it possible to manage conflicts and resources in the Sahel.

By valuing these dynamics, the book proposes to move beyond exogenous approaches—often ineffective, as illustrated by employment programs analyzed by Berman, Felter, and Shapiro, whose impact on reducing insecurity remains limited—and instead to rely on what Sahelian societies do best: adapt, cooperate, and, when necessary, renovate rather than merely innovate.

This perspective, the guiding thread of such interdisciplinary work, is not only retrospective but resolutely forward-looking. By placing local actors at the heart of the analysis, the book invites a fundamental rethinking of public policies and international partnerships.

It envisions a Sahel where decentralization, fully endowed with resources and capacity, becomes a tool of reconciliation and development, as suggested in Chapter Ten. It imagines a Sahelian region where traditional trade networks—disrupted and distorted by conflict—recover their legitimate roles through participatory regulation.

Or, with lucid optimism, it envisions a future where interethnic solidarities—like those between Fulani and Kanuri cheese producers in Diffa—become models of economic and social integration through the renewed valorization of the ties that for centuries guided the exchange of goods and ideas.

These visions, though largely optimistic, are not utopian; they are grounded in existing realities—on a resilience that, when strengthened and recognized, can transform the Sahel into a symbol of renewal, far from deterministic prophecies of collapse, especially when compared over time to other regions of the world.

The book ***The State of the Sahelian Countries*** reminds us that to understand this region, one must first have the scientific courage to delve into its history—as a crossroads of civilizations and a crucible of knowledge before it became a battlefield coveted by all—while also daring to pose legitimate questions about its future.

Even if today's crises seem structural and undeniable to some, they must never obscure the driving forces that have enabled the Sahel to endure through ages and eras, through historical contingencies that have shaped its destiny without imprisoning it in a monolithic frame outside the course of history.

As deep as these crises may appear, they should sometimes be seen as the beginning of another story—not necessarily the end of History—if we are to resist the defeatism that paralyzes our ability to rethink the Sahel from within and in relation to the modern world.

By restoring full dignity to endogenous strategies and strengthening resilience mechanisms, this work offers a dynamic and thought-provoking framework—free from naïve optimism and destructive pessimism alike.

Scientific inquiry, even when doubtful, has always been the driving force and raison d'être of knowledge itself.

Beyond documenting a complex reality, this collective work by eminent researchers and practitioners is, above all, an invitation to scholars, policymakers, and citizens to co-construct a future in which the Sahel is not a space to be "saved" by externally imposed paradigms, but a region that asserts itself as the architect of its own destiny—drawing from its roots and inner resources a modernity that reflects its own character and opens it further to the world, even to its adverse winds.

Ultimately, the merit of such a work lies in its scientific rigor while feeding and enriching advocacy for an unprejudiced re-examination of the dynamics and complexities of a Sahel in the making.

May its reading by policymakers and decision-makers inspire a new, salutary dynamic—one that initiates the necessary breaking down of barriers between the world of knowledge production and that of decision-making, which, in the end, cannot do without the light of science without risking serious missteps.

Dr. Bakary Sambe
Director, Timbuktu Institute –
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Chapter I : INTRODUCTION

Ahmadou Aly Mbaye, Lamine Ndiaye, and Nancy Claire Benjamin

In the recent history of the African continent, conflicts have been the main cause of the deterioration of living conditions for its populations. In the specific case of Sahelian countries, two major facts deserve particular attention:

- The subregion has experienced a significant increase in violent conflicts since 2012;
- Most of the economy in these countries is informal.

This book examines the complex interactions between informality and conflict in the Sahel. It asks two fundamental questions:

1. How have the economic and social performances of Sahelian countries been affected by the insecure environments in which they operate?
2. How does the predominance of informality in productive activity and employment affect strategies designed to mitigate conflicts?

In the Sahel, a social contract based on well-established customs—one that had long allowed for the peaceful coexistence of communities with often divergent economic interests (for example, farmers and herders)—has been severely tested by uprisings sponsored by international networks of violent militias, made even more dangerous by access to new information and communication technologies (ICTs).

What appears to have changed in the Sahel, beyond the advent of ICTs and the proliferation of militias, is the management of public goods such as security and education systems—issues arising from the absence of state authority across virtually the entire Sahara Desert.

Over the past decade, a vast area dotted with small villages engaged in livestock rearing, agriculture, and legitimate trade—where local authorities, often rooted in longstanding traditions, had maintained social order—has been almost entirely overrun by international networks trafficking in drugs and weapons of all kinds.

As drug routes in northern and eastern Latin America were progressively dismantled, largely due to strong U.S. involvement, the Sahel—facing major governance challenges—seemed to offer an attractive alternative to international criminal networks.

The Libyan civil war of 2011 facilitated the infiltration into the Sahel of former African mercenaries returning from Libya, aided by militias based in North Africa and Nigeria.

"...a toxic cocktail of armed groups—insurgent movements, ethnic militias, criminal gangs, smugglers and traffickers, even violent extremists—compete for control. The dividing lines between these actors are not always clear: membership in these organizations can be fluid and overlapping, and alliances of convenience are made and broken according to immediate interests, personalities, and the broader political context." *(Cooke & Sanderson, Militancy and the Arc of Instability, SCRS, 2016)*

The operational methods of these militias have always relied on open predation and on challenging traditional local authorities.

Various programs, sponsored by international donors, have sought to reduce the incentives for populations—especially youth—to join rebellions by offering alternative employment and livelihood opportunities. While some have succeeded in creating jobs, the expected impact on reducing participation in militia activities has not been observed.

Berman, Felter, and Shapiro (2018) discuss the nature and scope of such programs, highlighting several reasons why their results have been disappointing in many parts of the world. Two factors, in particular, deserve mention: the international nature of the militia labor market, which offers greater opportunities than local economies, and the disproportionate damage that can be caused by a very small number of militants (the high number of victims from the small group responsible for the 2019 Easter attacks in Sri Lanka is one example).

More recently, several initiatives have been launched in the Sahel to improve governance, security, the business environment, and adaptation to climate change. All emphasize the need to enhance the quality and reach of governance.

A major aspect of the governance deficit in the Sahel is the weakness of state institutions in addressing the frustrations of key socio-professional groups at the heart of the rebellion—herders, Fulani, Tuareg, and others. For instance, Serge Michailof emphasizes governance challenges in the Sahel and outlines several approaches to address them.

About the Book

This book consists of twelve chapters, each covering an important aspect of the complex interrelations between armed conflict, the economic performance of states, and the predominance of informality in people's livelihoods.

Although each chapter addresses a distinct topic, together they present different facets of the ongoing security crisis in the Sahel and the ways these crises interact with people's livelihoods and the informal sector—which remains the main economic sphere for most households.

This book complements Mbaye et al. (2025), which focuses exclusively on the informal sector in Mali. That study uses an innovative firm-and employment-level analytical approach to identify the various components of this heterogeneous sector, the interactions among them, their relations with the formal sector, and the operating patterns of its actors. It also examines the factors explaining the persistence of informality, including a poor business environment and the state's limited ability to enforce its own economic rules.

One of the key conclusions from Mbaye et al. (2025) is that, while the informal sector in conflict-affected countries resembles that of other developing countries in some respects, it differs profoundly in others. In particular, the scale of criminal informal activities in conflict-affected countries far exceeds that observed elsewhere.

Moreover, political conflicts in some Sahelian countries have decisively reinforced the dominance of the informal sector—both in GDP formation and employment—far beyond what is seen in more stable countries.

This volume provides a broader overview of the Sahelian countries, offering a comprehensive perspective that encompasses livelihoods, governance, education systems, and more—enabling comparisons between conflict-affected countries and others with similar physical and socio-economic characteristics.

While **Mbaye et al. (2025) is** more descriptive, presenting multiple aspects of the informal sector in a conflict environment based on Mali data, the present volume explores potential policy solutions to these crises by addressing their most immediate determinants: decentralization of public affairs, climate change, low financial inclusion, dual education systems, and widespread household precarity.

The chapters in this volume come from different authors, each providing a detailed examination of specific countries, their relation to conflict, and how improvements in each area might help address the multiple conflict-related challenges affecting population well-being and livelihoods.

Structure of the Book

- **Chapter 2** presents the general economic and social implications of conflict. It proposes a typology of its effects on individual and social welfare, including fiscal revenue losses, declines in mining in favor of artisanal gold mining, production losses in agriculture and tourism, population displacements, and damage to education, as well as the looting of cultural and natural heritage.
- **Chapter 3** analyzes poverty in Sahelian countries using national and international databases, satellite data, and machine learning/deep learning algorithms to evaluate household welfare across various comparative poverty measures. Across all metrics, conflict-affected countries—particularly Mali and Niger—face greater challenges, confirming the strong link between poverty and conflict.
- **Chapter 4** examines the interrelations between the informal sector and conflict using field data from Niger and Mali. The findings confirm those of the "twin" volume *Mbaye et al. (2025a)*: informality is heterogeneous, affects and is affected by the business environment, interacts with the formal sector in competitive or complementary ways, and tends to be less productive—thereby reducing growth potential. Informality both grows with conflict and increases the incentives for vulnerable groups to join jihadist movements.
- **Chapter 5** extends the previous analysis by focusing on the impact of conflict on cross-border trade. It shows how regional trade composition has shifted, with illicit trade (arms, drugs, human trafficking) increasingly displacing the once-dominant legitimate trade in goods.

- **Chapter 6** examines financial inclusion as a means to improve the productivity of the informal sector under conflict conditions in the Sahel.
- **Chapter 7** evaluates the impact of climate change on conflict, showing that climate stress—combined with governance deficits—acts as a catalyst for conflict by depleting rural livelihoods.
- **Chapter 8** studies the relationship between conflict and migration, emphasizing how violence drives internal displacement. Rural-to-urban migration, in particular, is a major driver of labor market informalization in the developing world.
- **Chapter 9** analyzes the duality of education systems in the Sahel and its implications for the emergence and development of jihadist movements.
- **Chapter 10** focuses on conflict and administrative decentralization, emphasizing that decentralization can be an effective response to several conflict-driven challenges. It argues that, beyond boosting informal-sector productivity, Sahelian governments must restore citizens' trust in the state—trust that, when lost due to poor public service delivery, facilitates extremist recruitment. A well-designed decentralization policy can help rebuild that trust.
- **Chapter 11** draws on focus group findings to explain the emergence of Boko Haram in Niger and how governance weaknesses contributed to its rise.
- **Chapter 12 (Conclusion)** advocates for containing the ongoing violence in the Sahel and discusses practical strategies for achieving that goal.

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PART ONE
LIVING CONDITIONS AND CONFLICTS IN THE SAHEL

Chapter II: INSECURITY IN THE SAHEL: SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

Amadou Tidiane Cissé

Introduction

For a decade now, the Sahel has been the target of violent extremist groups that have managed to control vast territories and impose their rule not only on states but also on populations, who pay the heaviest price amid the resurgence of terrorist activity in the region. They are gaining the upper hand over defense and security forces ill-prepared to face asymmetric conflicts[1] and are threatening coastal countries such as Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Benin, and Togo. It should be recalled that the deadly forms of asymmetric warfare that plague the Sahel are not unique to this part of the African continent. Other African regions (the Lake Chad basin, Southern and Central Africa) are also prey to terrorist activity that brings with it loss of life and the seizure and destruction of public and private property.

The attack on a Protestant church in the Beni region (North Kivu in the DRC), which left 17 people dead and was claimed by fighters from the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), a Ugandan Islamist faction affiliated with the Islamic State, is clear proof of the Islamic State organization's plan to expand across the African continent. Jihad Analytics[2] thus reveals that in 2022 the Islamic State carried out 1,027 attacks in Africa out of a total of 2,058. Today, the African continent is the region of the world most affected by attacks perpetrated and claimed by this jihadist movement.

In its latest report[3], the International Monetary Fund warns of uncertain economic prospects in sub-Saharan Africa for at least three reasons: the global slowdown, the tightening of financial conditions, and the volatility of commodity prices. Added to this is a tense security situation that could jeopardize economic growth in Sahelian countries. The IMF report also establishes a link between the halt in economic growth in 2022 and the disastrous security situation in the Sahel.

Security challenges must be addressed in order to curb the social effects of jihadist violence in the region—effects that include: massive flows of refugees fleeing conflict zones; the closure of teaching and learning centers in regions prey to jihadist violence; school dropouts among children recruited into the ranks of armed fighters; abandonment of farming activities; looting of cultural assets and protected or endangered environmental species; etc.

However, acts of violence cannot be reduced solely to the terrorist threat. In fact, the jihadist insurgency sits alongside other forms of violence—sometimes associated with major banditry, sometimes with separatist ambitions of certain communities such as the Tuareg in northern Mali, and sometimes with organized crime. Connections have even been

1. In these forms of war, the belligerents have disproportionate forces, and the weaker parties resort to guerrilla warfare and terrorist acts in order to prevail over their adversaries.
2. AC/APA: DRC: The Islamic State claims responsibility for the attack on a Protestant church in Beni, January 16, 2023.
3. International Monetary Fund: *"Sub-Saharan Africa: Walking a Tightrope,"* October 14, 2022.

established between terrorist armed groups and other criminal actors who control smuggling and illicit trafficking networks in the region[4].

In a speech delivered as guest of honor at the 2021 Dakar International Forum on Peace and Security, the President of Niger referred precisely to this dangerous collision in the following terms:

"In truth, insofar as terrorism has become a way to earn one's bread, it has attracted to itself all the bandits living off various cross-border traffics who have traditionally scourged the area (poachers, highway robbers, traffickers in fuel, tramadol, etc.). Today, what is at work consists of a mix of diverse strategies whose common thread, at least in Niger, in northern Mali and in eastern Burkina, beyond the slogans, is a greedy violence imposing an oppressive iron curtain on populations. They are dispossessed of their livestock, subjected to exorbitant taxes in the name of Zakat and kept in check by appalling terror. This is a consequence of a concomitant phenomenon of the jihadization of banditry and the banditization of jihad."

Whatever the motivations of the criminal groups operating in the Sahelian space, the consequences of their activities are catastrophic for the economies of Sahelian states and for their populations.

Regional geopolitical context

The protagonists in today's Sahel conflicts

"Sahel," which in Arabic means "shore" or "border," is sometimes defined as a climatic reality, sometimes as an economic or geopolitical one. As a territory, it is a band stretching from the Atlantic Ocean to the Red Sea. With an estimated area of 3 million km², the Sahel encompasses more than a dozen countries: Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Algeria, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Sudan, South Sudan, Eritrea, and Ethiopia. This is a very large geographical whole, which many, for analytical purposes, reduce to the following core states: Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, and Chad.

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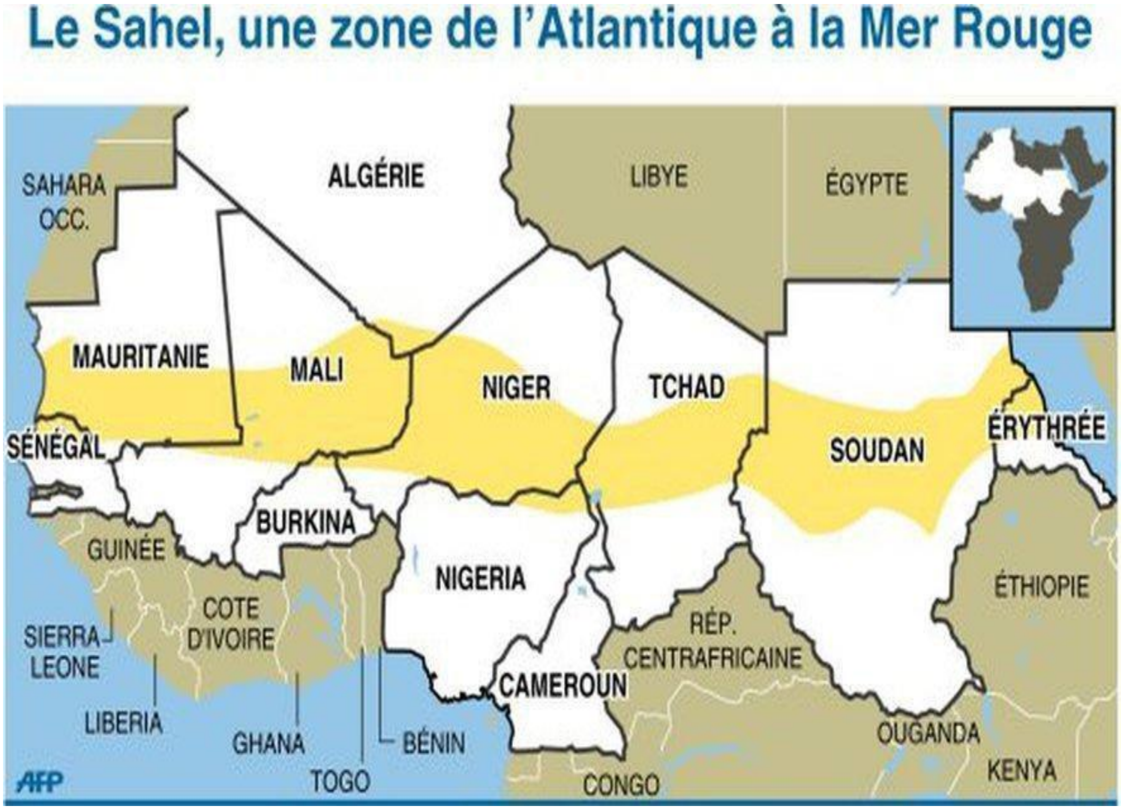
4. S. B. Gaye, 2017, *Connections between Jihadist Groups and Smuggling Networks in the Sahel*, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Foundation.

Figure II-1. The Sahel, a zone from the Atlantic to the Red Sea.



As part of our reflection on the social and economic implications of the insecurity prevailing in the Sahel, we will confine ourselves to these core states listed above, which remain a fairly representative sample of security threats and their negative impact on society and the economy.

In the aftermath of the fall of the Gaddafi regime in 2011, the security situation in the Sahel progressively deteriorated with the invasion of northern Mali by terrorist fighters from Iyad Ag Ghali's Ansar Dine, whose roadmap is to impose sharia over the territories they conquer.

Further loss of territory followed in central Mali, where fighters from the Katiba Macina, affiliated—like Ansar Dine—to al-Qaeda, deployed. Neighboring Niger also experienced a rapid deterioration in its security situation. The west (Tillaberi), the southwest (Diffa), and the northwest (Tahoua) have been the target of deadly jihadist attacks often claimed by the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara.

Burkina Faso has faced an almost identical crisis since 2015, with a strong presence of terrorist fighters in the Boucle du Mouhoun, the Northern region, the Sahel region, and the Eastern region. By blowing open the Burkinabè lock, jihadist groups have taken a serious option on conquering and annexing the countries along Africa's Atlantic coast. Togo and

Benin suffered their first terrorist attacks in 2021, with killings orchestrated by jihadist groups in the Pendjari and W parks.

Alongside the jihadist presence, there is cause for concern about the ever-increasing formation of self-defense groups that have been set up to protect communities victimized by the violence of terrorist armed groups. These self-defense groups, now major actors in the Sahel conflict, have managed to embed themselves in the balance of power between the central government and jihadist groups. Their weight on the regional security chessboard is such that the Sahel cannot be cured of the "cancer" of jihadism as long as the state fails to find a solution to the problem of armed ethnic militias.

Faced with difficulties on the ground in containing the threat, some Sahelian states—notably Mali and Burkina Faso—encouraged these self-defense groups in their action against Islamist groups, thereby spurring their rise in power. In Burkina Faso, the Koglweogo play the same role as the Dozo militia in Mali. They first took root in the Plateau-Central region before extending across the entire Burkinabè territory—namely the Center-North, Center-South, Center-East, and Center-West. Dogon militias are present throughout the country, with the exception of the Hauts-Bassins and Cascades regions, where Dozo hunters subcontract the security of communities victimized by the jihadist insurgency.

Outsourcing security to such groups, poorly prepared to assume the responsibility, has often led to abuses. Deadly excesses occurred following clashes between Fulani and Dogon in Mali. The armed militia Dan Na Ambassagou, very active in the center of the country, is blamed for the massacre of several dozen Fulani in the village of Ogossagou in March 2019.

M. Pellerin sees the establishment of armed militias in the Sahel as a factor worsening the jihadist threat in rural areas. As he writes:

"The armed involvement of self-defense groups in insurgent wars has not improved security in any of the areas mentioned. It has even aggravated it in the majority of documented cases. In all four countries, it is largely the Fulani community that finds itself overexposed to the violence of these groups from which they are excluded, on the basis of suspicions of their proximity to jihadist groups. The violence committed by self-defense groups contributes to self-fulfilling the prophecy, in the sense that populations targeted by these groups then seek to protect themselves by turning to jihadist groups"[5].

To support this thesis, Pellerin also cites documented cases of settling of scores, kidnappings, child recruitment, and the involvement of militias in drug trafficking and sexual abuse. These are all reprehensible acts that call into question the narratives legitimizing their presence in regions abandoned by the state, where they embody authority and provide for local demand for security and justice.

Insecurity in the Sahel and the proliferation of small arms

The illegal circulation of arms is the factor that contributes the most to aggravating the security situation in the Sahel. The occupation of Malian territory by jihadist groups was

5. M. Pellerin, December 2022, *"Self-Defense Groups: Firefighters-Arsonists in the Sahel,"* Ifri.

facilitated by the circulation of weapons and ammunition following the debacle in Libya, which gave rise to fraudulent overland transfers of arms to Mali. Today, Libya has the reputation of being a vast black market in war weapons, where terrorist fighters have been able to resupply at low cost. The former Malian president rightly described Libya as "the busiest and cheapest open-air arms supermarket." The OECD report[6] on arms circulation in West Africa is extremely alarming, estimating that more than 500 million illicit small arms are circulating in the region. In Nigeria, where the Islamist sect Boko Haram operates, 350 million illicit small arms are in circulation[7]. The proliferation of illicit weapons perpetuates the terrorist threat, transnational crime, and major banditry that are rife in the region.

In its investigation[8] into the illicit cross-border movement of arms and ammunition, the NGO Conflict Armament Research reveals in its report that 17% of weapons seized from jihadist fighters in southeastern Niger came from the weapons depots of the defense and security forces of Niger, Nigeria, and Chad. In addition to the sources described above, the CAR report lists two other sources of illicit arms in the Sahel: weapons sold on the black market in North and West Africa and weapons legally imported into the Sahel that were then diverted from their intended end-users.

Combating the proliferation of arms and ammunition is a major challenge for Sahelian states, given their role in perpetuating asymmetric conflicts and in the territorial conquests of jihadist groups. It is therefore more urgent than ever to eradicate this scourge, first by revising firearms legislation and also by strengthening the operational capacities of defense and security forces.

Economic impact of insecurity in the Sahel

Insecurity and losses of customs revenue

Customs administrations—one of whose fundamental missions is the collection of customs revenue—bear the full brunt of insecurity's consequences on fiscal revenue projections. In countries where portions of national territory escape the control of the central state, the collection of tax revenue on imported goods is seriously compromised.

In northern Mali, several revenue collection offices have been closed due to recurrent attacks by jihadist groups:

"Insecurity has also led to the closure of customs offices and posts and has delayed the plan to create new customs units aimed at better monitoring Malian customs territory. In northern Mali, the customs clearance offices and checkpoints for commercial operations located in Ansongo, Ménaka, Labézanga, Andéramboukane, Léré, Bourem, Tessalit, and Kidal have all been closed due to frequent jihadist attacks. In central Mali, where armed violence is commonplace, customs units have also been closed by decision of the administrative authority. The Koro Office, known for its strategic position in controlling flows of goods from Burkina Faso, Togo, Benin, and Ghana, has not escaped closure. The same goes

6. OECD, Annual Report 2018.
7. BBC News Africa: *"Nigeria: The Danger of Weapons,"* August 2016, www.bbc.com
8. Conflict Armament Research Report, 2016, mapping the circulation of weapons in the Sahel.

for the customs offices and posts located in Diallassagou, Denangoro, Bankass, Hombori, and those in the administrative districts of Ségou, Sikasso, Koulikoro, Bougouni, and Koutiala”[9].

As a result, illicit trafficking in staple goods—previously subject to taxes and levies—develops. This is a significant fiscal loss whose accumulation over years of conflict could even call into question the viability of states. Illicit goods that cross the customs cordon pose a threat to the security and stability of states or to public health. Thus, the absence of border controls affects failed states twice over: non-collection of customs duties and other taxes on smuggled goods, and illicit inflows and outflows of goods and currencies. The Center for the Analysis of Terrorism[10] reports that the illicit trafficking of cigarettes—heavily taxed—accounts for 20% of sources of terrorist financing in the Sahel. By itself, it illustrates the fiscal losses suffered by states grappling with insecurity, as well as the pernicious use of revenue from this illegal trade to sustain jihadism in the Sahel.

Insecurity and its consequences for the extractive industry in the Sahel

The contribution of gold to state revenue mobilization is considerable in countries rich in this resource. Endeavour Mining, the dominant player in West Africa’s gold sector, operates six (6) gold mines in West Africa. Gold production in Mali was forecast at 70 tons in 2022. Of the 4.14 million ounces representing the total operations of the multinational Barrick Gold, Loulo-Gounkoto—the largest operating gold mine of the Canadian mining giant in Mali—produced more than 700,000 ounces in 2022[11]. Over the past 25 years, this gold mine has contributed 7.7 billion dollars to the Malian economy in the form of royalties, taxes, purchases from suppliers, etc.[12] In 2022, Burkina Faso produced 740,000 ounces of gold, i.e., more than half of the Canadian group’s annual production. In Burkina Faso, export earnings generated by the sector in 2021 amounted to 2,021 billion CFA francs. Gold accounts for 20% of tax revenue[13]. The President of the Burkina Faso Chamber of Mines foresaw a 15% drop in annual gold production (66.8 tons in 2021), which he linked to the insecurity prevailing in the country.

Moreover, as this senior official of the Burkina Faso Chamber of Mines points out, instability weighs on mining companies’ operating costs due to the surcharges caused by air transport of gold extracted from mining sites, higher insurance premiums, and additional costs linked to beefing up security around mining sites.

The zinc mine owned by Trevali Mining announced in November 2022 that it was ceasing operations[14] due to financial difficulties and the persistence of the security threat in the

9. A. T. Cissé, 2021, *Terrorism: The End of Borders? New Challenges for Customs Cooperation in Security Matters in the Sahel*, L’Harmattan, Senegal.
10. Center for the Analysis of Terrorism, March 2015, *“Terrorist Financing, Smuggling and Counterfeiting of Cigarettes.”*
11. E. Tossou, *“Barrick Exceeded Its Gold Production Forecasts in 2020,”* February 8, 2021, www.agenceecofin.com
12. E. Tossou, *op. cit.*
13. Interview with M. A. Soro, President of the Chamber of Mines of Burkina Faso, published in *Jeune Afrique*, January 16, 2023.
14. Nadoun Coulibaly: *“Burkina Faso: After the Departure of Trevali Mining, What Future for Burkinabè Zinc?” Jeune Afrique*, November 14, 2022.

mining sector. Its closure resulted in losses of around 30 billion CFA francs in tax revenue, the suspension of contracts for the supply of goods and services, and the loss of 700 local jobs in the rural commune of Perkoa, in Sanguié Province (Center-West).

Insecurity has fostered unregulated and uncontrolled artisanal gold mining on sites that have fallen into the hands of organized-crime actors. It has also facilitated the exploitation of a highly strategic sector of the economy whose revenues escape the state. The NGO International Crisis Group[15] warned that the gold rush had become a source of funding for jihadist groups and a human reservoir for recruiting fighters:

"In Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger—the countries of central Sahel—armed groups have, since 2016, seized artisanal gold-mining sites in areas where the state is weak or absent. Their greed is stoked by the boom in the artisanal gold sector since the discovery, in 2012, of a Saharan seam running from Sudan to Mauritania. These armed groups, including jihadists, have found in these gold mines a new source of financing and even a recruitment ground. Informal networks are increasingly involved in transporting the precious metal. Artisanal gold mining therefore risks fueling violence and transnational criminal networks. Sahelian states should encourage the formalization of gold-mining activities while ensuring they do not alienate miners. They should redouble efforts to secure gold-mining sites and prevent security forces or allied militias from becoming predatory elements. The governments of these countries and of those that purchase their gold should strengthen regulation of the sector."

Insecurity and its consequences for the agricultural economy and local tourism

Once a major scientific center where astronomy flourished, Dogon Country has become the region of Mali most violently struck by the jihadist whirlwind, as evidenced by serial massacres in the villages of Diallassagou, Diamweli, and Deguessagou.

The asymmetric conflicts that plague the Sahel also affect agricultural investment. In central Mali, the security crisis has affected agricultural productivity because Dogon farmers have abandoned their lands. Mali has significant agricultural potential. However, recent episodes of armed conflict have seriously undermined agricultural investment and productivity: disruption in the distribution of inputs and equipment, price shocks, and mass displacement of agricultural labor. In fact, during periods of armed conflict, agricultural production falls by 12.3% each year.

A study by researchers[16] in the University of Florida's Department of Economics showed the negative impact of civil war on economic growth, notably in terms of reduced capital investment. Armed conflicts disrupt public accounts due to massive injections of money into the arms and munitions expenditures of countries at war, to the detriment of other vital sectors (health, education, agriculture, etc.).

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15. International Crisis Group: *"Taking Control of the Gold Rush in the Central Sahel,"* Report No. 282/Africa, November 13, 2019.

16. Gyimah-Brempong, Kwabena and Corley, Marva E., *"Civil Wars and Economic Growth in Sub-Saharan Africa,"* Journal of African Economies, Vol. 14, Issue 2, pp. 270–311, 2005. Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=915459

In its economic bulletin[17] on Mali, the World Bank establishes a correlation between the tepid nature of the economic recovery and the insecurity prevailing in the country. According to its estimates, the poverty rate rose from 42.5% in 2019 to 44.4% in 2021, pushing an additional 375,000 people into extreme poverty. Economic prospects for this year are hardly bright due to ECOWAS and WAEMU economic and financial sanctions, food insecurity in the region, and the war in Ukraine.

Banks in the sub-region suffered greatly from the sanctions targeting Mali, which was already struggling by late June 2022 to honor payment of 44 billion CFA francs owed to investors in the WAEMU public securities market. In total, the Malian government was to repay 346 billion CFA francs over the course of 2022. Adding the following year's due date, repayments on the WAEMU public securities market skyrocketed to 761 billion CFA francs. The shock wave from these defaults could spread across WAEMU countries, given that more than 60% of public securities are held mainly by Ivorian and Burkinabè banks.

Impact of insecurity on society

The Sahel security crisis and its effects on population displacement and education

A recent United Nations report indicates that the security crisis in the Sahel has had devastating effects on populations, with forced displacement increasing by 30% between 2020 and 2021 in the Central Sahel (Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger)[18]. More than 2 million people have been internally displaced and there are 132,000 refugees. The situation of displaced persons is even more alarming in Burkina Faso, where terrorist violence has forced over a million people to flee the country. Displaced people suffer violence perpetrated by armed groups and also face difficulties in accessing basic social services (schools, health facilities, boreholes, markets, etc.). Instability in the Sahel also affects school-age children. According to UNICEF, "Insecurity has encroached on the right to education of many children in Mali. Today, more than 1,100 schools in Mali are closed due to insecurity, affecting more than 350,000 children, the majority of whom are in the central region of Mopti."[19]

The Islamist sect Boko Haram, which operates in Nigeria and neighboring countries, has built its ideology around a crusade against Western education, which it deems pernicious. In the local Hausa language, "Boko Haram" means "Western education is a sin." The sect advocates withdrawing children from schools and frequently carries out attacks on them. The kidnapping of the 276 Chibok schoolgirls sparked indignation and mobilization from the international community to secure their release. Amnesty International collected testimonies from students who managed to escape from the Sambisa Forest where they were detained, revealing the trauma they live with and the stigma they face. They struggle to reintegrate into their communities, where they are singled out and still have not received the financial aid promised by Nigeria's federal government.

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17. World Bank: *Note on the Economic Situation of Mali: Strengthening Resilience in Times of Uncertainty — Renewing the Social Contract,* May 24, 2022.
18. UN News: *"West Africa: The Crises in the Sahel Have Devastating Effects on the Most Vulnerable."*
19. UNICEF: *"Children in Mali: Mali's Greatest Wealth Is Its Youth,"* www.unicef.org

In total, more than 1,500 children have been kidnapped in Nigeria by armed groups since 2014[20]. More than 600 schools have remained closed due to waves of kidnappings in the country and the ransoms demanded by the criminal groups behind them. This has led to a phenomenon of school dropout that exposes children to the temptation of recruitment by jihadist groups or armed self-defense militias.

Security crisis and the plundering of cultural heritage

The ideological underpinnings of terrorism served as a pretext for Ansar Dine to organize the worst forms of plunder of African cultural heritage, particularly in Timbuktu. The practice of an Islam judged heretical by local populations motivated jihadist fighters to sack a dozen mausoleums and destroy more than 4,200 manuscripts in Timbuktu, a city listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1988. Timbuktu, also known as the City of the 313 Saints, was a major center for the teaching of the experimental sciences, where thousands of learners converged to acquire knowledge. This rich past has made Timbuktu part of posterity and earned it an enduring prestige that has been severely tarnished by the jihadist threat, still present in the region.

The security crisis and its consequences for natural heritage

The illicit trafficking of environmental goods generates substantial profits for criminal groups. The UN has sounded the alarm on the danger posed by the illegal trade in protected species, which yields between 69 and 199 billion dollars[21]. Collisions are possible between criminal networks focused on major banditry and poaching and jihadist groups, and can pose a major threat to West Africa's tropical forests. From rear bases in Burkina Faso, jihadist groups carry out incursions into northern Benin to gain access to Pendjari Park, which covers an area of 4,800 km². By establishing themselves in parks and reserves, they could seize wildlife and floral resources and, in so doing, endanger the region's rich natural heritage. Yet, aware of the importance of parks and reserves, Burkina Faso, Niger, and Benin merged their national biosphere reserves into a single protected area called the transboundary W-Arly-Pendjari Complex, covering nearly 100,000 km².

Joint management of the reserve was intended to foster the development of local communities straddling the three neighboring countries and to provide young people with the means to lead decent lives that only migration to urban agglomerations—where most economic activity is concentrated—might otherwise offer. The insecurity prevailing in the region threatens this natural heritage. Yet the region's abundant environmental resources and the major investments made by states could have made the area a leading tourist hub.

In central Mali, where the Katiba Macina and the Dogon militia Dan Na Ambassagou operate, armed violence makes one forget that Dogon Country is the cradle of astronomical science. Indeed, the village of Sanga was the prime observation site for the rising of Sirius and of

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20. Amnesty International: *"More than 1,500 Students Kidnapped by Armed Groups in Nigeria,"* April 2022, www.amnesty.fr
21. *Le Point*: *"Illegal Wildlife Trafficking Generates Between 69 and 199 Billion Dollars per Year,"* July 8, 2020, www.lepoint.fr

the Sun[22]. The research team led by G. Dieterlen determined that the Dogon had built genuine astronomical observatories in Sanga village several centuries ago[23]. Armed violence has dealt a blow to the local economy organized around agriculture, but it has especially dampened the attraction Dogon Country holds for enthusiasts of astronomical science.

Customs and the fight against the proliferation of arms and other illicit traffic

In Africa, customs administrations have long been confined to fiscal and economic missions. Combating fraud has, in fact, mostly been reduced to undervaluation, false declarations of tariff classification, quantity, or origin[24]. It took a resurgence of attacks around the world to assign greater customs surveillance to the trade supply chain, which could henceforth become a vector for mass killings or a means of transporting illicit goods. The illicit trafficking of arms and ammunition is a matter of the utmost concern for border control services—especially customs—given their strategic position along the customs cordon.

In reality, no government agency knows the nomenclature and control of traded goods better than customs. It is therefore within their remit to monitor cross-border movements of goods, notably small arms and ammunition whose possession is so important for non-state armed groups. Customs administrations are increasingly aware of their role in a context of insecurity with threats that transcend state borders.

In 2015, the World Customs Organization adopted the Punta Cana Resolution, giving customs administrations a new security mandate by enjoining them to integrate into their strategic plans a new security mission alongside their traditional missions of revenue collection and investment promotion. This resolution aligns with UN Security Council Resolution 1373, which recommends that states combat terrorism and its financing. In this area, customs administrations are expected to exercise particular vigilance to put an end to the illicit circulation of goods but also of financial flows, which have been proven to have been used in terrorist attacks—notably the 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center.

Customs administrations are also involved in combating the illicit trade in precursors and chemical components used to manufacture improvised explosive devices. The list of dual-use goods is subject to special monitoring by control services to prevent their use in developing improvised explosive devices.

To this end, since 2020 the customs community of West and Central Africa has been initiating operations to control imports of chemical precursors (ammonium nitrate, hydrogen peroxide, sodium chlorate, etc.) and to dismantle trafficking in arms, ammunition, explosives, etc. Seizures by customs services attest to the vitality of these illicit traffics and the need to sustain these initiatives in order to deprive criminal groups of any access to weapons and ammunition.

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22. M. Griaule, 1948, *God of Water: Conversations with Ogotemmeli*, Paris, Éditions du Chêne, 263 p.
23. A. T. Cissé: *"Dogon Country: The Stronghold of the Dogon Militia Was the World Capital of Astronomy,"* published in www.maliactu.info, July 2022.
24. The community origin of goods confers a lower tax burden on imports of merchandise.

The movement of foreign terrorist fighters is also a major issue to be taken into account in preventing violent extremism and combating terrorism. UN Security Council Resolution 2178 calls on states to take measures to counter the travel of terrorist fighters to conflict zones, through policies preventing and repressing the recruitment, transport, organization, and equipping of jihadist fighters. Customs services have also integrated this dimension of the fight through the establishment of a targeting system known as Advance Passenger Information (API) and the exploitation of Passenger Name Records (PNR), which remain indispensable tools for combating terrorism and all other forms of crime. On this issue, the Secretary-General of the World Customs Organization lifts a corner of the veil in these terms: "In recent years, several countries have gone further, adopting laws requiring carriers to submit, in addition to API, other passenger data in the form of Passenger Name Records. These passenger records contain larger data sets that can be used for risk assessment."

Airlines are now required in many countries to submit API and PNR to governments. The relevant authorities—customs, immigration, or police—can then assess the risk posed by certain travelers and thus combat transnational crime[25].

Conclusion

The jihadist insurgency—one of the main sources of insecurity in the Sahel—is on the verge of infecting the entire West African region. After the central Sahel, it is spreading to the coastal countries, with the beginnings of conflagration in northern Togo and Benin and increasingly frequent attacks in northern Côte d'Ivoire. This assault on national sovereignty, meticulously prepared by terrorist groups, recalls the early days of the security crisis in northern Mali, which did not suggest such a wave of regional contagion a decade later.

The lessons of the asymmetric wars that have gripped the Sahel have apparently not been learned. These crises have had an impact on the economic growth of states and on civilian populations, who are caught in the crossfire, violently attacked, and killed. At this stage, we must regret the absence of a regional security strategy tailored to the terrorist threat prevailing in the region.

We also note parallel—and even competing—initiatives between the G5 Sahel's security strategy and that contained in the Accra Initiative, whose intervention area remains Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Benin, and Togo.

The question of security financing also constitutes a major issue. While the Accra Initiative prides itself on relying on the budgets of the states that set it up, it is clear that domestic resource-mobilization capacities remain weak. Since its creation, the G5 Sahel has struggled to close its annual budget of 400 million, despite intensifying security tensions.

In times of war—whether conventional or asymmetric—state budgets are primarily allocated to national defense. Other priority sectors of social and economic life such as education, health, youth employment, and investment are left behind. Military conflicts monopolize public resources that should have been used for investment and poverty reduction.

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25. K. Mikuriya: *"API and PNR: Two Essential Acronyms of the International Security Agenda,"* WCO News, www.wcoomd.org

This results in worsening precariousness for populations who are collateral victims of the conflicts and who at the same time bear the brunt of the priority given to spending on arms and ammunition. J. Robinson, in his critique of Keynes's militarist policies, argues that they deprive populations of the public interventions they need. If the defense of national sovereignty has a cost that states must bear, it remains understood that insecurity—associated with the loss of sovereignty over a portion of territory—has social and economic blowback that undermines the foundations of a nation's sustainable development.

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Chapter III: POVERTY IN THE SAHEL: BURKINA FASO, CHAD, MALI, MAURITANIA, NIGER AND SENEGAL

Jeanine Braithwaite and Kamwoo Lee

Introduction

This chapter is a study of poverty in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Senegal. These six countries are a microcosm of poverty in the Sahel, and in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) more broadly. Several countries are sparsely populated owing to arid Saharan conditions, but others like Senegal and Burkina Faso are quite densely populated. Five countries are roughly the same in population (Table 1), but land areas vary. Mauritania has the smallest population and one of the larger territories. These stylized facts have implications for poverty profiles in the six countries. We use several different definitions of monetary and non-monetary poverty in this chapter, including national lines and internationally comparable measures.

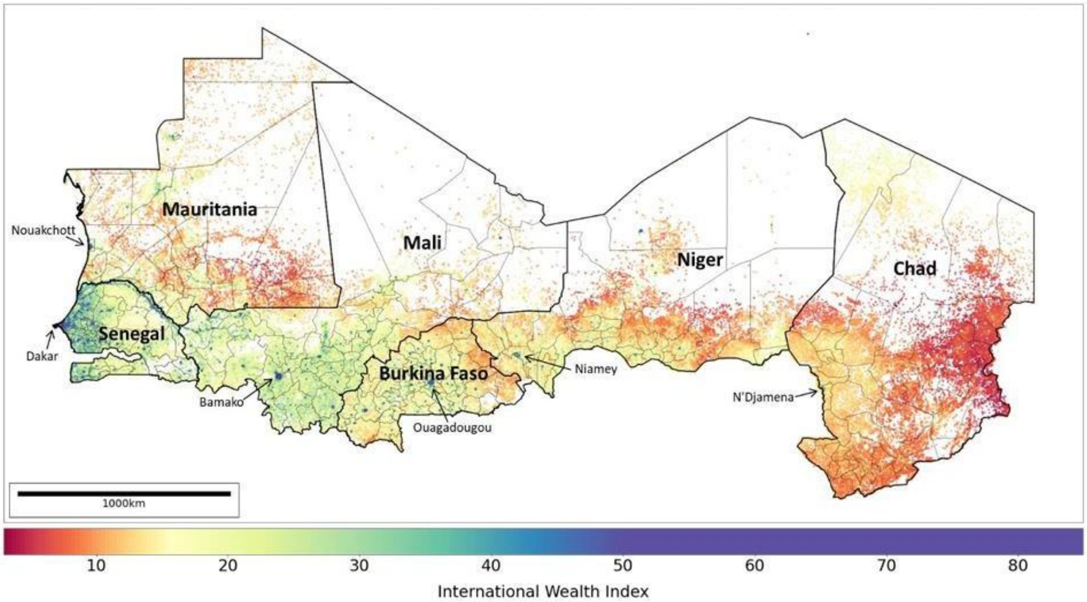
Table III-1: Population and Area

2018	Population (nombre)	Superficie (km^2)
Burkina Faso	19.751.535	273.600
Tchad	15.477.751	1.259.200
Mali	19.077.690	1.220.190
Mauritanie	4.403.319	1.030.700
Niger	22.442.948	1.266.700
Senegal	15.854.360	192.530

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (WDI). https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world-development-indicators October 2020.

Poverty Maps

Poverty maps provide information about who is poor and where the poor are located at the lowest administrative level. This is crucial information for policymakers to ensure that anti-poverty programs reach their targeted beneficiaries and that services and infrastructure are sited appropriately. However, traditional poverty maps are expensive and rapidly become outdated. In recent years, there have been significant advances in estimating socioeconomic indicators with geospatial information and machine learning, which makes it possible to produce poverty maps in finer granularity at low cost rapidly.

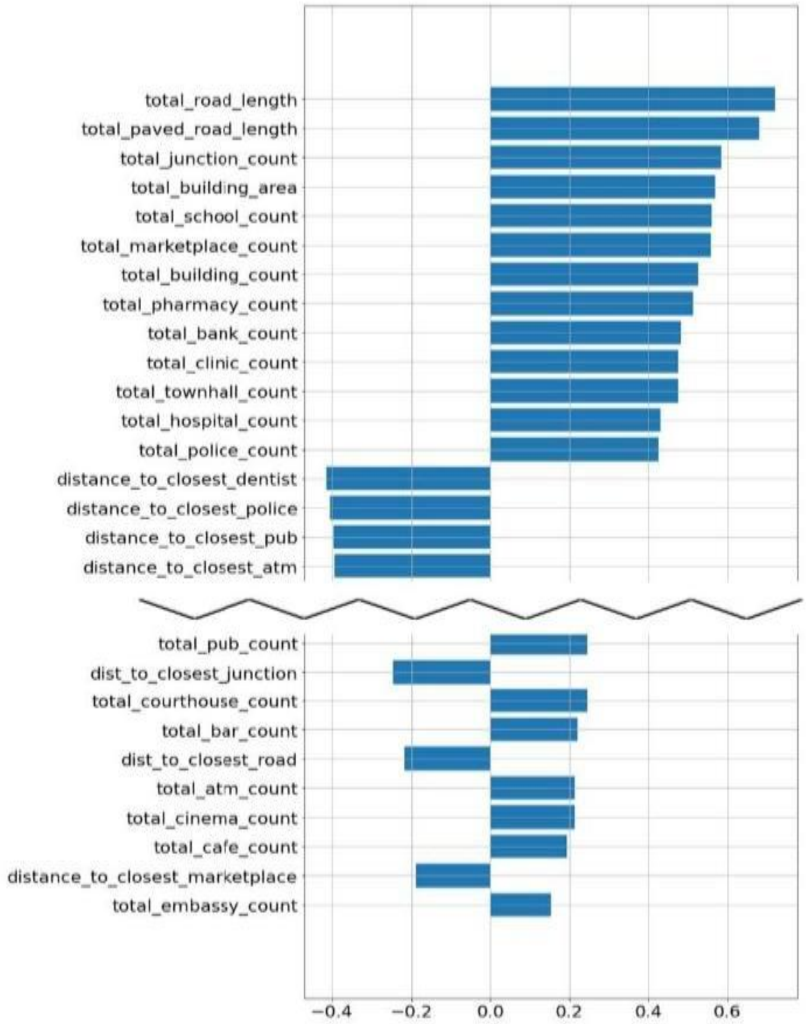


Source: Author calculations.
Note: Each dot represents 1 square mile area with a color-coding of wealth index. Note that this map shows all populated places regardless of population density in each place. Overall color on the national-level map does not depict national-level wealth since population density greatly differs from place to place.

Figure III-1. Map of poverty

Lee and Braithwaite (forthcoming) proposed a new machine learning method to create high-resolution poverty maps with satellite images and crowd-sourced map data for countries where there is no recent survey data. We extracted geospatial features that are relevant to wealth levels at the village level across countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. Such geospatial features include the total length of roads, distance to the closest road, number of junctions, distance to the closest junctions, total building area, and the number of buildings for each 1 square-mile area as well as the number of and distance to 24 social infrastructures such as schools and hospitals and markets. We present the poverty map for the six Sahel countries in Figure 1.

Figure 2. Pearson Correlation Coefficients



Source: Author calculations.
Note: This correlation shows relationships between wealth levels and geospatial features at the 1 square-mile area level.

Figure III-2. Pearson correlation coefficients

The high-resolution poverty maps make it possible to analyze the correlations between geospatial features and wealth index at the community level in the six Sahel countries. When measured by the Pearson correlation coefficient between the geospatial features and the estimated wealth index, the top correlates across the six countries are road features, such as total road length, total paved road length, and number of junctions within 1 square mile area. The number of pharmacies, banks, clinics, and hospitals as well as the distance to the closest dentist, police, pub, and ATM show relatively high correlation (Figure III-2). The order of correlates is different from country to country. For instance, the number of marketplaces is the top correlate after road features in Senegal while total building area and the number of buildings show higher correlation than many of the road structures like paved road and junctions in Mali. Tertiary industry services, such as kindergartens, cafes, and bars, are notable features in Mauritania, but the total road length simply stands out in Niger and Burkina Faso.

When considering the least relevant geospatial features, we can find more interesting relationships. Although the number of marketplaces and length of roads are one of the top correlates, the distances to the closest marketplace and road are one of the least correlated features. The distances to the closest amenities such as cafes, cinemas, and bars are highly correlated with wealth levels of communities but the numbers of them are not. We can see a glimpse of a causal relationship from this contrast. If cafes, cinemas, and bars had high effects on the wealth level, the number of them would have a higher correlation as well. But that is not the case. Wealthy places tend to have cafes, cinemas and bars but those amenities don't make a place wealthy. A similar but opposite implication can be made for marketplaces and roads. More marketplaces and longer roads make a place wealthy.

We created high-resolution poverty maps with not just the aforementioned quantifiable features but also image features because quantifiable features alone cannot capture qualitative nuances of the geospatial characteristics. For instance, a single-track road in the mountains is fundamentally different from an 8-lane highway with the same length. Image recognition techniques with deep-learning algorithms provide increasingly useful and powerful information for measuring poverty.

National Poverty

All six of our countries have developed their own national poverty lines to assess their monetary poverty, and their poverty rates[26] according to these lines are presented in Figure 3. It is important to stress that these national poverty rates are not comparable-they are for different years, and are based on different national lines and different measures of welfare. We offer Figure 3 as an illustration of how the 6 Sahel countries assess their own poverty lines. In the next section of this chapter, we compare the countries based on the internationally comparable poverty line calculated by the World Bank.

Figure 3 is based on national data reported to the World Bank in its World Development Indicators (WDI) on-line database.[27]. Although the national poverty rates are not themselves directly comparable, it is notable that national poverty does not differ sharply across the six countries over time, except that it is highest in Niger and noticeably lowest in Mauritania. We make this comparison valid by using an internationally comparable poverty line next.

26. Percent of the population with per capita or per equivalent consumption or income below the poverty line (Ravallion 2016; Foster, Greer and Thorbecke 1984).

27. https://databank.worldbank.org/source/world-development-indicators Accessed October 2020, various days. Hereafter, WDI data. The WDI database and query tool are accessible in French.

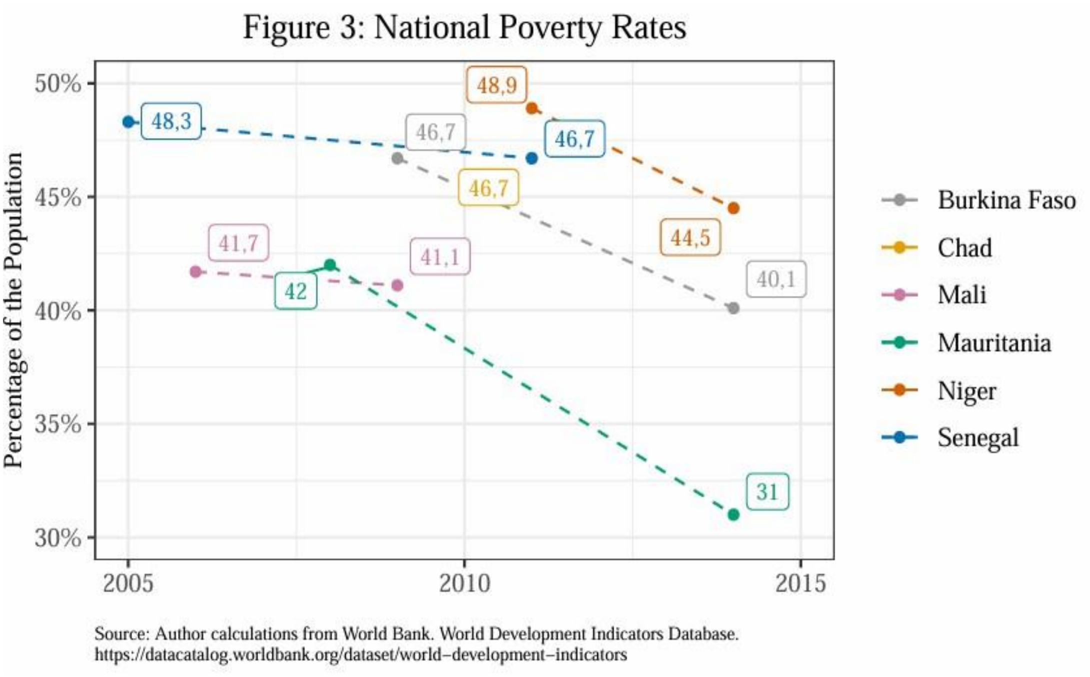


Figure III-4. Taux de pauvreté nationale

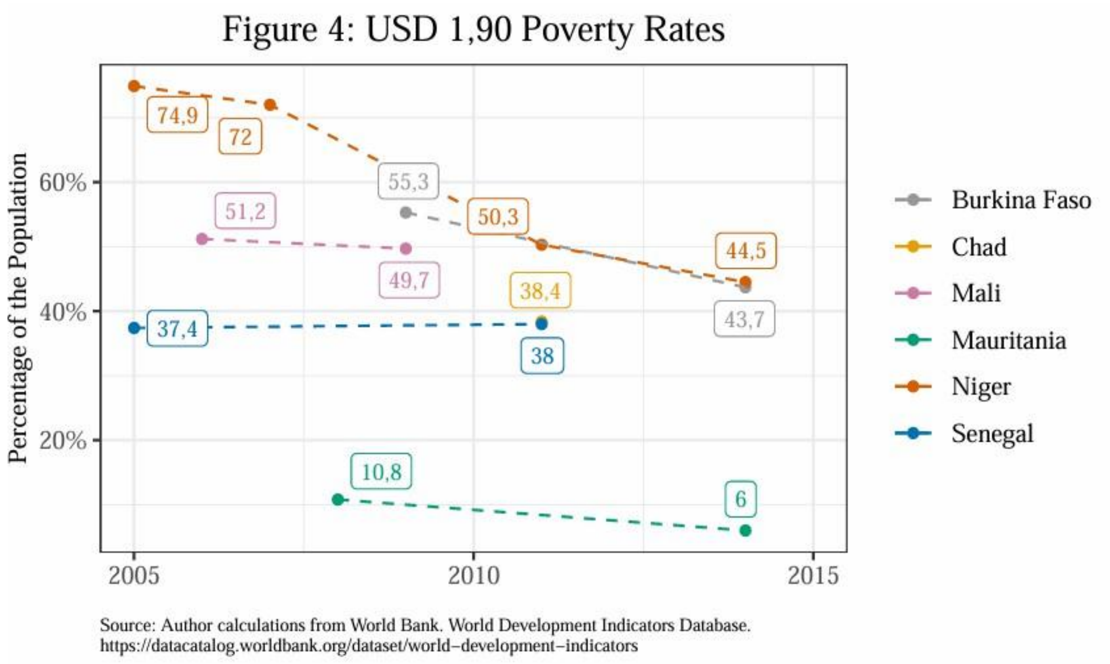


Figure III-3. Taux de pauvreté 1,90 dollars

Internationally Comparable Poverty

Starting in the late 1980s, the World Bank invested significant resources and effort to develop an internationally comparable poverty line to track and monitor global poverty over time (Ravallion 2016; World Bank 2001; Ravallion, Datt & van de Walle 1991; World Bank 1990). Using purchasing power parities (PPPs), the World Bank estimated the US dollar (USD) average PPP cost of a consumption basket of basic food items, then added an allowance for non-food consumption requirements (the basic needs approach) to generate an internationally comparable poverty line of USD 1 per person per day (this was rounded for simplicity, it was actually USD 1.08).[28] This line was adjusted as PPP estimates improved and also as the cost of living increased, to USD 1.25, but was continued to be reported in general usage as simply USD 1 per person per day. Additionally, another line was used for less-poor country comparisons generated by simply doubling the USD 1 line to USD 2 per person per day.[29] The World Bank supported the data needs of these internationally comparable poverty lines with an extensive program of household surveys in developing countries (Grosh & Glewwe 1995, https://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/lsms).

In 2015, the basic internationally comparable line was updated to USD 1,90 per person per day, to take into account increases in the global cost of food and fuel that occurred starting in 2008. (https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/brief/global-poverty-line-faq). This line was almost doubled to USD 3,20 for additional comparisons. Using the USD 1,90 per person per day poverty line, we can compare poverty rates in the 6 Sahel countries (Figure 4, Table 2) and rank them, including over time.

Table III-2 : Poverty rate according to the $1.90/day poverty line (percentage of poor)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Burkina Faso	..	..	..	..	55,3	..	..	..	..	43,7
Tchad	..	..	..	..	..	..	38,4	..	..	..
Mali	..	51,2	..	..	49,7	..	..	..	..	..
Mauritanie	..	..	..	10,8	..	..	..	..	..	6,0
Niger	74,9	..	72,0	..	..	..	50,3	..	..	44,5
Sénégal	37,4	..	..	..	..	..	38,0	..	..	..

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (WDI). https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world-development-indicators October 2020.

28. The World Bank uses consumption (purchases plus the imputed value of food consumed from own-production) as its standard for welfare comparisons (Deaton & Zaidi 2002, Deaton 1997) although most European countries and the US use income, primarily for reasons of historical precedence.

29. Poverty comparisons are quite complicated once one moves beyond a per capita standard, but Deaton & Paxson (1998) found previous methodologies (Deaton & Muelbauer 1980, 1986) to estimate per equivalent standards to be flawed and to date, economists have not agreed on a resolution. The basic problem is clear in that people in households consume differing amounts, so a per person standard may not be appropriate for accurate poverty measurement (Lanjouw & Ravallion 1995).

Rates and Ranking

Here we see that 15 years ago, Niger "led" the 3 Sahel countries for which we have observations in terms of having the highest poverty rate of 74.9 percent in 2005. However, while USD 1.90 per person per day poverty was essentially unchanged in Mali and Senegal from 2005/2006 to 2011, it dropped sharply in Niger to 44,5 percent in 2014. Poverty also declined in Burkina Faso from 55,3 percent in 2009 to 43,7 percent in 2014. We lack a point of comparison for Chad, having only one observation in 2011 of a poverty rate of 38,4 percent.

Again, paralleling the discussion about national poverty rates, the internationally comparable poverty rates are not starkly dissimilar for 5 of the Sahel countries. However, Mauritania is sharply less poor. In 2008, USD 1.90 poverty in Mauritania was only 10.8 percent and this had declined to 6 percent in 2014. In this sense, Mauritania is an outlier as its 2014 internationally comparable poverty rate is more than 2 standard deviations different than the most recent poverty rates for the 6 Sahel countries taken as a group or individually.

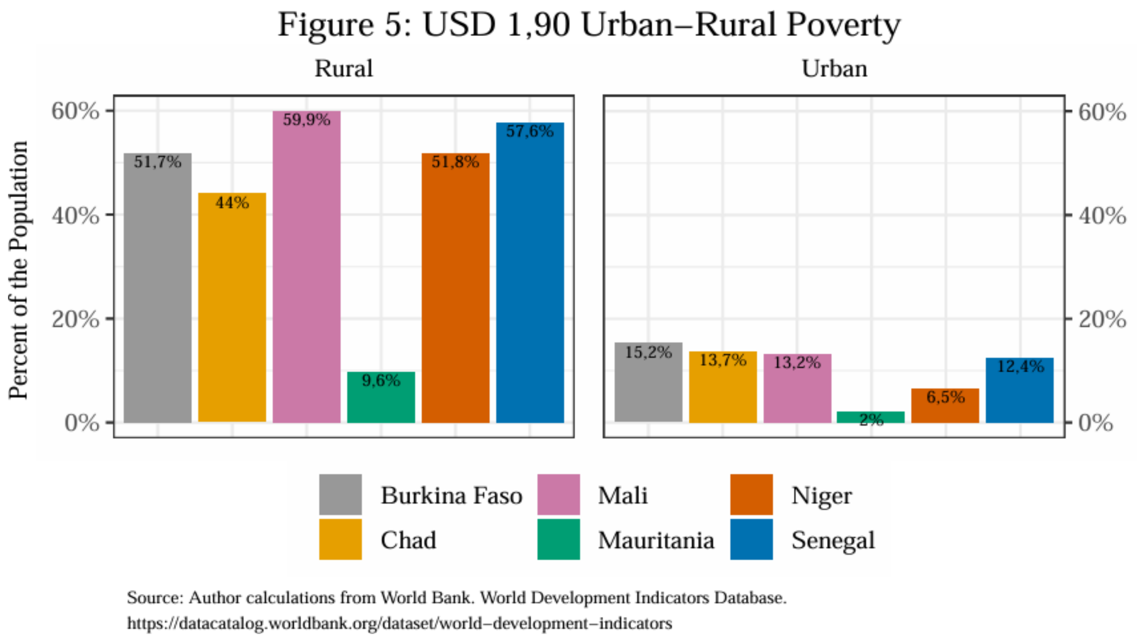


Figure III-5. Rural-urban poverty $1.90/day

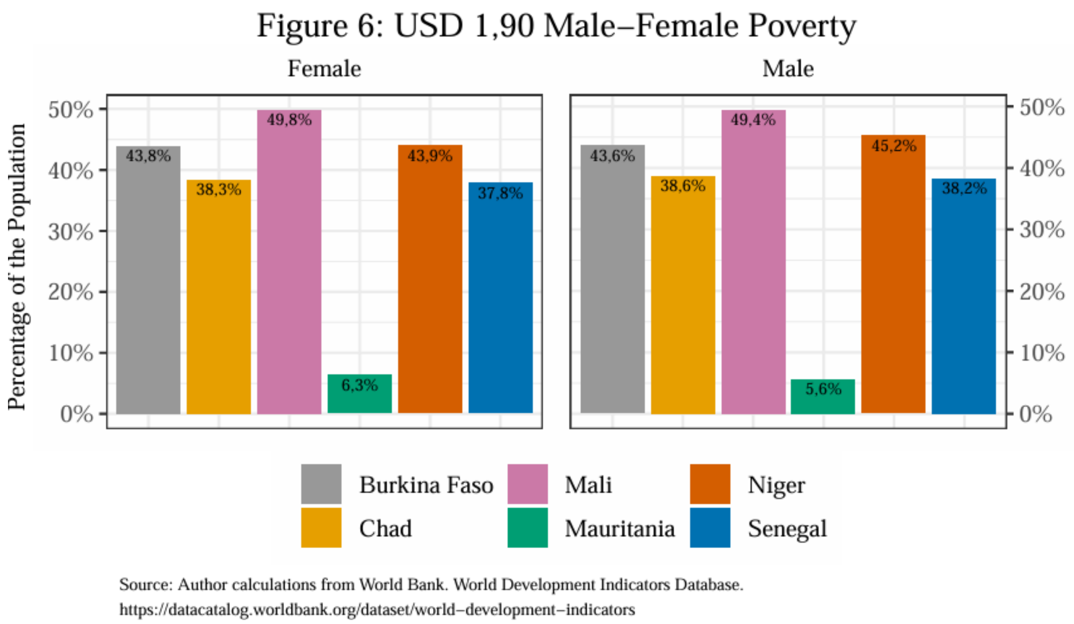


Figure III-6. Male-female, $1.90/day

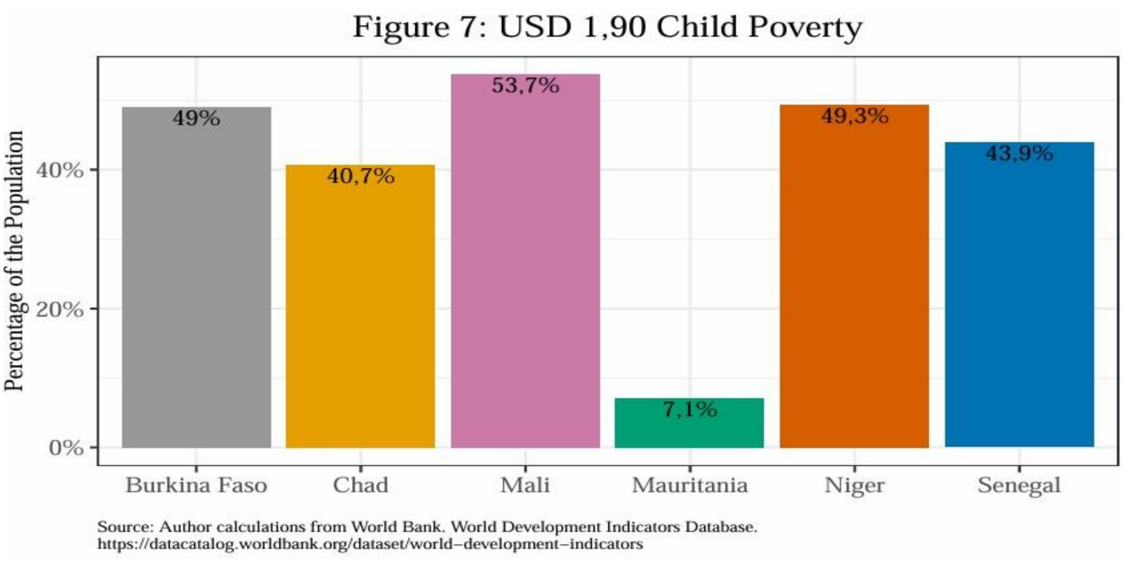


Figure III-7. Child poverty, $1.90/day

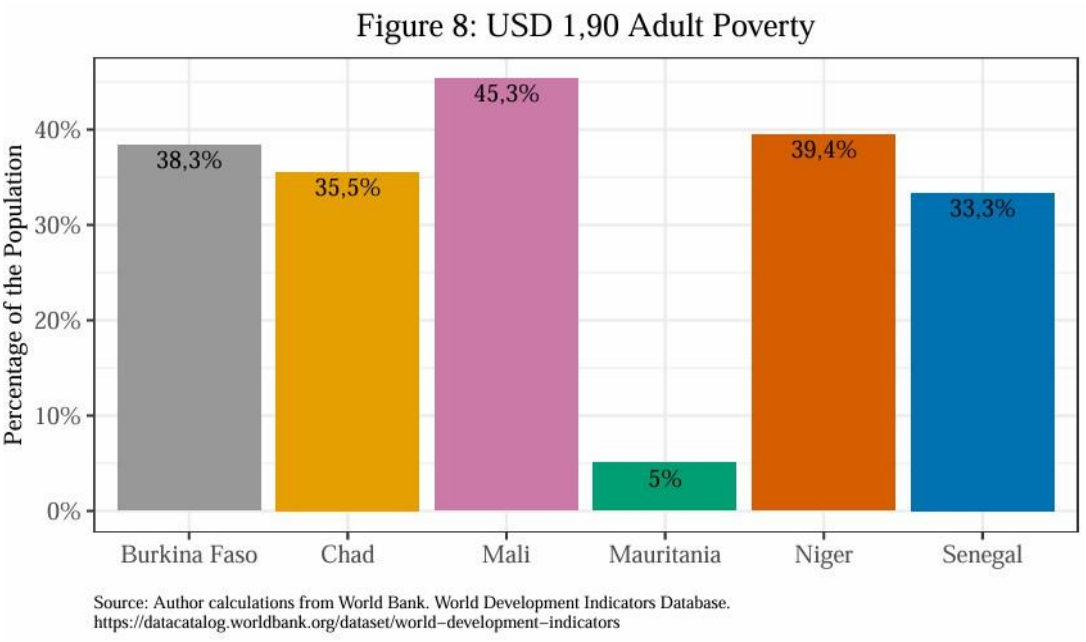


Figure III-8. Adult poverty, $1.90/day

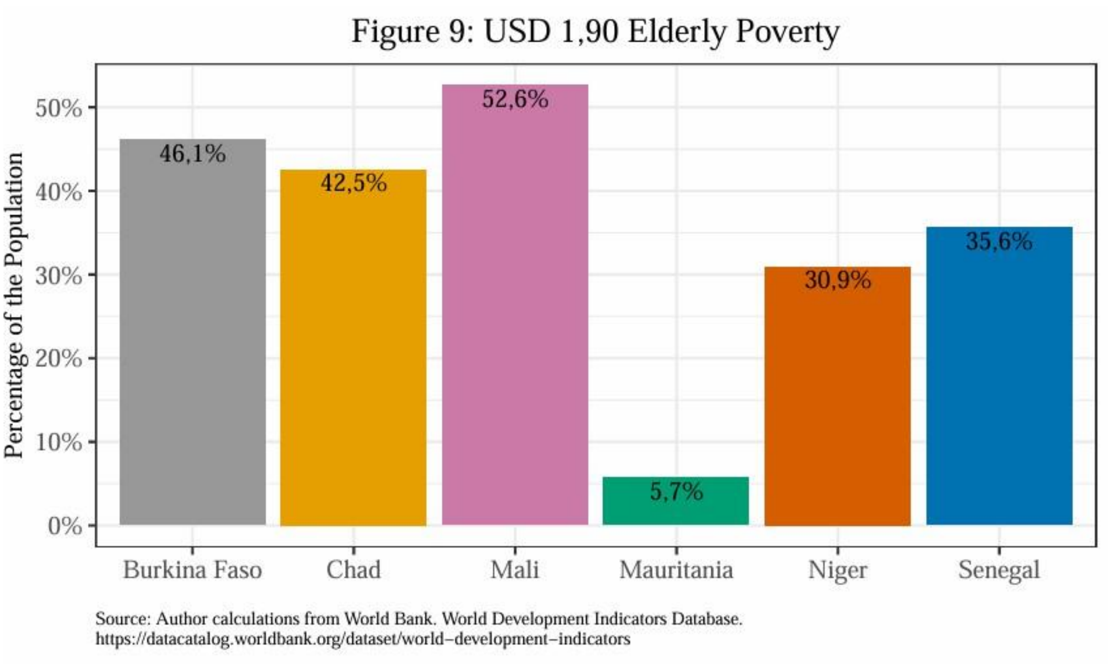


Figure III-10. Elderly poverty, $1.90/day

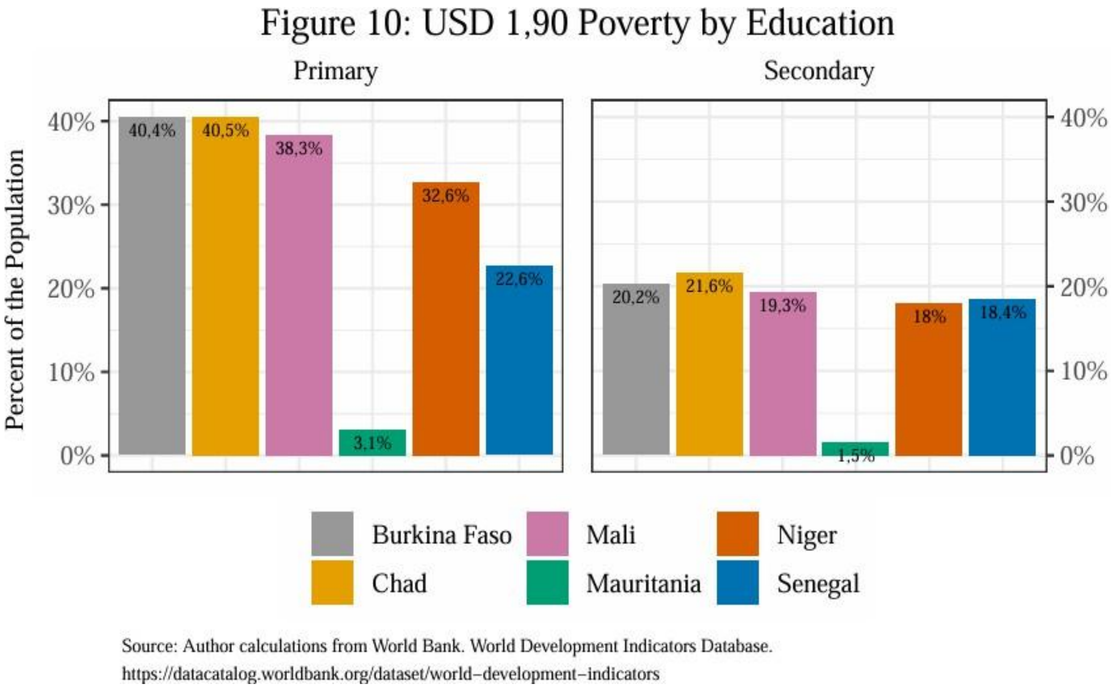


Figure III-9. Poverty by education, \$1.90/day

Profiles

The WDI data enable us to draw abbreviated poverty profiles for the 6 Sahel countries. Poverty in the Sahel is overwhelmingly a rural phenomenon, with the poverty rates in rural areas of the countries being 3-5 or even 8 times (Niger) that of urban areas (Table 3, Figure 5). Here, the rural nature of poverty in the Sahel is in accord with what is generally found in SSA and most of the rest of the world.

In terms of demographics, there is little visible or numeric difference between the poverty rates for females and males (Figure 6), although the WDI data do not include indicators for female-headed households separate from male-headed households. Poverty rates for adults aged 15-64 (Table 4, Figures 7-9), are lower in all countries than for children aged 14 and under (except Mauritania), or in elderly aged 65 and above (except in Niger). For four countries, children are between 15 to 30 percent poorer than adults, while the elderly are 10-20 percent poorer. The outlier is Niger where the elderly were less poor than adults in 2014.

Tableau III-3. Pauvreté urbaine rurale au seuil de 1,90 USD (pourcentage de la population pauvre).

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Pauvreté urbaine						
Burkina Faso	..	..	..	..	..	51,7
Tchad	..	..	44,0	..	..	..

Mali	59,9	..	..	..	..	..
Mauritanie	..	..	..	..	..	9,6
Niger	..	..	..	..	..	51,8
Sénégal	..	..	57,6	..	..	..
Pauvreté rurale						
Burkina Faso	..	..	..	..	..	15,2
Tchad	..	..	13,7	..	..	..
Mali	13,2	..	..	..	..	..
Mauritanie	..	..	..	..	..	2,0
Niger	..	..	..	..	..	6,5
Sénégal	..	..	12,4	..	..	..

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (WDI). https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world-development-indicators October 2020.

Tableau III-4. Tableau 4. Pauvreté au seuil de 1,90 USD par âge (pourcentage du groupe pauvre)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Age 0-14						
Burkina Faso	..	..	..	..	..	49,0
Tchad	..	..	40,7	..	..	..
Mali	53,7	..	..	..	..	..
Mauritanie	..	..	..	..	..	7,1
Niger	..	..	..	..	..	49,3
Sénégal	..	..	43,9	..	..	..
Age 15-64						
Burkina Faso	..	..	..	..	..	38,3
Tchad	..	..	35,5	..	..	..
Mali	45,3	..	..	..	..	..
Mauritanie	..	..	..	..	..	5,0
Niger	..	..	..	..	..	39,4
Sénégal	..	..	33,3	..	..	..
Age 65+						
Burkina Faso	..	..	..	..	..	46,1

Tchad	..	..	42,5	..	..	..
Mali	52,6	..	..	..	..	..
Mauritanie	..	..	..	..	..	5,7
Niger	..	..	..	..	..	30,9
Sénégal	..	..	35,6	..	..	..

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (WDI). https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world-development-indicators October 2020.

As in most other poor countries of SSA and the world, education is a powerful determinant of poverty in the Sahel. People with primary-only education were twice as likely to be poor in 5 Sahelian countries as people with secondary education (Table 5, Figure 10). Only in Senegal was this ratio lower, with people with primary education twenty percent more likely to be poor. This result could be because Senegal had a higher rate of education (see below).

Table III-5: Poverty rate by level of education

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Primaire						
Burkina Faso	..	..	..	..	..	40,4
Tchad	..	..	40,5	..	..	..
Mali	38,3	..	..	..	..	..
Mauritanie	..	..	..	..	..	3,1
Niger	..	..	..	..	..	32,6
Sénégal	..	..	22,6	..	..	..
Secondaire						
Burkina Faso	..	..	..	..	..	20,2
Tchad	..	..	21,6	..	..	..
Mali	19,3	..	..	..	..	..
Mauritanie	..	..	..	..	..	1,5
Niger	..	..	..	..	..	18,0
Sénégal	..	..	18,4	..	..	..

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (WDI).
https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world-development-indicators October 2020.

Poverty Gaps

The poverty rate measures what share of the population falls below the poverty line, but not by how much. The poverty gap is a measure of the difference between the average shortfall in per capita or consumption (or income) and the poverty line (Ravallion 2016; Foster, Greer & Thorbecke 1984) and addresses this question of the depth of poverty. Countries can have a lot of poverty in terms of a high percentage of the population below the poverty line, but with people not that far below-or countries can be plagued with both high poverty rates and deep poverty gaps, which are much more challenging for policy-makers to solve.

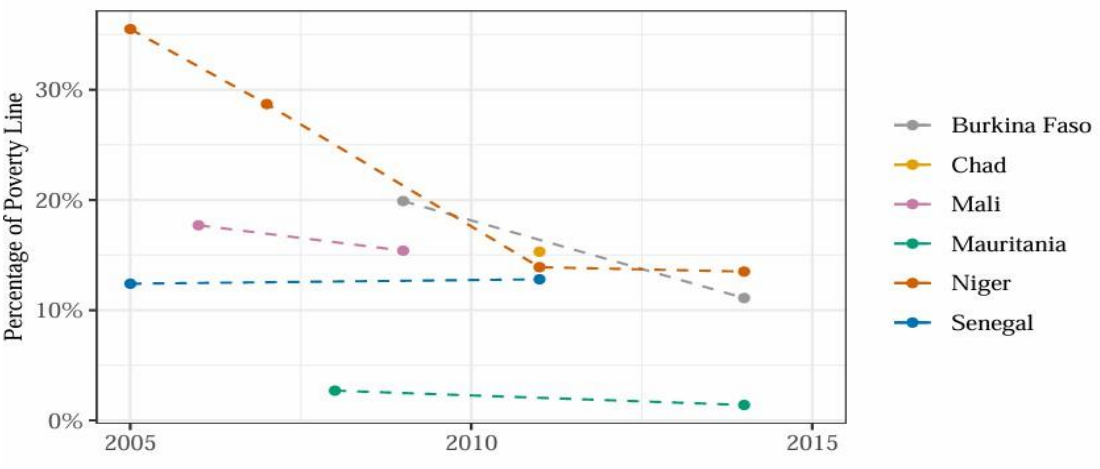
Table III-6. Poverty gaps at $1.90/day (percentage of people)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Burkina Faso	..	..	..	..	19,9	..	..	..	..	11,1
Tchad	..	..	..	..	..	..	15,3	..	..	..
Mali	..	17,7	..	..	15,4	..	..	..	..	..
Mauritanie	..	..	..	2,7	..	..	..	..	..	1,4
Niger	35,5	..	28,7	..	..	..	13,9	..	..	13,5
Sénégal	12,4	..	..	..	..	..	12,8	..	..	..

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (WDI). https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world-development-indicators October 2020.

We present the poverty gaps in Table III-6 and Figure 11. Again, the 5 Sahel countries are very close in terms of their average poverty gaps--around 10-15 percent, while Mauritania has almost a zero poverty gap--a mere 1,4 percent.

Figure 11: Poverty Gap at USD 1,90 line



Source: Author calculations from World Bank. World Development Indicators Database. https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world−development−indicators

USD 3.20 poverty

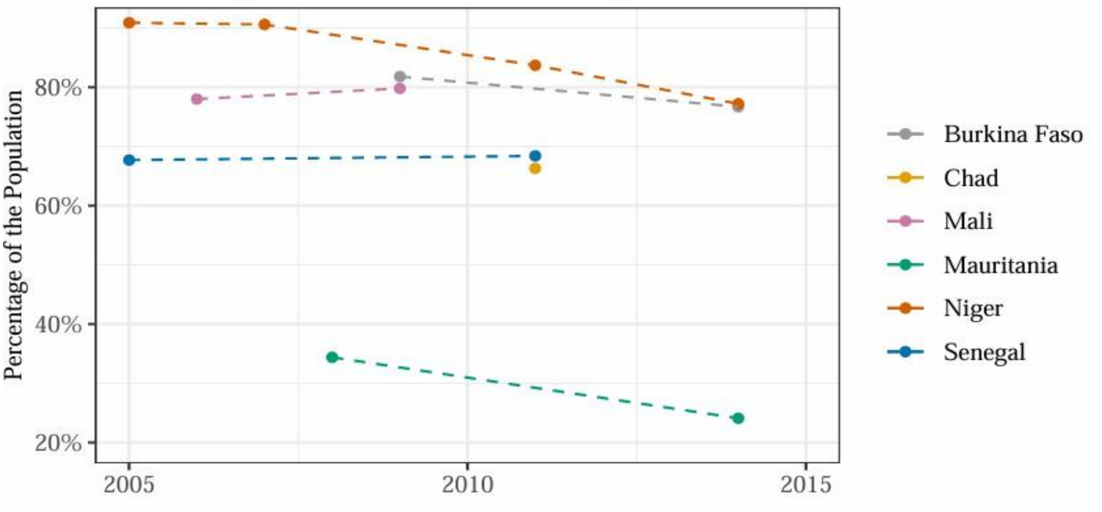
The World Bank increases the USD 1.90 poverty line to compare poverty for less-poor countries. We offer this comparison for the 6 Sahel countries (Table 7, Figure 12) and find that again, the 5 Sahel countries cluster roughly together with high rates of USD 3.20 poverty ranging from around 70 to 80 percent but Mauritania is again an outlier, with USD 3.20 poverty of under 25 percent.

Tableau III-7. Poverty gap at $3.20/day

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Burkina Faso	..	..	..	..	81,8	..	..	..	..	76,7
Chad	..	..	..	..	..	..	66,3	..	..	..
Mali	..	78,0	..	..	79,8	..	..	..	..	..
Mauritanie	..	..	..	34,4	..	..	..	..	..	24,1
Niger	90,9	..	90,6	..	..	..	83,7	..	..	77,2
Sénégal	67,7	..	..	..	..	..	68,4	..	..	..

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (WDI). https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world-development-indicators October 2020.

Figure 12: USD 3,20 Poverty Rates



Source: Author calculations from World Bank. World Development Indicators Database. https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world-development-indicators

Human Development Index

In an effort to consider non-monetary aspects of deprivation, the UN developed the Human Development Index (HDI) in 1990, and revised it over time, including in 2019. The HDI is a weighted average of per capita PPP gross national income (GNI, a monetary indicator), life expectancy, and two education measures.[30] The UN uses the HDI to rank countries annually. The Sahel countries compare very unfavorably (Table 8), with Niger placing dead last in the 2018 ranking (the most recent year data were available as of publication of this book).

Table III-8: Ranking of Sahel countries in the Human Development Index

			Espérance de vie	**Années prévues**	**Années moyennes de**
2018		**Rang IDH***	**À la naissance**	**De la scolarité**	**Scolarité**
Burkina Faso	0,434	182	61,2	8,9	1,6
Chad	0,401	187	54,0	7,5	2,4
Mali	0,427	184	58,9	7,6	2,4
Mauritanie	0,527	161	64,7	8,5	4,6
Niger	0,377	189	62,0	6,5	2,0
Sénégal	0,514	166	67,7	9,0	3,1

Note: Classification de 189 pays et territoires, 1 est le meilleur.*

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (WDI).
https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world-development-indicators October 2020.

- Des informations détaillées sont disponibles sur le site http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development index di et dans le rapport annuel des Nations unies sur le développement humain

The low HDI rankings of the Sahel countries in general, and of Niger in particular do not mean that our countries of focus are the "poorest" in the world. There are many countries which have higher rates of USD 1,90 per person per month poverty than the 6 Sahelian countries and much higher poverty gaps. Rather, low levels of per capita GNI seem to be the major reason to rank several of the 6 Sahel countries near or at the bottom.

Non-monetary Poverty Indicators

The WDI data provide a rich source of health and education information, and to a lesser extent, indicators on gender and water and sanitation, that can be used to assess non-monetary aspects of poverty. These detailed tabulations provide a more nuanced depiction

30. Details are found at http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-index-hdi and the annual UN *Human Development Report*.

of non-monetary deprivation than the HDI, which is an aggregated indicator for which per capita GNI provides significant weight.

When examining health and education indicators, Mauritania's outlier status as doing so much better than the other Sahel countries in terms of monetary poverty (USD 1,90 and 3,20 per person per day) fades. Indeed, on many dimensions, Senegal outperforms Mauritania in terms of indicators like child nutrition, life expectancy, and education. And on some health dimensions, HDI-last-ranked Niger is not performing as badly as Chad. The poor performance of Mauritania on non-monetary poverty indicators probably relates to its child poverty problem, which we identified in the poverty profile section.

Health

Some of the most important health indicators for non-monetary poverty assessment of a country are those that relate to children. We present neonatal mortality rates, infant mortality rates (by gender), under-five mortality rates (by gender), prevalence of wasting (by gender) under five, and prevalence of stunting (by gender) under five, in Tables 9-13 and Figures 13-17. Girls in the region have lower mortality rates and rates of under-nutrition. Senegal clearly dominates the 6 Sahel countries by performing best on these indicators, including equally by gender.

Table III-9. Neonatal mortality (per 1000 live births)

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Burkina Faso	34,7	33,5	32,5	31,6	30,9	30,2	29,7	29,0	28,5	28,0	27,5	27,0	26,5	25,9
Tchad	39,6	39,1	38,7	38,4	38,0	37,6	37,1	36,6	36,1	35,6	35,0	34,5	33,9	33,3
Mali	42,4	41,5	40,6	39,7	38,8	37,9	37,0	36,2	35,5	34,8	34,1	33,5	32,8	32,1
Mauritanie	41,0	40,4	39,8	39,1	38,3	37,6	37,0	36,2	35,5	34,8	34,2	33,5	32,7	32,0
Niger	35,2	34,0	32,7	31,5	30,5	29,5	28,6	27,9	27,1	26,5	25,9	25,3	24,8	24,3
Sénégal	30,8	29,7	28,6	27,7	26,8	26,1	25,5	24,9	24,4	24,0	23,5	23,0	22,5	22,0

Tablu III-10. Infant mortality (per 1000 live births)

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Mâle														
Burkina Faso	84,2	81,3	78,5	75,9	73,6	71,6	69,7	67,9	66,3	64,6	62,9	61,5	60,1	58,7
Tchad	99,0	97,2	95,4	93,5	91,6	89,8	88,0	86,2	84,5	82,8	80,9	79,0	77,1	75,3
Mali	92,3	89,9	87,5	85,2	82,9	80,7	78,6	76,5	74,5	72,6	70,8	69,0	67,2	65,5
Mauritanie	73,2	71,9	70,6	69,3	67,9	66,5	65,0	63,5	62,2	60,6	59,2	58,0	56,7	55,4
Niger	80,4	76,8	73,3	70,1	67,0	64,3	61,9	59,8	58,1	56,4	54,9	53,4	52,0	50,7
Sénégal	55,7	53,2	50,9	48,9	47,1	45,5	44,0	42,7	41,4	40,3	39,2	38,2	37,1	36,2
Femelle														
Burkina Faso	71,8	69,3	66,9	64,6	62,6	60,6	58,9	57,2	55,7	54,2	52,8	51,5	50,2	49,1
Tchad	83,3	81,8	80,2	78,5	76,8	75,2	73,6	72,0	70,5	69,0	67,4	65,8	64,2	62,5
Mali	78,8	76,5	74,3	72,2	70,1	68,2	66,2	64,4	62,6	60,8	59,2	57,7	56,1	54,6
Mauritanie	59,3	58,3	57,2	56,1	55,0	53,8	52,6	51,6	50,3	49,2	48,0	46,9	45,7	44,7
Niger	68,9	65,6	62,4	59,5	56,7	54,2	52,1	50,3	48,7	47,2	45,9	44,7	43,5	42,4
Sénégal	45,2	43,0	41,1	39,4	37,9	36,6	35,4	34,3	33,2	32,3	31,4	30,5	29,7	29,0

Source: Banque mondiale. Base de données des indicateurs du développement dans le monde (WDI). https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world-development-indicators. Consulté en octobre 2020, plusieurs jour

Table III-11. Child mortality (par 1000)

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Mâle														
Burkina Faso	152,2	145,2	138,5	132,3	126,7	121,9	117,4	113,3	109,4	105,6	101,9	98,5	95,4	92,2
Tchad	172,6	168,7	164,7	160,5	156,2	152,2	148,2	144,1	140,2	136,5	132,5	128,3	124,1	120,3
Mali	157,3	151,8	146,5	141,4	136,4	131,7	127,0	122,6	118,3	114,2	110,3	106,6	102,9	99,4
Mauritanie	113,9	111,3	108,8	106,0	103,2	100,4	97,3	94,5	91,8	88,8	86,1	83,7	81,2	78,7
Niger	163,8	153,5	143,8	134,8	126,3	118,9	112,4	106,9	102,4	98,0	94,1	90,4	87,2	84,0
Sénégal	90,3	84,5	79,4	74,9	71,0	67,6	64,5	61,8	59,3	57,1	54,8	52,9	51,0	49,3
Femelle														
Burkina Faso	140,6	134,0	127,7	121,8	116,4	111,6	107,2	103,1	99,2	95,5	92,0	88,8	85,8	82,7
Tchad	155,9	152,2	148,4	144,4	140,5	136,6	132,8	129,1	125,6	122,0	118,3	114,5	110,6	106,9
Mali	143,8	138,5	133,4	128,5	123,8	119,2	114,8	110,5	106,4	102,5	98,7	95,2	91,7	88,4
Mauritanie	99,1	96,8	94,3	91,8	89,3	86,6	83,9	81,5	79,0	76,3	73,9	71,5	69,0	66,8
Niger	154,9	144,7	135,1	126,2	117,9	110,6	104,3	99,0	94,3	90,1	86,2	82,7	79,4	76,5
Sénégal	79,9	74,3	69,4	65,1	61,4	58,2	55,3	52,8	50,4	48,2	46,2	44,4	42,7	41,1

Tableau III-12. Émaciation, taille par rapport au poids, des enfants de moins de 5 ans (pourcentage).

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Mâle														
Burkina Faso	26,2	..	..	..	16,6	11,8	12,6	..	9,4	..	8,6	9,7	9,4	..
Tchad	..	..	..	..	17,4	..	..	..	..	14,7	..	..	..	..
Mali	16,4	..	..	..	10,0	..	..	..	..	15,0	..	..	10,4	..
Mauritanie	..	14,4	9,3	..	..	14,9	13,1	..	..	16,4	..	..	13,3	..
Niger	14,0	..	..	..	..	..	14,6	14,1	16,2	..	12,7	..	..	..
Sénégal	..	..	..	..	..	9,8	..	10,0	6,3	8,2	7,8	9,8	..	8,9
Femelle														
Burkina Faso	22,6	..	..	..	14,4	8,9	8,7	..	7,6	..	6,3	7,5	7,3	..
Tchad	..	..	..	..	15,2	..	..	..	..	11,8	..	..	..	..
Mali	14,5	..	..	..	7,6	..	..	..	..	11,9	..	..	7,6	..
Mauritanie	..	12,8	6,8	..	..	12,9	10,2	..	..	13,3	..	..	9,7	..
Niger	11,0	..	..	..	..	..	12,2	10,8	12,2	..	8,2	..	..	..
Sénégal	..	..	..	..	..	9,7	..	8,0	5,5	7,3	6,4	8,2	..	7,3

Tableau III-13. Retard de croissance, taille par rapport à l'âge des enfants de moins de 5 ans (pourcentage)

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Mâle														
Burkina Faso	43,4	..	..	..	36,8	38,2	36,7	..	31,8	..	30,3	22,7	27,7	..
Tchad	..	..	..	..	40,3	..	..	..	..	40,9	..	..	..	..
Mali	39,9	..	..	..	29,9	..	..	..	..	32,9	..	..	28,0	..
Mauritanie	..	33,0	26,4	..	..	31,2	25,4	..	..	29,6	..	..	25,5	..
Niger	56,9	..	..	..	..	..	42,5	44,4	44,6	..	42,8	..	..	..
Sénégal	..	..	..	..	..	28,2	..	20,6	20,4	22,7	19,4	18,0	..	20,7
Femelle														
Burkina Faso	36,4	..	..	..	32,5	30,8	28,7	..	26,1	..	23,0	19,4	22,0	..
Tchad	..	..	..	..	37,1	..	..	..	..	38,6	..	..	..	..
Mali	35,3	..	..	..	25,6	..	..	..	..	27,8	..	..	25,7	..
Mauritanie	..	29,9	20,5	..	..	28,2	20,5	..	..	26,2	..	..	20,1	..
Niger	52,5	..	..	..	..	..	37,1	40,6	39,9	..	39,8	..	..	..
Sénégal	..	..	..	..	..	25,1	..	16,9	17,1	18,6	14,7	15,0	..	16,9

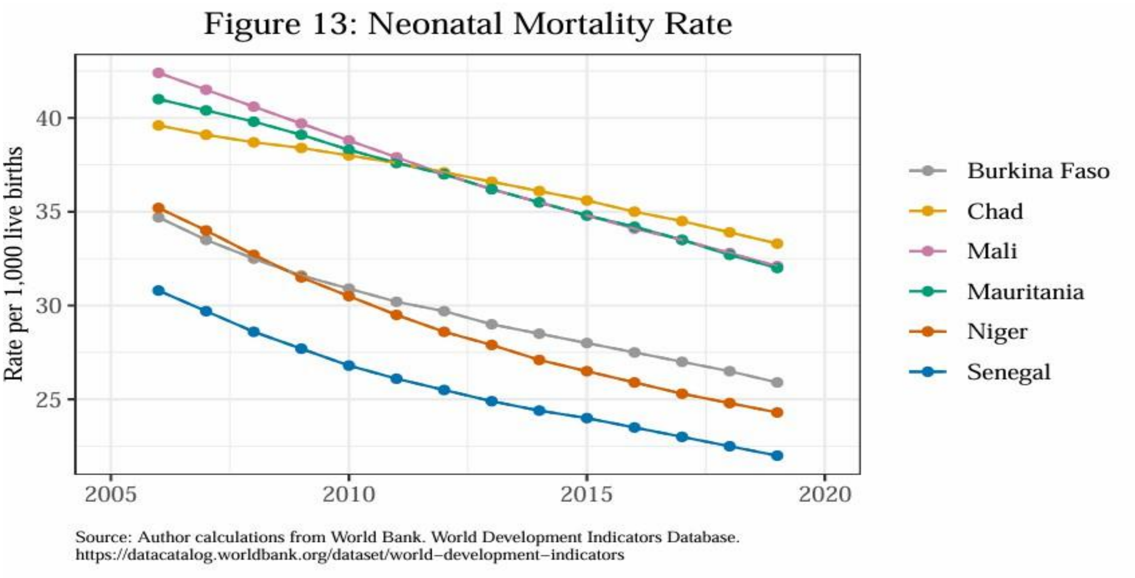


Figure III-13. Taux de mortalité néonatale

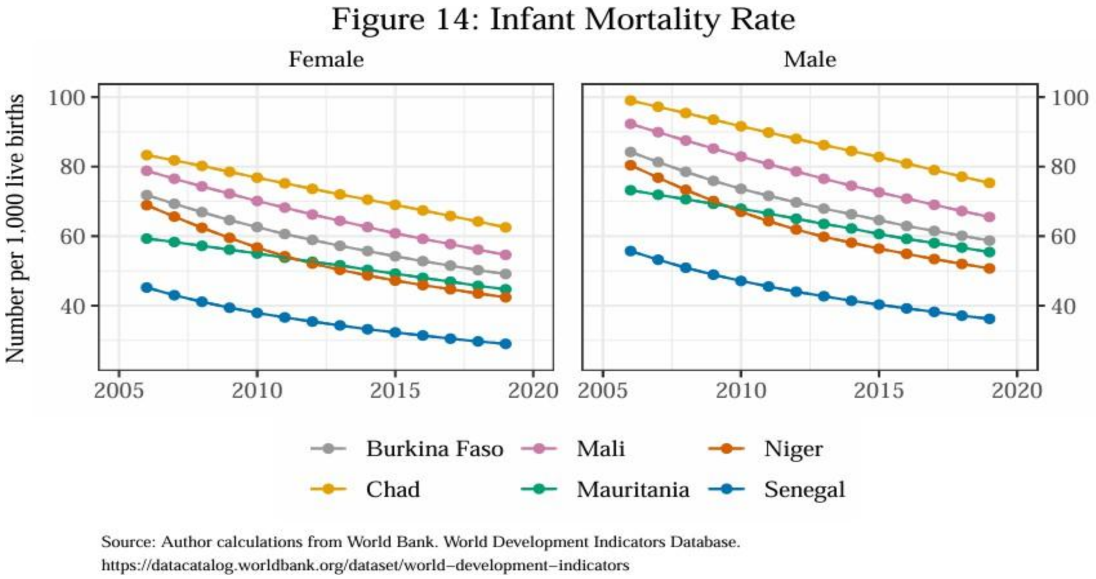


Figure III-14. Taux de mortalité infantile.

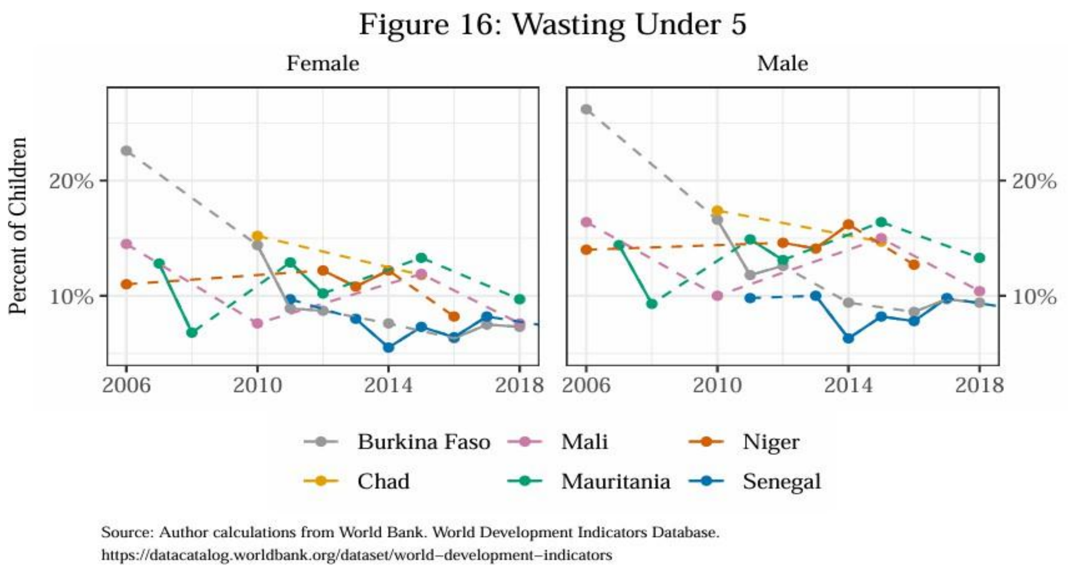


Figure III-15. Retard de croissance chez les enfants de moins de 5 ans

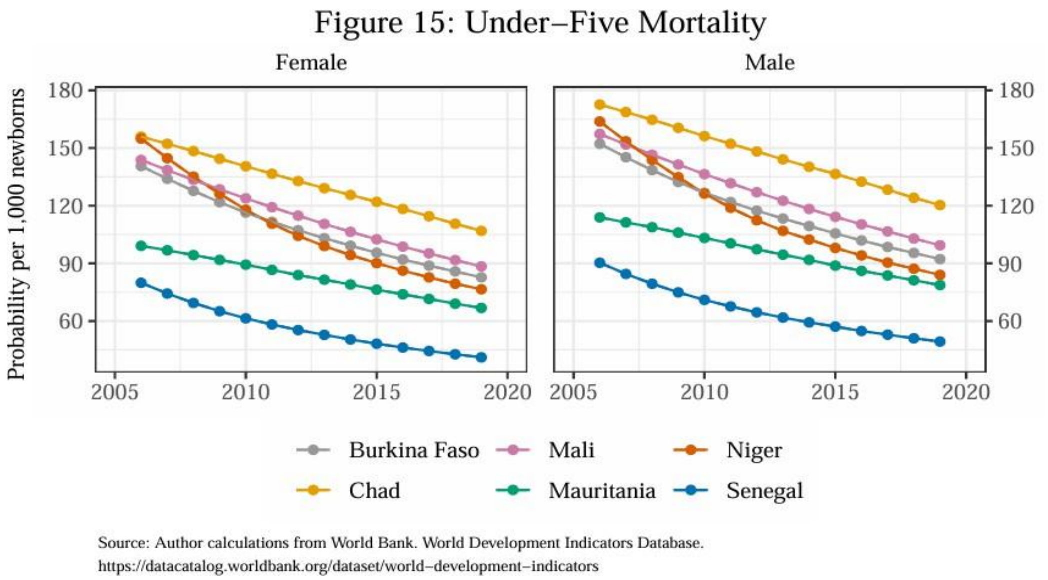


Figure III-16. Mortalité à moins de 5 ans

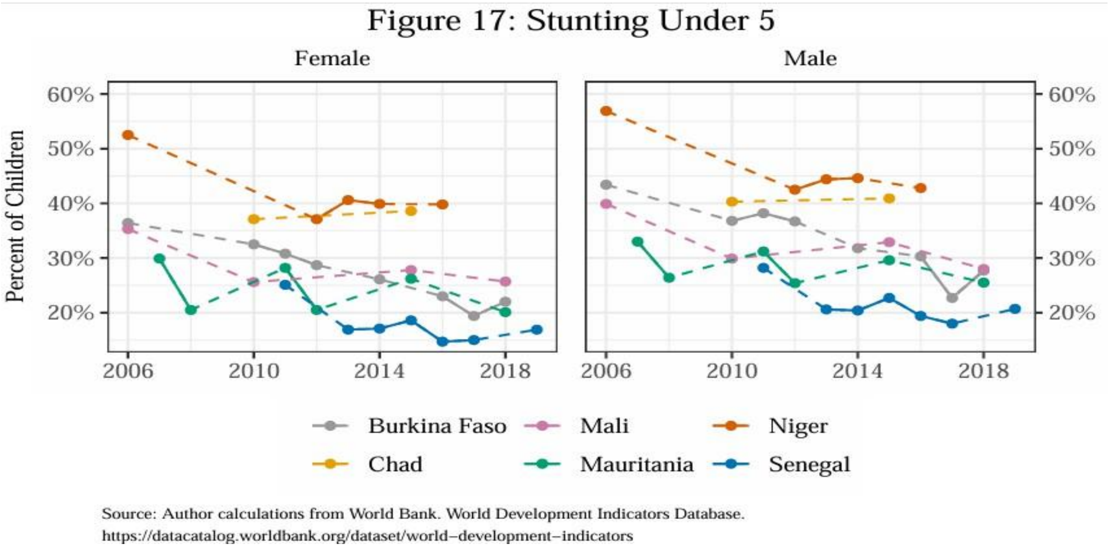


Figure III-17. Émaciation des enfants de moins de 5 ans

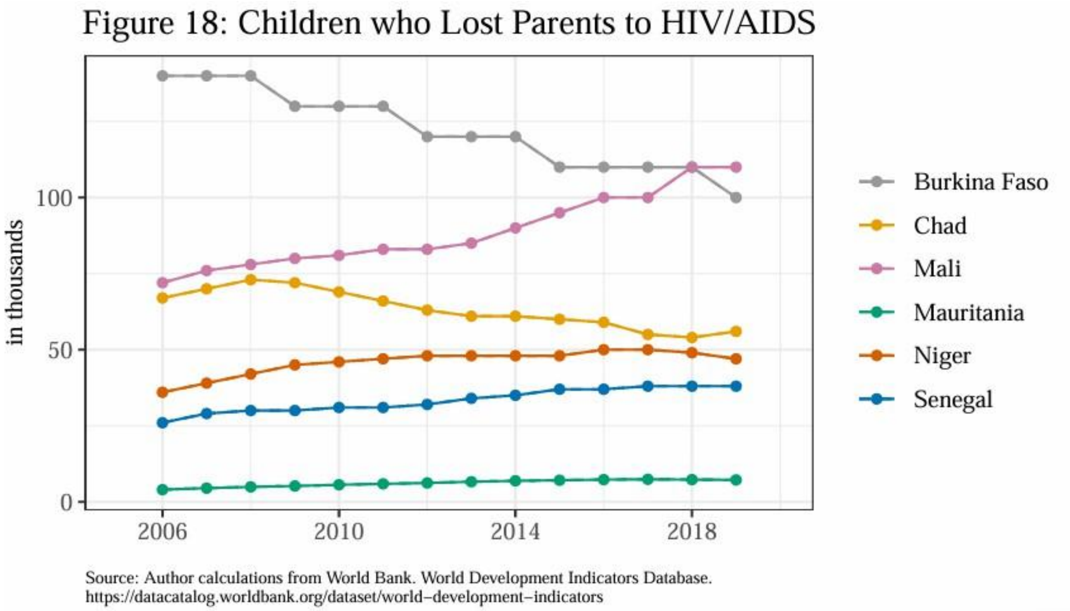


Figure III-18. Enfants ayant perdu leurs parents à cause du VIH/SIDA

There is one indicator relating to children that Mauritania outperforms the other five, but this indicator actually reflects the size of the population more than anything else--it is the absolute number of children who have lost a parent or parents to HIV/AIDS (Table 14, Figure 18). Mauritania has only 7 percent of the number of children who have lost parents to AIDS of Burkina Faso or Mali, but its population is also much smaller than either of those countries.

Tableau III-14. Absolute number of children who have lost a parent to HIV/AIDS

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Burkina Faso	140.000	140.000	140.000	130.000	130.000	130.000	120.000
Chad	67.000	70.000	73.000	72.000	69.000	66.000	63.000
Mali	72.000	76.000	78.000	80.000	81.000	83.000	83.000
Mauritanie	4.000	4.500	4.900	5.200	5.600	5.900	6.200
Niger	36.000	39.000	42.000	45.000	46.000	47.000	48.000
Sénégal	26.000	29.000	30.000	30.000	31.000	31.000	32.000
	2013	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**
Burkina Faso	120.000	120.000	110.000	110.000	110.000	110.000	100.000
Chad	61.000	61.000	60.000	59.000	55.000	54.000	56.000
Mali	85.000	90.000	95.000	100.000	100.000	110.000	110.000
Mauritanie	6.600	6.900	7.100	7.300	7.400	7.300	7.200
Niger	48.000	48.000	48.000	50.000	50.000	49.000	47.000
Sénégal	34.000	35.000	37.000	37.000	38.000	38.000	38.000

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (WDI).
https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world-development-indicators October 2020.

Moving to adult health indicators, Senegal has the highest life expectancy at birth of both women and men in the 6 Sahel countries (Table 15, Figure 19). Senegal and Mauritania are essentially tied for best performance in terms of lowest incidence of malaria cases per 1000 population at risk (Table 16, Figure 20), while Burkina Faso has the worst outcomes of the 6 Sahel countries and Mali also has a high rate of malaria. The picture is opposite for tuberculosis, which incidence is lowest in Burkina Faso and Mali, but relatively high in Senegal although still outpaced by Chad (Table 17, Figure 21).

	2006	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**
Mâle													
Burkina Faso	53,3	54,1	54,9	55,7	56,4	57,1	57,7	58,2	58,7	59,2	59,6	60,0	60,4
Tchad	47,7	48,1	48,6	49,1	49,6	50,1	50,6	51,0	51,4	51,7	52,0	52,3	52,6
Mali	52,2	52,9	53,6	54,1	54,6	55,1	55,5	55,9	56,4	56,8	57,3	57,7	58,1
Mauritanie	59,7	59,9	60,2	60,4	60,7	61,0	61,3	61,6	61,9	62,3	62,6	62,8	63,1
Niger	53,4	54,1	54,9	55,6	56,4	57,1	57,8	58,4	59,0	59,5	60,0	60,5	60,9
Sénégal	59,8	60,6	61,3	62,0	62,6	63,1	63,6	64,0	64,4	64,7	65,0	65,2	65,5
Femelle													
Burkina Faso	54,7	55,4	56,2	56,9	57,6	58,3	58,9	59,5	60,0	60,5	61,0	61,4	61,9
Tchad	50,1	50,5	51,0	51,6	52,2	52,8	53,3	53,8	54,2	54,6	54,9	55,1	55,4
Mali	53,5	54,2	54,8	55,4	55,9	56,3	56,8	57,2	57,7	58,2	58,7	59,2	59,6
Mauritanie	63,4	63,6	63,8	64,0	64,3	64,5	64,8	65,1	65,3	65,6	65,8	66,1	66,3
Niger	55,0	55,8	56,7	57,5	58,4	59,1	59,9	60,6	61,2	61,8	62,3	62,8	63,2
Sénégal	62,8	63,6	64,3	65,1	65,8	66,5	67,2	67,7	68,2	68,6	69,0	69,3	69,6

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (WDI). https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world-development-indicators October 2020.

Tableau III-15. Incidence du paludisme (pour 1 000 personnes à risque)

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Burkina Faso	493,8	503,8	533,4	552,0	551,2	539,6	527,5	487,5	436,1	400,1	401,7	399,9	398,7
Tchad	205,6	210,7	215,1	222,9	225,9	210,5	195,3	179,4	170,3	167,3	169,9	172,3	164,8
Mali	405,7	388,8	379,1	374,6	383,6	404,7	435,7	452,8	441,0	391,8	384,2	386,8	386,8
Mauritanie	72,4	70,8	61,1	31,6	38,8	47,6	28,4	33,2	49,2	61,6	71,5	55,5	39,4
Niger	370,7	386,7	409,1	419,1	425,6	427,9	430,5	420,5	400,3	369,8	358,7	356,6	356,6
Sénégal	117,7	101,9	86,4	57,1	59,3	49,9	56,9	67,9	39,5	69,8	45,7	52,4	55,8

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (WDI). https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world-development-indicators October 2020.

Tableau III-16. Incidence de la tuberculose (pour 100 000 personnes)

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Burkina Faso	63	62	61	60	58	57	55	54	54	52	51	49	48
Tchad	150	149	149	148	147	147	146	146	145	144	144	143	142
Mali	68	66	65	64	63	62	61	60	58	57	56	55	53
Mauritanie	170	160	151	143	135	128	121	115	111	107	102	97	93
Niger	136	129	123	118	113	109	105	102	98	95	93	90	87
Sénégal	139	138	136	134	132	130	129	127	125	123	122	120	118

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (WDI). https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world-development-indicators October 2020.

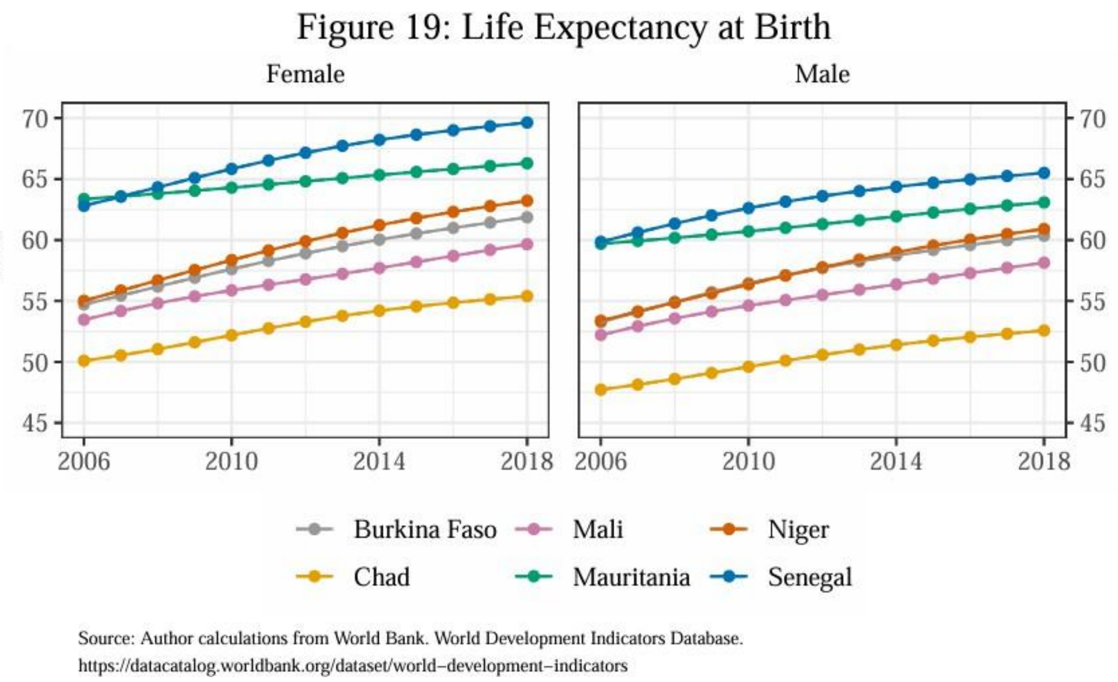


Figure III-19. Espérance de vie à la naissance

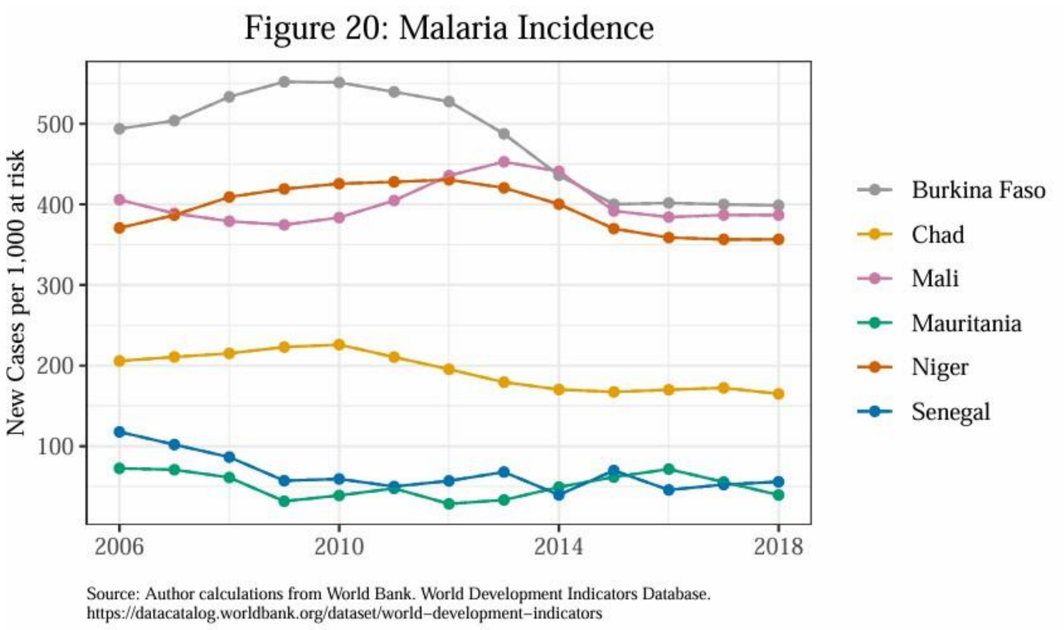


Figure III-20. Incidence Malaria

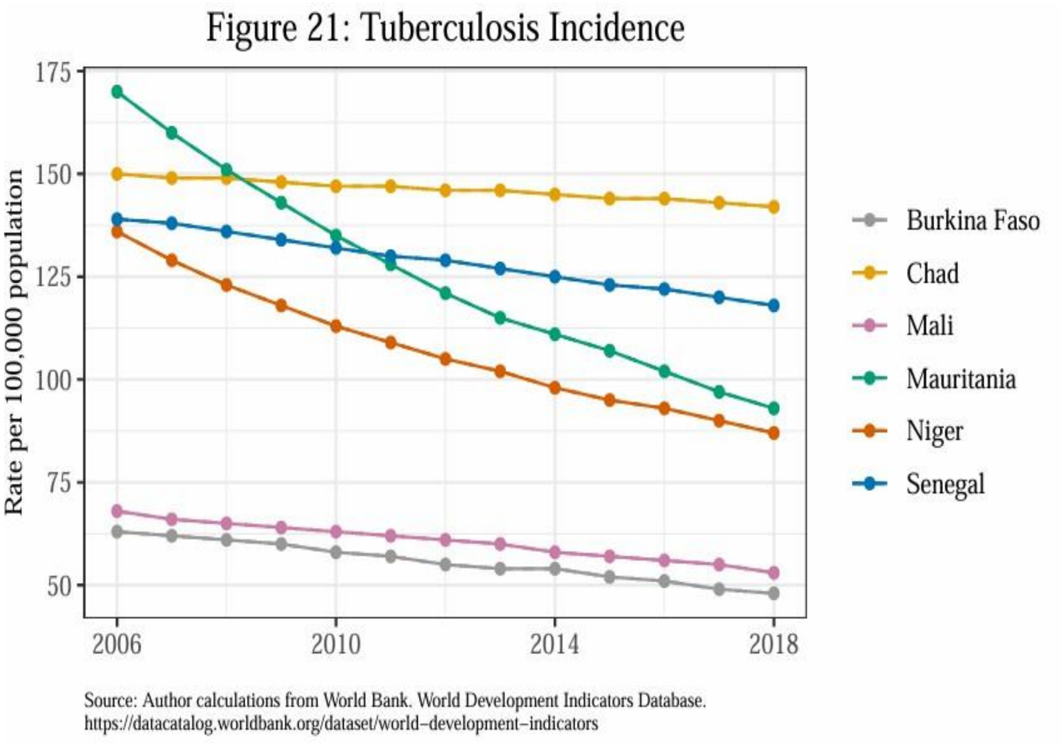


Figure III-21. Incidence tuberculose

Education

In terms of outputs of the education system, Senegal and Mauritania have the highest rates of adult literacy, although male literacy is markedly higher than female literacy in both countries (Table 18, Figure 22). Literacy in both genders is lowest in Chad, and is roughly on a par in the other 3 Sahel countries. Primary school graduation ratios in Burkina Faso surged in to above 75 percent in 2012-2013, although this abated in 2016 (Table 19, Figure 23). Primary school gross graduation rates were clustered together for the other 5 Sahel countries, in the range of 20-25 percent. Rates do not differ appreciably between girls and boys.

Tableau III-17. Taux d'alphabétisation des hommes et femmes.

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2019
Homme														
Burkina Faso	31,4	29,7	36,7	..	..	..	..	..	..	44,4	..	..	..	50,1
Tchad	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	38,9	31,3	..	..
Mali	..	34,9	..	..	..	43,4	43,3	..	..	..	45,1	..	..	46,2
Mauritanie	..	..	57,4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	63,7	..
Niger	42,9	..	..	..	..	..	..	39,1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Sénégal	..	52,3	..	..	61,8	..	66,3	..	52,8	..	..	..	64,8	..
Femme														
Burkina Faso	16,6	16,3	21,6	..	..	..	..	..	..	26,2	..	..	..	32,7
Tchad	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	13,9	14,0	..	..
Mali	..	18,2	..	..	..	20,3	24,6	..	..	..	22,2	..	..	25,7
Mauritanie	..	..	57,4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	63,7	..
Niger	42,9	..	..	..	..	..	..	39,1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Sénégal	..	52,3	..	..	61,8	..	66,3	..	52,8	..	..	..	64,8	..

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (WDI). https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world-development-indicators October 2020

Tableau III-18. Brut d'obtention de diplôme au primaire (Pourcent)

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Mâle													
Burkina Faso	30,7	30,9	..	..	..	41,6	41,7	80,3	75,0	..	60,0	..	..
Tchad	27,1	..	..	..	29,1	31,4	32,6	27,3	..	..	..	..	..
Mali	..	33,2	41,5	40,4	39,0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mauritanie	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	25,6	37,3	..	39,3	38,5	37,5
Niger	..	16,8	20,7	25,0	25,7	28,7	26,8	28,3	..	32,1	23,3	32,8	33,3
Sénégal	..	35,6	..	..	..	39,7	31,0	25,2	22,2	25,0	39,0	38,2	34,2
Femelle													
Burkina Faso	23,0	23,7	..	..	..	36,4	36,1	83,9	82,8	..	64,6	..	..
Tchad	12,9	..	..	..	15,5	16,7	18,2	15,5	..	..	..	..	..
Mali	..	21,9	22,0	27,9	28,3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mauritanie	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	23,7	36,1	..	40,1	39,2	40,4
Niger	..	10,0	13,2	15,8	17,6	20,3	19,3	21,4	..	24,4	31,3	26,9	28,4
Sénégal	..	30,4	..	..	..	61,0	23,7	45,5	24,3	27,2	47,2	43,2	40,0

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (WDI). https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world-development-indicators October 2020

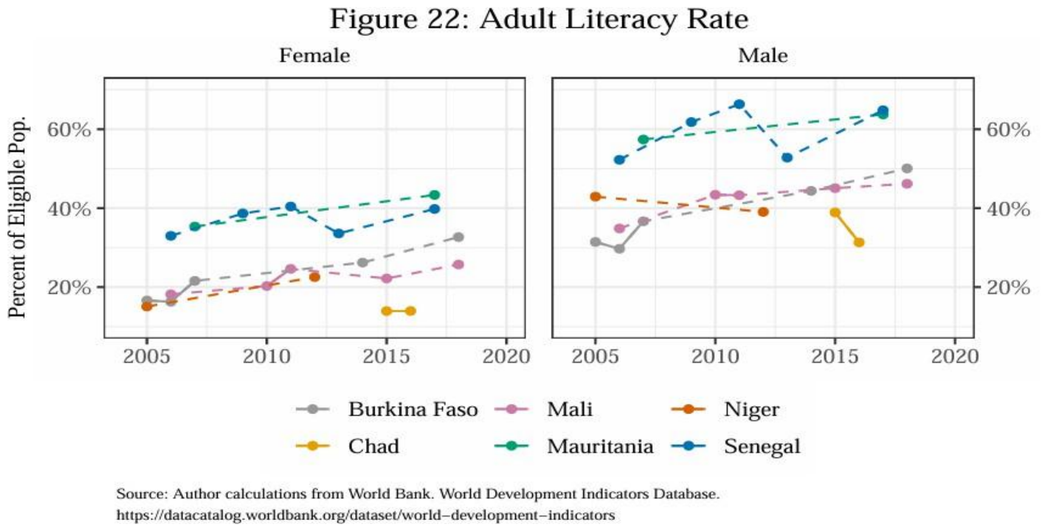


Figure III-23. Taux d'alphabétisation des adultes

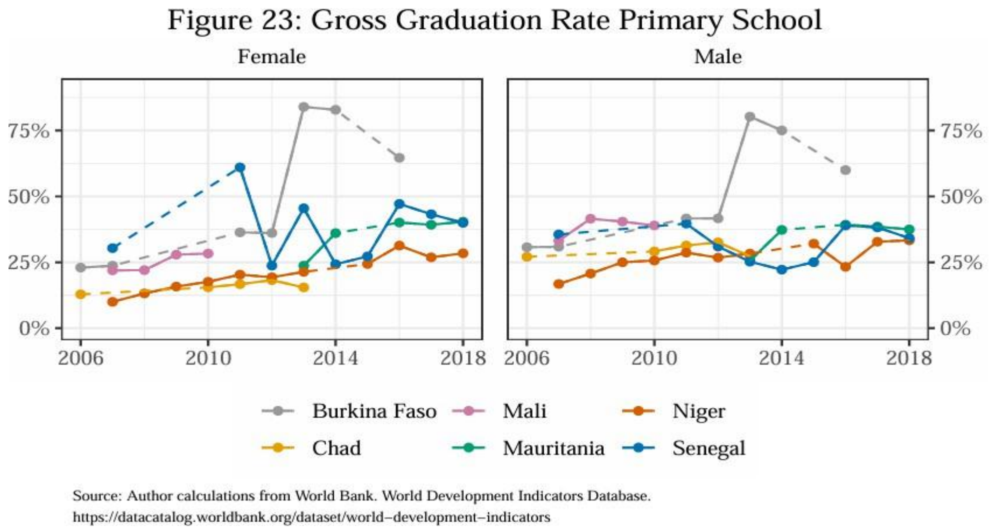


Figure III-22. Taux brut de diplomation à l'école primaire

As for inputs, Senegal and Mauritania send more girls to primary school as measured by net enrollment rates (Table 20, Figure 24), while Niger sends the least. Net enrollment rates for primary school are clustered more closely for boys, although there was a very sharp surge for boys in Chad that propelled Chad to a 90 percent rate above the other 5 Sahel countries in 2013-2015. Net enrollment rates for primary school increased from 2005, leading to increases in expected years of schooling for both girls (slightly higher) and boys in 2020 (Table 21, Figure 25).

Tableau III-19. Taux net de scolarisation, école primaire

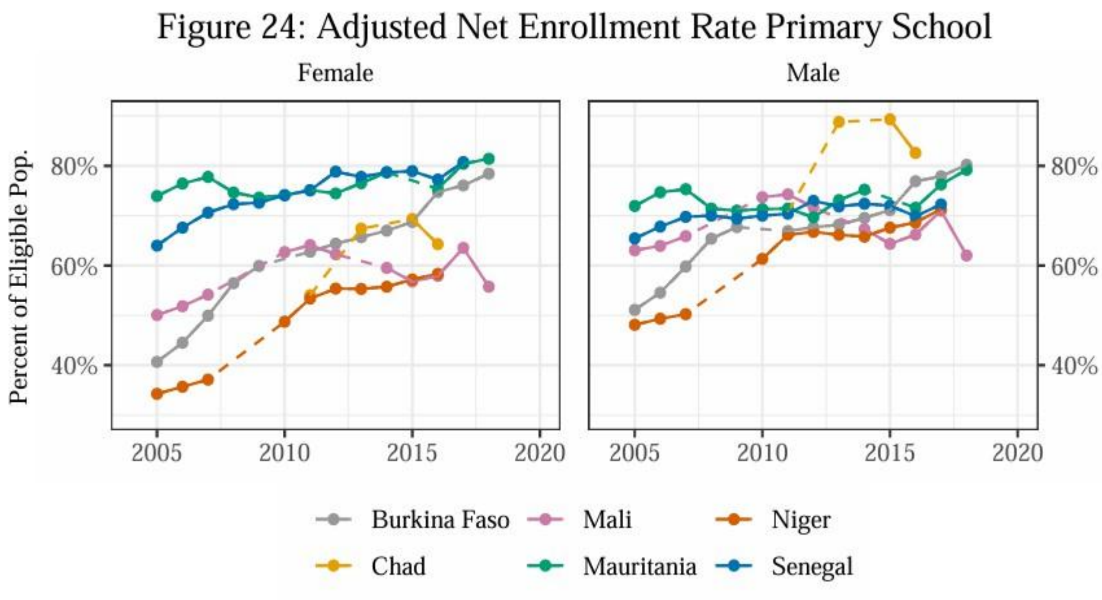
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2019
Homme														
Burkina Faso	51,1	54,6	59,8	65,4	67,7	..	66,9	67,7	68,2	69,6	71,1	76,9	77,9	80,2
Tchad	..	..	..	..	..	..	70,7	..	88,8	..	89,3	82,6	..	..
Mali	63,1	63,9	65,9	..	..	73,7	74,3	71,7	..	67,3	64,4	66,2	71,0	62,0
Mauritanie	72,0	74,7	75,3	71,4	71,0	71,3	71,4	69,7	73,1	75,2	..	71,6	76,3	79,2
Niger	48,1	49,3	50,3	..	..	61,3	66,2	66,8	66,2	65,8	67,6	68,6	71,3	..
Sénégal	65,4	67,8	69,8	70,0	69,4	70,0	70,4	73,0	71,9	72,4	72,0	69,9	72,3	..
Femme														
Burkina Faso	40,7	44,5	49,9	56,5	59,9	..	62,8	64,4	65,7	67,0	68,8	74,8	76,1	78,4
Tchad	..	..	..	..	..	..	54,0	..	67,4	..	69,3	64,3	..	..
Mali	50,1	51,8	54,2	..	..	62,7	64,1	62,3	..	59,5	56,8	57,9	63,5	55,8
Mauritanie	73,9	76,5	77,8	74,7	73,6	74,1	75,1	74,5	76,5	78,7	..	75,4	80,4	81,4
Niger	34,3	35,7	37,1	..	..	48,7	53,4	55,4	55,3	55,8	57,2	58,3	..	..
Sénégal	64,0	67,6	70,6	72,3	72,6	74,1	75,1	78,8	77,8	78,7	79,0	77,3	80,8	..

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (WDI).
https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world- development-indicators October 2020

Tableau III-20. Nombre d'années de scolarité prévues

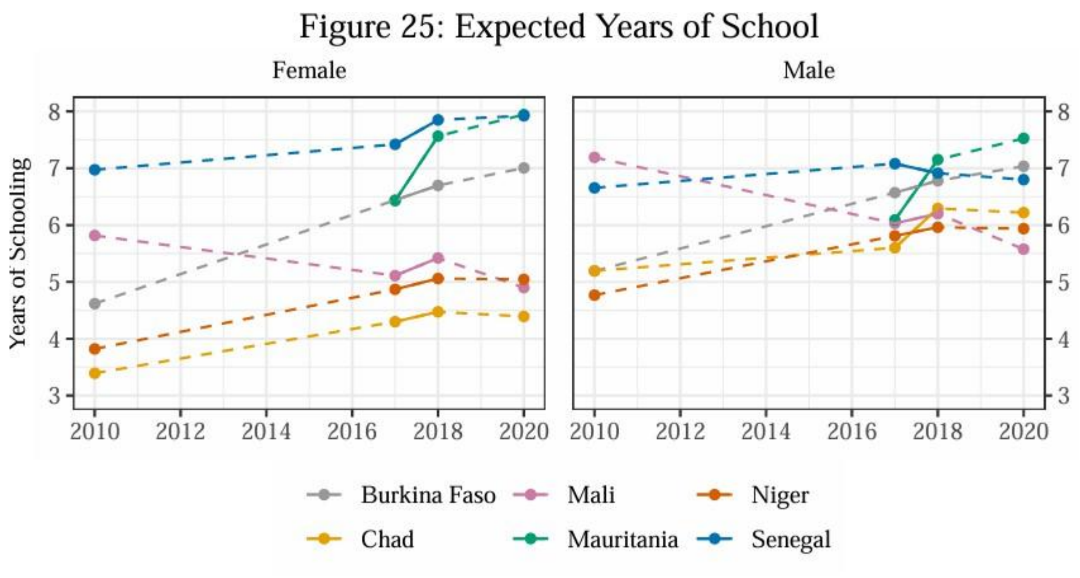
	2010	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**
Homme											
Burkina Faso	5,2	..	..	..	..	..	..	6,6	6,8	..	7,0
Tchad	5,2	..	..	..	..	..	..	5,6	6,3	..	6,2
Mali	7,2	..	..	..	..	..	..	6,0	6,2	..	5,6
Mauritanie	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6,1	7,2	..	7,5
Niger	4,8	..	..	..	..	..	..	5,8	6,0	..	5,9
Sénégal	6,7	..	..	..	..	..	..	7,1	6,9	..	6,8
Femme											
Burkina Faso	4,6	..	..	..	..	..	..	6,4	6,7	..	7,0
Tchad	3,4	..	..	..	..	..	..	4,3	4,5	..	4,4
Mali	5,8	..	..	..	..	..	..	5,1	5,4	..	4,9
Mauritanie	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6,4	7,6	..	7,9
Niger	3,8	..	..	..	..	..	..	4,9	5,1	..	5,0
Sénégal	7,0	..	..	..	..	..	..	7,4	7,8	..	7,9

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (WDI).
https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world- development-indicators October 2020.



Source: Author calculations from World Bank. World Development Indicators Database.
https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world-development-indicators

Figure III-24. Taux net ajusté de scolarisation à l'école primaire



Source: Author calculations from World Bank. World Development Indicators Database.
https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world-development-indicators

Figure III-25. Années de scolarisation attendues

Gender

We presented non-monetary health and education indicators disaggregated by gender where the WDI data permitted. In this section, we look at three indicators of special relevance to gender considerations: maternal mortality, age at first marriage, and female genital mutilation. The maternal mortality ratio (MMR) declined in all 6 Sahel countries since 2006 (Table 22, Figure 26), but remained sharply higher in Chad, while lowest in Burkina Faso and Senegal. The MMR in Mali was about half-way between that in Chad and Senegal/Burkina Faso in 2017, with Chad and Niger falling between Mali and the lowest 2 Sahel countries.

Tableau III-21. Taux de mortalité maternelle (Estimation modélisée, pour 100 000 naissances vivantes)

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Burkina Faso	422	410	401	393	385	377	369	362	353	343	331	320
Tchad	1.340	1.300	1.310	1.270	1.240	1.210	1.190	1.170	1.170	1.160	1.140	1.140
Mali	675	663	661	661	660	663	663	663	642	620	590	562
Mauritanie	821	820	819	822	824	822	812	805	796	785	777	766
Niger	739	725	709	688	663	639	616	594	573	555	530	509
Sénégal	514	504	492	472	447	423	400	381	364	346	330	315

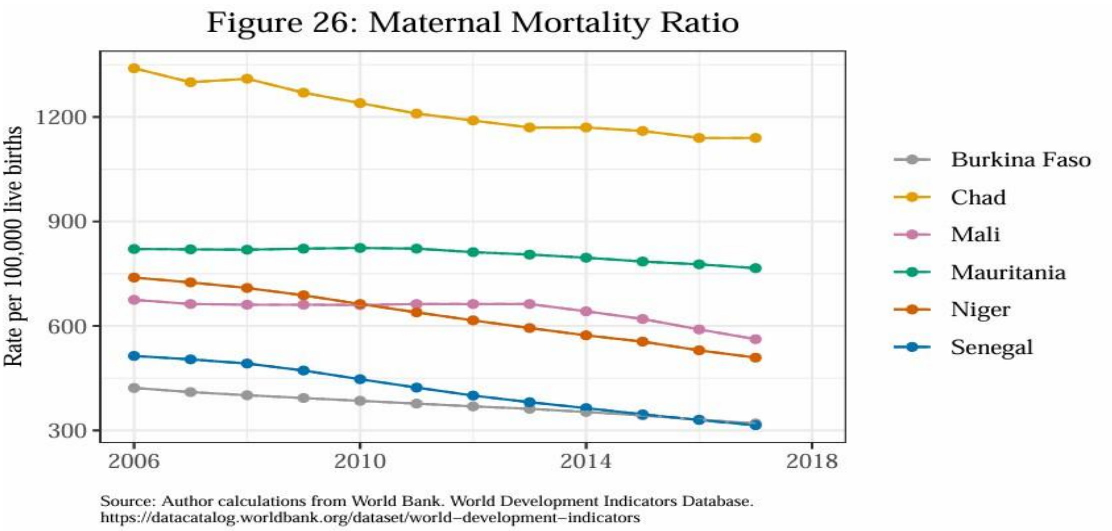


Figure III-26. Ratio de mortalité maternelle

There was a pronounced gap between age at first marriage between women and men (Table 23, Figure 27). Age at first marriage was highest for women in Senegal (22) in 2013, and lowest (at 17 in 2011_ in Niger, while men married on average at age 30.5 for the first time in Senegal and age 25 in Niger.

Tableau III-22. Âge au premier mariage (années)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Mâle									
Burkina Faso	26,4	..	..	..	25,3	..	..	..	..
Tchad	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mali	24,0	..	..	27,6	..	..	..	25,9	..
Mauritanie	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Niger	25,1	..	..	..	..	..	25,0	..	..
Sénégal	..	..	..	..	30,0	..	..	29,2	30,5
Femelle									
Burkina Faso	20,3	..	..	..	19,5	..	..	..	..
Chad	..	..	..	..	18,2	..	..	..	..
Mali	17,8	..	..	19,9	..	..	..	18,5	..
Mauritanie	..	21,6	..	..	..	21,6	..	..	..
Niger	17,7	..	..	..	..	..	17,2	..	..
Sénégal	..	..	..	..	21,6	..	..	22,1	22,4

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (WDI).
https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/ world-development-indicators October 2020.

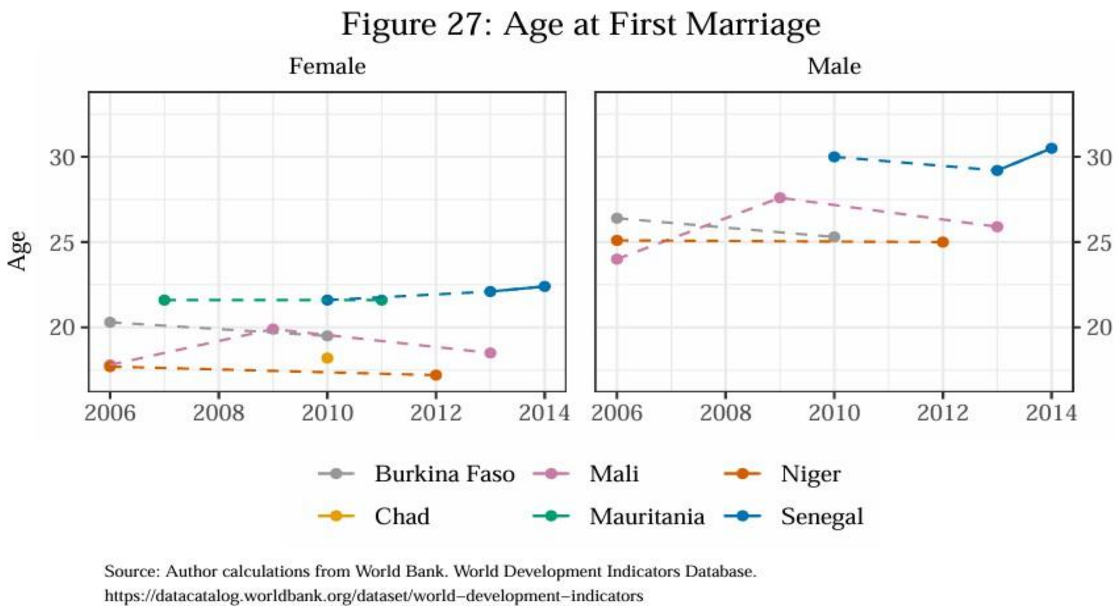


Figure III-28. Age au premier mariage

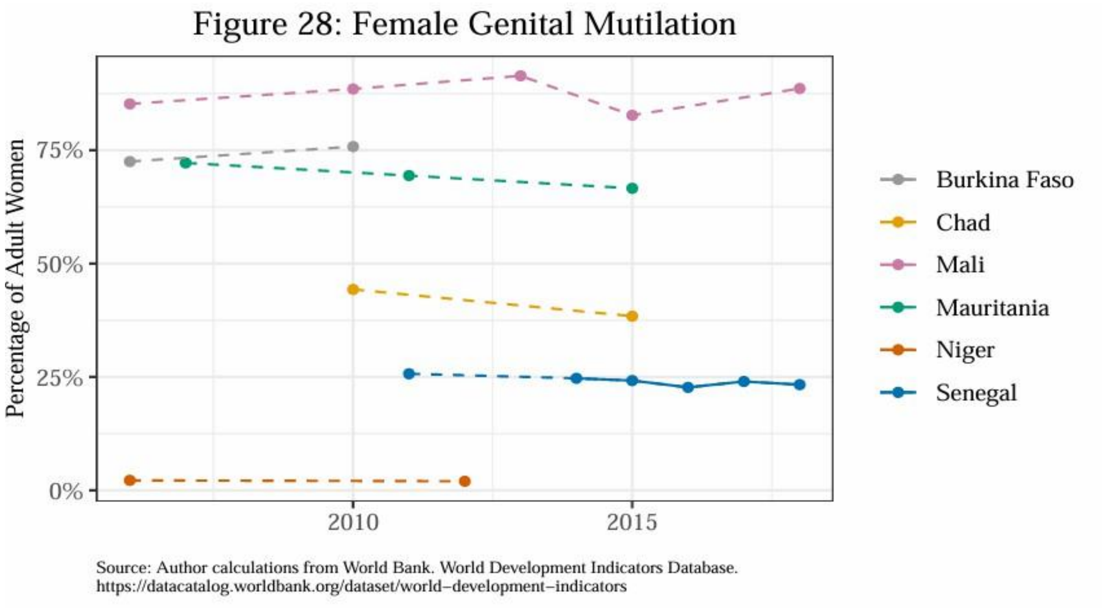


Figure III-27. Mutilations génitales féminines

There was a wide dispersion in the prevalence of female genital mutilation (FGM), ranging from about 83 percent in 2015 in Mali (down from 91 two years preceding) to nearly zero in Niger (2 percent in 2012). FGM rates were lower in Chad at 38 percent in 2015 and about a quarter of women in Senegal in 2017.

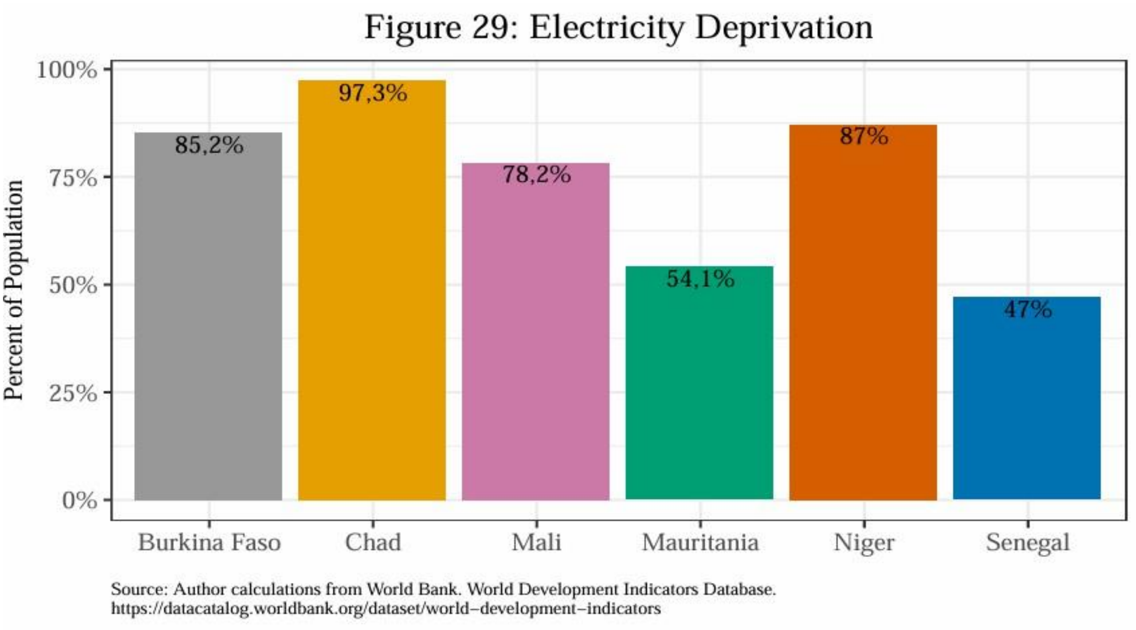
Electricity and Water/Sanitation

Access to electricity ranges from a low of less than 3 percent of the population in Niger in 2011 to about half of the populations of Mauritania and Senegal (Table 25, Figure 29). Access to electricity is quite low in Burkina Faso and Niger at only about 13-15 percent of the population.

Tableau III-23. Électricité (pourcentage de la population défavorisée).

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Burkina Faso	..	..	..	..	..	85,2
Tchad	..	..	97,3	..	..	..
Mali	78,2	..	..	..	..	..
Mauritanie	..	..	..	..	..	54,1
Niger	..	..	..	..	..	87,0
Sénégal	..	..	47,0	..	..	..

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (WDI). https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world-development-indicators October 2020.



Data on water is only available for 5 of the 6 Sahel countries-the WDI database lacks information for Mauritania. Mali has the lowest rate of households with water 30 minutes or further distance from households (Table 26, Figure 30), but Senegal has the highest rate of households with water on premises by a large margin--five times that of Mali, suggesting that settlements in Mali are located near water sources while Senegal has strong water infrastructure (Table 27, Figure 31).

Tableau III-24. Taux le plus bas de ménages disposant d'eau à 30 minutes

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Burkina Faso	..	..	..	..	14,2	..	..	..	21,9	..	..	..	32,6
Tchad	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	26,0	..	..	..
Mali	2,3	..	..	..	..	..	..	3,2	..	4,8	..	..	4,4
Mauritanie	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Niger	26,1	..	..	..	..	..	33,2	..	..	..	..	..	..
Sénégal	..	..	..	..	..	5,6	..	6,8	6,6	6,0	4,3	4,1	5,8

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (WDI). https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world-development-indicators October 2020.

Tableau III-25. Eau sur les lieux (Pourcentage des ménages)

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Burkina Faso	..	..	..	..	11,4	..	..	..	16,6	..	..	..	17,1
Tchad	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	11,2	..	..	..
Mali	45,4	..	..	..	..	..	..	37,1	..	27,5	..	..	33,0

Mauritanie	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Niger	13,5	..	..	..	..	..	10,7	..	..	..	..	..	..
Sénégal	..	..	..	..	..	61,4	..	60,3	65,3	58,4	68,5	71,7	75,0

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (WDI).
https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/ world-development-indicators October 2020.

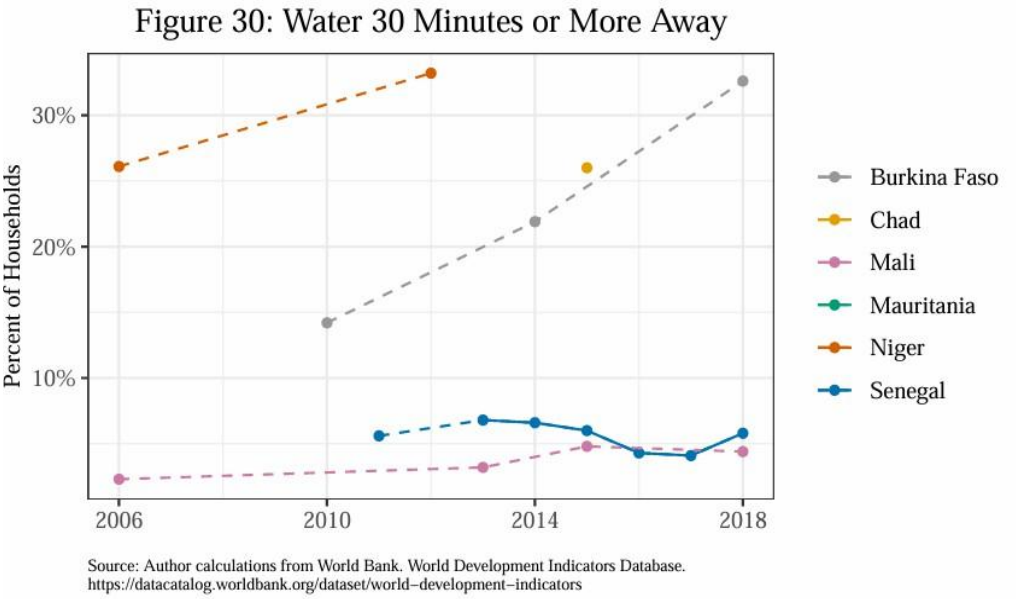


Figure III-30. Accès à l'eau à domicile

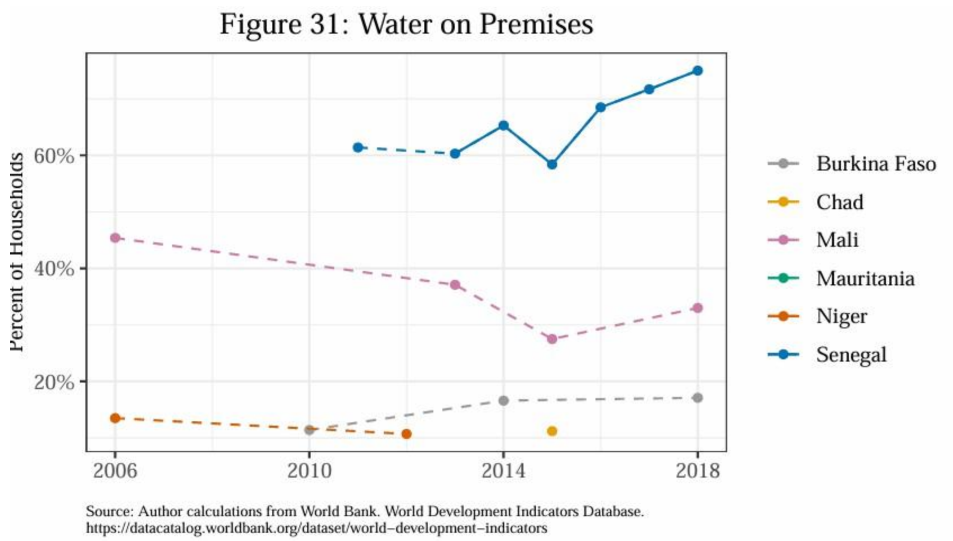


Figure III-31. Accès à l'eau à 30 minutes ou plus

Mali is also a leader in sanitation, with a markedly low level of the population practicing open defecation--only 7 percent (Table 28, Figure 32). For all 6 Sahel countries, the rate of open defecation fell from 2006 to 2017, the last available year of data. Rates of open defecation were highest and almost equal in Chad and Niger at 67 and 68 percent respectively.

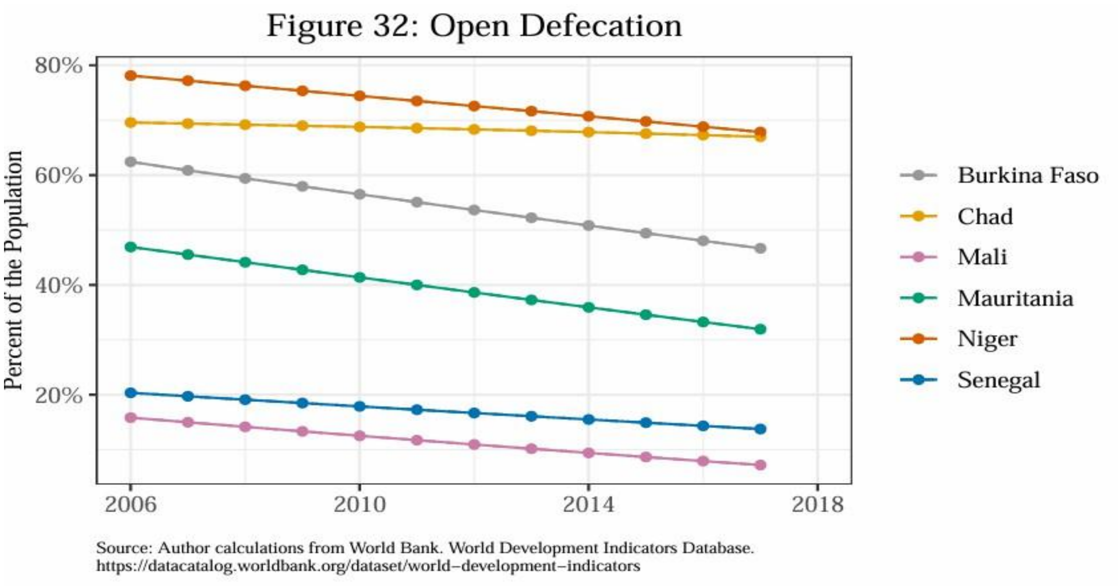


Figure III-32. Défécation à l'air libre

Conclusions

We have observed that rates of internationally comparable poverty in 4 Sahel countries were fairly close, but Mauritania was much less poor and Niger poorest of all. We turn to World Bank analysis of the USD 1,90 poverty lines and trends to further analyze this observation.

On Mauritanian performance, strong growth in mean per capita household expenditure has been pro-poor between 2008 and 2014 (World Bank 2016), and inequality reduced over the time period (World Bank 2016), so that already low USD 1,90 poverty further decreased. Discoveries of oil and gold boosted Mauritanian GNI, and so far, Mauritania seems to have avoided the "natural resource curse" of unequally distributing gains.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, sharp measured declines in USD 1,90 poverty from 2005-2014 in Niger (World Bank 2017b) were noted but, with statistical changes assessed that "household living conditions improved only slightly over 2005-2011" (World Bank 2015c, p. 25). Niger's declines in monetary USD 1,90 poverty were not matched with improvements in non-monetary poverty indicators.

In Chad, poverty declined from 2003 to 2011 but is monitored irregularly (World Bank 2015b), and recent information is lacking. Even less information is available for Mali, where survey incompatibility means that the evolution of poverty after 2010 is not clear (World Bank 2015a, p. xi, pp. 56-65).

In Burkina Faso, poverty has declined, but Burkina Faso has one of the highest fertility rates in the world (World Bank 2017a), limiting the impact of expanding economic growth on poverty reduction.

In Senegal, USD 1.90 poverty and inequality stagnated (World Bank 2018). Although Senegal is one of the top performers in SSA in non-monetary poverty indicators (World Bank 2018), it still ranks low in international HDI comparisons.

To conclude, our findings for non-monetary indicators of poverty in terms of health, education, gender, and electricity and water/sanitation closely tracked our rankings of the 6 Sahel countries based on the USD 1,90 internationally comparable poverty line. We found that Mauritania was markedly less poor, and Niger was the poorest country overall, although it improved markedly over time. Senegal did very well on its non-monetary poverty indicators.

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Chapter IV : CONFLICT AND INFORMALITY IN THE SAHEL

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Dominique Haughton & Khady Yama Sarr

Introduction

The eradication of extreme poverty is undoubtedly one of the main targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—as it was for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). While the most stable developing countries are on track to achieve it, fragile states are moving increasingly farther away (Burt, Hughes, and Milante, 2014). The proportion of households living in extreme poverty within fragile countries has risen sharply between 2005 and 2010, and is projected to double by 2030 (Gertz and Chandy, 2011). Access to employment remains the surest path out of extreme poverty, and the informal sector often represents the interface between work and poverty.

The World Bank (2011) study on *Conflict, Security, and Development* identified the existence of economic opportunities as the principal driver of resilience in fragile states characterrized by weak institutions. Therefore, the emergence of a strong private sector and the creation of numerous, high-quality jobs constitute critical levers through which countries can reduce extreme poverty and mitigate fragility. In conflict and fragile-state contexts, the informal economy often serves as the main source of livelihood and the largest employer—particularly for vulnerable and marginalized groups.

The informal economy encompasses a wide diversity of activities and actors, including informal credit systems, artisanal extractive and manufacturing activities, kinship-based trade networks, smuggling, associations of informal workers, informal service providers, informal land transactions, and the economy of refugee camps.

Analyzing the informal sector is essential, not least because of the policy reforms it can inspire. Although its economic weight represents significant potential for job creation, productivity growth, and tax revenue, its negative correlation with most well-being indicators often leads to calls for its gradual reduction and formalization. Both the informal economy and the fragile context typical of most Sahelian countries represent important knowledge gaps this chapter aims to address.

Our understanding of the mechanisms by which the informal economy affects employment, inclusive growth, and political stability remains limited. This chapter seeks to provide a more nuanced understanding of how informality functions—its potential contribution to employment, governance, economic growth, social inclusion, and political stability—and to examine how fragile political contexts respond to public policy interventions.

The increasing instability in the Sahel has brought the state of these economies to the forefront of international concern. This study therefore seeks to clarify the role of informal enterprises in job generation in fragile, low-income countries—especially those of the Sahel. We use data from surveys, interviews, and focus groups conducted in Mali and Niger (2017–2018) to analyze the interrelationships between informality, fragility, and conflict in the region. Section 1 presents findings from our surveys; Section 2 details insights from our interviews. While collected through different methods, the two sets of results are highly complementary and convergent.

Informality, Living Conditions, and Conflict in the Sahel: Evidence from Survey Data

In this section, we use data from surveys conducted in Mali, Niger, and other Francophone African countries to apply our continuum approach to informality (Benjamin and Mbaye, 2012; Mbaye, Golub, and Gueye, 2020). This approach treats informality not as a binary concept but as a continuum of characteristics. Thus, we define varying levels of informality based on the number of criteria a firm meets. The section begins with a brief explanation of the methodology, followed by a presentation of key features of informality, and concludes with results on productivity differentials between formal and informal firms.

Binary Definitions of Informality and Enterprise Classification

Table IV-1 presents the different criteria for informality commonly used in the literature and the resulting classification of firms in our sample. According to firm size, 55% of enterprises in our Mali sample are informal, compared to 85% in Niger. By the criterion of non-maintenance of accounts, 49% of firms in Mali are informal versus 78% in Niger. For registration, 28% of Malian firms are informal compared to 32% in Niger.

When considering professional premises, about 80% of firms in Bamako and Mopti have a business location, while in Diffa, this proportion is 70%. Many operate in public markets, workshops, or hangars—for example, 57% of "large informal" firms in Bamako and 50% in Diffa have premises in a public market, and 21% of Bamako firms have a workshop or hangar.

More than 50% of firms in Mopti, Bamako, Diffa, and Niamey are formally registered, reflecting recent government investment in promoting one-stop business registration centers, which allow registration with the Tax Identification Number (NIF) and the Chamber of Commerce.

Regarding bank credit, about 80% of firms in Bamako, Mopti, Diffa, and Niamey report no access to bank loans. Similarly, 85% of firms in Mopti and 95% in Diffa do not subscribe to social security, compared with 68% in Bamako and 89% in Niamey. For taxation, only 51% of firms in Bamako and 32% in Diffa are taxed under the real regime, compared with 30% in Mopti and 17% in Niamey.

Table IV-1. Firms Not Meeting Various Formality Criteria (%)

Criteria	Bamako	Mopti	Global (Mali)	Diffa	Niamey	Global (Niger)
Fewer than 5 employees	47.3	65.0	54.9	92.4	84.2	85.6
Without professional premises	19.5	21.7	20.4	29.3	41.8	39.7
Not registered	34.8	19.0	28.0	21.3	35.2	32.8
Does not keep accounts	44.3	54.7	48.7	80.7	78.2	78.6

No bank loan obtained	85.0	90.0	87.1	98.7	96.1	96.5
Not enrolled in social security	67.0	88.0	76.0	95.3	89.4	90.5
Not taxed under real regime	47.5	68.7	56.6	67.3	82.1	79.5

Source: Authors' survey data.

Informality as a Continuum

In all cases, significant variations remain within cities of the same country (Bamako and Mopti in Mali, and Niamey and Diffa in Niger), for each criterion considered individually. These results confirm a conclusion we reached in Mbaye, Golub, and Gueye (2020), namely that different criteria of informality produce different classifications of firms.

Table IV-2. Level of Informality of Firms (%)

	Bamako	Mopti	Total	Diffa	Niamey	Total
Level 0	8.8	1.7	5.7	0.0	0.4	0.4
Level 1	22.8	6.3	15.7	0.0	3.0	2.5
Level 2	16.5	14.3	15.6	4.1	6.6	6.2
Level 3	6.8	18.0	11.6	10.3	6.5	7.1
Level 4	3.0	14.0	7.7	24.8	12.4	14.5
Level 5	11.0	22.7	16.0	31.7	26.8	27.6
Level 6	16.5	12.3	14.7	14.5	22.4	21.1
Level 7	14.8	10.7	13.0	14.5	21.9	20.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Survey data collected by the authors.

To define informality as a continuum, we consider each of the criteria listed in Table 1 and classify firms according to the number of criteria they meet. Different levels of informality are thus identified (Table IV-2):

- **Level 0** corresponds to fully formal firms; that is, they have more than five employees, a professional premises, are registered, keep accounts, have access to bank credit, subscribe to a social mutual fund, and are taxed under the real regime. This description corresponds to the "pure formal" sector. This level represents about 8% of firms in Bamako and less than 2% in Mopti (Table IV-2).
- **Level 1** corresponds to firms that meet six of the seven formality criteria.
- **Level 2** corresponds to firms that meet five of the seven criteria, and so on.
- **Level 7** includes firms that meet none of the formality criteria (i.e. they meet all the criteria of informality) and are therefore fully informal. They represent about 14.75% of firms in Bamako and 21.9% in Niamey, compared with about 10% in Mopti and 14.5% in Diffa.

Each of these categories of firms often has particular characteristics and responds differently to incentive packages or policies arising from state intervention. This confirms the conclusion reached by Mbaye and his various co-authors that no single criterion can adequately account for the informality phenomenon and that they must be combined in order to obtain a broader picture of it.

Sectors of Activity and Informality

The concentration of informality in certain sectors is a dominant feature of the informal economy and deserves emphasis. According to Table IV-3, around 50% of formal enterprises in Bamako and Diffa are in commerce, compared with 10% in industry, 14% in construction (BTP), and 23% in other services. The bulk of the informal sector in Bamako is found in commerce (50%) and services (35%). Meanwhile, 65% of small informal enterprises in Bamako operate in commerce and 23% in services.

In Mopti, both formal and informal enterprises are concentrated in commerce (around 45%) and services (around 40%) (Table IV-3).

For Diffa, the same trend observed in Bamako appears: 51.9% of formal enterprises operate in commerce, compared with 12.7% in industry, 13.9% in construction, and 21.5% in other services. Commerce remains the dominant activity within both the large and small informal sectors. About 60% of large informal enterprises in Diffa and 50% in Niamey engage in commerce. Similarly, the majority of small informal enterprises in Diffa and Niamey also operate in this activity.

Services are also a non-negligible activity in the small informal sector in Diffa and Niamey, representing 40.6% of activities in Niamey and 23.7% in Diffa.

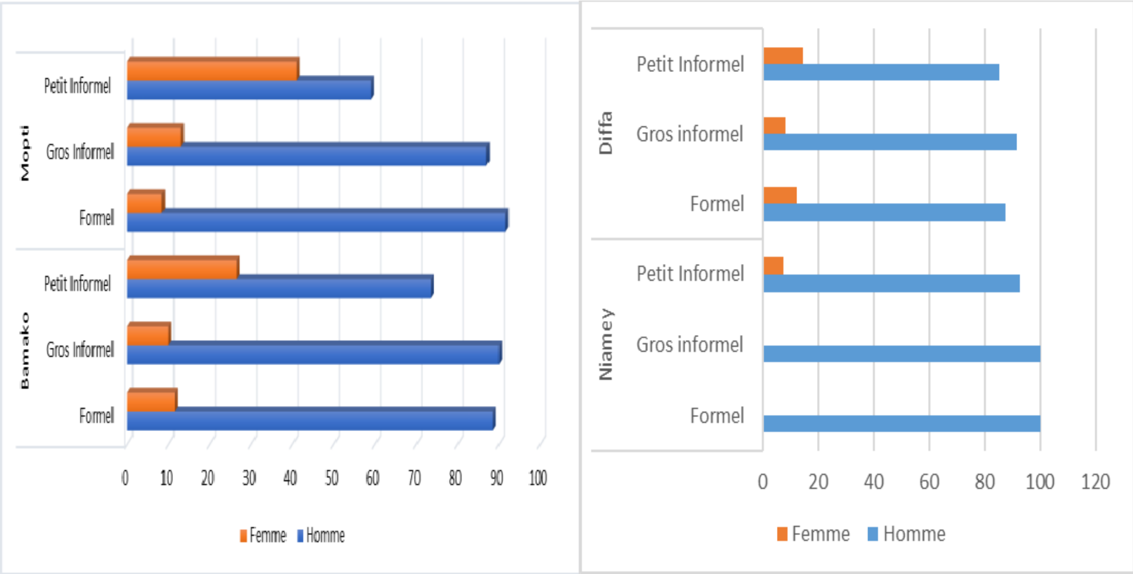
Tableau IV-3. Répartition des entreprises par secteur et selon le statut de la firme (%)

	Secteur d'activité	Formel	Gros informel	Petit informel	Total
Bamako	Commerce	51,0	50,0	65,5	57,0
	Industrie	11,0	15,0	8,3	10,1
	BTP	14,3	0,0	3,0	8,8
	Services	23,8	35,0	23,2	24,1
	Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
Mopti	Commerce	45,7	47,8	21,3	31,0
	Industrie	7,5	21,7	36,1	26,0
	BTP	4,3	0,0	0,6	1,7
	Services	42,6	30,4	42,1	41,3
	Total	100	100	100	100
Diffa	Commerce	51,9%	63,4%	52,8%	53,7%
	Industrie	12,7%	5,6%	20,4%	18,0%
	BTP	13,9%	12,7%	3,1%	5,3%
	Services	21,5%	18,3%	23,7%	22,9%
	Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%
Niamey	Commerce	67,5%	50,0%	53,5%	57,3%
	Industrie	2,5%	0,0%	3,0%	2,8%
	BTP	22,5%	50,0%	3,0%	9,1%
	Services	7,5%	0,0%	40,6%	30,8%
	Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source: Results of surveys undertaken by the authors.

Gender and the Informal Sector

The results of our surveys and interviews confirm that women appear to be more confined to small informal activities and therefore more excluded than men from basic social services (training, financing, use of ICTs, etc.).



Source: Results of surveys undertaken by the authors.

The relatively greater presence of women in the small informal sector was also revealed in our interviews. Women are found in retail trade, artisanal hairdressing, the sale of prepaid telephone cards, and food services (street eateries).

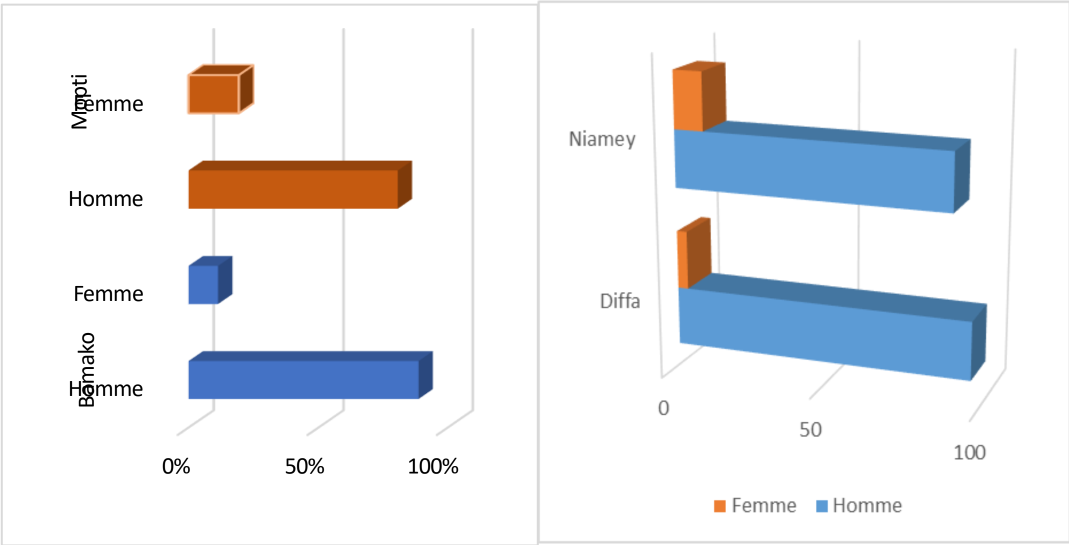
We also conducted a more detailed analysis of the characteristics of female entrepreneurship by examining the correlation between the gender of the manager and certain attributes of informality or exclusion. It appears that a majority of women do not keep reliable accounts in the four cities (Table 4). Those who do not keep accounts represent 69% of the total in Bamako, 82% in Mopti, 87% in Diffa, and 83% in Niamey.

When we now consider the criterion of registration, less than 20% of women in the four cities are registered (Figure IV-2).

	Bamako		Mopti		Diffa		Niamey	
	Homme	Femme	Homme	Femme	Homme	Femme	Homme	Femme
Tenue de comptabilité	60,37	30,3	56,54	17,44	19,72	12,5	22,71	16,33
Non tenue de comptabilité	39,63	69,7	43,46	82,56	80,28	87,5	77,29	83,67

Source: Results of surveys undertaken by the authors.

Figure IV-2. Enregistrement suivant le sexe du dirigeant (%)



Source: Results of surveys undertaken by the authors.

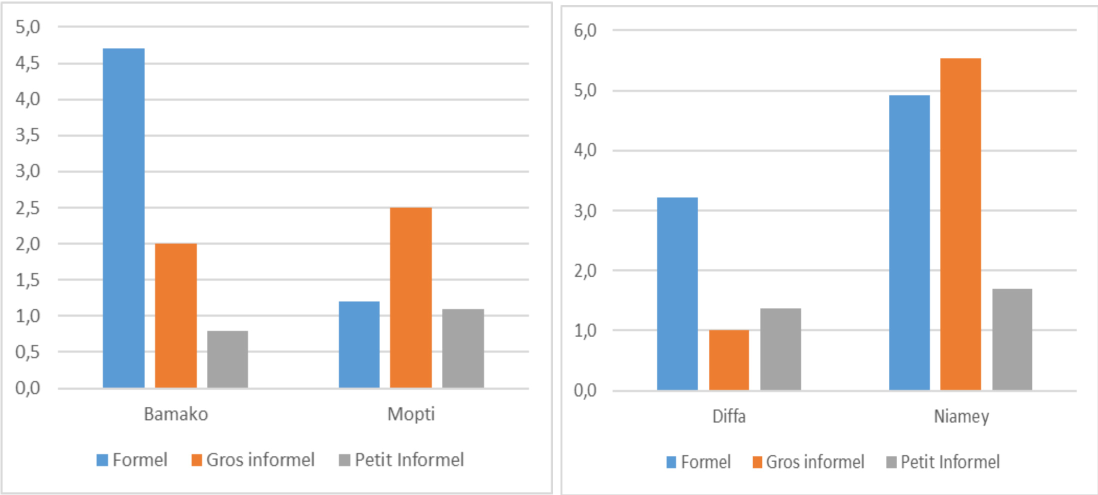
Moreover, enterprises headed by women have less access to financing and ICTs (Mbaye et al., 2025).

In summary, women seem more exposed to most characteristics of informality and precariousness than men. Consequently, the types of activities that characterize female entrepreneurship are prototypes of activities requiring assistance and support: very small enterprises excluded from most public infrastructure services.

Employment, Underemployment, and Precarity

Our surveys also covered issues related to informal employment and its dominant characteristics. Figure IV-3 shows the average number of jobs per enterprise in the two cities. In the formal sector, the average number of employees is about four in Bamako, compared with two in the large informal sector and one in the small informal sector. In Mopti and Niamey, it is the large informal sector that employs more people, with about two employees compared with one for the formal and small informal sectors in Mopti, and five employees compared with four and two respectively in Niamey.

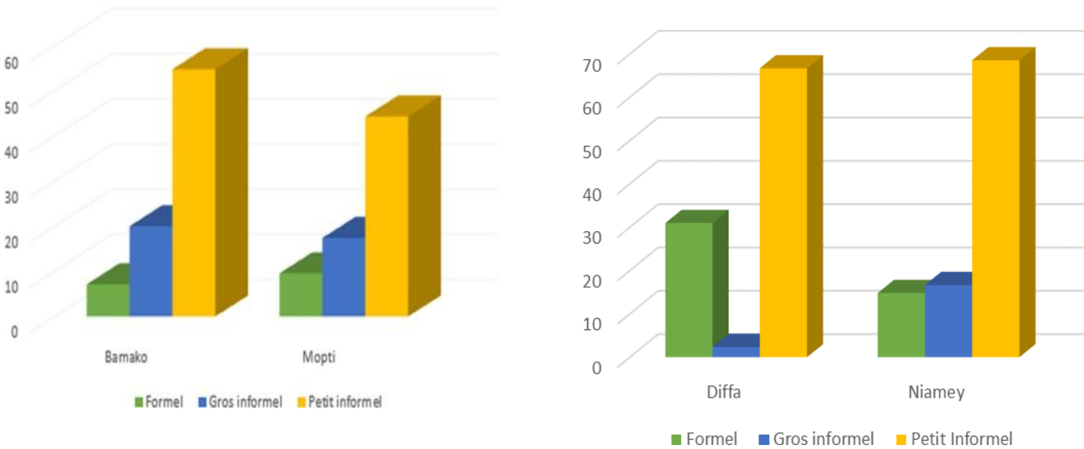
Figure IV-3. Emploi moyen suivant le statut de la firme



Source: Results of surveys undertaken by the authors.

Self-employment is a dominant feature of the informal sector, particularly in Sub-Saharan African countries. In our consolidated dataset, self-employment accounts for 94.02% of employment in the small informal sector in Dakar, 96.83% in Ouaga, and 95.3% in Cotonou. Ultimately, in all West African cities considered, self-employment represents more than 80% of informal employment. The same trends are found in Mali and Niger (Graph 4).

Figure IV-4. Proportion de l'auto-emploi suivant le statut de la firme (%)



Wage Differentials Between the Formal and Informal Sectors

A dominant feature of informality in Sub-Saharan Africa is the significant wage differential between the formal and informal sectors. Analysis of Table IV-5 shows a large difference in the inter-city wage differences between the informal and formal sectors. For example, in the formal sector, the average wage in Bamako is about 150,000 FCFA compared with 74,000 FCFA in Mopti. This gap is much smaller in the informal sector. An employee in the large informal sector in Bamako earns an average of about 67,500 FCFA, compared with 82,800 FCFA in Mopti. For the small informal sector, the difference narrows even further. However, in Niamey, workers in the large informal sector earn more than those in the formal sector. On average, an employee in the large informal sector earns about 96,000 FCFA compared with 58,000 FCFA in the formal sector.

Table 5 shows that in Bamako more than 95% of men and women earn more than the minimum wage (SMIG), and the same is true for Niamey, although the proportion is lower for women (less than 88%). In Mopti, only 60% of men and 37% of women receive a wage above the SMIG (Table IV-6). In Diffa, more than 70% of employees earn a wage above the SMIG, and this is the case for all employees in the large formal sector. The SMIG in Mali was 31,370 FCFA and 30,047 FCFA in Niger in 2016.

Another result worth highlighting is that in Bamako, in the formal sector, wages are set according to a well-defined salary grid in 41% of enterprises. In contrast, in Mopti, this is not the case. In Mopti's formal sector, 65% of wages are set through direct negotiation between employer and employee, as is common in the informal sector (Table IV-7). In Niamey, the situation is similar: most wages in the formal sector are set through negotiation. However, in Diffa, wages are set by the manager (38.46%).

Tableau IV-4. Salaire moyen en FCFA suivant le statut de la firme.

Informalité	Bamako	Mopti	Diffa	Niamey
Formel	151 700	74 100	25 200	58 515
Gros informel	67 500	82 800		96 089
Petit informel	34 600	37 600	-	44 149
Total	97 700	52 500	-	57 673

Source: Results of surveys undertaken by the authors.

Tableau IV-5. Niveau de la rémunération par rapport au SMIG et selon le sexe des employés (%).

	Bamako	Mopti	Diffa	Niamey
Homme	97,15	60,88	71,83	93,30
Femme	95,38	37,01	87,50	88,78
Total	96,75	55,22	72,67	92,68

Source: Results of surveys undertaken by the authors.

Tableau IV-6. Mode de fixation des salaires selon le statut de la firme (%)

Mode fixation	**Bamako**			**Mopti**		
	Formel	Gros Informel	Petit Informel	Formel	Gros Informel	Petit Informel
Grille salariale	41,15	15	2,35	11,58	0	0
Salaire du marché	9,09	0	1,76	6,32	17,39	3,83
Fixé par le manager	19,62	35	20,59	14,74	13,04	17,49
Par négociation	20,57	30	32,94	65,26	65,22	71,04
Autres	9,57	20	42,35	2,11	4,35	7,65

	Diffa			**Niamey**		
	Formel	Gros Informel	Petit Informel	Formel	Gros Informel	Petit Informel
Grille salariale	7,69	0,00	0,00	19,64	18,18	4,59
Salaire du marché	23,08	100,00	31,58	17,86	13,64	15,31
Fixé par le manager	38,46	0,00	26,32	12,50	9,09	16,84
Par négociation	15,38	0,00	26,32	50,00	52,27	50,51
Autres	15,38	0,00	15,79	0,00	6,82	12,76

Source : Results of surveys undertaken by the authors.

Recruitment Channels

The channels through which employees are recruited also attracted our attention. Social connections appear to play a predominant role in recruitment dynamics.

In Bamako, both formal and informal firms use recruitment channels other than recommendations, whereas 52% and 37% of large and small informal firms respectively in Mopti recruit through recommendations (Table IV-8).

Tableau 8 Canaux d'obtention de l'emploi selon le statut de la firme (%)

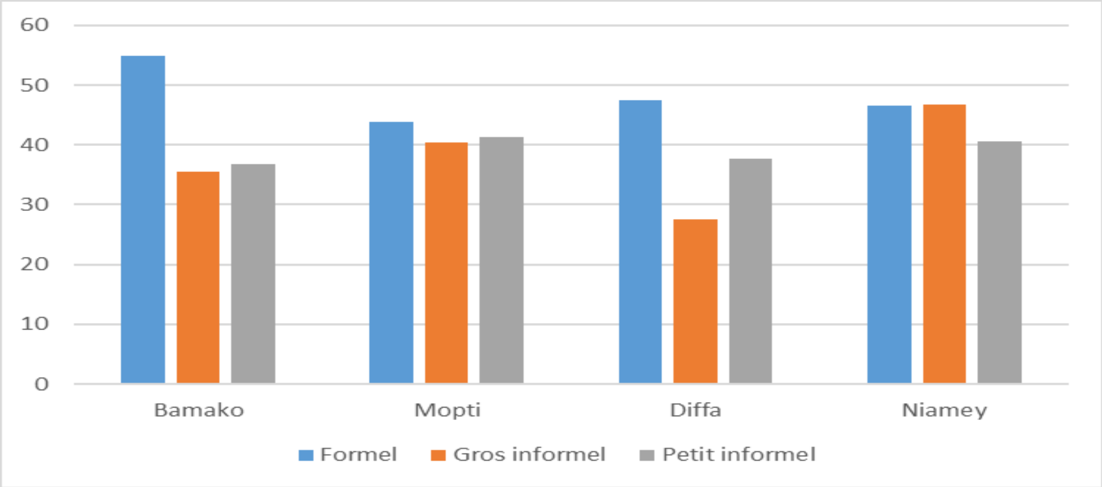
Canaux d'obtention	Bamako			Mopti		
	Formel	Gros informel	Petit informel	Formel	Gros informel	Petit Informel
Sur recommandations	15	5	5	18	52	37
Ex salarié grande société	15	10	2	1	0	0
Ex salarié petite société	1	0	1	2	0	2
Ex apprenti	2	5	8	19	26	18
N'importe qui	0	10	6	52	22	39
Autres	66	70	78	8	0	4

Source: Results of surveys undertaken by the authors.

Youth in Employment

The employment rate of young people (under 25 years old) is very low in the enterprises surveyed. The average age of employees is above 40 in the formal sector across all four cities, whereas in the small informal sector it is slightly lower (Figure IV-5).

Figure IV-5. L'âge moyen suivant le statut

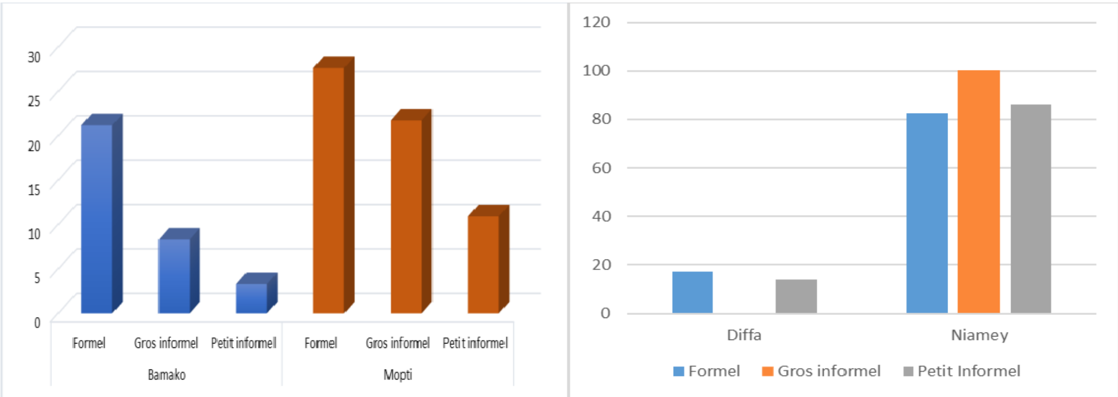


Source: Results of surveys undertaken by the authors.

Migration and Employment

In this section, we examine the employment of individuals originating from inland regions of Mali and Niger within enterprises in the four cities. Graph 6 indicates that formal enterprises employ more migrants—20% in Bamako and 27% in Mopti—than the informal sector. However, the share of migrant employees in the large informal sector approaches that of the formal sector, reaching 21%. In Niamey, large informal enterprises employ more migrants than the formal sector.

Figure IV-6. Proportion des travailleurs migrants selon le statut de la firme (%)



Source : Results of surveys undertaken by the authors.

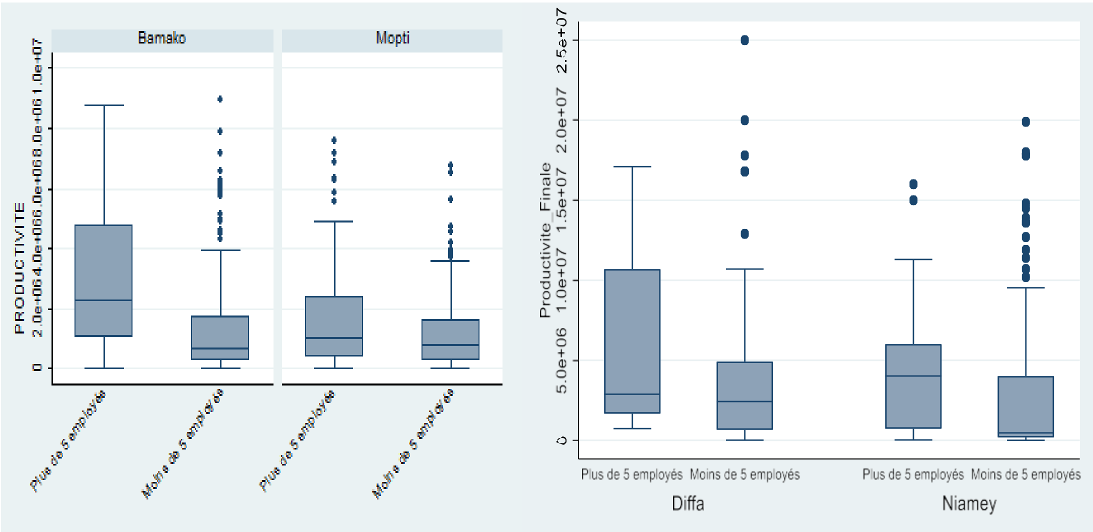
Productivity Gap Between the Formal and Informal Sectors

Analysis of our survey results highlights the existence of a productivity gap between formal and informal enterprises in the seven cities included in the study, with a less pronounced gap between the formal sector and the large informal sector, similar to the trends observed elsewhere in West Africa. This corroborates the conclusions of the literature regarding the relationship between productivity and informality, as referenced earlier.

Figure IV-6 compares productivity levels for the cities in Mali and Niger. Enterprises in Bamako are much more productive than those in Mopti. Likewise, enterprises in Diffa are surprisingly more productive than those in Niamey. Unsurprisingly, a relatively large productivity gap is observed between the formal and informal sectors. This gap is less marked between the formal and large informal sectors in Bamako. In Mopti, large informal enterprises are slightly more productive than formal ones. However, the productivity gap is significant in Niamey and Diffa.

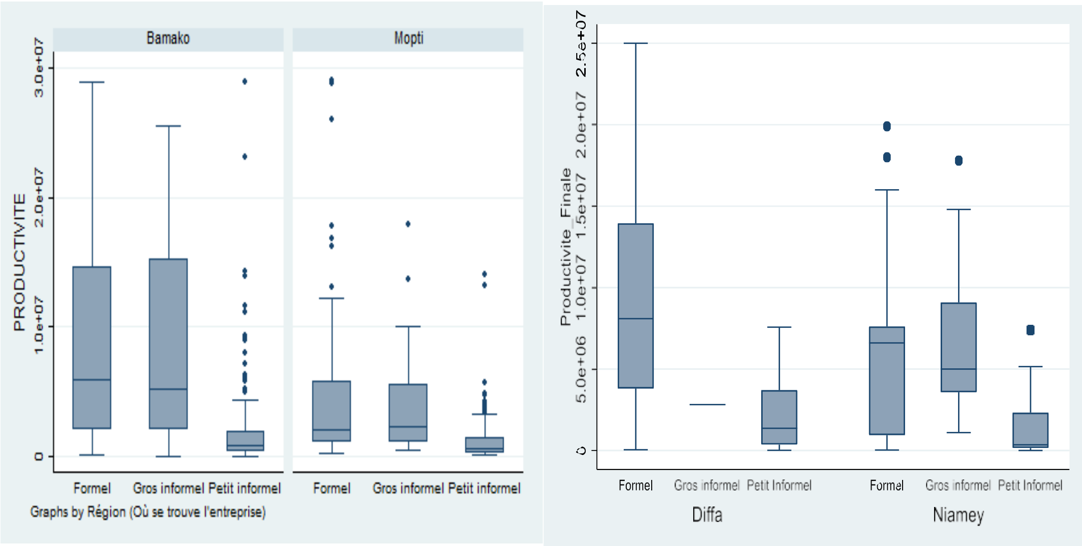
The productivity gap between formal and informal enterprises appears robust across alternative measures of informality. We examined the relationship between productivity and each informality criterion considered individually. In the following graphs, informality is measured in a binary manner using, in turn, the criteria described above: social protection for employees, access to bank credit, type of tax paid, existence of professional premises, presence of reliable accounts, registration, and firm size (Figures IV-7 to IV-12). In all cases, there appears to be a clear negative correlation between the variable defining informality and productivity.

Figure IV-7. Productivité de la firme suivant le statut de la firme



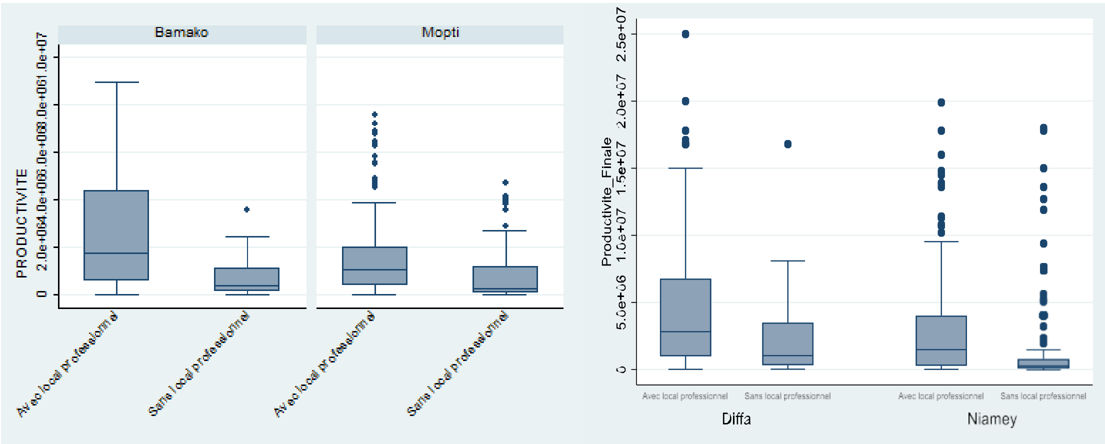
Thus, Graph IV-7 shows that firms with more than five employees are more productive than those with fewer than five employees across all four cities.

Figure IV-8. Répartition des entreprises suivant la productivité du travail et la taille



Graph 9 indicates that enterprises with fixed professional premises have higher labor productivity than those without such premises.

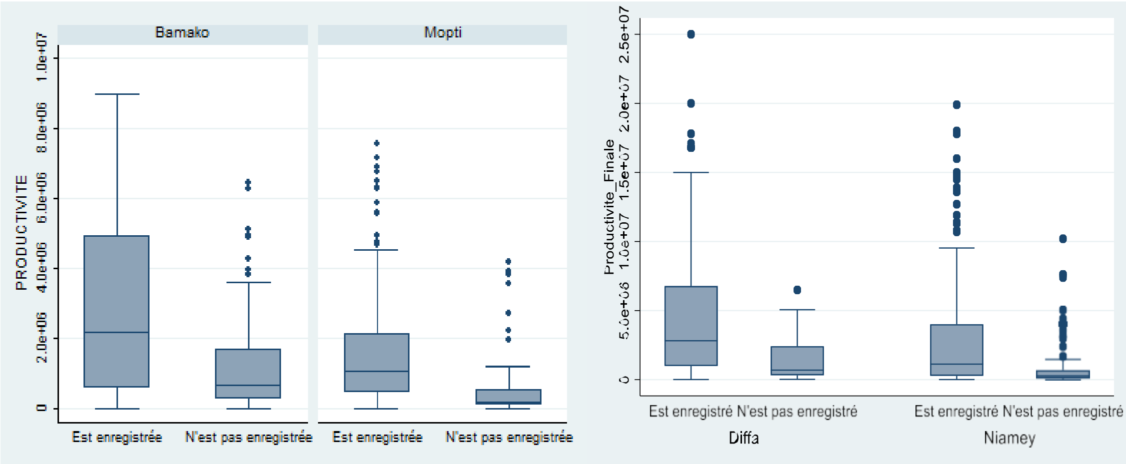
Figure IV-9. Répartition des entreprises suivant la productivité du travail et le local professionnel



Source: Results of surveys undertaken by the authors.

Figure IV-10 shows that registered firms have higher productivity than unregistered ones in both cities. The productivity gap is more pronounced in Bamako and Diffa.

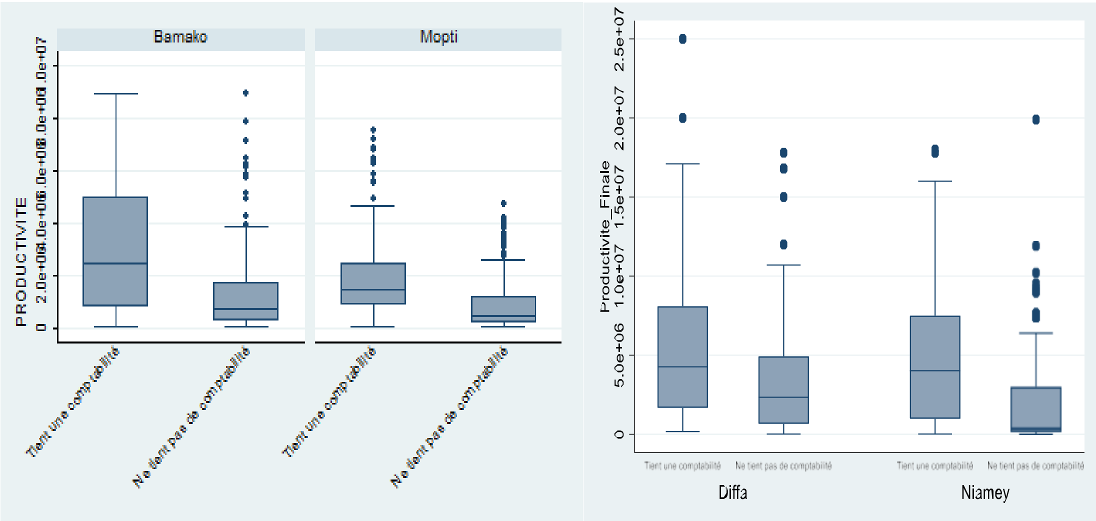
Figure IV-10. Répartition des entreprises suivant la productivité du travail et l'enregistrement



Source: Results of surveys undertaken by the authors.

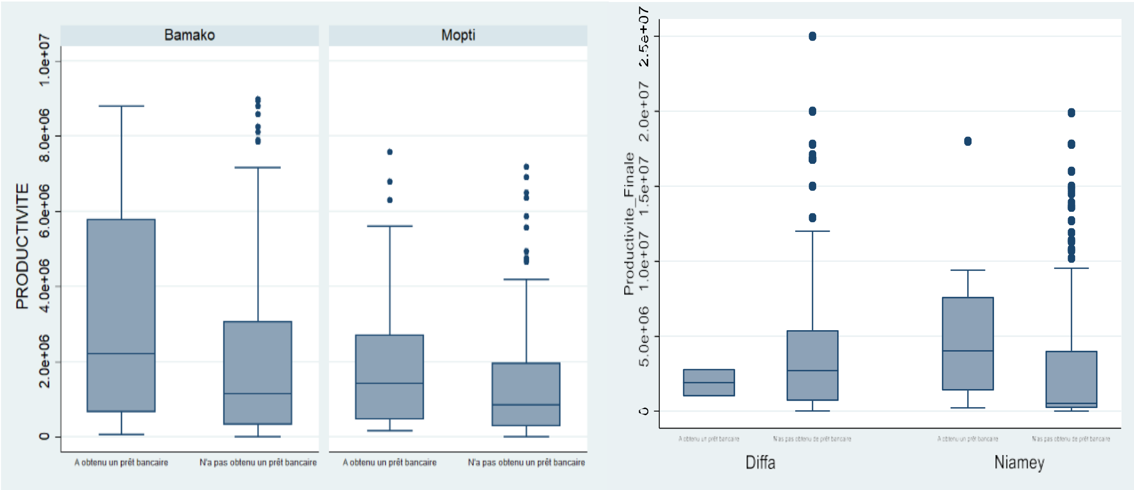
Figures IV-11, IV-12, and IV-13 show that firms that keep accounts, have access to bank credit, or are taxed under the real regime are significantly more productive than those that do not meet these criteria in both cities.

Figure IV-11. Répartition des entreprises suivant la productivité du travail et la tenue de comptabilité



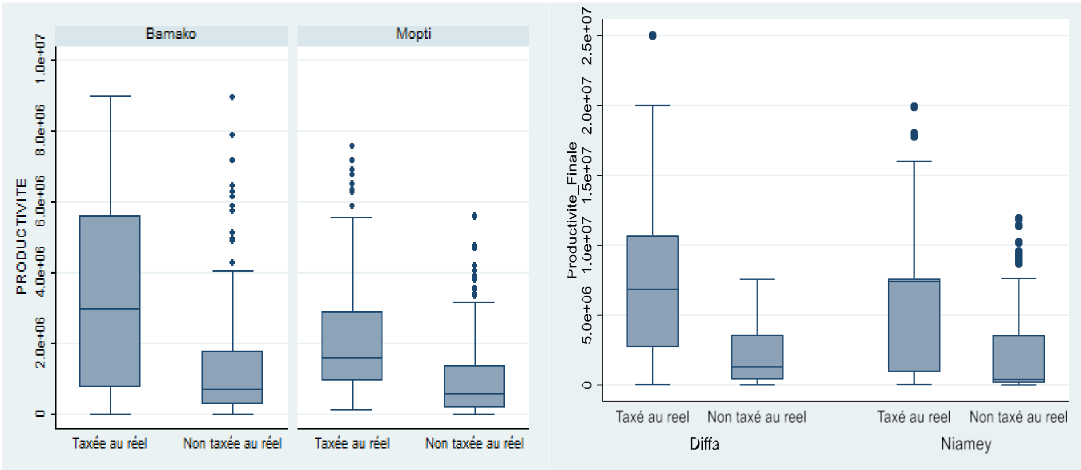
Source: Results of surveys undertaken by the authors.

Figure IV-12. Répartition des entreprises suivant la productivité du travail et accès au financement bancaire



Source: Results of surveys undertaken by the authors.

Figure IV-13. Répartition des entreprises suivant la productivité du travail et mode de taxation S



Source: Results of surveys undertaken by the authors.

Informality, Business Environment, and Conflict: A Synthesis of Qualitative Assessments from Stakeholders

In this section, we present the results of our interviews and focus groups (mainly those conducted in Niger) on various facets of informality, including its linkages with jihadism, social protection, the business environment, corruption among administrative actors, and financing needs.

Youth and Women in the Informal Sector

The perceptions of actors in the informal sector, collected through our interviews and focus groups, confirm many of the trends revealed in our surveys, while also reflecting the views of stakeholders on the ground regarding two of the most vulnerable groups in African societies—youth and women. The informal sector is such that most young people entering business work with or for a close relative (often the father or an uncle). It is only when they reach a certain age that their relatives help them set up on their own.

Regarding women, there are cultural and religious barriers to their social advancement. A woman heading an informal enterprise in Niamey made the following observation:

"For a long time, I was the only woman registered at the Chamber of Commerce in Niamey. Some people even asked why my husband had difficulty keeping me at home. Religion handicaps us. People spread the idea that a woman trader is a woman of the streets. In politics, we face the same problems: women are used as electoral animals to shout and stir up crowds, but they are never placed on electoral lists."

According to people in the automobile mechanics sector, women are poorly represented in this trade because of social and religious constraints. One participant shared her personal experience:

"I am the only woman mechanic in the group, and I had to open my own workshop because no one wanted to recruit a woman mechanic, even though I am qualified."

Other participants argued that the country's leaders do not trust women or young people. The system, they said, does not want women to succeed.

Unemployment, Underemployment, and Jihadism

Employment in Sahelian countries is heavily influenced by security conditions. Migration from conflict zones to national capitals is a major feature of employment patterns in conflict settings. Our interviews also show that employment precarity constitutes fertile ground for jihadist groups, which often exploit the vulnerability of young people to recruit them in large numbers.

According to respondents in Diffa, Boko Haram recruits many young people in the locality by exploiting the extreme poverty they face. Those recruited are often persons lacking education and living in precarious conditions. Boko Haram is also tied to ethnicity: the Béri Béri group, found largely in Maiduguri and Diffa near the Nigerian border, and equally present in Cameroon. In Mali, Al-Qaeda appears to be the dominant group.

Paradoxically, rural exodus toward the capital is less pronounced in Niger than in neighboring countries. Respondents explained that the public sector no longer hires, although most students see themselves as future civil servants. People are trained for salaried jobs that no longer exist. Even the informal sector no longer absorbs all unemployed youth, many of whom do absolutely nothing.

Niamey offers very few additional opportunities compared to interior regions. Nigeriens travel abroad rarely and for short periods, primarily to Algeria or Libya. Many remain in rural areas because they have farmland there; when they come to Niamey, it is usually for seasonal activities. Numerous artisanal gold and gemstone mines generate significant revenues and contribute to keeping people in rural zones—though this concerns other regions more than Diffa.

Young people join Boko Haram because of a lack of opportunities. The organization offers each recruit 500,000 FCFA, a motorcycle, and a wife. Rebels invade entire villages, seize young girls, and force them into marriage with new recruits. Estimates indicate that around 15,000 girls have disappeared along the border (including the 212 Nigerian schoolgirls abducted in 2014). Diffa borders Nigeria, and the same ethnic groups live on both sides. The Nigerien state is almost absent there. The most widely used currency is the Nigerian naira.

Fishing, livestock, and agriculture are the main activities. But with climate change and the government's withdrawal from agricultural support, opportunities are dwindling. The river is shrinking, rainfall is decreasing, and conflicts over water resources are increasing among fishers, farmers, and herders. Crops are sold off cheaply because of poor transport and storage infrastructure. All of these factors make productive activities increasingly unattractive.

Social Protection in the Informal Sector

Lack of access to social protection is a major aspect of informality. While a common belief is that informal actors are entirely excluded from social protection programs, protection exists in forms different from those observed in the formal sector. When an informal worker becomes ill, they bear the costs themselves. In cases of disability, care is provided by children, relatives, or colleagues. Official social protection does not exist for informal sector employees, but there is strong group solidarity: when an artisan falls ill, others help.

Respondents in Niger expressed distrust of the National Social Security Fund (CNSS). In principle, all transport operators must contribute to a social security plan for their drivers and apprentices. But in the event of an accident, nothing is received from the CNSS. Taxi drivers must pay 25,000 FCFA per quarter to the CNSS and show the receipt during police checks, yet receive no support when ill. Large truck operators pay 49,500 FCFA per quarter, with similarly no effective coverage.

Informal workers are therefore fully responsible for their own welfare in cases of hardship. Mutual insurance schemes are proposed as alternatives to the CNSS, but trust is lacking. Many mutual funds collapse because directors embezzle funds with impunity due to political connections.

Fuel distribution in Niamey illustrates the sensitivity of these issues. The sector is largely dominated by informality. Officially, only six 50,000-liter tankers supply Niamey, a total of 300,000 liters—equivalent to four liters per vehicle. Clearly, this is not adequate for the actual size of the city's motor fleet. The deficit is covered by informal actors, almost none of whom benefit from real social protection.

Obstacles to Formalization in Niger

A large number of actors who are registered or have a business premise remain informal. To obtain a taxpayer identification number (NIF), an entrepreneur simply needs to provide an address, often their home. Few wish to formalize because of the costs involved. Most keep unreliable accounts. Tax and social security officers are involved in the formalization process at the business registration center.

Perceived obstacles to formalization include land tenure problems, limited financing, poor roads, and mandatory social security contributions. Many actors outsource accounting, which is expensive.

People obtain a NIF only to win a public contract. Increasingly, civil servants obtain NIFs to compete with the informal sector for public tenders, often using front persons. Once identified, firms must declare taxes and pay even when they have had no business activity. Most jobs created are informal; formal contracts are perceived as legal liabilities. Informal enterprises rely on family labor.

Among transport workers (7,400 drivers), none are registered with social security. In the National Federation of Artisans (80,000 members, 61% men), operators avoid registering to escape tax harassment. Mechanics' unions (2,000 members) operate almost entirely informally; employees quickly become competitors by taking clients when they leave.

Many respondents stated that registration is inexpensive, but compliance and regularization are costly. Some carpenters or artisans register their workers only when applying for public contracts. Most informal actors are organized into professional associations, such as used car importers, artisans (75,000 members nationwide), and taxi owners. Registration rates vary widely: car importers require NIF for customs clearance, but most taxi drivers and artisans do not. Ninety percent of carpenters keep no accounting records, operating instead by intuition. Neither their spouses nor children know their true income.

NIFs are borrowed or rented as needed. When executing contracts through another person's NIF, the payments go through that account and are then passed on. Trust is key. Sometimes accounts are debited due to unpaid taxes, and part of the money is lost.

Public spaces occupied by informal actors are not theirs and they are frequently evicted. Municipalities charge a 3,000 FCFA annual fee, recently raised to 5,000 FCFA, leading many to stop paying. Actors open bank accounts only for importing or specific transactions and keep minimal funds in them.

Financing and Investment

Access to financing is a major challenge for African private firms, especially informal actors. Banks base lending decisions on collateral, not the quality of business projects. Financial statements make little difference. Banks do not fund firms without NIFs, prompting many to obtain one when seeking credit.

Because of bank restrictions, both formal and informal actors avoid banks. In transport and commerce, almost all investments are self-funded, complemented by supplier credit.

Informal operators access bank loans only when presenting significant guarantees. Interest rates exceed 14%, and life insurance is required for the manager. Processing delays are long. Artisans complain that banks have no confidence in them, despite their contribution to GDP (estimated by them at 25%). Very few artisans have bank accounts.

Transport operators now turn to foreign funders after failing to obtain government guarantees. With no development bank in Niger, some unions consider forming cooperatives to improve their access to credit.

Banks' reluctance to lend is attributed to historical insolvency among traders and artisans, who often abandoned projects mid-way after receiving financing. Today, high interest rates and fees push most projects to rely on self-financing, family support, or tontines.

The Cost of Doing Business in Niger

The difficult business climate, noted in our surveys, is confirmed in our interviews. Respondents stated that there is no autonomous private sector in Niger. It is impossible to conduct business without working with the state. All major contracts are public contracts. Women and youth, lacking political connections, are often excluded.

Most artisans with over 30 years of experience report never having won a contract worth 10 million CFA or more. One respondent gave the following account:

"Recently, a school furniture contract worth about 300 million CFA—10,000 tables and benches—was awarded to the wife of a civil servant. The contract was never executed because she had no expertise; she was actually running a travel agency."

Professional training is considered the Achilles heel of the business environment. According to stakeholders, about 90% of artisans learned through informal apprenticeships, leading to low technical quality. Those who receive proper training perform much better, attend international fairs, and export successfully, but they are a minority. These challenges discourage young people from joining artisanal trades.

In road transport with heavy trucks, most actors have aging vehicle fleets, while government ministers "buy trucks and compete with us," as one respondent complained. Some ministers reportedly own substantial fleets.

Land issues pose major challenges. Few formal land titles exist in Niamey; most transactions rely on municipal certificates that confer no real ownership rights. Property taxes are high, making rental more attractive than ownership.

Respondents also argued that competition from Nigeria prevents the development of domestic industries, as low-quality Nigerian manufactured goods flood the Nigerien market.

The combination of fiscal, energy, and customs challenges makes it difficult for businesses to thrive. Most enterprises in Niger are individual, often informal, and jobs are more temporary than permanent.

Interactions Between the Formal and Informal Sectors

According to the results of the focus groups, there is very little subcontracting from large firms to small enterprises. The managers of SMEs have limited expertise and experience. They do engage in production and sales cooperatives—particularly in artisanal sectors—but this does not truly constitute subcontracting. Trade fairs are organized to help market goods, and some sales are channeled through cooperatives, a few of which have transformed into Economic Interest Groups (GIEs) that pool their resources to handle certain order volumes. Within these cooperatives, certain pieces of equipment are shared. Nevertheless, access to markets remains a major concern, particularly access to public procurement. According to our respondents, the government prefers to purchase imported furniture rather than support local carpenters by sourcing from them.

Most actors—particularly women and young people--who are more concentrated in the most vulnerable segments of the informal sector possess less social capital than others. Powerful kinship networks control more than 80% of the country's resources. These networks are structured on ethnic or geographic bases (regional belonging). Outside these networks, as one respondent put it, "the big ones do not lift up the small ones, they devour them instead."

Some forms of subcontracting exist in a few sectors, such as construction. In these cases, however, subcontracted firms receive only a small portion of the contract value. One obstacle to subcontracting is the scarcity of large enterprises due to the bleak business environment. The ventures that succeed are those "done under the table," that is, informal. Registered firms are exposed and less profitable. Small firms prefer to operate "under the table" and use front names when aiming to win public contracts.

Many respondents believe that if the situation does not improve quickly, there is a significant risk not only of an expansion of Boko Haram but also of urban riots. All public contracts are politicized, and one must be in the good graces of the state to win them. Subcontracting exists only in commerce, where large traders entrust goods to small traders, who sell them, keep their profit margins, and return the remainder. In the transport sector, trucks may be rented out to drivers in exchange for daily payment quotas; if the driver meets the targets within the agreed timeframe, the vehicle is transferred to them. In the artisan sector, apprentices are trained and later helped to establish their own workshops. Beyond these scenarios, subcontracting is virtually nonexistent.

Informal Sector and Corruption in Niger

Most public contracts are awarded to traders or individuals with no real business structure. Only after winning a contract do they assemble the required documentation. Most administrative files—particularly those relating to investment code procedures—contain falsified information. Corruption is widespread. Most customs brokers operate informally. At the border, customs clearance is determined by container size rather than by the nature of the goods. Traders are issued receipts showing lower payments than what they actually pay; if they refuse, higher taxes are applied.

In principle, to become a customs broker one must hold a degree, have ten years of experience, and provide a 25-million CFA guarantee. However, politicians grant licenses to individuals who do not meet these requirements. Respondents noted that all formal customs brokers are disappearing except Bolloré. Corruption exists at all levels, but is especially evident at the border and within customs services.

In Niger, legislation provides for criminal penalties—including imprisonment—for tax offenses, but these sanctions are never applied, which offers little deterrence. Penalties for customs fraud exist but are rarely enforced except in blatant cases. Fines remain the primary sanction. A Fiscal Appeals Arbitration Committee (CARFI) was established in May 2016 to arbitrate tax disputes. Tax litigation can last several years. Any operator who takes a case directly to court without going through CARFI must now deposit 50% of the disputed amount as a guarantee. These measures respond to corruption within the judiciary that previously allowed operators to escape penalties and tax obligations.

Conclusion

In Sahelian countries, given the current structure of the private sector, the informal sector will remain the main source of new employment, even though it already absorbs the majority of existing jobs. As shown in the preceding sections, exposure to difficult and precarious living conditions heightens the risk of individuals turning to violence. Reducing the appeal of jihadist movements therefore requires improving livelihoods, notably by strengthening existing informal employment.

Our recommendations draw on our research and other studies on the Sahel, focusing particularly on the need for effective governance to support and sustain a favorable business climate for the small informal enterprises that dominate the private sector. It is crucial to extend the authority of the state across the entire national territory, with an emphasis on populated areas. This includes providing customs services at key cross-border trade points, though not necessarily applying all customs rules in their strict legal form.

Given the concentration of populations and resources in the southern and western districts, governments in Mali and Niger have been tempted to focus their efforts there. However, under current conflict conditions—where militias thrive in under-governed spaces—it is unwise to neglect any pocket of territory. Decentralization must therefore be strengthened, extending from the center to villages and conflict zones, while adapting the technical and institutional innovations that have proven effective elsewhere.

The circumstances are difficult, but it is hard to imagine improvement in conflict-affected areas without increased state presence. Our surveys and focus groups show that people in these areas would welcome greater involvement of the central government. Local authorities may reach temporary arrangements with armed groups for self-protection, but these are not genuine alliances based on shared objectives. Residents would be satisfied to see central government forces provide security, social services, and even customs services—so long as the latter do not disrupt local commercial practices. A key demand is that the central government hire local staff for these roles. Public-sector jobs are seen as high-quality employment, and communities wish to see their share increase, particularly in the security forces.

Another takeaway from our research is that the central government and local communities must collaborate to support a plan to improve the business climate. Basic security is essential in this regard. Economic growth and credit provision in the Sahel depend on the ability of entrepreneurs to save and protect their savings. Without such protection, incentives for new investment and enterprise creation are weakened.

It is evident that where the central government is absent, another form of authority will rise to fill the vacuum. If local authorities cannot assume this role, armed groups—who have no interest in supporting the business environment—will take their place.

Finally, the central government must engage with neighboring countries to manage the shrinking of Lake Chad and the resulting resource losses. A strong message emerging from our focus groups in Diffa is the essential nature of irrigation for agriculture given the impact of climate change. The recurrence of references to climate change in discussions—despite the focus on informal economic activity—underscores this importance. Adapting to climate change will require credible commitment from the central government and substantial financial support from development partners.

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Chapter V : INFORMAL CROSS-BORDER TRADE IN THE SAHEL

Nancy Benjamin and Ahmadou Aly Mbaye

Introduction

Cross-border trade in the Sahel is a longstanding tradition going back centuries. In the past, traveling merchants carrying consumer goods would provide transit across the Sahara Desert while accumulating enough customers across various small villages and towns to keep their business profitable. In recent times, this trade has been driven more by government subsidy policies that have ensured gains through price differences across national borders, along with price variations across large transit distances. What remains the case is that cross-border trade is a major source of economic activity across the Sahel, but especially in the north; that this trade is overwhelmingly informal and reinforces informal economic practices; and that this trade creates strong cross-border networks and alliances that can be stronger than national alliances. What is relatively new is the higher prevalence of conflict due to armed militias—some with outside funding—fighting for greater territory or control, and the influence of recently expanded trafficking in guns and illegal drugs. What is of new concern is the impact of this trade in licit and illicit goods on governance, both local and national, and in turn how the related governance problems are affecting conflict and the health of the informal economy.

The informality of cross-border trade in the Sahel involves a great deal of smuggling of otherwise legal goods. This smuggling takes the form of misreported or unrecorded goods, falsely classifying goods as qualifying for exemptions, undervaluation of goods, overloading of trucks beyond their official capacity, falsely reporting more goods of lower value while underreporting high value goods, mislabeling goods as being in transit to another country while selling them domestically, or labeling as domestic imports goods that are intended for re-sale in a third country. Given the amount of mis-recording, formal trade statistics are hardly reliable. For example, Nigeria is routinely – and appropriately – described as Niger's largest trading partner, yet the official statistics show it among the smallest. Official trade statistics are estimated to capture less than 3 percent of actual Sahel cross-border trade.

Given the gaps in the official data, informal trade is estimated by various means. These include cross-checking domestic trade data with partner country trade data and checking trade data against the implied levels of domestic per capita consumption of key consumer goods. They also include interviews with government officials, customs agents, truck drivers, trade agents, intermediaries, and the professional associations that represent them. When possible, surveys can be conducted at border crossings or at major customs posts. Satellite photos can verify the extent of traffic crossing borders that are officially "closed" or that avoid official border posts. (See Benassi et al, 2015; Raballand and Maur, 2017; Golub, Benjamin and Mbaye, 2015.) This informal trade is well-known, and given the terrain, and the key role of informal trade throughout the Sahel economy, strict enforcement of trade regulations is neither possible nor feared.

Figure V-1. The national borders of West Africa

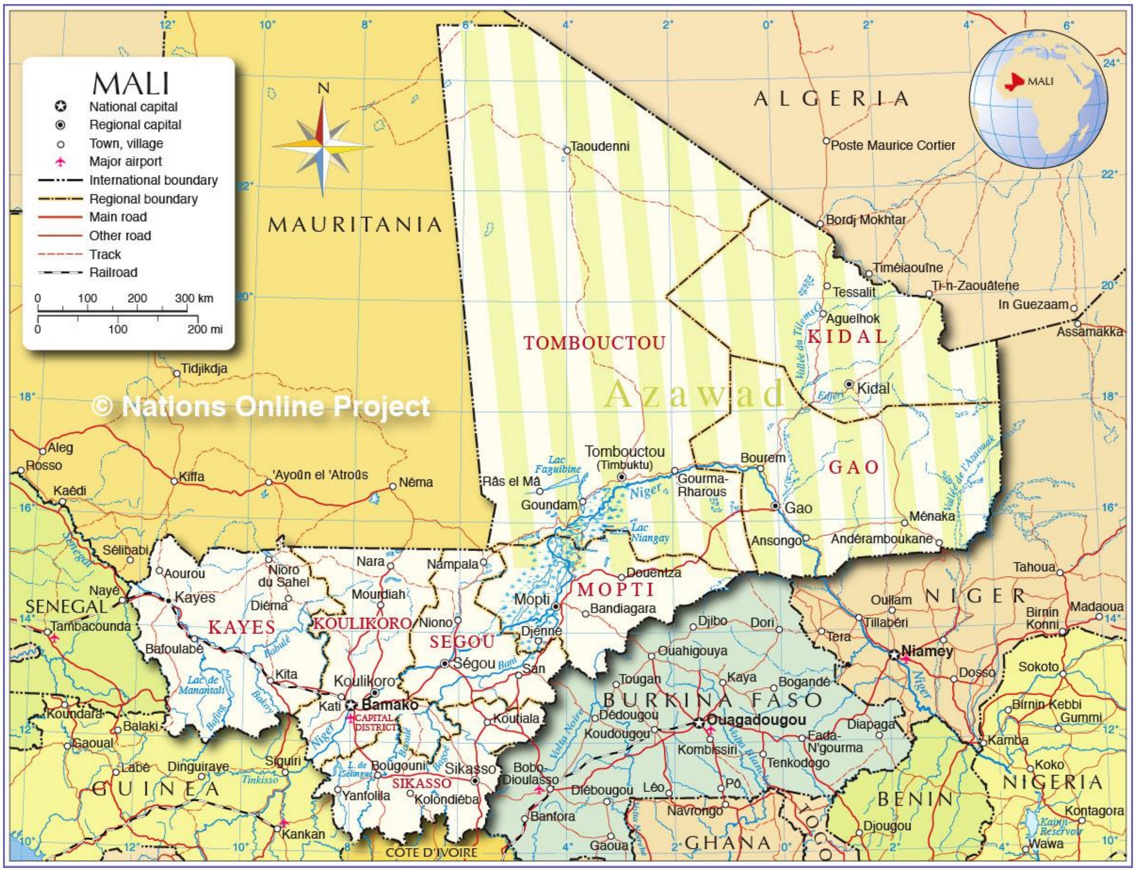
Source: www.nationsonline.org

Algeria-Mali trade

Almost all consumer goods and appliances in northern Mali come through Algeria. Transit times across Algeria to the southern border are about seven days, whereas transit from ports in Dakar or Abidjan to northern Mali takes closer to seventeen days. Mali also imports goods that are subsidized in Algeria, most notably gasoline but also sugar, milk, flour and flour-based food products such as pasta. Mali's exports north include fruit and livestock. Aside from subsidies, cross-border trade is increasingly affected by conflict in northern Mali.

Trade is estimated by Benassi et al (2015) to have dropped by more than half from 2011 to 2014 – from an approximate weekly turnover of US$ 2 million to US$ 0.74 million -- after the major uprising in Mali during 2012-2013 and the arrival of French troops. Still, with profit margins of 20-30 percent, informal trade continues to play a major role in the northern Mali economy. Benassi et al estimate that value added on informal trade services makes up about 3.5 percent of the GDP of northern Mali. Total informal imports are estimated at $70 per capita in Mali, where a substantial share of goods traded cross-border in the north are destined for Bamako or other cities in the south. Even traffickers in guns and drugs join in convoys of legal goods, using them to obscure their own contraband, and launder their profits by financing informal trading caravans.

Figure V-2. Administrative map of Mali



Source: www.nationsonline.org

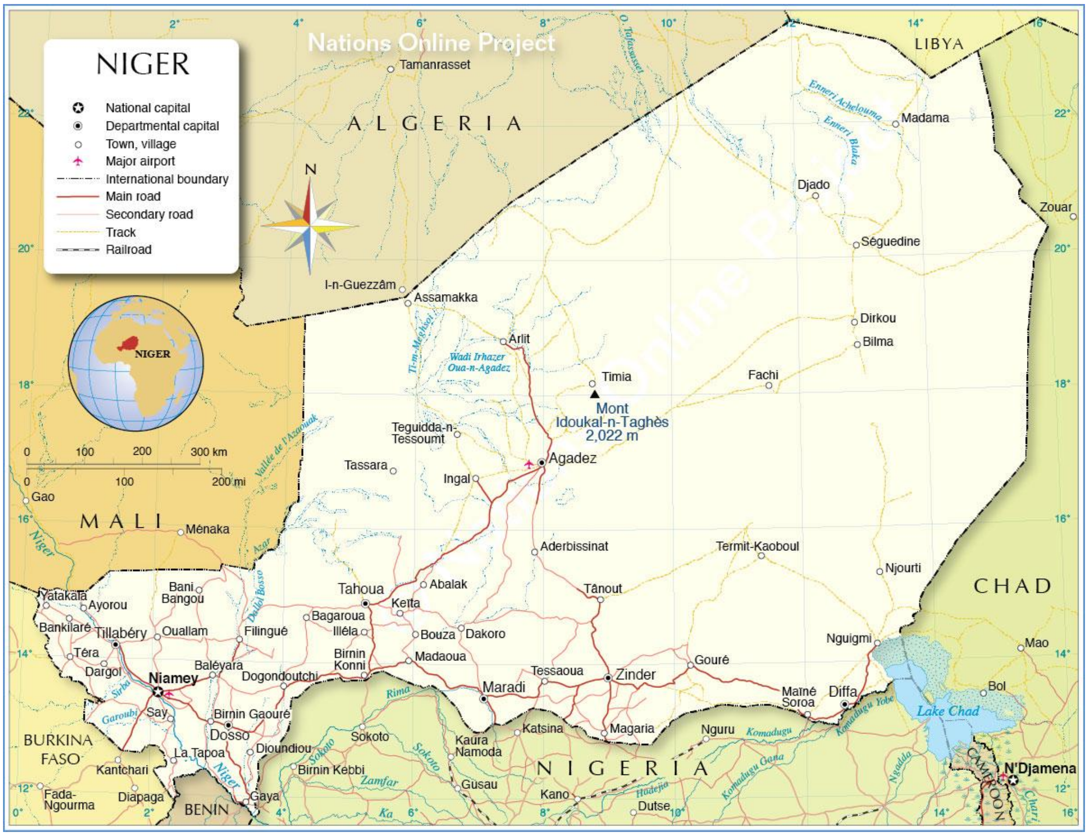
Informal trade in Niger

Niger has its own lengthy border with Algeria, yet most products smuggled into Niger from Algeria are brought in via Mali. Informal traders report that this route is easier for clandestine trade. Even so, the most significant and most active border for informal trade in Niger is the nearly 1500 km border with Nigeria. The single product with the largest value is gasoline and other hydrocarbons. Niger has three neighbors that produce and subsidize hydrocarbons – Algeria, Libya and Nigeria – and the price differential with Niger draws a substantial share of Niger consumption into the informal market. Formal statistics of fuel imports and consumption in Niger are impossibly low, indicating that most consumption is of smuggled products, avoiding the monopoly control of Niger's national petroleum company. Petroleum smuggling apparently varies somewhat with variations in the value of neighboring country currencies. Niger and Mali use the CFA franc which has a fixed exchange rate with the euro. The currencies of the neighboring petroleum producers are more closely related to the world price of oil.

Many goods that are smuggled into northern Nigeria are brought north through Benin and east through Niger. Difficult customs procedures and transit through Nigeria make it preferable to transit through other countries. These goods include an important share of the used cars smuggled into Nigeria, mostly through Benin to southern Nigeria (See Golub, Mbaye and Benjamin, 2015), but the route to northern Nigeria usually passes through Niger. This smuggling, through the port in Cotonou and then through customs posts on the Benin/ Niger border, is usually transacted by undervaluation and misreporting of cargo. Goods intended for re-export to Nigeria are frequently claimed to be for domestic consumption, and vice versa, depending on the relevant tariff regime.

While the route for consumer durables through Benin and Niger to northern Nigeria is relatively well-organized by major operators, there is a far more broad-based trade in food, livestock and agricultural products, but also textiles and pharmaceuticals, conducted by small operators the length of the Niger/Nigeria border. Customs agents along that border concede that they do not even stop people with small loads, such as people on foot or in passenger cars. Undervaluation or misreporting is common for loads in small trucks. Border posts in Niger are often located a few kilometers back from the border, allowing ample opportunity for goods to be dispersed to local networks before they reach any import controls.

Figure V-3. The land routes of Niger



Source: www.nationsonline.org

Trade, informality and governance

Informal trade is the lifeblood of the Sahel economy. With its extensive transit networks, it provides the cross-border distribution and marketing for agriculture and livestock, Mali's second largest export, and provides supplies of vital goods including food and fuel. These activities are all part of the informal sector, and the informal sector is the backbone of economic activity in the Sahel. Besides a small number of formal firms and the few jobs they offer, all businesses are informal. And these support many stable livelihoods and long-term investments. Unfortunately, the long traditions of the informal economy do not include broad and deep civic contributions. The extensive networks of traders and itinerant merchants also have a long tradition of avoiding taxes.

Rather than leaving informal businesses to their own devices, the government can help to serve their need for collective services, as well as the needs of informal workers. For example, the north of Mali lacks a government presence, and lacks governance generally. And yet to function well, the North's communities and its informal economies require some governance. If this governance is not provided by the government, then non-state—and possibly violent--groups will step in (Benjamin, 2014).

In the absence of a functioning state, the informal economy provides some stability amid the fragility. The government could invest in this informal economy and help provide for its collective needs while working to re-establish order in the region (Reitano and Shaw, 2014). Closely related is more orderly border management, one that is more integrated with central systems, which may require special dispensation of taxes, but would standardize public control.

And while the recent surge in illegal smuggling of drugs and contraband may be highly profitable, it hardly offers a stable livelihood alternative for most traffickers. Although contraband generates income for many, as with most illegal activity the revenue concentrates at the top, and the risk, as well as the potential for conflict among traffickers, is high. Interviews with Sahel residents indicate a firm preference for legal trade, even though it may generate a lower income, over tangling with illegal business and competing groups of illegal traffickers. (Benjamin, 2016; Mangan and Nowak, 2019).

Unfortunately, national governments have come to face a similar choice. The temptation is strong to accept a share of the profits from illicit trafficking while surrendering most central government control over large sections of the Sahel. At the same time, certain militias have found it advantageous to insinuate some of their members into the Government. "With endemic levels of corruption and the interweaving of trafficking groups into the state, and the state into the (illicit) protection economy, the interests of the two groups may not be distinct. State officials may follow economic, social, and political incentives that are incongruent with the interests of central state consolidation, …" (Reitano and Shaw, 2014)

Thus, there comes a tipping point in the governance of Sahel communities, and particularly those near the border. When these communities cannot distinguish between the behavior of central government authorities and non-state armed militias and traffickers, and when the central government seems to have lost the incentive to serve community needs, the local authorities who retain these incentives will form whatever alliances are needed to ensure local security and preserve local welfare. But unlike non-state actors, the central government has a unique capacity to aid local communities, because it has unique resources that no militias have.

The central government has the potential to provide local security in ways that meet national standards. Communities near conflict zones report that they are willing to rely on central-level security services as long as these provide protection from armed militias. Similarly, the central government can provide education and health services that are based on national standards and can draw on central-level resources. It can provide resources and guidance for investments in roads and water projects. And it can provide more orderly border management. But the government must choose this nation-wide jurisdiction and support for local communities over ad hoc, corrupt practices and unevenly distributed profits from trafficking in illegal goods.

In order to avoid having efforts at strengthening central government capacity end up diverted to strengthening traffickers who have infiltrated public systems, researchers have emphasized the value of promoting local community development along with political accommodation for informal traders (Venturi, 2019; Reitano and Shaw, 2014). "Over time, … there will need to be an effort to bring the state back into those regions where its reach has not been felt, and ensure its capacity to control, regulate, and secure livelihoods and communities. The informal economy maintains its traction at the community level because of the paucity of other alternatives. An overarching framework needs to be applied … to development and to economic priorities that recognize the dynamics of the informal economy, (and) make the structural reforms required to bolster the resilience of communities … " (Reitano and Shaw, 2014).

Informal trade will continue to serve as the backbone of the Sahel economy. Central governments will need to use a combination of political accommodation and economic support to local communities in order to provide a stable environment for this vital economic activity and prevent it from being overrun by armed militias and traffickers in illicit goods. Supporting alliances with motivated local authorities can help provide the structure for improving governance that will, in turn and over time, enhance the government's orderly control of its domestic territory.

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Chapter VI : BUSINESS FINANCE AND THE INFORMAL SECTOR

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Introduction

This chapter will review the discussion of how best to adapt business finance to local business conditions in francophone West Africa, as included in "Improving the Contribution of the Informal Economy to GDP Growth," (with Aly Mbaye, 2018), and updated with data recently collected from the Sahel region. Informal business owners, like small business owners, complain of lack of credit. Surveys of informal firms in francophone West Africa (Mbaye and Benjamin, 2012, 2018) have often shown that informal firms believe that a significant advantage of formalizing is gaining greater access to credit, and World Bank Enterprise Surveys of informal firms usually find responses that cite lack of access to credit as a major constraint. Yet, surveys of formal businesses indicate that not all firms who qualify for formal loans are interested in taking them, while informal firms indicate a strong preference for personal sources of credit. The behavior of firms – formal, large informal and small informal – indicates that the problem of financing businesses in francophone West Africa goes beyond access to credit. This essay will compare the Doing Business/Investment Climate data on credit penetration with corresponding data from surveys of informal businesses of francophone West African countries, including the Sahel region, to see which reforms could improve credit penetration and financial service to informal businesses.

Numerous attempts to address business financing issues, especially for small informal firms, have been implemented by means of expanding the supply of micro-credit services. In a broad survey of such programs (discussed below), Beck (2015) found the results to be decidedly mixed. At the same time, Mbaye and Benjamin (2018) show from surveys in West Africa that informal businesses make little use of either formal or micro credit, and strongly prefer internal financing from savings or family loans. They find formal credit to be expensive and difficult to repay. Fundamentally, the structure of most loans does not suit the high-risk nature of their businesses. Mbaye and Benjamin find that personal savings and family loans help businesses diversify default risks without sacrificing collateral, and they suggest increasing the use of grants for such firms. Subsequent surveys of informal firms undertaken in the Sahel indicate even less use of formal credit and even more reliance on personal savings or other personal sources of financing. (See figure 4 below.) It is noteworthy that these types of financing are also sought out and used by small entrepreneurs in the United States (see, for example, Lidow, 2018).

Section II of the chapter reviews literature on attempts to expand access to credit for small and informal firms. The main conclusion from this literature is that the supply of credit is **not** the binding constraint facing these firms. This conclusion, established most pointedly in Beck (2015), is significant because it is based on an examination of the results of credit expansion programs in multiple countries, rather than on opinion surveys of businesses. Section III looks at results regarding credit from surveys of mostly informal firms in francophone West Africa and finds that these results largely concur with Beck's conclusion

– that access to credit is not the binding constraint to growth for small and informal firms – and reveal other factors to consider for improving credit conditions for these firms. The final section provides recommendations based on these results.

A review first of the literature examining various programs to help relieve the financing constraint and then results of these surveys will help in understanding why formal credit arrangements do not adequately serve these businesses and thus why their financial inclusiveness remains low.

Financial exclusion is a dominant trait of entrepreneurship in Africa, from which even the formal sector does not escape completely. To illustrate this context in this chapter we use surveys conducted by Mbaye et al (2012, 2015 and 2018) in West and Central Africa and the World Bank Enterprise Surveys of the business environment. The work of Mbaye et al (2012, 2015 and 2018) focuses on business surveys on a total of eight cities in West and Central Africa. These surveys use the same methodology and focus on formal and large and small informal enterprises[31] with an average of 300 enterprises surveyed in each city.

Review of credit expansion programs

Dimensions of financial inclusion of enterprises

Financing business activities in the economy has long been and remains a major concern for both developing countries and for many international organizations, such as the World Bank, which has been a catalyst for development in many countries. The belief that individual access to financial services is a sufficient means to overcome poverty has, in recent years, led to significant efforts to increase financial inclusion. The increased interest of researchers that followed resulted in an abundant literature on financial inclusion and its impact on poor people.

Although many papers on financial inclusion are related to its impact on economic agents in general, we will only review those that look at its impact on enterprises. We begin by defining the concept of financial inclusion. Discussion on the literature on enterprises' access to financial services and its impact on their activities will then follow. Finally, we will present the outcomes of providing this access to enterprises on the ground.

The discussion on the merits and determinants of financial inclusion has worked with a range of different definitions that vary according to the type of financial services, the degree of formality of the financial service provider and the depth of access. As a result, we will first offer a general definition and then, in a second step, we will discuss the different dimensions of financial inclusion.

Financial inclusion refers to the access, at a reasonable price, of economic agents in general and enterprises in particular, to formal and appropriate financial services that meet their needs. Access to financial services can be defined in several dimensions, including

31. Formal enterprises are those that come under the real taxation system. Large informal enterprises are those that pay basic or simplified taxes but have incomes that would qualify them for the real taxation system. Small informal enterprises are those in the tax-free regime, including those that pay a presumptive lump-sum tax and those that pay no formal taxes at all.

geographic access (i.e. proximity to a financial service provider) and socio-economic access (i.e. no prohibitive fees and documentation requirements). Access to appropriate products, whose prices are not prohibitive, which meet the needs of customers and which are viable for both suppliers and users of these products, is also another important dimension, often taken into account in the definition of financial inclusion (CGAP, 2011 cited by Beck, 2015).

Financial institutions are at the center of financial inclusion. No matter the dimension considered for the definition of this concept, it can only be understood by reference to these institutions.

Financial inclusion is provided by formal financial institutions. These include a wide range of institutions including banks, non-bank financial institutions and microfinance institutions. Even though their common target is the expansion of their services to households and enterprises, there are significant differences among these financial institutions. On the one hand, there is a significant difference between commercial banks, regulated and supervised by the central bank or separate regulation, and other financial institutions, which are generally subject to fewer rules and regulatory constraints. On the other hand, there are also important differences between the broad range of formal and semi-formal non-bank financial institutions. Their particular characteristics as well as their specific operating modes make it possible to capture the different dimensions by which financial inclusion can be perceived.

Microfinance can be defined as an attempt to provide financial services to households and micro-enterprises excluded from the traditional services of commercial banks. The borrowers are generally low-income individuals, independent or informal, without any formal properties in their assets and lacking legal documents. It is important to distinguish between the concept of microfinance and the providers of microfinance services, which bring together a variety of different institutions. These range from commercial banks trying to reach market segments that are excluded from their traditional services, through specialized programs; from small commercial lenders, such as the Mexican Compartamos, to non-governmental organizations (NGOs), such as Grameen Bank, to cooperative banks. The common characteristic of these different suppliers is the focus on the market segment bringing together low-income economic agents. However, they use a range of different techniques to reach this customer base and serve it in a commercially sustainable manner. Many of these institutions work with the principle of double (profit and social impact) or triple (profit, social impact and environmental impact) bottom line as the final goal. Microfinance is also often referred to as a concept that combines products and techniques that differ from conventional banking and are specifically designed to overcome the barriers that prevent conventional banks from satisfying all segments of the market.

According to Beck (2015), government-owned financial institutions play a key role in this area. These State institutions, such as post offices or savings banks, have a formidable performance in providing savings services to segments of the population not reached by private financial institutions. However, their overall balance in the provision of credit is rather negative; they use subsidized interest rates leading to credit rationing and rent-seeking, reduction or the complete elimination of debt. This results in a weakening of the credit culture (and therefore an attack on the private credit offer) and an inefficiency in the allocation of credit.

In addition, it is important to emphasize that the lack of access to and use of formal financial services does not imply that the poor have no access to financial services. As documented by Collins et al. (2009), the poor use a diverse range of informal financial services and access to a range of informal financial service providers including fund lenders, deposit collectors, credit-granting stores, lenders, pledges, friends, and family.

Although the underlying transactions and even the contractual arrangements do not necessarily vary significantly between formal and informal financing, there are critical differences that need to be highlighted. At the client level, dignity and privacy are often of concern in the case of informal finance. There is also a lack of formal rules for this type of transaction, to protect both creditor/provider and borrower/customer. At the aggregate level, informal finance remains to a large extent simply local and thus does not allow the same benefits of geographical and sectoral diversification as formal finance.

Attempts to broaden financial inclusion relate to the literature on financial development and poverty reduction on the one hand and exchange theory on the other. The first focuses on the indirect effects of financial deepening on poverty reduction (Beck, Demirguc-Kunt and Levine 2007, Gine and Townsend 2004, Beck, Levine and Levkov, 2010) while the theory of exchange tries to establish a direct relationship between access to financial services and their effects on households and especially enterprises.

In this chapter, we focus on the literature on the theory of exchange given the particular emphasis it puts on the relationship between financial inclusion and development of enterprises.

Exchange theory states that access to payment and transaction services allows for better integration into modern market economies and the development of entrepreneurship (Beck, 2015). The enterprise is no longer forced to manipulate money in cash. It can use safer, cheaper means of transfer and these faster payment methods allow for more economical transactions over greater geographic distances. Thus, the different financial services often make it possible to achieve the same objective, but with different degrees of efficiency. As a result, the influence of the different financial services on the net income of enterprises is not the same (Beck, 2015).

The empirical literature on access to credit and the growth of entrepreneurship and corporate profit has shown mixed results over the last 15 years. Much of the interpretation can be summarized as a half-full glass or a half-empty glass; that is, the interpretation often depends on the observer.

Coleman (1999) assesses the effect of an MFI's branch expansion in northern Thailand and exploits the fact that six communities were identified as the location of village banks, and that there was a list of self-selected candidates for loans from village banks in the process of being established. By comparing these outstanding borrowers with actual borrowers from existing banks in other villages, Coleman does not see any significant credit impact on physical assets, savings, sales of production, production expenses, labor or spending on health care or education.

In a similar study using the gradual introduction of a new lending program, Cotler and Woodruff (2008) compare small retailers receiving loans from a Mexican microfinance lender to selected retailers who receive it in the future; they find a positive and significant effect of the microcredit program on sales and profits only for smaller retailers, but a negative effect on sales and profits of large retailers. The economic impact is surprisingly strong but corresponds to that of other studies on the impact of subsidies for micro-entrepreneurs (de Mel, McKenzie and Woodruff 2008 in Sri Lanka).

In a study conducted in the Philippines, Karlan and Zinman (2011) show that the expansion of individual microcredit to micro-entrepreneurs has no positive effect on the activities of borrowers, but instead improves their personal status within communities and their access to informal financing. More specifically, the profitability of micro-enterprises increased as enterprises reduce their activities after taking out a loan, including the removal of labour. One explanation is that the increased access to credit reduces the need for co-branding within family or community networks. There is evidence of greater investment in education. Most of these effects apply exclusively to male but not to female borrowers. It seems there is a certain diversion of entrepreneurial finance for domestic purposes.

Augsburg et al. (2015) show in a study of Bosnia that microcredit increases the number of self-employed workers and reduces wage labour while increasing profits, which is more in line with the idea that microcredit increases entrepreneurship.

Attanasio et al. (2015) achieve similar results in rural Mongolia. The researchers compare the results obtained by borrowers in a group loan program and in an individual loan program. They find that the likelihood of owning a business increases significantly, as do corporate profits under the group loan program, while they find no significant effect for individual borrower clients.

Other recent studies have attempted to measure the effects of random allocation of credit at the area/village level rather than at the individual level, as this allows contagion effects to be incorporated into the community beyond immediate effects on borrowers. Angelucci, Karlan, and Zinman (2015) used a randomized placement program by Mexican micro-lender Compartamos and find modest effects on socioeconomic outcome variables after two or three years. Although they find positive effects of access to credit on the growth of micro-enterprises, there is no significant effect on their profits or on the entry or exit of entre-preneurs.

In Africa, particularly in Ghana, Karlan, Knight and Udry (2014) offering either small cash grants or counselling services or both to micro and small sewing enterprises in urban areas, find that neither of them has a positive effect on enterprises. Rather, they have resulted in lower profits and incentives for entrepreneurs to return to the previous mode of operation.

However, de Mel, McKenzie, and Woodruff (2014) found for a group of existing and potential women entrepreneurs that the training and subsidy provided to the firm can increase the profitability of existing entrepreneurs in the short but not in the medium term (i.e. eight months), while new entrepreneurs benefit from training in a more sustainable way.

While evidence from empirical studies may look contradictory at times, it remains undeniable that in many cases access to financial products and services has led to better outcomes for businesses in many regions.

However, despite these many advantages or opportunities that enterprises offer to different financial institutions, the adoption of services produced by them remains characterised by a significant reluctance of many enterprises. Several factors have been identified as the source of this phenomenon.

Barriers to the adoption of financial services by enterprises

Several factors are identified in the literature as explaining the low use or adoption of financial services, which are widely available. For this purpose, it is important to distinguish between the factors relating to supply and those relating to demand. In other words, it is a question of factors that prevent companies from adopting certain products and services and factors that prevent financial service providers from reaching certain groups of enterprises.

At the most basic level, there are high costs and high risks as the main limiting factors for the supply of financial services to certain groups of enterprises. Fixed costs of providing financial services (i.e. costs independent of deposit amount or credit, number of client transactions, or number of clients served at branch or institution) make it more difficult to offer services to low-resource market segments like micro-enterprises, because they are customers with lower and/or fewer transaction demands. Also, the lighter concentration of enterprises in rural areas makes the provision of traditional financial services commercially less viable outside urban centres.

In addition, the risks of reaching the lower end of the market could be prohibitive. Many households and economic agents in developing countries operate in the informal sector and do not have the official documentation required for financial transactions. This problem is exacerbated by the more stringent customer knowledge regulations introduced over the last decade worldwide, as well as the lack of appropriate identification systems in many low-income countries.

Similarly, volatility - both at the individual level, linked to fluctuations in the income flows of many micro-enterprises and households, and at the aggregate level, linked to the dependence of many low-income economies on primary exports - further increases the costs and risks of financial service providers.

On the demand side, the lack of financial literacy has been identified as a significant barrier to the adoption of financial services. Also, behavioural constraints are important especially for savings decisions, but also for decisions on the allocation of credit resources. In addition, for some groups of enterprises, religious constraints related to interest-bearing contracts limit their willingness to access conventional financing.

Despite innovations by financial institutions and many techniques used to overcome these obstacles there is still need of improvement. The effectiveness of the joint liability technique, for example, used to overcome the problem of the insufficiency of safeguards necessary to cover the excessive risk resulting from the high level of asymmetric information, was questioned by several studies. Besley and Coate (1995) modelled theoretically the compromise in collective lending. On the one hand, they show that group loans can encourage risk-sharing. On the other hand, this may encourage strategic default if a large number of the borrowers group default in payment. This prediction is confirmed by Gine, Krishnaswamy and Ponce (2011), who use the repayment data on Muslim and Hindu microcredit clients in India to determine if members of a joint responsibility group are more likely to default in payment when the fraction of defaulters of the group increases.

In the same vein, Attanasio et al. (2015) find no difference in default rates between individual and collective borrower groups in rural Mongolia; which means that there is no difference between the two techniques and therefore the problem of insufficient guarantees that blocks access to credit remains unresolved.

To overcome the obstacle related to the behavioural constraints of borrowers, microcredit techniques consisted of offering contracts with frequent repayments of small amounts, often weekly. But this technique also has a problem because of the short duration of repayments. For example, McIntosh (2008) and Field et al. (2012) show for Uganda and India, respectively, that greater flexibility in terms of repayment reduces stress and increases the likelihood of repayment. More specifically, Field et al. (2012) show that a two-month grace period reduces stress, and McIntosh shows that repayments every two weeks rather than weekly reduce drop-out rates and slightly increase the probability of repayment.

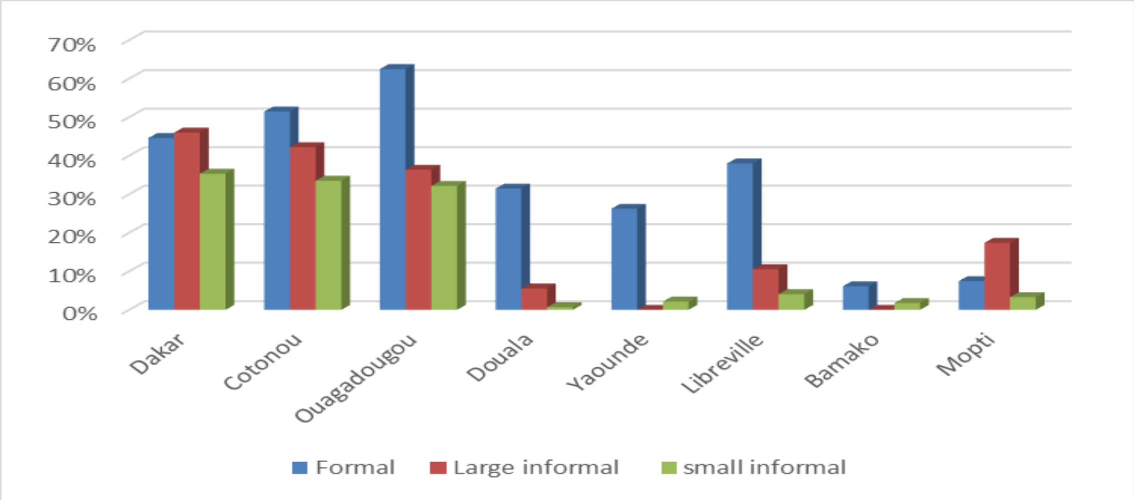
Finally, as women are less likely to have access to traditional financial services (Demirguc-Kunt, Klapper, and Singer 2013, Aterido, Beck, and Iacovone 2013), innovation in microfinance institutions in this area has to target this segment of the market. But this technique does not seem too promising either according to the results of many studies. Indeed, de Mel, McKenzie and Woodruff (2008) observe high returns on capital after a subsidy injection for an experiment in Sri Lanka, but only for male-owned firms; this gender gap cannot be explained by differences in capacity, risk-aversion or entrepreneurial attitudes. Similarly, Fafchamps et al. (2014) show in a field experiment in Ghana that women entrepreneurs of large firms do not show positive return on capital after cash grants but do so after in-kind subsidies. There is no effect for both types of subsidies for smaller enterprises. In view of all the above, the problem of adopting financial services remains unsolved.

Source of financing of companies in Francophone Africa from survey data

Figures VI-1 to VI-4 present the data from surveys of the sources of finance to enterprises in West and Central Africa. Results support the view that informal enterprises have little access to bank credit, but this is also the case for enterprises in the formal sector (see figure VI-2). But what is interesting to note is that a relatively small proportion of informal enterprises in West and Central Africa have access to bank credit. For example, in Douala, 2% of informal small enterprises have access to credit against 5% in Dakar. While for formal enterprises, in Libreville and Douala respectively about 30% and 20% of these enterprises have access to bank credit against 20% and 15% in Ouagadougou and Dakar, respectively. In addition, enterprises rely on other types of financing (personal savings, undistributed earnings, family loans, donations, inheritance) to finance their investment.

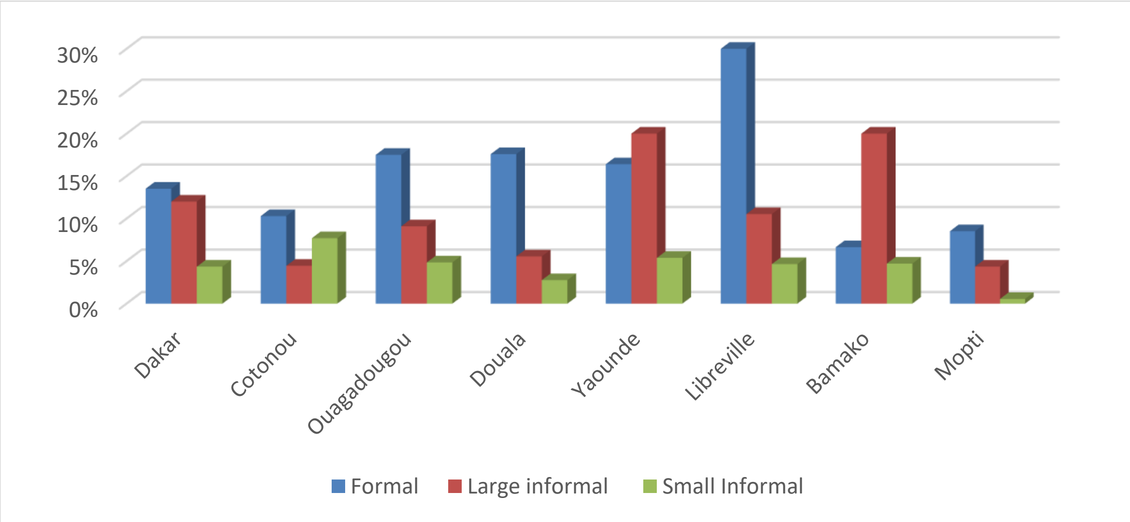
About 80% of informal small enterprises and 70% of informal big enterprises in Douala, Yaoundé and Libreville receive donations and inheritance as the main source of funding (see Figure VI-4).

Figure VI-1: Proportion of companies financed by internal funds or retained earnings



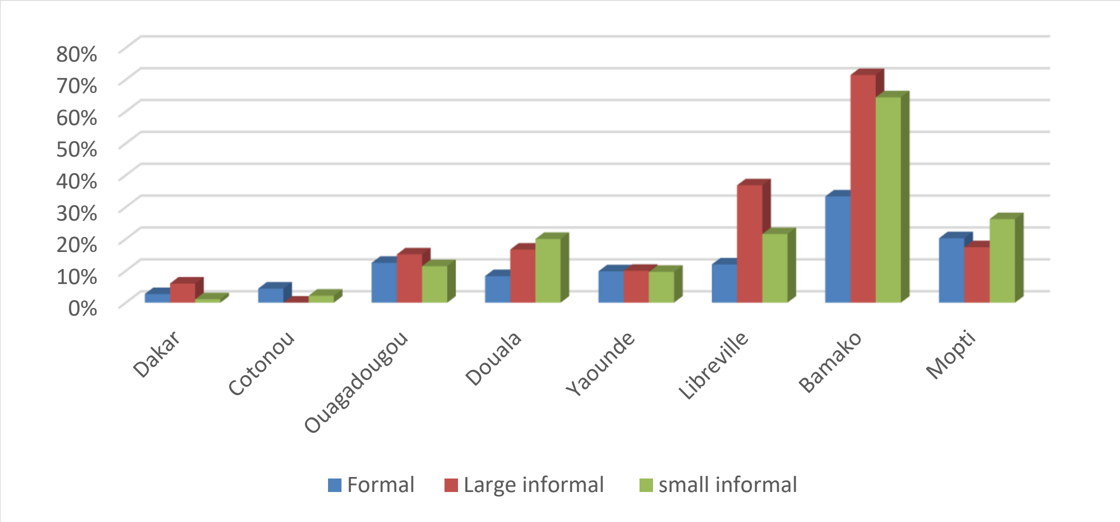
Source : Mbaye et al (2012 ; 2015 et 2018)

Figure VI-2: Proportion of companies with bank financing



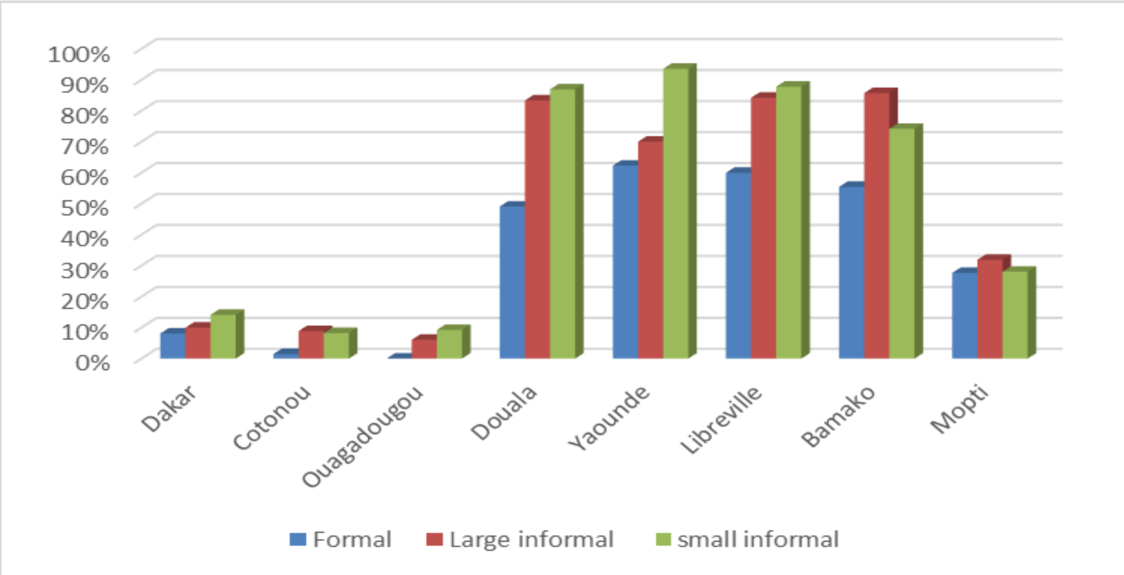
Source : Mbaye et al (2012 ; 2015 et 2018)

Figure VI-3: Proportion of companies with a family loan



Source : Mbaye et al (2012 ; 2015 et 2018)

Figure VI-4: Savings, gifts, inheritance



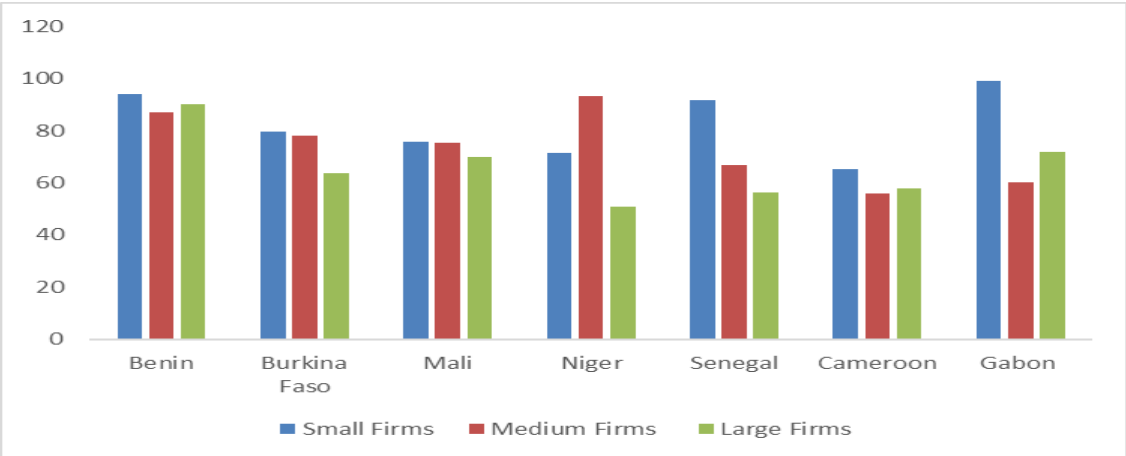
Source : Mbaye et al (2012 ; 2015 et 2018)

We also analyzed the data from the World Bank Enterprise Surveys in the same countries as Mbaye et al to study the financial inclusion of enterprises in Africa. The Enterprise Surveys (ES) focus on many aspects of the business environment. These factors can be accommodating or constraining for firms and play an important role in whether an economy's private sector will thrive or not. An accommodating business environment is one that encourages firms to operate efficiently. Such conditions strengthen incentives for firms to innovate and to increase. A more productive private sector, in turn, expands employment and contributes taxes necessary for public investment in health, education, and other services. Questions contained in the ES aim at covering most of the topics mentioned above. The topics include infrastructure, trade, finance, regulations, taxes and business licensing, corruption, crime and informality, access to finance, innovation, labour, and perceptions about obstacles to doing business. The ES are conducted by the World Bank Group and its partners across all geographic regions and cover small, medium, and large firms. The size of the firm is determined by the number of employees: 5 to 19 (small), 20 to 99 (medium), and 100 or more (large). Firms with less than five employees are ineligible for the survey. Firms that are 100% state-owned are also ineligible. The ES are repeated approximately every four years for a particular country (or region). By tracking changes in the business environment, policymakers and researchers can look at the effects of policy and regulatory reforms on firm performance. Repeated surveys aid in studying the evolution of the business environment and how it affects the dynamics of the private sector.

For each country, we considered the last available survey: thus, 2016 was considered for Benin, Mali, and Cameroon, the year 2017 for Niger; 2009 for Burkina Faso and Gabon and 2014 for Senegal.

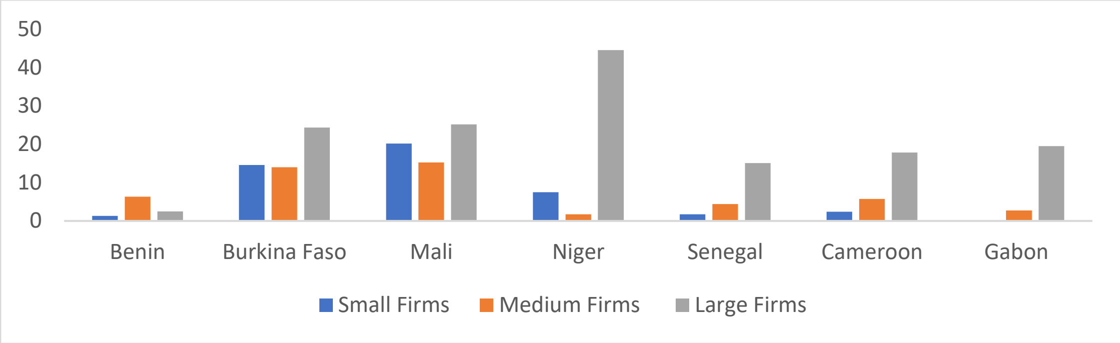
The results of these surveys are presented in the figures from VI-5 to VI-9. The analysis of these graphs shows the main source of financing for both small and large enterprises are of internal origin (see Figure VI-5). Only large enterprises have access to bank financing. For example, more than 44.5% of large enterprises in Niger have access to bank loans, compared to 7.5% for small and 1.7% for medium enterprises (see Figure VI-6). Other types of financing such as supplier credit and stock sales remain relatively weak for enterprises (see figures VI-7 and VI-8).

Figure VI-5: Proportion of investment financed internally (%)



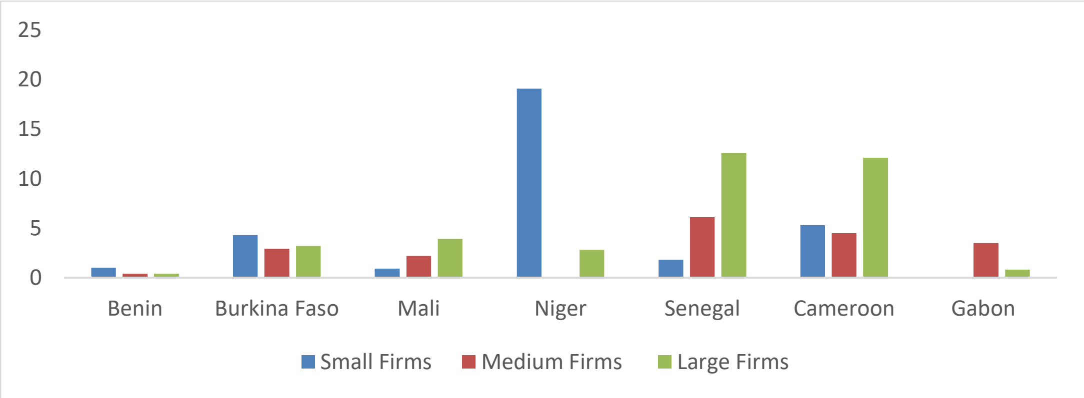
Source : calcul des auteurs à partir des données de « Entreprise Survey » de la Banque mondiale

Figure VI-6: proportion of investment financed by bank (%)



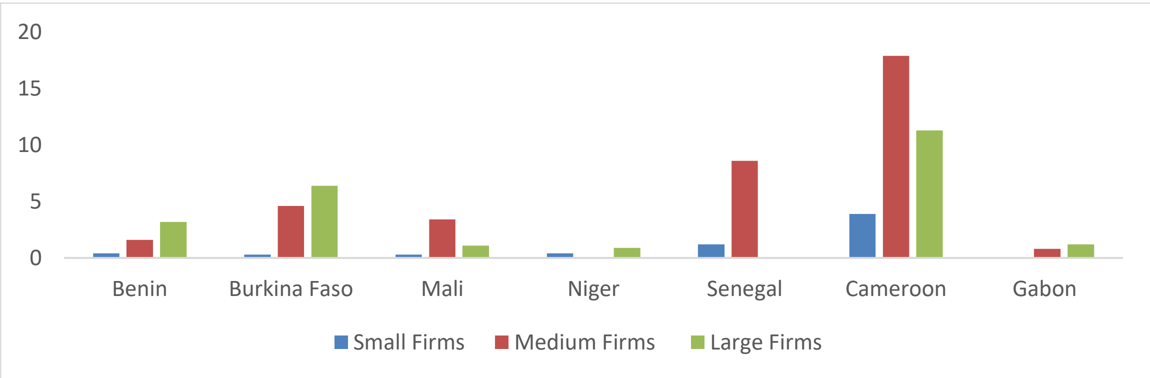
Source : calcul des auteurs à partir des données de « Entreprise Survey » de la Banque mondiale

Figure VI-7: proportion of investment financed by supplier credit (%)



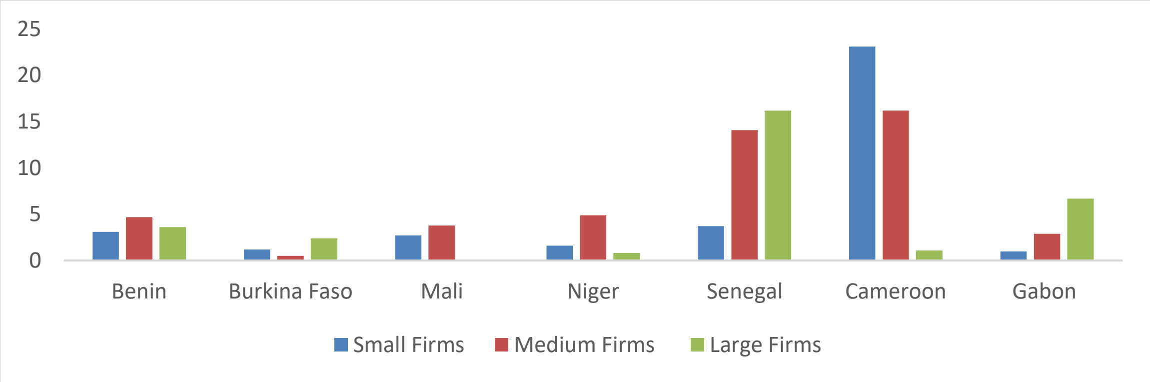
Source : calcul des auteurs à partir des données de « Entreprise Survey » de la Banque mondiale

Figure VI-8: Proportion of investment financed by equity or stock sales (%)



Source : calcul des auteurs à partir des données de « Entreprise Survey » de la Banque mondiale

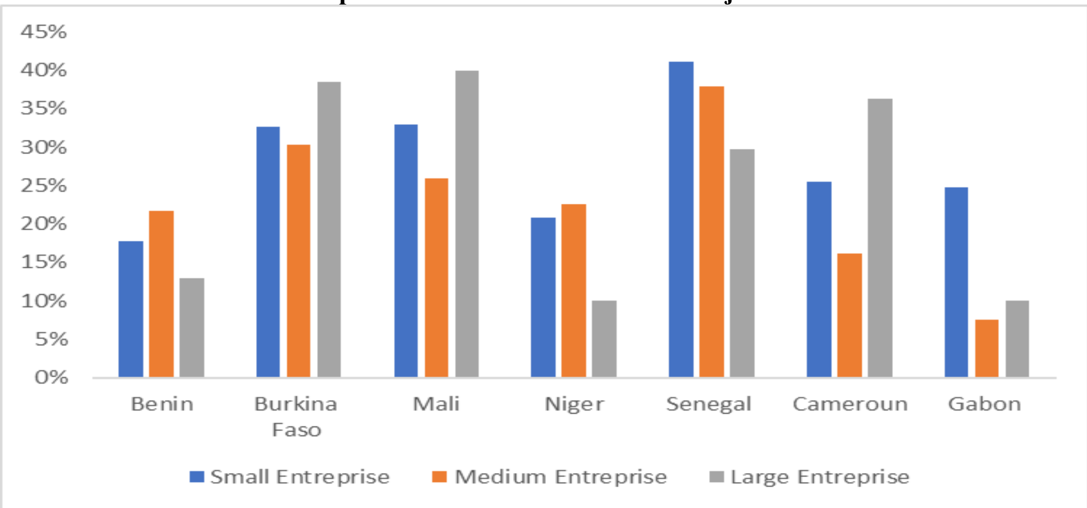
Figure VI-9: Other Financing for investment (%)



Source : calcul des auteurs à partir des données de « Entreprise Survey » de la Banque mondiale

Further, it is noteworthy that for the Enterprise Survey question on access to credit as a constraint to business, seldom do more than half find it major or severe obstacle, and the distribution across firms of these positive replies appears to have little correlation with whether or not such firms have made use of formal credit.

Perception of Access to Finance as a major obstacle



Source : calcul des auteurs à partir des données de « Entreprise Survey » de la Banque mondiale

Conclusion

In sum, Beck (2015) finds that by varying credit program parameters, lenders can generate some small advantage to themselves by 'selling' more credit, but there is no clear evidence that they generate any advantage for the firms they lend to. Beck's final conclusion is that the supply of credit is not the binding constraint for firms observed to be under-represented in credit markets.

This conclusion is especially pertinent in view of survey results from Mali and Niger, two fragile and conflict countries. Blattman and Ralston (2015) have found no positive impact in conflict zones – as regards firm growth or conflict reduction -- from training or from micro-finance programs; rather, they find the most constructive results come from business grants, either in liquid form or in kind. (Berman, Felter, and Shapiro (2018) find similar lack of impact from training and employment programs in conflict zones.) Similarly, Blattman, Fiala, and Martinez (2018) find a more constructive role for grants in building capital in informal businesses and reducing poverty in a post-conflict setting (Uganda), as compared to other programs. AFD has had success in the Sahel with zero-interest loans, albeit still requiring repayment of principal. Such loans have grant elements of 40 to 50 percent.

Beck (2015) does find a binding constraint on instruments for saving. Indeed, given the reliance of informal businesses on own savings, the lack of instruments for informal saving is quite significant. The basic difficulty is that informal firms want to continue hiding their incomes, and they know that putting savings in a bank account will ultimately reveal their financial flows to the Government. Instead, they use cash or gold, and physically store these assets in their homes or businesses. While some alternatives clearly could be more efficient, it is not clear how far policy should go in aiding informal firms in obfuscating their incomes from the authorities.

Much attention has been paid to technical innovations that enable phone banking. These certainly facilitate transactions and make it easier for more people to hold bank accounts. However, they do not resolve problems of informal savings or providing business credit. And while much creative effort has gone into expanding what small informal firms can collateralize, including a record of regular bill-paying documented through phone banking, it is not clear that small informal entrepreneurs are looking for more collateral. Rather, the West Africa informal firm survey responses indicate that they have a solid sense of how much debt they can carry, and that they avoid creating any new debts lest they not be able to service them. In other words, they voluntarily exclude themselves from greater participation in formal financial markets.

If, as Beck concludes, the supply of credit is not the binding constraint for small informal firms, why do entrepreneurs often claim on World Bank Enterprise Surveys that lack of access to credit is a major constraint? The West Africa informal firm surveys indicate that the bigger problem is lack of demand for their goods and services, i.e., the firms wish they had sufficient business income to justify taking on more debt, but do not. Even if they spot new business opportunities available only if they take on new investments, they are not confident they can repay as needed to protect their capital. A study of financial inclusion in Senegal, sponsored by the Finance Ministry and the World Bank (2016) found that the main reason given for not using formal financial services was 'lack of money.'

Tableau 1:Proportion des personnes non utilisatrices de compte par milieu de résidence selon les principales causes

Les principales causes de non disposition d'un compte	Milieu de résidence			
	Dakar urbain	Autres urbains	Rural	National
Institution trop éloignée	0	0,6	3,8	2,3
Institution trop coûteuse	2,8	1,6	4,1	3,3
Absence de documents nécessaires pour ouvrir un compte	3	3,1	3,3	3,2
Absence de confiance	1,5	1,9	2,1	1,9
Manque d'argent	85,9	90,5	93,3	91
raisons religieuses	0	0,1	0,4	0,2
Un membre de la famille a déjà un compte	0,4	0,3	0,2	0,2
Autre	9,9	4,2	3,1	4,8

Source : ANSD, L2s, Enquête modulaire mensuel juillet /août 2016

Thus, for the poorest, conflict or post-conflict countries in Africa, a program of select business grants may be the most successful approach to expand business and economic opportunities. For African countries approaching middle income, attention needs to focus on the many reforms identified by entrepreneurs required to improve the business climate and thereby business income, and not on programs aimed at signing informal firms up to pay taxes or to indebt them further.

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PART TWO

LIVELIHOODS AND FRAGILITY : CASE STUDIES

Chapter VII : CLIMATE CHANGE, LIVELIHOODS, AND CONFLICTS IN THE SAHEL

Ahmadou Aly Mbaye, Mbayang Thiam, Fama Gueye, and Khady Yama Sarr

Introduction

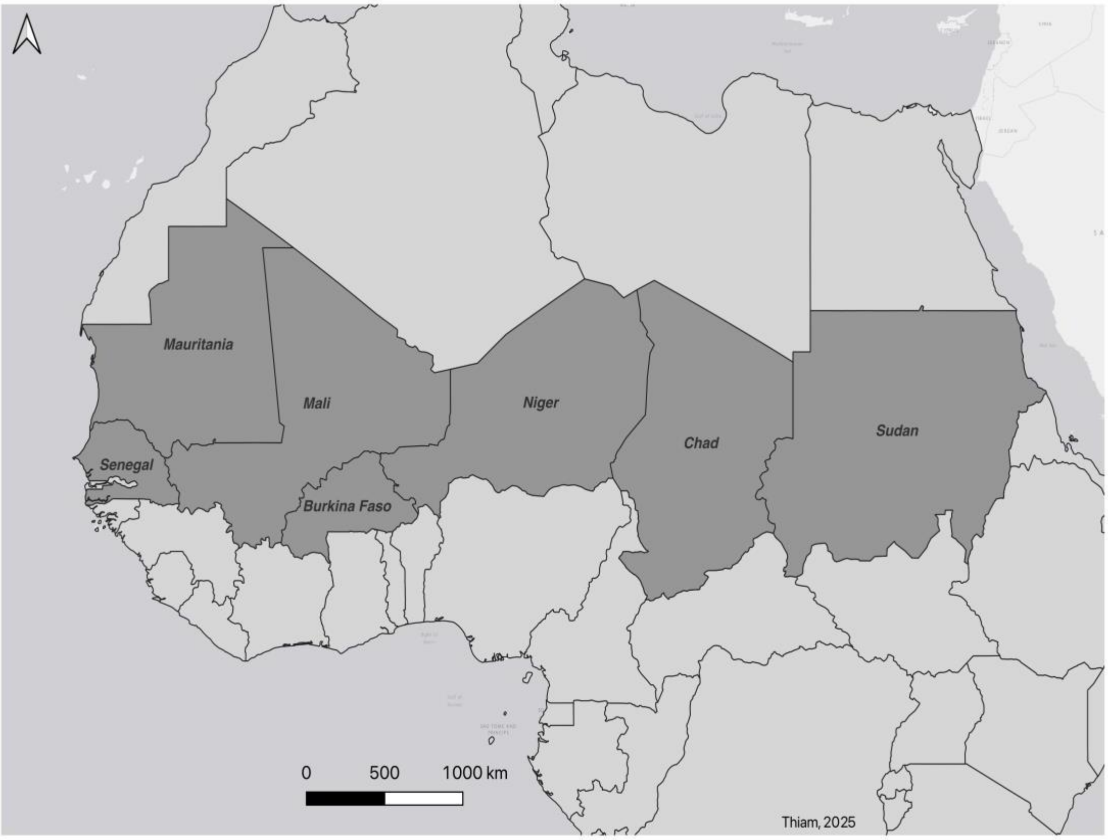
The Sahel is a vast, semi-arid band of land stretching between the Sahara Desert to the north and the Sudanese savannas to the south, spanning several countries in West, East, and Central Africa (Figure VI-1). Recent climate trends observed in the Sahel reveal a continuous rise in temperatures, accompanied by increased rainfall variability, which manifests in prolonged drought episodes and sporadic flooding. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), these climatic changes are likely to persist and intensify, thereby exacerbating the region's already fragile environmental conditions (IPCC, 2021).

At the same time, the Sahel is experiencing a rise in natural disasters, whose frequency and intensity are expected to increase in the near future, resulting in disastrous consequences for the availability of natural resources essential to the survival of local populations. Desertification—worsened by unsustainable agricultural practices, resource overexploit-tation, and climate change—constitutes a direct threat to food security and access to drinking water. In a context where natural resources represent the primary source of livelihood for millions of people, environmental degradation has profound repercussions on community resilience, rendering populations particularly vulnerable to economic and social crises.

Meanwhile, the Sahel region is also grappling with severe political turbulence, marked by the rise of radical Islamist groups and persistent armed conflict. These dynamics of violence and insecurity create an environment conducive to instability, both within states and across their borders. Recent research establishes a link between climate trends and the persistence of violent conflicts in the region, underscoring that populations facing increasingly difficult living conditions are often pushed to migrate or to fight over increa-singly scarce resources (Schraven et al. 2020). This struggle for survival, combined with ethnic and religious tensions, creates fertile ground for the emergence of violent conflict. Moreover, manifestations of violence in the Sahel are often exacerbated by socio-political factors, including state failure and the marginalization of certain populations, who find themselves on the front lines of climate change impacts (Buhaug et al. 2015).

In this chapter, we argue that conflicts in the Sahel result from a multitude of interdependent factors. Among these, weak governance, favoritism, as well as ethnic and religious tensions, play a predominant role. Climate change, far from being an isolated factor, acts as an amplifier of existing tensions, contributing to the outbreak of violence and the worsening of humanitarian crises. Consequently, we contend that reducing conflict in the Sahel can only be envisioned through a set of integrated policies in which climate change adaptation is considered an essential component. By incorporating climate-resilience strategies into security and development policies, it becomes possible to create a framework for lasting peace and greater stability in the sub-region.

Figure VII-1 : M ap of the Sahel.



Climate Change and Conflict in the Sahel

In the Sahelian subregion, there is a strong correlation between climate change and violent conflict, with temperature variations being closely associated with conflict incidence. Research conducted by Burt, Miguel, and Satyanath (2020) demonstrates a significant correlation between the worsening of climate change and the intensification of violent conflicts. More specifically, temperature fluctuations are strongly linked to the frequency of conflicts observed. Extreme climatic conditions can exacerbate social and political tensions, creating an environment conducive to violent confrontations, particularly in already fragile areas of the Sahel. Likewise, Miguel, Satyanath, and Sergenti (2004) highlight an indirect effect of temperature on conflict, noting that a 5 percent shock to economic growth leads to a 50 percent increase in the probability of conflict in the following year. By combining climate projections and correlating them with conflict data, Burt, Miguel, and Satyanath (2009) find that a 1°C increase in temperature causes a 4.5% rise in conflict incidence in the same year and a 0.9% increase the following year.

However, the impact of political institutions on these conflict dynamics should not be overlooked. Strong institutions can play a crucial role in mitigating the harmful effects of climate change. The work of Schilling et al. (2012) emphasizes that well-established institutions not only promote reconciliation but also provide mechanisms for managing potential conflicts, even during periods of food crisis. Indicators such as property rights protection and the effectiveness of the judicial system correlate with a significant reduction in civil wars (Obi, 2010). The "paradox of abundance" offers another illustration of the important role played by institutions. For instance, in Kenya, periods of relative abundance are also correlated with episodes of conflict. In fact, conflicts related to cattle raiding are more frequent during wet seasons (Schilling et al. 2012).

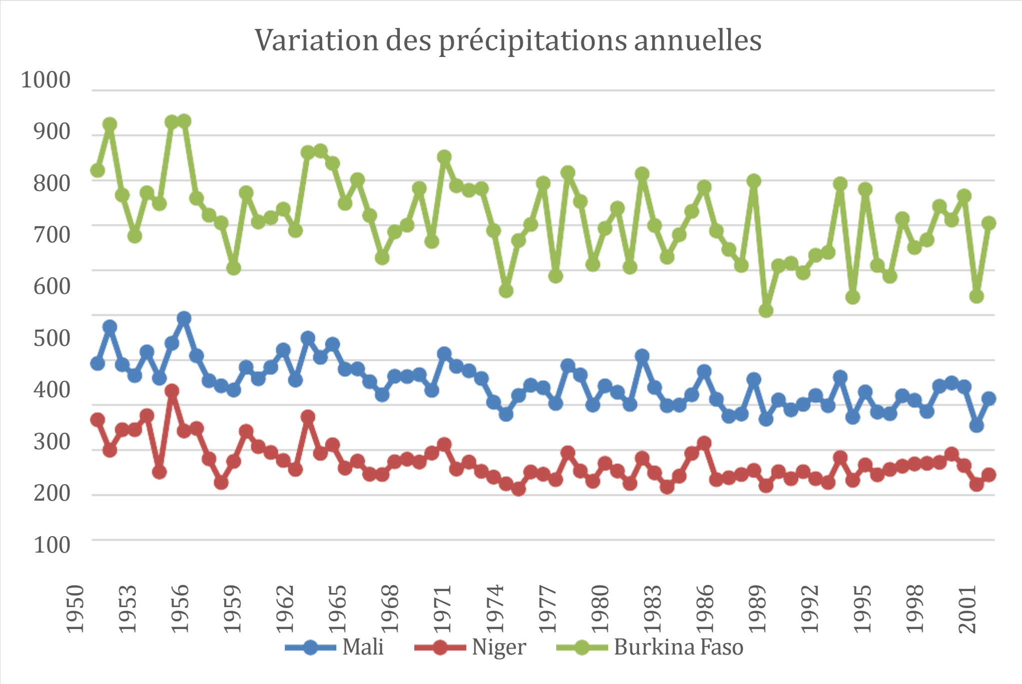
Thus, although climate change is an aggravating factor in conflicts in the Sahelian region, it is essential to recognize the fundamental role of institutions and social dynamics. A holistic approach that accounts for both environmental and institutional challenges is therefore necessary to better understand and prevent conflicts in this vulnerable region.

Climate Change, Food Insecurity, and Instability in the Sahel

Climate change has significant repercussions on food security and instability in the Sahel, a region already vulnerable due to its geography and socio-economic conditions. Rising temperatures and increasing variability in rainfall exacerbate agricultural challenges, even though agriculture remains the primary source of livelihood for many rural populations. For example, in Niger, a large part of the territory experiences extreme rainfall variability (Figure VI-2), leading to prolonged droughts that directly affect the yields of crops such as millet and sorghum (Tchoho, 2023).

It is important to highlight that, in Africa, yields of staple food crops could experience a significant decline—between 10% and 30%—for each 1°C increase in warming, thereby intensifying existing tensions around food security (Masara, 2021). The deterioration of agricultural conditions due to climatic variations heightens community vulnerability to food shortages, which can lead to violent conflict. The literature is abundant on this link between climate change and conflict, noting that food shortages caused by extreme climatic conditions can exacerbate intercommunal tensions (Benjaminsen et al. 2012).

Figure VII-2: Annual variation precipitation in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso, 1950-2001.



Source: World Bank and authors' calculations.

The Impact of Climate Change on the Economy and Agriculture in the Sahel

The impact of climate change on the economy—and agriculture in particular—in the Sahel is also a major concern. Projections indicate that some African countries could see their gross domestic product (GDP) severely affected, encompassing almost half of the continent's total GDP losses due to the effects of climate change (Egah, 2021). Agriculture, which depends heavily on climatic conditions, is particularly vulnerable. Agricultural systems in sub-Saharan Africa, often based on rain-fed practices, are threatened by phenomena such as frequent droughts and floods, which disrupt food production and, consequently, food security (Yegbemey et al., 2020; Kate et al., 2016). Findings from a study in Benin reveal that rainfall variability has a more detrimental impact on agricultural income than rising temperatures, highlighting the importance of water management and agricultural resource governance in the region (Sodjinou & Hounkponou, 2019).

Furthermore, climate change leads to internal and cross-border migration, exacerbating social and political tensions. Populations displaced by natural disasters—such as floods and droughts—often find themselves in already overcrowded areas, which can fuel conflicts over scarce resources (Booghs, 2023). Conflicts between farmers and herders, often driven by resource scarcity, illustrate how climate change can aggravate instability in the region (Bronkhorst, 2012). Support policies for agriculture must therefore integrate climate-change adaptation strategies to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable communities and ensure long-term food security (Ferroukhi et al., 2022).

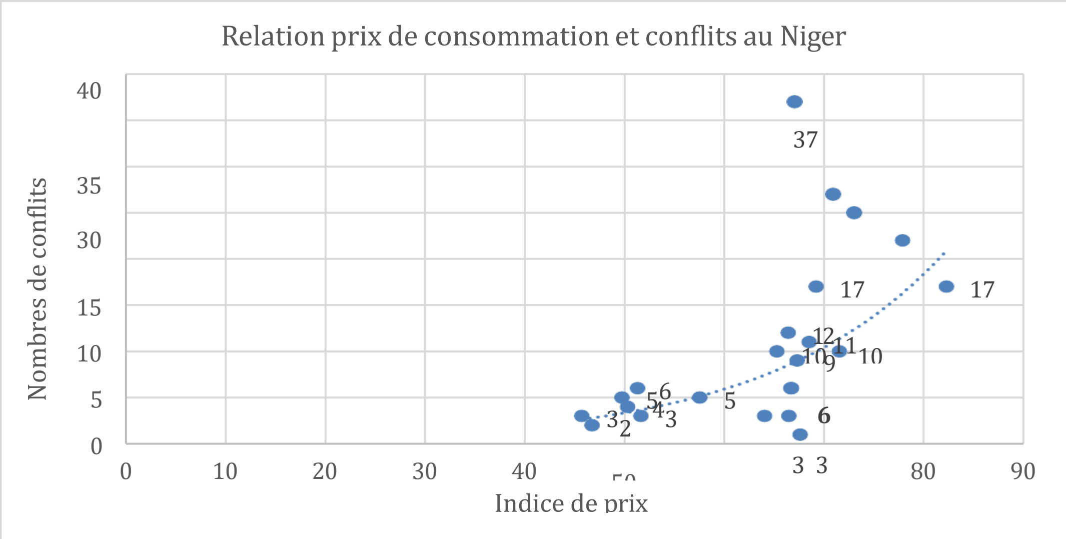
Climate change represents a major challenge for food security and stability in the Sahel. The effects of climate variability on agriculture, combined with its significant economic impacts and growing social tensions, call for urgent attention and adapted interventions to mitigate these risks. Nature-based solutions and sustainable agricultural practices may offer promising pathways for strengthening the resilience of food systems in this vulnerable region.

Food Security Challenges in the Sahel

Food security is a major challenge for Sahelian countries, which rank among the lowest globally according to the Global Food Security Index (GFSI). Mali is ranked 86th, Senegal 87th, Burkina Faso 97th, Niger 104th, and Chad 108th. Although food insecurity can be attributed to multiple factors, climate change emerges as one of the primary determinants. With climate change, desertification has intensified in many localities in the Sahel in recent years, reducing yields of staple and fruit crops and thereby exacerbating food insecurity (Acosta et al., 2024; Issaharou-Matchi et al., 2019). Studies indicate that agricultural production losses in West Africa—largely due to warming—have worsened precarious food conditions in the region (Sultan et al., 2019; Defrance et al., 2020). Although recent greening trends have been observed, these do not counterbalance the decline in agricultural yields caused by climate change (Épule et al., 2017; Carr et al., 2022).

Climate change also affects food security through fluctuations in food prices. An analysis of annual rainfall deviations from the long-term average and annual agricultural income deviations in Niger reveals a striking correlation: periods of rainfall deficits often coincide with reduced agricultural yields, leading to a significant increase in food prices. This increase—particularly pronounced in the Sahel—aggravates food insecurity by reducing access to basic products. As illustrated in Figure VII-3, there is an exponential relationship between rising consumer prices and the number of conflicts. When the price index surpasses a certain threshold, the number of violent incidents rises sharply, suggesting that food-price inflation can be a trigger for social tensions and protests. By exacerbating economic and social pressures, price volatility becomes an additional risk factor, intensifying precarity and conflict dynamics in the region.

Figure VII-3: Index of food prices and conflict events, 2000-2022.



Source: ACLED, World Bank.

Although there is debate surrounding the relationship between climate change and communal violence, there appears to be a more direct link between riots and the increase in food prices driven by climate-related factors. Figure VII-3 illustrates the price index of essential food commodities in major Sahelian consumption zones and the number of riots and protests recorded in the corresponding localities across the Sahel. It shows a clear upward relationship between the two variables, indicating the decisive impact of prices on the incidence of conflict. Indeed, as the figure demonstrates, when the price index remains low, the number of conflicts is limited; once it surpasses a certain threshold (around 65–70), the frequency of violent confrontations rises sharply.

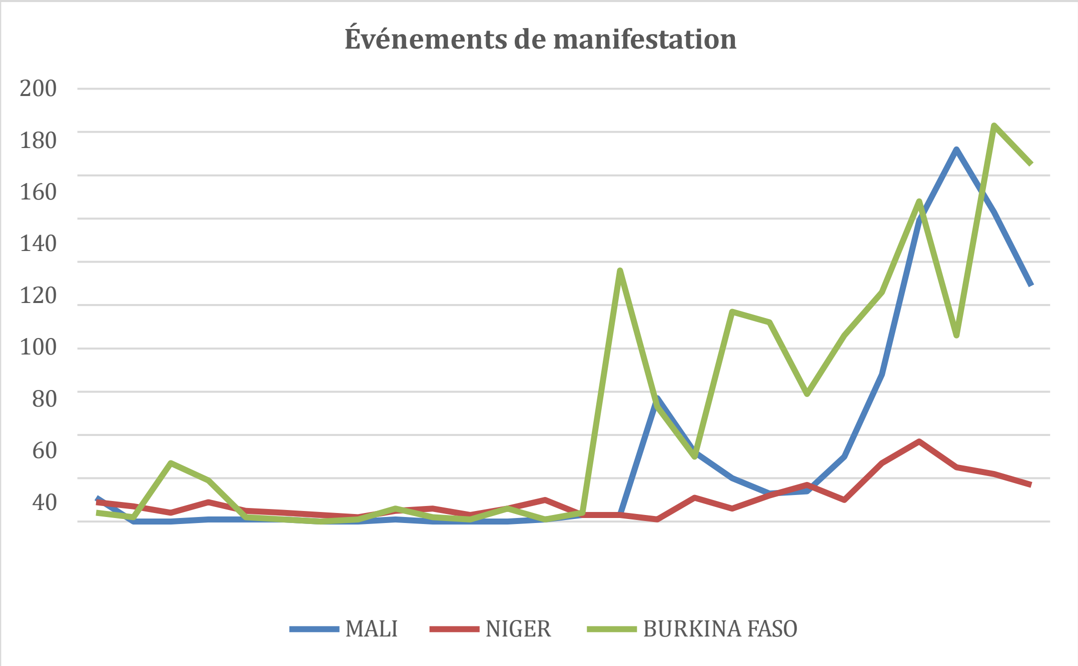
The exponential trend observed suggests that excessive inflation of staple foods acts as a catalyst for social tensions, transforming economic precarity into social instability. This phenomenon highlights the vulnerability of populations to economic and food-related shocks, increasing the risks of uprisings and political instability.

Climate Change, Favoritism, and Conflict in the Sahel

While state failure is increasingly considered the primary driver of conflicts in the Sahel, it manifests in various ways across Africa. First, most governments have very limited control over their territories. Remoteness and difficult terrain restrict governments’ capacity to provide security. The lack of complete territorial control prevents African states from delivering basic public services to populations living in remote areas.

In Saharan, Sahelian, and arid or semi-arid regions, many hinterland zones are not covered by land registries. The same applies to islands in certain countries, such as Guinea-Bissau. Service provision and political representation in Africa fall considerably below global averages.

Figure VII-4 : Violent protests in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso de 1997 à 2022.



Secondly, due to the clientelist nature of most African regimes, governments often unduly favor certain ethnic groups or districts that vote for them, further marginalizing groups considered less aligned with those in power. In a region where there are few livelihood options—given a hostile and changing environment, the lack of assets, and weak public policies—violence linked to resource scarcity is exacerbated by favoritism exercised to the detriment of certain political factions or marginalized ethnic groups. For example, available data from the Horn of Africa and the Sahel show that politically ostracized groups are excluded from the political agenda and often settle on marginal lands. These marginalized groups, although too weak to resort to violence against the government, often do so against rival communities.

According to some estimates, up to 65% of ethno-political minorities in Africa are disadvantaged in terms of access to positions of responsibility in public administration and the military. Similarly, the hypothesis of clientelist political regimes in Africa manifests itself in three tangible realities: presidentialism with a strong concentration of power in the hands of few privileged individuals; clientelism that rewards political supporters through public-sector employment, budget allocations, licenses, contracts, and public procurement; and the use of public resources for political legitimization. Finally, the way states manage public responses to natural disasters is also shaped by clientelism. The literature documents numerous cases in which political leaders in Niger and Mali divert resources intended for humanitarian assistance for personal gain.

Thus, in the Sahel, climate-induced conflict risk is linked to pre-existing economic, political, and physical vulnerabilities within communities, where resource governance and risk distribution also act as sources of instability. Restrictions on the mobility of nomadic herders, political negligence, corruption, and rent-seeking behavior are the main determinants of conflict.

The graph above illustrates the evolution of violent events in Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso, highlighting a pronounced upward trend since 2010**.** This increase in incidents can be interpreted as a reflection of growing socio-economic tensions, exacerbated by food-price inflation, resource scarcity, and governance failures. The peaks observed after 2011 coincide with periods of political crisis and destabilization, notably in the aftermath of the Libyan conflict. Since the political disorder resulting from that conflict and the subsequent circulation of weapons, the situation has become increasingly volatile. Indeed, the disintegration of Libya into multiple zones of influence, combined with the well-known porosity of weakly monitored international borders, has greatly facilitated arms trafficking throughout the Sahel in recent years.

This proliferation of weapons, combined with structural inequalities and tensions linked to resource access, fuels persistent instability and violence in the region.

The Case of Mali

In our view, the divergent conclusions in research on the link between climate change and conflict are largely due to the fact that climate change is often associated with drought, whereas in reality it refers more broadly to rising temperatures and extreme deviations in rainfall—whether dry or wet—both of which induce resource losses associated with conflict. Furthermore, by their very nature, conflicts often have multiple interwoven causes, which are difficult to isolate and test. Thus, although econometric regressions provide valuable insights into correlations between conflict and its various determinants, they often need to be complemented by in-depth contextual analyses to account for other factors not adequately captured in statistical data.

In this section, we document the case of the Inner Niger Delta in Mali, which offers an excellent illustration of how climate change and institutions interact with other factors to fuel conflict in the Sahel.

Mali is a landlocked, low-income Sahelian country with a poverty incidence of 47.8%, compared with an average of 41% in sub-Saharan Africa. Currently, Mali suffers from violence and political instability primarily in the North, causing significant economic harm across the country. Two agroecological zones can be distinguished in Mali:

- The North (the Sahara): almost empty, comprising the three northern regions—Timbuktu, Gao, and Kidal—which represent two-thirds of the national territory but only 10% of the population.
- The South (the Sahel): more populated, with substantial agricultural activity.

Between the two zones lies the city of Mopti, marking the boundary between the North—occupied by jihadists—and the South controlled by the government. In 2012, nearly all of northern Mali fell under the control of jihadist groups, including Ansar Dine and the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO). As they advanced southward toward the capital, Bamako, these groups reached the town of Kona in the Mopti region in January 2013. The Malian government declared a state of emergency and appealed to France, which launched Operation Serval and successfully halted the jihadist advance, forcing them to retreat northward.

The river delta is the main source of livelihood for farmers, herders, and fishers. It encompasses a catchment area of approximately 30,000 km² where seasonal flooding depends largely on rainfall. Farmers and herders have long coexisted in the Sahel, and local institutions traditionally prevented and managed conflicts. However, since independence, the Malian government has consistently favored farmers over herders. President Modibo Keïta frequently expressed condescension toward herders, arguing that Mali's priority was to promote industry and agriculture to advance his socialist development agenda. His successor, Moussa Traoré, did little to alleviate the accumulated frustration of nomadic groups.

The justice system has likewise failed to reduce tensions. In land disputes handled by the Court of Appeal of Mopti in Sévaré, numerous cases of judicial corruption have involved conflicts between farmers and herders, and between farmers and fishers. Most interviewees in Benjaminsen et al. (2012) attributed weak public governance as the primary cause of conflicts in Mali. The same study documented many instances in which herders bribed government officials to secure support against farmers.

In Mali, a clear dividing line in livelihoods corresponds to ethnicity, with a social division of labor largely shaped by ethnic affiliation. For example, the Fulani (Peul) and Tuareg tend to be herders, while the Songhai and Bambara are largely farmers. The Fulani and Tuareg are predominantly Muslim, whereas the Bambara and Songhai primarily practice animism (traditional African religion). Recent patterns of communal conflict in Mali illustrate how ethnic and religious factors, along with state failures, interact with climate change to generate conflict.

The Niger River basin is an area of intense agricultural activity for both farmers and herders. While farmers prioritize rice cultivation, herders cultivate *burgu*, a fodder crop used as the main feed source for livestock during the dry season. *Burgu* grows in deeper water than rice. During drought periods—which are becoming increasingly frequent due to climate change—*burgu* fields are often encroached upon by rice farmers, triggering communal conflicts. Since the 1950s, one-quarter of *burgu* fields have been converted into rice fields due to declining rainfall.

A general trend is that Fulani and Tuareg increasingly join the jihadist insurgency in northern Mali due to the combined pressures of perceived government bias and the effects of climate change on water scarcity. In such a context, jihadist attacks trigger reprisals from Bambara and Songhai farmers, perpetuating a vicious cycle of hatred and violence.

Developing Adaptive Capacity to Mitigate Climate-Induced Conflict

Climate change is an important driver of conflict in the Sahel, intersecting with deeper causes such as state and institutional failure. Adaptation to climate change is therefore essential to mitigating conflict, along with deep institutional reforms.

Adaptation encompasses several dimensions:

- **Diversification of livelihoods**—developing activities less dependent on climate, such as inland fisheries and traditional agriculture. This may involve transforming traditional crops and primary products to create more value added.
- **Introducing innovation into production**—using crop varieties more tolerant to drought and floods, and employing modern tools and technologies.
- **Improving livestock resilience**—for example, constructing shelters to create shade and facilitate air circulation, protecting animals from rising temperatures.

Domestic workers, self-employed workers, and micro-entrepreneurs dominate rural and semi-urban activities in agriculture, livestock, and fisheries—sectors most affected by climate change. Strengthening these actors should form a central part of any adaptation strategy. This would require targeted programs, including adequate financing mechanisms, skill development, and business incubators to help vulnerable enterprises grow and consolidate.

Given Africa's tiny share of global greenhouse gas emissions—contrasting sharply with its disproportionate exposure to climate impacts—it is reasonable to argue that adaptation should receive greater consideration in international climate finance allocation. Although the international community has pledged substantial increases in adaptation support, resources remain limited and should be significantly scaled up.

Conclusion

By exacerbating food insecurity and the scarcity of natural resources, climate change contributes to sustaining violent conflicts in the Sahel. The dependence of Sahelian economies on rain-fed agriculture and livestock makes communities particularly vulnerable to climatic variations. Farmer–herder conflicts, intensified by competition over increasingly scarce resources, illustrate this conflict dynamic.

Institutional failures—including ineffective governance and stark economic inequalities—further aggravate the situation. Local institutions are often incapable of managing crises effectively, leading to the marginalization of vulnerable populations such as pastoralists. The rise of extremist groups in the region can also be linked to these tensions, as frustrations over resource access and poor governance fuel cycles of violence. Additionally, forced migration resulting from conflict and environmental degradation adds another layer of complexity to the Sahelian crisis, making the situation even more unstable.

However, climate change also offers an opportunity to rethink development and security strategies in the region. Effective adaptation policies focused on climate resilience and livelihood diversification are crucial for mitigating these impacts. Strengthening local institutions and establishing sustainable natural resource management mechanisms are promising avenues for ensuring lasting stability in the Sahel.

Moreover, regional cooperation initiatives can promote an integrated and multisectoral approach—linking climate action, economic development, and peacebuilding (Booghs, 2023). In conclusion, addressing the effects of climate change in the Sahel must be part of a broader strategy to build resilient and inclusive states. This requires a deep understanding of the socio-political and environmental dynamics that heighten local vulnerabilities. A collaborative approach, involving local actors in policymaking, is essential for anticipating and effectively managing crises.

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Chapter VIII : MIGRATION AND CONFLICT IN THE SAHEL

Pape Sakho, Boubacar Macalou & Garba Hima

Introduction

Internal and external migration are as old as the traditional societies of the Sahel. Initially seasonal, then episodic—but always temporary—migration played a role in the education and training of adolescents and young boys. The practice constituted an essential, almost unavoidable step in the life of the adolescent or unmarried young man: the stage of physical hardening and moral fortification. Physical hardening stemmed from the fact that the candidate for migration, generally lacking professional qualifications, possessed only his physical strength to monetize in order to generate income and attempt to become prosperous before returning home.

Moral fortification came from the young person's exposure to other socio-cultural realities, which he was compelled to discover, learn, and understand in order to respect them—sometimes at the cost of enormous but necessary effort to ensure successful integration into the host environment. All these elements complemented the education of adolescents and young men who, as a result, became points of reference for their age groups and beyond, particularly for informing, explaining, or assessing—and even judging—based on experiences that extended beyond the geographical borders and knowledge of their home communities. In other words, migration was a deeply cultural phenomenon (Cortes 1998[(38)], Dia 2015[(39)], Sakho 2018[(40)]).

Today, the economic dimension has overtaken the cultural dimension in explaining migration. Indeed, with colonial administrative practices designed to manage the effects of natural disasters—such as droughts and their corollary, famine—combined with the monetization of exchanges, societies came to feel the need to seek money and accumulate wealth to ensure households could maintain living standards aligned with modern norms (Bredeloupe 2021[(41)], Fall 2017[(42)]). All of this, combined with an age-old and cultural practice deeply rooted in social habits, makes it impossible for successive generations to escape the phenomenon of migration.

Ecology professionals agree that when environmental conditions change, three possibilities present themselves to living beings: adapt, migrate, or perish. Migration is therefore, in many cases, an instinct for survival—especially in the Sahelian regions of Mali.

Another dimension that cannot be overlooked is the lengthening of migration durations. The destinations are also increasingly distant from the places of origin, especially with the progress made in transportation and the reduction of internal and external isolation within and between states. Added to this are migration policies in major destination countries, which were highly favorable at certain times.

Economic migration first aims to support the migrant's household or family of origin once the migrant has achieved an acceptable level of material comfort for himself. Investments made for families of origin include the provision of essential foodstuffs, the acquisition of agricultural equipment, housing improvements, the purchase of livestock as a form of savings, and more.

Inspired by what they learn from their experiences during their diverse activities, and advised by benevolent individuals where there are no qualified trainers, migrants quickly began pooling their knowledge and financial resources to compensate for deficiencies in the central state and local governments in meeting unmet social needs. This has led to achievements of nearly every activity and in every sector, particularly in education, health, drinking-water supply, agricultural production, places of worship, water management, and the reduction of geographic isolation through road construction and/or connection to telephone networks. In short, without migration, many entire localities in the Sahel region would not enjoy decent living conditions today.

However, the phenomenon has taken new forms and proportions that call for reflection, especially since the emergence of what is now commonly referred to as the migration crisis.

Regarding investments made in migrants' areas of origin, there is an urgent need to coordinate efforts with those of local governments, which have been assigned responsibilities by the state for designing and managing local development. Such coordination is necessary to avoid contradictions between the objectives and activities of the various actors.

Definition of Key Concepts

Diarra (2008) defines migration as "the movement of populations from one country to another for settlement." Sissoko (2007) defines a migrant as:

"The person who has left their country to live temporarily or permanently in another country, for political or economic reasons—in other words, the person who has left their place of origin to live temporarily or permanently elsewhere, where they feel foreign." (Sissoko, p. 207)

Typology of Migration Movements

There are several possible typologies of migration movements. Macalou (2002) identified several types of migration, summarized below. Broadly, this typology comprises two dimensions: one national and the other transnational or international. But within national population movements, several other forms may be distinguished based on motivations and/or the areas of departure and destination. These include:

International Migration

International migration consists of the movement of populations from some countries to others. Very common and increasingly practiced by working-age individuals of both sexes, this type of migration is by far the most sought after—and even the most envied—in both rural and urban areas of the country.

Rural Exodus

Also called *"transfer,"* rural exodus is a form of migration in which populations move from rural areas to large urban agglomerations. This movement has been common throughout the world.

Inter-Sectoral Movement

This refers to the movement of people from one production sector (e.g., rice or millet) to another (e.g., cotton or an industrial zone), whether within the same region or not.

Urban-to-Rural Migration

These are movements of people from urban areas to rural environments. This is referred to as "rurbanization." This type of movement is very rare in Mali because it concerns only a few civil servants who, once retired, decide to return to their villages of origin or to other rural areas they consider more favorable. It is also worth noting the case of unemployed individuals who move to rural zones where large public works projects launched by the State or by private or non-governmental organizations offer greater opportunities for employment.

According to Robin (1996), two types of migration can be distinguished: itinerant migration and deserrance migration.

- Itinerant migration**:** itinerant migrations are

"those in which the protagonists, including the most modest, are driven by ambition, a project of social advancement. These have as their preferred horizon the developed West." ([1])

- Deserrance migration**:** according to the author, this type of migration is characteristic of countries and populations of the Global South, with the primary objective being survival. These migrations are therefore always oriented from poor regions toward others that are relatively better off, or from zones of risk/conflict toward spaces more peaceful or less hostile to human life.
- Cissé (1994) distinguishes three forms of migration:
- Internal migration, or migration within the same country;
- Sub-regional migration, meaning population movements between countries of the same sub-region (e.g., West Africa);
- Inter-subregional migration, which refer to population movements between states belonging to different sub-regions—for example, between West Africa and Central Africa.

Factors Contributing to External Migration

Several reasons are cited to explain migration. They vary by socio-cultural area as well as by socio-professional categories.

Poverty

Diarra (2008) notes that:

"The causes of migration are multiple, the main one remaining poverty."

The author explains that:

"Constraining and uncontrollable exogenous factors have worsened poverty in our country and further stimulated the migratory movements of populations."

In more localized research, B. Macalou (2002) confirms Diarra's position, identifying three causes of emigration in the rural commune of Madiga Sacko (Kayes region). In this commune, insufficient monetary income (92.8%), drought (5.9%), and lack of fertile land (1.3%) are the main reasons given to justify emigration. These proportions remain nearly the same regardless of the migrant's marital status.

The Observatory for Sustainable Human Development and the Fight against Poverty (RNDH, Mali, 2016) states:

"Faced with monetary poverty at the household level, migration may designate a person who will try their luck elsewhere, when the place of residence does not offer opportunities for monetizable goods." The Ministry of Malians Abroad and African Integration (2006) reports similar findings:

"The main reasons that drive people to emigrate are more economic than political or other. They are: poverty, underemployment and unemployment, economic crisis, and above all—particularly in rural areas—weak prospects in agriculture (lack of arable land, soil depletion, progressive desertification, lack of water, climatic hazards)."

Natural and Human-Induced Contingent Factors

Among numerous exogenous factors, Diarra highlights:

- endemic drought;
- desert encroachment and desertification;
- insufficient and uneven rainfall distribution across space and time;
- predators (locusts, grain-eating birds, maggots, caterpillars);
- the slave trade;
- the search for adventure.

The ODHD/LCP report (2016) also identifies natural contingent factors, noting:

"The irregularity of rainfall leading to the decline of natural resources inevitably accompanies low agricultural productivity in zones where agriculture depends heavily on rainfall. Migration appears as an immediate response to drought."

Commercial Exchanges

Other reasons also explain migration, particularly commercial exchanges between Malian ethnic groups—especially the Sarakolé—and others in West Africa. These exchanges historically involved gold, gum arabic, peanuts, millet, rock salt, slaves, and kola nuts.

In the same vein, Sissoko (2007) cites commerce as a factor of external migration, especially among the Soninké. According to him, the initial destinations of these traders were Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Gambia.

Constraints of the French Colonial Administration

As a former French colony, Mali endured several abuses by the French colonial administration, including the imposition of taxes on local populations. Diarra reports that this measure marked the true beginning of population displacement at the end of the 19th century. Indeed, this colonial policy pushed able-bodied men to leave seasonally to earn money in order to pay taxes.

Sissoko (2007) shares this view, identifying French colonization as a factor in external migration. According to him, the development of peanut cultivation in Senegal by the colonial administration led to the recruitment—voluntary or forced—of Malian agricultural laborers to work in Senegal during each farming season (May to October).

The objective was to supply processing industries (oil mills) in the metropole. At the end of the season, young laborers returned home with the remainder of their earnings, enabling their families to meet monetary needs. When income was sufficient, material goods such as bicycles were purchased as collective family assets.

However, during the next farming season, the same young men—having acquired a taste for the activity—or new able-bodied individuals, voluntary or not, were again recruited for the same destination.

Post-War Reconstruction Efforts and Europe's Economic Boom

Following World War II, Europe's reconstruction needs exceeded its labor capacity—particularly for unskilled labor. Europeans thus turned to their colonies, including African territories, to fill labor shortages.

Diarra notes:

"Toward the end of the 1950s, the migration space expanded to more distant destinations, in response to the demand for foreign labor accompanying Europe's post-war economic and industrial growth."

Sissoko (2007) identifies two additional reasons: one cultural and one economic.

The Cultural Determinant

In the Three-Borders Region (Mali, Mauritania, and Senegal), authors show that for Soninké youth, migration is a long-standing cultural practice. According to a widespread belief and practice, every young boy must attempt "adventure" from puberty and before marriage (Sakho, 2005[(43)]). The purpose is to expose young people to other natural and social environments to enrich their education and training. This practice is therefore a factor of strengthening and valorizing the young man.

Push and Pull Factors

Sissoko argues that external migration (emigration) is also driven by push and pull factors. Push (repulsive) factors include:

- recurrent droughts;
- poverty;
- lack of opportunities;

- absence of viable prospects;
- unemployment.

Pull (attractive) factors include:

- higher wages;
- family reunification opportunities;
- reduced transportation costs and diversified transport modes;
- income disparities between host countries and Mali;
- aging populations in Western countries;
- greater security and political freedom;
- better job opportunities due to shortages of qualified labor;
- more advanced technological and professional environments;
- availability of scholarships;
- employment opportunities in international organizations;
- better-quality education and healthcare;
- improved educational and training prospects for children.

In summary, emigration appears as an **opportunity**—one that provides solutions to economic problems that cannot be resolved locally. This is especially true for the **Kayes region**, which borders eastern Senegal. As Diarra aptly notes:

"Foreign emigration constitutes a remedy that no other local activity can replace insofar as it provides entire families with incomes superior to the local production capacities of the Kayes region."

Table VIII-1. Distribution of emigrants from Mali by region of departure

Régions de départ	2009			2011		
	Urbain	**Rural**	**Total**	**Urbain**	**Rural**	**Total**
Kayes	10,7	89,3	28,8	14,6	85,4	25,9
Koulikoro	2,7	97,3	14,8	5,3	94,7	19,9
Sikasso	9,1	90,9	11,3	8,4	91,6	16,0
Ségou	6,2	93,8	7,3	6,1	93,9	11,1
Mopti	4,8	95,2	16,9	9,0	91,0	11,0
Tombouctou	3,3	96,7	4,6	11,9	88,1	3,4
Gao	24,3	75,7	3,5	18,2	81,8	2,2
Kidal	44,8	55,2	0,1	46,1	53,9	0,3
Bamako	100	0	12,7	100	0,0	10,1
Total	**19,6**	**80,4**	**100**	**18,9**	**81,1**	**100**

Source: ODHD/LCP, 2016

Malian emigrants leave from all administrative regions of the country, although the Kayes region, the first administrative region, provides the largest share—nearly 29% of the total (Table IX-1). Moreover, departures from rural areas are more significant than those from urban areas, with the exception of the regions of Gao and Kidal, located in the far east of the country on the borders with Niger and Algeria.

Table VIII-2 also provides the distribution of emigrants by destination.

Table VIII-2. Distribution of emigrants from Mali by country of destination, declared in 2009

Pays de destination	Proportions (%)
Burkina Faso	1,6
Côte d'Ivoire	31,9
Niger	1,2
Sénégal	6,1
Autre Afrique	32,1
Europe	19,8
Reste du monde	2,1
Non disponible	5,2
Total	**100,0**

Source: ODHD/LCP, 2016

This table shows that the majority of Malian emigrants remain within the African continent, and even within the West African subregion, with the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire hosting the largest contingent.

Migration and Gender

In Mali, migration is practiced by both men and women, although at different levels. The following table summarizes, by region, the distribution of male emigrants.

Tableau VIII-3. Distribution of male emigrants by marital status

Régions	État matrimonial des hommes émigrants						Sous-ensemble
	Célibataire	**Marié monogame**	**Marié polygame**	**Veuf**	**Divorcé/ séparé**	**Union libre/ concubinage**	
Kayes	62,6	15,5	21,1	0,5	0,3	0,0	100,0
Koulikoro	59,8	20,7	18,5	0,6	0,3	0,1	100,0
Sikasso	59,7	16,8	22,5	0,6	0,3	0,0	100,0
Ségou	58,3	23,1	17,7	0,7	0,1	0,1	100,0
Mopti	55,1	27,7	15,6	1,2	0,3	0,1	100,0
Tombouctou	51,8	36,6	9,3	1,8	0,4	0,1	100,0
Gao	55,8	33,4	8,5	1,4	0,9	0,0	100,0
Kidal	46,7	48,9	1,1	1,1	1,6	0,5	100,0
Bamako	71,5	17,0	10,4	0,6	0,4	0,1	100,0
Mali	61,4	20,2	17,3	0,7	0,3	0,1	100,0

Source: ODHD/LCP, 2016

A little less than two-thirds of international migrants are single, although the phenomenon affects monogamous and polygamous married men with little difference. In fact, no marital status is spared by international migration. The phenomenon also affects women, as shown in the table below.

Table VIII-4. Distribution of female emigrants by marital status

Régions	Statut matrimonial des femmes ayant émigré						Sous-ensemble
	Célibataire	**Marié monogame**	**Marié polygame**	**Veuf**	**Divorcé/ séparé**	**Union libre/ concubinage**	
Kayes	20,9	42,5	31,6	4,1	0,8	0,1	100,0
Koulikoro	29,7	42,3	22,5	4,6	0,7	0,2	100,0
Sikasso	20,3	44,9	29,8	4,3	0,5	0,2	100,0
Ségou	22,4	45,3	25,2	6,4	0,6	0,2	100,0
Mopti	21	48,5	22,9	6,5	0,9	0,1	100,0
Tombouctou	22,2	49,8	18,4	7	2,5	0,1	100,0
Gao	24,3	53	14	6,4	2,3	0,1	100,0
Kidal	28,1	57,4	6,5	3,7	4,1	0,2	100,0
Bamako	36,9	35,6	19,9	6,2	1,1	0,3	100,0
Mali	29,2	40,9	23,1	5,6	0,9	0,2	100,0

Source: ODHD/LCP, 2016

Here too, no m++++++arital status is spared by migration. However, it is clear that the scale of the phenomenon is smaller for single women than for men of the same marital status.

Factors Behind Internal Migration

Within Mali, the literature shows that internal migration is mainly driven by opportunities in agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries production, or by prospects for diversifying income sources. As such, the RNDH-2016 specifies:

"The availability of arable and fertile land, the abundance of pastoral spaces, the construction of the Sélingué hydro-agricultural dam, and the relative abundance of water points in the Sikasso region have attracted migrants."

Still concerning internal migration, the same source notes, about the Sélingué hydro-agricultural dam:

"The exploitation of the agricultural perimeter offers objective promises, especially with market gardening and double-season rice farming. The construction of the dam led to a large population movement, resulting in the creation of numerous hamlets/neighborhoods populated by migrants…" *(RNDH-2016)*

To this observation, one may add that when regions of the country do not offer the same opportunities for employment or income, population movements naturally follow. This is corroborated by the National Human Development Report (RNDH):

"With cotton cultivation, farmers had the possibility of multiplying income sources. Migrants did not fail to seize this opportunity by investing in this sector, which long held the promise of prosperity."

Other factors include the abundance of grazing areas, which attract herders, or the establishment of agro-industrial processing units, which seasonally draw large numbers of active workers from one sector or region to another—all in search of complementary income.

In addition, gold mining, whether industrial or artisanal, attracts populations from all regions of the country to its various sites due to the direct and indirect employment opportunities it generates.

The table below presents the distribution of internal migrants by region and by area of departure.

Table VIII-5. Distribution of internal migrants by region of origin and area of departure

Régions	Milieu		Effectifs	
	Urbain	**Rural**	**Nombre**	**Taux (%)**
Kayes	59,6	40,4	201 145	11,0
Koulikoro	62,3	37,7	311 287	17,1
Sikasso	50,5	49,5	288 413	15,8
Ségou	55,1	44,9	350 895	19,2
Mopti	49,0	51,0	249 710	13,7
Tombouctou	48,4	51,6	85 594	4,7
Gao	65,4	34,6	53 009	2,9
Kidal	62,4	37,6	4 007	0,2
Bamako	100,0	00,00	280 988	15,4
Mali	**54,1**	**45,9**	**1 825 048**	**100,0**

Source: ODHD, 2016

In internal migration, urban areas experience significantly more departures than rural areas**.** Apart from the capital, the most populous and best-connected regions provide the largest numbers of departures. These regions also offer the greatest opportunities in agricultural production and/or artisanal or industrial gold mining.

Table VIII-6. Distribution of internal migrants by region of destination and sex

Région	Sexe		Ensemble	
	Masculin	**Féminin**	**Effectif**	**%**
Kayes	56,0	44,0	152 642	8,4
Koulikoro	50,2	49,8	352 624	19,3
Sikasso	52,0	48,0	240 552	13,2
Ségou	49,6	50,4	183 675	10,1
Mopti	51,0	49,0	121 718	6,7
Tombouctou	51,2	48,8	32 991	1,8
Gao	51,7	48,3	27 088	1,5
Kidal	61,3	38,7	6 630	0,4
Bamako	48,9	51,1	707 128	38,7
Mali	50,5	49,5	1 825 048	100,0

Source: ODHD/LCP, 2016

Except for the regions of Kayes and Kidal, located at the extreme west and east of the country, the gap between male and female internal migrants is small and negligible (Table VIII-6).

Migration and Labor Supply

Trends in the Demand for Unskilled Labor

Generally, while the labor supply is increasing, it remains far from meeting demand in the regions of origin, while it decreases in receiving areas due to pressure from arriving populations. For example, in the Sélingué hydro-agricultural perimeter, the ODHD/LCP notes:

“A quarter-hectare of weeding that cost 7,500 FCFA now costs 12,500 FCFA.”

This rise in the cost of unskilled labor is due to its scarcity following the massive departure of able-bodied workers to gold-mining sites in the region or in neighboring Guinea.

Diversification of Activities

In some receiving areas, it has been observed that newcomers bring **skills and know-how** that local populations adopt, in addition to their traditional occupations. Likewise, migrants themselves adopt local production methods.

In the Human Development Report (2016, ODHD), an example from the commune of Kouoro-Barrage is given:

“One of the noteworthy experiences is that of Fulani herders becoming farmers, and Senoufo farmers becoming true livestock herders.”

A regional council official from Sikasso, in southern Mali near Burkina Faso and Côte d’Ivoire, explains:

“The Fulani who settle here, for example in my village, employ young people as cowherds for payment in kind. A few years later, these Senoufo cowherds become livestock owners and adopt herding as a main activity. For their part, even though Fulani herders do not practice agriculture as their main activity, they do possess fields from which they derive substantial profits.”

Typology of Jobs by Destination Country

According to the ODHD/LCP:

“Difficulties or ease of access to housing as well as to employment depend on the nature of the agreements and/or conventions binding the countries.”

Regarding international migration, this same source notes differences in job types available to Malians in Central Africa and Europe:

- In Central Africa, Malian emigrants mainly engage in trade;
- In Europe, especially France, they are generally manual laborers or unskilled workers, unless they occupy other low-skilled jobs.

However, these jobs are becoming increasingly scarce due to labor market competition. The employment crisis has made certain tasks, previously neglected by locals, increasingly sought after—dishwashing, cleaning, waste collection, etc.

The ODHD/LCP reports the following testimony:

“Twenty years ago, the work that was done exclusively by us is now done by white people themselves, which raises the problem of employment. Before, we swept and washed dishes. White people themselves do all this now. Some Eastern European countries are now part of the EU. If there is competition, they take Romanians or Bulgarians who are better qualified…”

According to INSEE, cited by the ODHD/LCP, the unemployment rate among Malian immigrants in France is 28.33%. The same source states that 38% of active Malians occupy unskilled labor positions, compared with only 17% in skilled labor positions.

Migrant Remittances and Entrepreneurship

Remittances sent by migrants to their areas of origin are considered a **duty**, motivated by:

- repayment of the family’s investment in their departure;
- acknowledgment of the sacrifices made by their families;
- the pursuit of parental blessings;
- cultural expectations.

These transfers depend on individual earnings and follow no fixed schedule.

Estimates of Migrant Remittances

Diarra (2008) reports:

“In 1996, the annual amount of transfers per family from France to Mali was 1,706,678 FCFA, excluding retirement pensions from France for former emigrants, and excluding exceptional shipments such as agricultural machinery or construction materials sent by migrants.”

According to the same author, remittances from other regions are far lower:

- 29,240 FCFA per family from West African emigrants;
- 106,387 FCFA per family from Central African emigrants;
- 200,633 FCFA per family from other migrant-hosting regions.

According to the ODHD/LCP, migrant transfers exceed external financing of Mali’s Special Investment Budget (BSI), reaching 160% of the BSI in 2010 and 2011 (Table VIII-7).

Table VIII-7. Remittances of migrants compared with export revenues, the Special Investment Budget, and Official Development Aid

Années	Envois de fonds des travailleurs migrants reçus	Recettes d'exportation	BSI externe	APD
2010	291,7	973,9	166,6	198,14
2011	316,6	1132,2	217,9	254,93
2012	367,4	1337,8	52,1	1,79
2013	374,7	1371,6	117,7	156,05

Source: ODHD/LCP, 2016, p. 78

Use of Migrant Remittances

Provision of Food Supplies to Households

Empirical analyses consistently show that priority in the use of remittances is given to food consumption. Diarra (2008) notes that:

"The predominance of subsistence expenditures is evident."

He emphasizes this point further, stating that:

"These remittances played a preponderant role during the major droughts of 1973–1974 and 1984, allowing the families of emigrants who remained in the village to cope with the famine that struck Mali during those periods by purchasing foodstuffs."

Similarly, Macalou (2002) established that in the rural commune of Madiga Sacko, located in the Western Sahel zone in the western region of Mali, **up to 94.5%** of families cite the purchase of foodstuffs as the primary use of migrant remittances.

Sissoko (2007) observed the same pattern, noting that:

"Family maintenance expenses (food, clothing, health, etc.) constitute the first expenditure category for migrant remittances."

This observation is corroborated by another analysis by the same author, stating that:

"More than half of household food allocations are covered by money sent by emigrants,"

and further that:

"Through emigration, food during the lean season is assured for the entire family."

Financing Other Household Expenses

According to Macalou (2002), the second-largest remittance expenditure category includes tax payments, marriage expenses, clothing, agricultural labor costs, and livestock savings. A third category—though far behind the first two—concerns the financing of dowries and other marriage-related expenses.

Individual and Collective Investments by Migrants

The financing of investments is a subject that generates much reflection and debate. Many analysts criticize migrants for allocating too large a share of remittances to consumption rather than to investments that could stimulate socio-economic development.

However, this situation must be understood in context. Although colonial administrative practices initiated large migration movements, these were later intensified by crises—particularly the famines of the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s—even before the contemporary migration crisis that Africa, Europe, the Americas, and Asia have faced since the 2000s.

Over recent decades, international migration has become a survival strategy for households, families, villages, and entire geographic or agro-climatic regions. And while investment is not always the top priority for migrants, it is nevertheless true that important investments by emigrants are recorded both in the national and regional capitals and in rural areas.

Typically, these investments compensate for deficits in central-state capacity to respond to grassroots community needs. Investments include both individual and collective initiatives.

Individual Investments

Individual investments include:

- First, support for household consumption expenditures.
- Construction of durable housing using concrete or semi-concrete materials to avoid the risks and heavy annual maintenance required for buildings made of non-durable local materials (mudbrick, straw, local wood, etc.).
- Investment in livestock as a form of savings, with the household or family serving as the savings unit.
- Purchase of agricultural equipment, sometimes motorized but more often animal traction equipment, to support family farms and compensate for the sometimes massive departure of agricultural laborers.

Collective or Community Investments

Collective investments address needs that public authorities have been unable to meet. To compensate for insufficient public investment or financial resources at the central and local government levels, migrants—individually or through associations—undertake the construction of collective infrastructure and equipment.

A well-known example in Mali is that of Cessé Komé, a member of the diaspora who settled in Côte d'Ivoire after traveling through several African countries. He carried out major projects in Mali, both in his home village and in the capital, Bamako, as well as abroad, particularly in Côte d'Ivoire.

Komé is a notable example due to the scale of his business ventures and his visibility at both the subregional and international levels. His achievements earned him distinguished honors, including the *International Club Olof Palme Prize*, awarded on 24 May 2008, recognizing him as the "Best Male Entrepreneur of the Malian Diaspora."

According to Diarra, Komé's contributions in his home village of Koïra, located about 300 km north of Bamako, include:

- A six-classroom primary school with annexes, for an investment of 30 million CFA francs;
- A health center, including a clinic, maternity ward, and pharmacy, able to hospitalize ten (10) patients, costing 40 million CFA francs;
- A drinking-water supply system and related equipment, costing 10 million CFA francs;
- Installation of a satellite telephone booth, costing 2 million CFA francs.

In Bamako, he also financed major public-use projects, including:

- A 24-room hotel, named *Hôtel Résidence Komé*, costing 3.5 billion CFA francs and generating 40 jobs, including 32 permanent positions;
- Another hotel, an extension of the first, with 74 rooms, known as the *Hôtel Radisson*, costing 9 billion CFA francs and employing 95 people, of whom 85 are permanent.

Sissoko (2007) reports similar types of migrant-funded achievements in the commune of Diakon, in the Kayes region of western Mali. His data includes an inventory of migrants' major contributions by village.

Investissements / Villages	Puits à grand ø	Forages	Réseaux d'adducti o n d'eau	Mosquées	Centre de Santé Com.	École (classe)		Pont	Banque de céréales	Jardin maraîcher	Pompe solaire	Micro barrage	Total
						E	M						
Bendougou	6	6	-	1	1	3	6	-	-	1	-	-	24
Diakon	6	4	-	1	1	9	6	-	1	1	1	-	27
Diédiguiguidint a	10	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	15
Diédiguikassé	15	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	18
Doualé	5	2	-	1b	1	6	-	-	1	1	-	-	17
Kabida	1	1	-	1	-	3b	-	-	-	1	-	-	6
Kandia	8	1	-	1	-	3	4	-	-	1	-	-	18
Kembé	27	2	p	1	1	9	3	-	-	1	-	-	44
Kembélé	17	8	-	1	-	3	5	1	-	1	-	-	36
kouroudinfing	1	1	-	1		as	6	-	1	-	-	-	10
Koury	14	2	-	1	1ph	3b	4	-	-	1	-	-	26
Loumbama	10	-	-	1 b	-	5b	4	-	-	1	-	-	21
Madina	17	2	-	1	-	-	3	-	-	1	-	-	24
Sangafé	8	1	-	1	-	5	9	-	-	1	-	-	25
Sibindin	25	5	1 ec	2	1	6	6	-	1	1	-	1	49
Sitakourou	5	-	-	1	1	3b	-	-	-	1	-	-	10
Trentimou	7	6	-	1	1	6	-	-	-	1	-	1	23
Nombre	176	44	1	18	7	64	56	1	5	16	1	2	391

Source: A. *F. Sissoko (2007)*

Conclusion

Deeply rooted in Malian cultures, amplified by economic considerations, and encouraged by public policies in both areas of departure and destination, migration is a phenomenon as old as the country's societies and cultural regions. No dissuasive or persuasive measure can bring it to a halt. Therefore, it is necessary to design appropriate public policies to support, regulate, and enhance it.

The contribution of emigration—under all its forms—is substantial to the socio-economic development of households and entire administrative divisions in Mali. It results in improved food and housing conditions for families of origin, as well as in the acquisition of individual and family assets and collective or community infrastructures, in both social and productive sectors.

However, there is a need to improve the design and management of émigré-funded projects so they can complement the interventions of public authorities and locally elected bodies responsible for development in decentralized communities, which is the focus of the following recommendations.

Training in Trades for Potential Migrants

Given the many equipment needs in rural areas, it is possible to establish training projects in relevant technical trades. The design of such programs must take into account production outlets, and functional mechanisms should be put in place to facilitate contacts between producers and potential clients.

Diversification of Agricultural Production

Based on existing potential and market demand, various crop, livestock, and fisheries **productions** may be developed through specifically identified, formulated, and implemented projects aimed at meeting local needs.

Promotion of Agro-Food Processing

One diversification strategy and a means of employing agricultural labor—especially during the long dry season—is the development of artisanal processing as a starting point, later transitioning to semi-industrial and finally modern industrial agro-food processing units. In addition to providing off-season employment, this can add value to agricultural production activities. Such initiatives must build upon local knowledge and skills.

Information and Awareness-Raising for Grassroots Communities

Awareness programs should be directed primarily at rural communities in all departure regions.

Messages—including information, advice, warnings, and training sessions—must be tailored to target audiences using appropriate communication tools.

Implementation of a National Migration Policy

A national migration policy was adopted by the government several years ago through a strategic document. To produce the expected results, the vision must be translated into operational programs and projects, identified based on the specific needs of rural and urban communities targeted. Such an exercise must be participatory and inclusive, making optimal use of the expertise of development actors operating on the ground.

Linking Development Plans with Migrant Investments

Emigré-funded projects—rarely known to the State—are often **not included** in the development plans of local governments, despite these plans being intended as the coordinating framework for all interventions within their territorial jurisdictions.

Consequently, migrant investments must be properly identified, formulated, and incurporated into local development plans, even if separate management structures need to be established following formal collaboration and coordination frameworks.

Information and Training for Migrants on Project Formulation and Implementation

We recommend establishing training programs on project formulation and financing that cover the entire project cycle (identification, formulation, implementation, monitoring-evaluation, etc.). Project financing should emphasize economic and financial dimensions. Additionally, official development statistics and government priorities should be made available to emigrants.

Establishing Investment Facilitation Measures for Migrants

Public authorities and local government bodies could initiate differentiated incentive measures, depending on regional development needs or other relevant criteria mutually agreed upon by the concerned parties.

Creation of a Migrant Database

To improve monitoring of emigrants, they should first be registered by destination region (West Africa, Southern Africa, Europe, the Americas, Asia, etc.). Then, a database of existing expertise within each migrant community should be created, followed by an inventory of investment intentions.

These intentions can be aligned with national needs or, if not feasible, structured to create complementarity between migrant-funded projects and those of the government or local authorities. Likewise, the government or national investors may seek the expertise of their compatriots in the diaspora.

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Chapter IX : EDUCATION REFORMS IN THE SAHEL AND THE MODERNIZATION OF DAARAS IN SENEGAL: EDUCATIONAL ISSUES AND SOCIOCULTURAL CHALLENGES

Mamadou Bodian & Léonardo A. Villalon

Introduction

The educational system in the predominantly Muslim countries of the Sahel, such as Senegal, is characterized by a bipolar structure: a formal, secular education overseen by the state but sometimes struggling to gain credibility among the population, and a religious education that has long been marginalized yet is deeply rooted sociologically and widely accepted. This duality results from relations—sometimes conflictual, sometimes peaceful—between the development of Islamic culture since the 8th century and the influence of Western culture introduced with French colonization in the 18th century.

Senegal illustrates this tension between two educational systems. For a long time, education has been a field of confrontation between secular instruction, delivered in French, and Islamic education, centered on Arabic. As early as the 19th century, religious brotherhoods, in reaction to the colonial school, founded and multiplied *daaras*, symbols of cultural resistance where the study of the Qur'an remains central. Despite attempts to formalize Arabic-Islamic education since the colonial period, managing the religious dimension of education remains a challenge. Until 2002, the Senegalese educational system functioned in a bipolar manner: on one side, a secular education supervised by the state, and on the other, a non-formal religious education developed in often anarchic ways and without state control. This bipolarization created a cycle of tensions and negotiations between religious actors and state authorities, a vicious circle that the democratic reforms of the 1990s sought to break.

The political alternation of 2000 marked a decisive turning point, with the introduction of religious education in public schools in 2002, the creation of Franco-Arabic public schools (*EFA*) in 2003, and the promulgation of the National Education Orientation Law in 2004, establishing a legal framework for reforming Arabic-Islamic education. President Wade pursued this integration of Arabic-Islamic teaching into the public system and the modernization of *daaras* with consistency. His successor, Macky Sall, continued the effort to expand access to education and address school dropout.

These reforms are situated within a Sahelian context in which the threat of violent extremism, fueled by social exclusion, has become pressing. While the reform of Qur'anic schools and the modernization of *daaras* represent an opportunity to prevent extremism, the long-term effects of these reforms—and their coherence with other structural factors—remain uncertain.

The Colonial School and the Imposition of Secular Public Education

The role of education in French colonial policy was fundamental, especially in West Africa, even before the establishment of French West Africa (AOF) in 1904 (Harrison, 1988). Colonial policy aimed to impose French institutions and education in the first communes of Senegal (Saint-Louis, Gorée, Rufisque, Dakar), in line with 19th-century assimilation policy, which considered mastery of the French language a criterion for citizenship in the colonies (Zuccarelli 1987). Before Faidherbe's arrival in 1854, the Catholic missionaries, through the denominational schools they founded as early as 1816 and 1817, attempted to Christianize children, provoking the indignation of Muslim families and *marabouts* (Sow, 2004). Pressure from Muslim communities led the colonial administration to clarify its educational policy, particularly toward Muslims.

In Saint-Louis in the 1850s, debate emerged over an educational policy for Muslims, motivated by fear of Islam, especially after Alhadjj Omar Tall's call for *jihad* in 1855. Some French administrators believed that no concessions should be granted to Muslims, while others saw education as an opportunity to create a class of pro-French Muslims (Harrison 1988). Faidherbe, supportive of the latter view, created the School of Hostages in Saint-Louis in 1855 to train indigenous subordinates and promote a selected elite (Hesseling 1985). This school, an instrument of assimilation, initially recruited sons of officials and notables, then sons of peasants. Closed in 1871, it reopened in 1893 as the School for Chiefs' Sons and Interpreters and was formally structured in 1903 with an organized educational framework (Harrison 1988).

The establishment of secular education in 1882 marked a pivotal moment in shaping the educational system in Francophone Africa and triggered a reaction among Muslims. This educational turning point dates back to Jules Ferry, Minister of Public Instruction (1879–1880) and President of the Council (1880–1881),[32] who promoted free and secular education, replacing religious instruction with civic instruction. In an anti-clerical context, Émile Combes, President of the Council in 1902, launched a program to eliminate teaching congregations, escalating tensions with the Vatican and leading to the severing of diplomatic relations between France and the Papacy in 1905 (Maury, 1996). This model of secularism was applied in the Sahelian colonies in the name of Ferry's "civilizing mission." If the Republic viewed religion as incompatible with its social mission, religious authorities—whether the Vatican or the *marabouts* of Senegal—considered their sacerdotal mission incompatible with the values of the secular Republic. In the Islamized Sahel, Western-style education was seen as a threat to Muslim culture, perceived as a vehicle of Christian or European values. In Senegal, Muslim brotherhoods opposed what they saw as cultural aggression, creating a confrontation between formal education and Qur'anic schools (*daaras*).

Control over Arabic-Islamic Education and the Emergence of Educational Duality

The French authorities faced difficulties managing Muslim schools in West Africa despite their relative success in establishing a secular educational system. Their policy aimed to isolate "Black Islam" from "Arab Islam," perceived as a threat, by imposing control measures and modernizing Qur'anic schools, followed by a policy of moderate disengagement

32. In his Senate speech of 31 March 1881, Ferry clearly defined the French approach, applied both in France and later in the colonies: *"You may cite England and the United States for other things, for great things they do, that they possess and that we lack. But we have over England and the United States this superiority of considering that education—above all the education of childhood, at whatever level and of whatever nature, private or public—is not a matter of industry, but a matter of the State, and that the intellectual interests of childhood fall under the control and supervision of the State."* (Quoted by Claude Lelièvre in *Jules Ferry: la République éducatrice*, Hachette, 1999.)

(Hugon 2016). This ambiguous management—partly due to Muslim resistance—established an educational duality: an official French-language education with limited acceptance and an Arabic-Islamic education with strong sociological roots.

Long before the secular laws of 1882–1905, Faidherbe launched educational reforms in 1857 to restrict the influence of *marabouts*. A decree in 1857 required authorization to open a *daara* and obliged Qur'anic teachers to send students over age 12 to French schools (Ware, 2009). However, these measures failed to attract Muslim pupils to secular schools, and the increasing number of Qur'anic teachers—especially in rural areas—made surveillance difficult. Other attempts at control, such as the imposition of French in 1870 and the ban on begging in 1896, were equally unsuccessful (Bouche 1975; Hugon 2016).

Muslim mistrust intensified with the secular turn in 1903. Camille Guy, governor of Senegal, imposed radical measures, closing denominational schools and replacing their staff with secular teachers for the 1904 school year (Bouche, 2005). Regarding Islamic education, a 1903 decree limited Qur'anic schools to twenty students and conditioned authorization on prior attendance at a French school (Harrison 1988). Despite these constraints, little favorable response was observed among Muslims. In 1906, the colonial administration had to adopt a more conciliatory approach, symbolized by the creation of the Bureau of Muslim Affairs in AOF. The *daaras*, having resisted colonial restrictions, strengthened their sociological grounding and legitimacy as an educational alternative, meeting strong local demand.

The Embedding of the Daara Model in Senegal

In Senegal, *daaras* emerged as an educational model parallel to the official system, supported by *marabouts*, who embodied resistance to colonial influence. Confraternal leaders such as El Hadj Malick Sy and Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba established *daaras* to teach the Qur'an and perpetuate their spiritual authority, thereby consolidating the "master/disciple dialectic" (Hammoudi 2001). This model was strengthened during colonization, as *marabouts* offered the population a refuge from the colonial administration, giving rise to the "Senegalese social contract" that ties the state to the religious brotherhoods in an alliance of mutual interests (Cruise O'Brien 2002).

This contract enabled the *marabouts* to expand the influence of *daaras* and to send their disciples abroad to study Islamic sciences (Ware, 2009). However, critiques emerged from the reformist Arabists of the Union Culturelle Musulmane (UCM), founded in 1957, who, marginalized by the colonial system, called for a reform of Islamic education (Villalón, 1995). Senegal's first president, Léopold Sédar Senghor, attempted to integrate the Arabists into official institutions, but their demands persisted.

In the 1970s, reformist movements such as the Mouvement Al Fallah and the Jamaa'tou Ibadour Rahmane (JIR) sought to modernize Islamic education by creating Franco-Arabic schools that combined Islamic and French-language instruction. Cheikh Mourtada Mbacké of the Mouride brotherhood also created the Al-Azhar Institute in Touba, establishing a structured education in Arabic and French as an alternative to traditional *daaras* (Fall 2017). This hybrid model exposed the contradiction between a public school system plagued by strikes and *daaras* associated with begging and the harsh discipline imposed on *taalibés*.

In 1977, the Socialist Party proposed granting *daaras* a legal status similar to that of private education in order to better regulate the *taalibés*. A seminar held in May 1978 brought together the state and Islamic actors to lay the foundations for modernizing *daaras* (Ware 2009). The *États Généraux de l'Éducation et de la Formation* (EGEF) of 1982 recommended integrating religious education into the formal system.

Despite these efforts, the recommendations remained inactive until 2000, under the presidency of Abdoulaye Wade, when an educational reform enabled the creation of public Franco-Arabic schools and sought to reform the *daaras*. This reform aimed to improve the living conditions of daara learners and to harmonize Franco-Arabic curricula and diplomas with those of the state, thus providing a framework for modernizing and integrating *daaras* into the official educational system.

The Reform of Arabic-Islamic Education in Senegal

Senegal's education reform, announced in 2002 and launched in 2003 with the introduction of religious education and the creation of the first public Franco-Arabic schools (EFA), became legally effective in 2004 with the promulgation of Law 2004-37. This law modifies the orientation of National Education by adding the possibility of optional religious instruction in public institutions. Article 2 states:

"National Education is secular: it respects and guarantees freedom of conscience at all levels, the freedom of conscience of citizens."

Thus, optional religious education may be offered in compliance with the secular nature of the state, leaving it to parents to decide whether or not to enroll their children.[33] This new provision preserves the secular orientation of National Education while allowing religious instruction in public schools, marking an important shift. The current reform of education is organized around three components: the introduction of optional religious instruction, the creation of public EFAs, and the modernization of *daaras*. The latter—crucial for integrating Arabic-Islamic education—holds particular significance in the context of the ongoing change in educational orientation.

On the institutional level, the project to reform Arabic-Islamic education is implemented by the state through the Ministry of National Education. The Division of Arabic Education (DEA) oversees Franco-Arabic education in collaboration with the Division of Private, Preschool, Elementary, and Secondary Education, as well as with the Inspectorate of Daaras, which has been autonomous since 2009. While the DEA manages the Franco-Arabic component, the Inspectorate of Daaras coordinates the modernization of these Qur'anic schools in partnership with local authorities and *serignes daara* (Qur'anic teachers), who also receive appropriate training. This institutional reorganization integrates a centralized framework while providing a degree of flexibility to the agents of both the DEA and the Inspectorate of Daaras in implementing the reform. Today, primary Arabic-Islamic edu-

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33. *Journal Officiel du Sénégal* No. 6202, Saturday 22 January 2005, Law 2004-37 of 15 December 2004: http://www.jo.gouv.sn/spip.php?article2689.

cation in Senegal is structured around Franco-Arabic schools and *daaras*, which display varying levels of formalization (see Table IX-1).

Tableau IX-1. Typology of Arabic-Islamic Primary Education Institutions

	Daaras traditionnels et urbains	Daaras modernes
Tutelle	Aucun	Aucune ou Inspection des *Daara*
Statut	Privé	Privé et public
Niveau de formalisation	Non formel	Formel
Curriculum	Mémorisation du Coran	Mémorisation du Coran et programme officiel
Sanction des études	Ijaza (autorisation traditionnelle d'enseigner)	Ijaza + Certificat de fin d'étude élémentaire (CFEE)
Financement	*Borom daara* (promoteur d'école coranique), mécènes	Mécènes + frais de scolarité + appui de l'Etat

Source: Tableau modifié et extrait des travaux de Lozneanu et Humeau (2014)

A Top-Down Reform: The Uncertain Beginnings of Daara Modernization

Since the announcement of the reform in 2002 and its entry into force in 2004, Senegalese authorities, with the support of international partners, have launched several projects to modernize *daaras* in order to integrate them into the national education system. Between 2002 and 2007, a joint program with UNICEF introduced trilingual instruction (national languages–Arabic–French) and vocational training in 80 pilot *daaras* located in the regions of Diourbel, Dakar, Kaolack, and Thiès, hosting approximately 15,735 *taalibés*.[34] This program, led by the Directorate of Literacy and National Languages (DALN), aimed to modernize *daaras* in terms of physical and sanitary facilities, improve the quality of learning, and offer training conducive to employment.

Initially, the modernization of *daaras* was meant to integrate their management into the official system by introducing national languages, Arabic, and French, while preserving Qur'anic memorization—the traditional mission of Qur'anic schools. The reform foresaw a training scheme based on the curriculum of community-based schools and on vocational training. According to Inspector Diop, this modernization project offers children several pathways:

1. continuing their studies in EFAs or in a classic middle school, with the *Certificat de Fin d'Étude Élémentaire* (CFEE);[35]
2. pursuing studies in Arabic;
3. enrolling in vocational training in a vocational training center.

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34. Réseau Ouest et Centre Africain de Recherche en Education (2007). « La modernisation des Daaras (écoles coraniques) au Sénégal, Contribution à l'élaboration de programmes alternatifs ouvrant sur le marché de l'emploi : étude appliquée aux 25 daara-tests de la région de Diourbel », Rapport final.

35. For this, *daara* students must sit the *Certificat de Fin d'Étude Élémentaire* (CFEE) as independent candidates.

Between 2008 and 2013, the USAID/EDB Project introduced French in the regions of Dakar, Louga, Saint-Louis, and Matam. Added to this was the Project for Improving the Quality and Equity of Basic Education (PAQUEEB), supported by the World Bank and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), whose first phase (2012–2016) financed the rehabilitation of 100 *daaras*, the payment of French teachers, and the purchase of teaching materials.

These initiatives laid the foundations for reforming Qur’anic schools, but the flagship initiative today is the Support Project for the Modernization of *Daaras* (PAMOD), launched in 2013 with support from the Islamic Development Bank (IDB). This five-year program, with an overall cost of 10 billion CFA francs, includes the construction of 64 modern *daaras* (32 public and 32 community-based) across the country, with the aim of reducing begging and promoting universal schooling. However, the reform faces obstacles, particularly resistance from *daara* promoters, who perceive these transformations as an intrusion into their tradetional educational practices.

Bottom-Up Pressure and Conflicting Agendas Around the Reform

The modernization of *daaras* is a complex process initiated in 2004, aiming to coordinate diverse initiatives to improve the educational offer and living conditions in Qur’anic schools. The state, as regulator, seeks to formalize *daaras* but encounters resistance reminiscent of that faced by the colonial administration. From the official announcement of the reform until 2009, isolated initiatives multiplied, all aiming to improve *daaras* and ensure children’s safety. However, without a coherent institutional policy framework, the sustainability of these initiatives remains uncertain. This is exemplified by the limited implementation of the project to introduce trilingual instruction (national languages, Arabic, French) in about sixty *daaras*, initiated in 2002 by the state with UNICEF support.

The creation of the Inspectorate of *Daaras* in 2009 was thus a pivotal moment in coordinating reform efforts and in the process of integrating Qur’anic schools into the official system. As a key institutional actor, the Inspectorate of *Daaras* was able to capitalize on the experiences of the trilingual and vocational training projects to launch the ongoing initiative to create modern *daaras*. The Inspectorate also encouraged Qur’anic school promoters to organize themselves into a National Collective, which in 2010 became the National Federation of Associations of Qur’anic Schools of Senegal (FNAECS), bringing together more than five hundred member associations. The signing of a framework agreement in December 2010 between the Ministry of National Education and the representatives of Qur’anic teachers (Hugon, 2015: 90), followed by the drafting of the concept of the modern *daara* that same year, gave new impetus to the reform process. This process continued even after the change of administration in 2012.

The Minister of Education, Serigne Mbaye Thiam, revived the reform of *daaras* to increase the enrollment rate by modernizing these Qur’anic schools. In December 2013, the Support Project for the Modernization of *Daaras* (PAMOD) was officially launched, with funding of 10 billion CFA francs from the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) for five years. This project, initiated in 2010, is based on three main pillars.

The first pillar concerns the strengthening of the legislative and regulatory framework for Qur'anic schools. In this regard, a draft law on the status of *daaras* and draft implementing decrees have been under preparation since 2013. These include: the draft decree setting the conditions for opening and supervising a *daara*; the draft decree specifying the required qualifications and conditions for *daara* directors and teaching staff; and the draft decree relating to the conditions for recognition and the modalities for granting subsidies, bonuses, and support to *daaras*.

The second pillar concerns infrastructure and equipment. PAMOD plans to build 64 modern *daaras* in several regions. Half of these Qur'anic schools will function as classic public institutions supported by the state; the others will be community *daaras* managed by local committees. The modernization of private *daaras* remains the responsibility of *borom daara* (owners), who must submit their needs. While construction was scheduled to begin in 2014, it actually started in 2017, with completion expected in early 2018.

The third pillar concerns the development of a formal educational offer with a harmonized curriculum for *daaras*. In 2010, a Steering Committee under the Ministry of Education was created to define this curriculum.[36] It includes members from the Ministry, the National Collective of Qur'anic Schools of Senegal (CNAECS), and the Collective of *Daaras* for Trilingualism and Vocational Training (CSTFP). This program proposes bilingual education (Arabic and French) for children aged 6 to 12 in *daaras*, allowing them to enter the formal school system after Qur'anic learning. Modern *daaras* will also provide pathways for children to join the classic or Franco-Arabic system via an entrance exam for the first year of middle school (sixième). For *taalibés* aged 15 and above, a vocational training track has been designed to provide practical skills, easing their integration into the labor market.

In practical terms, the proposed curriculum for modern *daaras* has a duration of 5 years (compared with 6 years in the traditional primary cycle), subdivided into three stages: Qur'anic memorization; learning Arabic and French; and further Qur'anic memorization combined with a program corresponding to CM1 and CM2 of the official primary cycle (see Fall 2017: 152–53). The test phase of the curriculum began in April 2017 in ten *daaras*. It will last ten months, after which the curriculum will be generalized across all 64 *daaras* once they are inaugurated.[37]

Points of Discord Beyond the Content of the Reform

Although the reform project initially generated considerable enthusiasm and appeared to receive widespread approval from stakeholders, the near-unanimous support of *daara* promoters seems to have eroded over the years. This situation results from three closely interconnected factors: the power relations between political authorities and Qur'anic teachers in defining the legal status of *daaras,* and the controversy surrounding the management of child begging in *daaras*.

36. Ministerial Order No. 9447 MEPEMS-SG-ID-DAJLD of 27 October 2010 concerning the establishment of a Steering Committee for the development of the *daara* curriculum.

37. Interview avec Babacar Samb, Directeur de l'inspection des *daaras*, Dakar, mai 2017.

Power Relations in Defining the Legal Status of Daaras

Immediately after the official launch of PAMOD in 2013, the various stakeholders agreed on the need to reform Qur'anic schools to facilitate their integration into the official educational system. The drafting process for these legal texts was inclusive to some extent. It was conducted by an ad hoc committee composed of public authorities, religious families, Qur'anic teachers, and associations of *daara* promoters. However, in 2015, disagreements emerged over the direction and management of the process, prompting members of the National Federation of Associations of Qur'anic Schools of Senegal (FNAECS) to express reservations regarding the orientation of the reform.

It should be recalled that the ad hoc committee tasked with drafting the bill on the status of *daaras* had produced a text that was shared with all stakeholders for amendments. The Federation's leaders wanted to inform and consult their grassroots base to gather their observations and suggestions, but "the technical validation of the project with the *Serigne daara*, who are the direct stakeholders, and the large-scale social validation did not take place."[38] After the validation workshop and the finalization of the draft bill, the Federation voiced its opposition on the grounds that many of the amendments initially proposed by its members were absent from the text to be submitted to Parliament. Consequently, members of FNAECS believed that the vision and curriculum outlined in the bill were not suited to the status of traditional *daaras*. During its General Assembly on 30 July 2015, the national executive board of the Federation officially rejected the draft bill and proposed an alternative "reference document" for the modernization of *daaras*.[39]

Hugon (2015: 97) interprets this opposition to the bill as an expression of a power dynamic that "once again allows the Federation to position itself as the guardian of Qur'anic tradition, by proposing its own reference document" (Hugon 2015). This strategy was evidently successful. The idea of initiating an emergency legislative procedure to pass this "reference document" was considered, but Federation members opposed it, fearing that parliamenttarians might alter their proposals. Ultimately, it was agreed to submit to the President of the Republic the project as proposed by the *daara* promoters.

The Controversy Surrounding the Management of Child Begging in Daaras

Like any reform, the ongoing *daara* reform is part of a plural and conflictual process of producing and implementing rules and coordination mechanisms aimed at regulating and modernizing Arabic-Islamic education, which until now has remained informal. Although stakeholders agree on the need to reform *daaras*, the multiplicity of actors and the overlapping, sometimes conflicting, agendas make it difficult to converge toward what is deemed an optimal functioning of these traditional Qur'anic learning institutions.

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38. Khadim Ndiaye, leader of the *Ligue des Écoles Coraniques*, a major association and member of the Federation.

39. Friday, 31 July 2015**.** *Modernisation des daaras : Les maîtres coraniques rejettent la loi et proposent un document de référence*.http://www.leral.net/Modernisation-des-daaras-Les-maitres-coraniques-rejettent-la-loi-et-proposent-un-document- de-reference_a150654.html#

Since the entry into force of the reform, the state has sought to assert its legitimacy in the process by collaborating with all *daara* promoters to set clear objectives and priorities aligned with achieving universal primary education and quality education for all. However, despite political will, the state does not necessarily possess the financial means to implement the reform. It has therefore had to negotiate differentiated support from financial and technical partners.

In this context, national resources and support from partners such as the World Bank, Japan, UNICEF, USAID, and the Islamic Development Bank have been mobilized to provide a safe educational environment for children and to protect them from risks. A controversial point in this reform concerns begging, exploitation, and abuse associated with Qur'anic schools. Senegal, having ratified international conventions on children's rights, is committed to protecting young people, but has often faced resistance from *daara* promoters in this domain.

On 10 May 2005, the National Assembly adopted Law No. 2005-06 against human trafficking and for the protection of victims. This law criminalizes the exploitation of another person's begging, with penalties ranging from 2 to 5 years in prison and fines of 500,000 to 2 million CFA francs. However, this attempt to end the phenomenon of street children provoked opposition from some Qur'anic teachers, who, as legal guardians of the children, felt personally targeted by the legislation.

In October 2006, President Abdoulaye Wade organized a presidential council on street children to mobilize public opinion and encourage solidarity toward these children.[40] The establishment of the Partnership-Association for the Withdrawal and Reintegration of Street Children (PARRER) in early 2007 aimed to coordinate efforts to remove children from the streets and reintegrate them socially. However, despite government initiatives and support from civil society and international partners, the issue remained unresolved.

In April 2010, the situation of street children resurfaced following a Human Rights Watch report stating that more than 50,000 *taalibés* in Senegal were subjected to corporal punishment.[41] This report provoked outrage among child rights advocates and international partners, who felt that the Senegalese state was not doing enough to address the problem. Under pressure, the government banned begging in public places on 26 August 2010, except near mosques. This ban was later lifted in favor of a more proactive approach centered on modernizing *daaras* through the PAMOD project.

It should be noted that the reform's primary goal is not to eradicate child begging, although this remains an important component. Since some *daara* promoters rely on the exploitation of *taalibés* for their livelihood, many of them believe that state involvement is needed to address this issue. The reform of *daaras* is thus expected to help resolve this concern, as

40. This council brought together members of the government and hundreds of participants, including representatives of technical and financial partners, private sector representatives, NGOs, and ambassadors from neighboring countries that send child beggars to Senegal.

41. Human Rights Watch Report (2010). *"Sur le dos des enfants"*, Mendicité forcée et autres mauvais traitements à l'encontre des talibés au Sénégal. https://www.hrw.org/fr/report/2010/04/15/sur-le-dos-des-enfants/mendicite-forcee-et-autres-mauvais-traitements-lencontre.

suggested by Matar Kébé: “The problem of begging will be resolved if the modernization of *daaras* is properly designed.”[42] Unfortunately, the issue of begging is poorly integrated into the *daara* modernization policy. Moreover, the reactive stance of public authorities and international partners toward this complex phenomenon has created an atmosphere of mistrust that undermines prospects for robust collaboration with *daara* promoters.

Some religious actors and *daara* promoters have adopted a defensive posture toward what they consider an “intrusion” of the state and its international partners into their protected sphere, fearing that the state may use the modernization process as a pretext to hinder Arabic-Islamic education, over which it would gain significant authority. These concerns appear all the more justified since, by organizing religious education, the state also equips itself with the means to curb the influence that *marabouts* and certain religious groups exert over this form of education. With the reform, the state’s involvement goes beyond merely monitoring *daara* operations; it extends to its capacity to censor practices (such as begging) considered inappropriate within these educational institutions.

One of the strongest forms of resistance comes from the *Fédération nationale des associations d’écoles coraniques du Sénégal* (FNAECS), which serves as an interface between public authorities and *daara* promoters. After its creation in 2010, the Federation set itself the objective of “speaking with a single and unified voice in relation to the administration and international actors” (Hugon 2015: 93). The President of the *Ligue des écoles coraniques*, an organization that was a member of the Federation, explains the motivations behind the decision of Qur’anic teachers to unite their efforts in these terms: “... The press and the NGOs advocating for children's rights also come with their own logic. When we noticed the excitement around the reform, we organized ourselves to form a bloc in order to prevent the state authorities from leading us blindly toward an unknown destination.”[43]

Child protection requires constant dialogue between actors and institutions, but the absence of an integrated national system complicates the implementation of both public and private efforts, despite the National Child Protection Strategy (SNPE) launched in 2011. The authorities face pressure from partners insisting that *daaras* meet international standards, as well as resistance from the promoters of those schools. After the March 2013 fire in a Qur’anic school in Médina, which caused the death of nine *taalibés*, a three-day workshop brought together state actors, religious authorities, and civil society organizations to assess the situation of child begging in Senegal. In response, the Interministerial Council on Child Begging, on 14 February 2013, adopted a strategic plan for 2013–2015. This plan set out four measures: the regulation of *daaras*, the strengthening of Qur’anic education, a plan to remove children from the streets, and strict enforcement of criminal law against abuse. While the first two measures have begun to be implemented, the last two continue to encounter significant obstacles.

42. Interview with Cheikh Matar Kébé, 30 May 2017, Islamic Institute of Dakar.

43. Khadim Ndiaye, President of the *Ligue des écoles coraniques*, 30 May 2017, in his *daara*, Parcelles Assainies unité 13.

Daara Reform and the Prevention of Violent Extremism

School is the primary institutional mechanism through which the state transmits values. The possibility that Arabic-Islamic educational institutions could foster violent extremism is a major concern for researchers and policymakers, particularly in Muslim-majority countries of the Sahel such as Senegal. This concern arises from gaps in understanding the profiles, motivations, and processes of indoctrination of individuals who join extremist organizations, which makes prevention and response efforts uncertain.[44] However, recent studies indicate that while various educational environments may influence religious radicalism, they do not necessarily promote violent extremism.

In his research on Qur'anic schools and private religious universities in West Africa, Thurston (2018) concluded that these institutions are not inherently linked to violent extremism. He notes that the religious teachings provided within them may offer strong ethical and moral grounding, while also instilling tolerance and respect for other religions and cultures. This is particularly true of certain Arabic-Islamic institutions—such as *daaras* affiliated with Senegal's religious brotherhoods—that follow an educational model based on *tarbiyah*, centered on moral and spiritual education.

Unlike the simple transmission of knowledge (focused on streamlined curricula akin to those of modern Western classrooms), *tarbiyah* aims to facilitate meaning-making by educating the individual holistically in order to enable them to reach maturity within the relational community (Wright 2012). It is seen as a process of human maturation and the development of a critical and reflective Muslim consciousness, which is increasingly promoted in modern approaches to Islamic education that are free from any association with extremism.

The centrality of *tarbiyah* has re-emerged over the past three decades, as states in the region have attempted to control the entire educational system through reforms—particularly in Arabic-Islamic education—that place the content of teaching at the heart of modernization. For example, within Senegal's *daara* reform strategy, the government clearly stated in official documents that the reform aims to control Arabic-Islamic education by protecting children from intolerance and religious fanaticism[45] while providing them with an education inspired by the "moderate Islam of Senegal" (Villalón and Bodian 2012).

However, *daara* reform should not be viewed as a miracle solution to violent extremism. Preventing this phenomenon requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach involving all stakeholders, along with measures to support the social and professional integration of *daara* graduates. Modernizing these schools must be part of a broader ecosystem of reforms

44. Religious radicalism involves ideas advocating for fundamental societal change through political and social means, often considered radical. Violent extremism, by contrast, is a form of radicalism that uses violence to achieve political or ideological objectives. Violent extremist groups use tactics such as bombings, kidnappings, and assassinations. Although related, religious radicalism and violent extremism are not identical; the latter always implies the use of violence.

45. Ministry of Education, "Introduction de l'éducation religieuse dans le système éducatif sénégalais: historique, problématique et perspectives." Speech delivered by Minister Moustapha Sourang at the Seminar on the Introduction of Religious Education and the Creation of Franco-Arabic Schools in the Senegalese Educational System, August 2002.

aimed at strengthening the economy, governance, and security, while actively involving communities and religious leaders to reduce the risks of extremism.

In a context in which young people are particularly vulnerable, the greatest threat to Senegal's stability lies in the rising expectations of an increasingly urban, often unemployed youth population, particularly those emerging from *daaras*. The many unemployed young people in Senegal can be divided into two groups: those from the Francophone school system and those from the Arabic-Islamic system. Both groups face inequalities: employment opportunities are limited even for Francophone-educated graduates, and even more restricted for those from Arabic-Islamic institutions. Growing unemployment creates frustration, risking a social divide between the two groups and making them potentially more vulnerable to radicalism and violent extremism.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we examined how the management of religious education—problematic since the colonial period—has evolved significantly since the 2000s due to a variety of internal and international factors. These developments pushed Senegalese authorities to integrate Arabic-Islamic education into the official school system. In a sociological context marked by the strong presence of Islam, the state must account for this religion in its educational objectives. The reform of religious education allows the state to respond to local educational demands while honoring its international commitments. Thus, the intersection of educational democratization and social change over the past two decades has led to adjusted public policies that better meet social expectations.

State control over the whole educational system is strategic, since school is the primary vector for transmitting state values. Yet the reform of *daaras* encounters the particularities of these Qur'anic institutions. Public authorities have therefore reoriented their strategy by creating modern public *daaras* to compete with traditional *daaras*. This modernization effort has elicited reactions from *daara* promoters, who fear that the state may use the reform to centralize control over Arabic-Islamic education.

Despite resistance, the idea of reform is gaining ground. These hesitations do not reflect rejection of the reform but rather mistrust regarding its intentions. They also reflect power struggles and strategic positioning within a reform that may produce winners and losers. What is striking is the absence of resistance to this reform in the name of secularism, signaling a profound sociopolitical evolution in Senegal since independence. The reform goes beyond the mere integration of Arabic-Islamic education and the modernization of *daaras*: it marks a transition toward a new type of school, symbolizing the end of the colonial school model.

The modernization of Arabic-Islamic education is occurring in a context where preventing violent extremism in the Sahel is crucial. Reforming *daaras* and Qur'anic schools is therefore essential, as these institutions play a key role in the religious education of young people. If they are not regulated, they could become vectors of radicalization. Modernizing these structures is necessary to address educational challenges and prevent violent extremism. This reform must adopt a holistic and long-term approach, involving communities to modernize their educational systems and placing *tarbiyah* (moral and spiritual education) at the heart of efforts to prevent extremism.

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Chapter X: POLITICAL, ADMINISTRATIVE, AND FISCAL DECENTRALIZATION: THE CASE OF MALI

By Nancy Benjamin, Boubacar Macalou, Ousmane Doucouré, Ousmane Sy, Birahim Bouna Niang & Lamine Ndiaye

Introduction

Like several areas of the Sahel, northern Mali has long been characterized by a proliferation of small pastoral villages and towns engaged in trans-Saharan trade. These settlements developed over time, peacefully, across vast territories marked by an obvious absence of the central government and weak governance. More recently, traffickers—particularly of illicit products such as drugs and weapons—have exploited this absence of the State and the lack of control over border regions to intensify their presence considerably.

According to many authors, the central government's lack of control over peripheral territories is one of the fundamental causes of the insecurity prevailing there. A properly implemented decentralization strategy, corresponding to the strong demand of the population, would be an important lever for restoring lasting peace and security (World Bank 2015).

For political leaders and peace practitioners, ignoring these popular demands as an opportunity to reach a non-violent settlement to a society affected by conflict—or the risk of conflict—would be a very serious error of judgment.

Similarly, Edwards, Yilmaz, and Boex (2014), based on a study in Sierra Leone, find that focusing on a decentralization program allows local flexibility in addressing the particularities of local situations while developing a framework that can be implemented on a larger scale at the central level.

In the specific case of Mali, many researchers emphasize earlier decentralization attempts marked by multiple failures—especially because of efforts to control resources and the local development agenda from the center. A case study, *Comparative Evaluation of Decentralization in Africa* (USAID, 2010), highlights a number of institutional weaknesses that undermined decentralization systems before the escalation of violence at the end of 2012.

These considerations should not obscure the fact that since the 1990s, numerous institutional innovations—together with technological advances—have improved fiscal and budgetary decentralization outcomes across West Africa. The link between budgetary transfers and specific accountability norms has made fiscal decentralization more effective.

Other authors stress that the lack of local skills is the main obstacle to successful decentralization. The question of capacity and competence, as well as other constraints, will be discussed below. However, institutional arrangements based on the transfer of resources to decentralized territories, in exchange for local responsibility for budgeting and certain key transactions, not only generate resources more quickly but also provide concrete incentives for localities to develop the necessary capacities rapidly. Frank, Bergman, and Vaillancourt (2014) note in this respect:

"Low capacity or competence should not prevent dialogue with local authorities; the risk of weakening support for peace is even greater if State-society relations cannot be improved because they lack the means to provide basic services to the population."

Indeed, while much can be improved in governance at the central level, it is difficult to imagine progress in fragile conflict areas without increased government presence at the decentralized level.

Political, Administrative, and Financial Decentralization

As an instrument for transferring decision-making and control in local-development planning and management, decentralization has existed in West Africa—and in Mali—since the times of medieval empires and kingdoms. The component entities of the empires of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai, as well as other kingdoms, enjoyed significant autonomy. Even the cantons granted a degree of autonomy to the villages composing them.

Centralization of political and economic power occurred only in the nineteenth century with the advent of colonization and in the interests of the Western colonial power. Yet the colonial authority had to adapt its development approach, granting varying degrees of autonomy—not to formal administrative districts as such, but to towns—to facilitate management. This approach was later continued by national authorities who inherited the modern governance of the post-colonial State.

In fact, it was only after repeated failures of development approaches that technicians and technocrats managed to convince political leaders that insufficient participation, accountability, and inclusion lay at the root of the poor performance of public-development policies. Thus, decentralization gradually emerged and eventually became established as a strategy for community-level participation and for consolidating development gains.

Decentralization benefited greatly from democratization and the promotion of human rights—factors that can arise from decentralization when it is conceived and implemented in all its dimensions. Yet the process of reflection, hesitation, and revision lasted four decades after independence. In popular understanding, Africa in general—and Francophone Africa in particular—has experienced five eras in the concept and management of development from the colonial period to the 1990s. These are characterized as follows:

1. **Colonial period:** the era "against the population";
2. **1960s:** the era "without the population";
3. **1970s:** the era "for the population";
4. **1980s:** the era "with the population";
5. **1990s:** the era "by the population."

The Context

It was in 1992, with the advent of the Third Republic and multiparty democracy, that the public authorities of Mali made a firm and irreversible choice in favor of decentralization as a strategy for improving the effectiveness of public governance—through stronger participation, representation, and transparency.

Having opted for full national territorial coverage, the government established 703 communes, of which 684 were rural and 19 urban. The urban communes included those created during the colonial period. In addition, 49 "cercles," 8 regions, and the district of Bamako were created as local governments—making a total of 761 territorial collectivities nationwide.

Operationalization began in 1999 with universal direct elections (single-round proportional voting) and the installation of deliberative and executive bodies.

The High and Persistent Level of Poverty

Despite the efforts made by successive governments since the struggle against poverty became a national and governmental priority—and despite considerable support from technical and financial partners—the incidence of poverty has remained high for more than fifteen years.

Table X-1 – Evolution of the Poverty Line and Incidence of Poverty in Mali, 2001–2017

Year	**2001**	**2006**	**2009–2010**	**2011**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**
Poverty line (CFA francs)	136 000	149 000	165 000	172 000	174 000	175 000	177 000	175 000	178 343
Poverty incidence (%)	55.6	47.6	43.7	45.6	47.1	46.9	47.2	46.8	44.9

Source: INSTAT, May 2018

Rising Inequality

According to the results of the *Permanent Modular Household Survey (EMOP)*, there are wide gaps between rural and urban living conditions, as reflected in the poverty incidence rates shown below.

Table X-2 – Evolution of Poverty Incidence in Urban and Rural Areas of Mali, 2001–2017

Year	Urban – Bamako	Urban – Other cities	Rural	National
2001	17.6	28.6	66.8	55.6
2006	7.9	34.1	57.8	47.6
2009	9.6	32.0	51.2	43.7
2011	10.7	47.7	51.1	45.6
2014	11.1	46.6	52.8	46.9
2015	11.2	47.7	53.1	47.2
2016	7.4	36.9	55.2	46.8
2017	4.7	32.9	53.6	44.9

Source: INSTAT, 2018

Living conditions are highly unequal between rural and urban areas, with poverty being much more pronounced in the countryside. In fact, the poverty rate is nearly ten times higher in rural areas than in Bamako and about one-and-a-half times higher than in other urban centers of Mali.

Recurring Conflicts and Weaknesses in Public Governance

In the *Specific Integrated Development Strategy for the Northern Regions of Mali* (Government of Mali, August 2017), it is acknowledged that

“The years of rebellion (1963–1964, 1990–1995, 2006–2009, and 2012–2015) interrupted development dynamics, displaced populations, and profoundly weakened the inhabitants of the northern regions.”

To find solutions to these various conflicts, successive governments have always negotiated and concluded ad-hoc agreements involving commitments to investment or employment opportunities for rebels who agreed to lay down their arms in pursuit of improved well-being.

All peace agreements signed since 1991 sought to improve local governance but never fully succeeded. Inequalities within these regions deepened. A large share of the population struggles to secure the basic necessities of life and lives in extreme poverty and vulnerability—worsened by drought and insecurity—thus requires emergency aid. Meanwhile, a few very large fortunes have rapidly emerged, built on the embezzlement of public funds or illicit trafficking.

In short, one may rightly ask: **Is poor public management one of the reasons for the recurrence of armed conflict and the resulting insecurity?**

Decentralization as a Strategy for the Sustainable Management of Internal Conflicts

The actors involved have agreed that the deep roots of the conflicts are primarily developmental in nature. They have therefore recognized the need to make local communities more responsible and to strengthen inclusion so as to facilitate the ownership of investments and processes that generate them.

Indeed, in the *Specific Integrated Development Strategy for the Northern Regions of Mali*, the government acknowledges that decentralization "has brought a climate of appeasement, improved well-being for the population on the ground, and enabled the creation of numerous infrastructures in the field of basic social services."

Furthermore, in drafting this document, one guiding principle was the recognition of *regionalization* as the operational mode of *enhanced decentralization*, which will ultimately lead to the effective transfer of broad powers and resources from the central State to local governments. Decentralization is thus recognized as a strategic means for achieving three objectives: implementing investments, building peace, and improving access to basic social services.

Through the *Plan for the Sustainable Recovery of Mali (PRED)* for 2013–2014, the Government believed that

"Following the unprecedented social, security and institutional crisis the country has experienced, decentralized actors have become more aware of their roles and responsibilities and have taken numerous initiatives."

The national forum of 5–7 November 2012 organized by associations of local authorities on the role and place of local governments in crisis management and recovery—as well as international forums such as the Lyon Conference of 19 March 2013—were part of this dynamic. The goal was to make decentralization a strategic response to the institutional and security crisis in Mali.

Weak Consideration of Peripheral Communities' Concerns

For more than two decades, the public authorities have made the fight against poverty a national priority; yet, the poverty rate has not been significantly reduced. Moreover, during this entire period, poverty has remained much higher in rural or "peripheral" areas than in the major urban centers.

Some analysts attribute this to the inefficiency of public development, defense, and security policies, in addition to natural (such as drought) or human causes (armed rebellions and organized terrorism—local, cross-border, or transnational). Among the causes of armed rebellions, the following seem to have gained consensus (Government of Mali, 2017):

- The extreme vulnerability of populations and their local production systems (floodplain agriculture, market gardening, extensive livestock farming, gathering, etc.) to climate shocks;
- A local governance system sometimes poorly adapted to local realities and unable to respond effectively to people's concerns;

- The inadequacy or inappropriateness of development actions undertaken;
- The rise of a criminal economy encouraged by the collapse of certain States.

This view is reinforced when the same government document reports:

“A portion of the population feels ‘deceived’ by promises of substantial support that are decided far from the field and bring no lasting improvement. Unfulfilled promises in terms of development and security can only inspire distrust toward the State and development partners.”

In most localities, there exists a list of desired services, along with demands for greater control over local administrative staff: security, justice (conflict resolution), health and education, infrastructure, water and sanitation, income and employment, land management, and building permits. In conflict zones, security assumes particular importance.

For example, in Mopti, a troubling case emerged involving conflict between the education and security services: violent groups in the suburbs of Mopti were firing on primary-school teachers. The government decided to close three schools, unable to ensure their safety.

The government thus faces a fundamental question: why attack teachers? Is it because these groups want to control the schools? Or because they wish to eradicate every sign of government authority in the region? Inevitably, the struggle to provide services to citizens parallels the fundamental struggle for power and control. The government must demonstrate that it can deliver services that violent militias cannot.

Historical Background and Key Concepts of Decentralization in West Africa and Mali

Historical Background

In Francophone West Africa, the history of decentralization is inseparable from that of the State itself. To serve the interests of the French colonial administration—both in managing territories and in exploiting and developing human and natural resources—certain reforms were introduced that prefigured the decentralization policies implemented after independence.

Thus, territorial entities with a minimum degree of management autonomy were created in the second half of the nineteenth century. The first experience began in Senegal, which housed the capital of French West Africa (AOF). That capital was successively Saint-Louis and Dakar. The communes of Gorée and Saint-Louis were created in 1872; eight years later came Rufisque (a suburb of Dakar), and in 1887, the commune of Dakar itself. These four communes became known as the “Four Old Communes.” Their residents held French citizenship within the colonial system.

The territory that would later become Mali was successively called *Haut-Sénégal-Niger*, *French Sudan*, *Sudanese Republic*, and finally the *Republic of Mali*. Its first “mixed commune,” Bamako, was created in 1918, followed by Kayes (1919, in the west near the Senegal border) and Mopti (1953, in the center).

In 1947, “medium-level” communes were established. Under the relevant legislation, some mixed or medium-level communes—Bamako, Kayes, Mopti, and Ségou—were upgraded to *full communes*. At the same time, several other mixed communes were created. The last communes established in French Sudan (present-day Mali) date from 1958, when eight medium-level communes were created.

Thereafter, decentralization progressed only slowly, both in the management of existing communes and in the creation of new ones. Even three decades later, Mali had only nineteen full urban communes, governed by elected bodies serving limited terms. This took place under alternating political regimes—socialist or Marxist-Leninist with centralized planning, military regimes, and single-party States.

Beginning in 1990, popular uprisings and a democratic awakening—reinforced by a favorable international context—challenged this entire system of governance. In 1991, Mali adopted a democratic form of State power and constitutional institutions. One year later, multiparty elections were held.

This ushered in a new era for decentralization, within a political context marked by stronger representative and participatory democracy. The enhancement of these two forms of democracy—and the quest for more effective public action—led to the generalization of decentralization in a form granting legal status and financial autonomy to territorial entities created by the central State, managed by elected councils.

In practical terms, the process entailed devolving decision-making and oversight powers to representatives of communities organized within territorial collectivities, for the planning, facilitation, and management of development. In total, Mali’s public authorities created 761 territorial collectivities: 703 communes, 49 cercles, 8 regions, and the District of Bamako, the capital.

The Seven Guiding Principles of Mali’s Decentralization Policy

The national decentralization policy rests on seven principles:

1. Respect for national unity and territorial integrity;
2. Respect for the free administration of local governments;
3. Respect for local specificities in territorial reorganization;
4. Democratic and transparent management of local governments;
5. The principle of subsidiarity;
6. Progressivity and simultaneity in the transfer of powers and resources;
7. The exercise of regional and local development authority by local governments.

Since most African States have followed similar democratic trajectories, decentralization has taken comparable paths, differing mainly in pace depending on political will and available resources. Two complementary measures remain indispensable—the true “engines” of decentralization:

1. The transfer of powers and resources; and
2. The deconcentration of technical services.

Their shared objectives are:

- Inclusiveness and empowerment of local communities, including citizen oversight of public action;
- Strengthening the means and accountability of local governments for participatory development planning;
- Redefining the role of the central State—focusing on regulation, oversight, ex-post institutional control, accountability, and promotion of citizen monitoring.

Key Concepts of Decentralization

The key concepts of decentralization used in the Malian context are defined as follows:

Decentralization

According to Mali's Directorate-General of Local Governments (DGCT, 2007):

"A system of administration that allows a human community on a portion of the territory to govern itself through elected bodies under the supervision of the State. It entails sharing power, functions, responsibilities, and means between the State and local governments."

The *African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralization, Local Governance, and Local Development* (African Union, 2014) defines decentralization as:

"The transfer of powers, responsibilities, capacities, and resources from the national level to all subnational levels of government in order to strengthen their ability to promote citizen participation and deliver quality services."

Deconcentration

Defined in Mali as:

"The delegation of certain State functions to representatives acting on its behalf" (DGCT, 2007).

Local Government (Collectivité Territoriale)

"A legal entity created by the State with legal personality and financial and administrative autonomy. In Mali, local governments are the commune, the cercle, and the region."

Inter-collectivity Cooperation

"The cooperation among Malian local governments in accordance with the law and under State supervision."

Political Decentralization

Comprises all rules and practices through which citizens express themselves and make choices via elections, representative bodies, participatory planning, and development policy processes.

Fiscal Decentralization

Refers to legislative and regulatory measures assigning fiscal roles and responsibilities to local governments, including budget preparation and execution, revenue collection, borrowing, grants management, and financial reporting.

Administrative Decentralization Means the devolution by the central State to territorial entities of the autonomous management of citizens' access to services such as civil status registration, human-resource management, procurement, and technical service delivery.

The Legal and Institutional Framework of Decentralization in Mali

Decentralization in Mali is enshrined in the **Constitution of February 25, 1992**, which recognizes the *free administration of local governments* as a principle of public governance. Article 98 specifies:

"Territorial collectivities are created and administered freely by elected councils under conditions determined by law."

Subsequent laws and decrees established the administrative architecture of decentrallization and defined the powers of the various levels of territorial collectivities. These texts constitute the legal framework within which local governments operate.

The most recent legal reference is **Law No. 2017-051 of September 2, 2017**, establishing the Code of Local Governments in the Republic of Mali. It consolidates the legislation governing decentralization and replaces earlier fragmented texts. The Code reaffirms that local governments are legal entities endowed with financial autonomy and managed by elected councils.

Under this framework, the **commune** is the basic unit of local governance. It enjoys legal personality and financial autonomy. Each commune has a *Municipal Council* (deliberative body) and a *Mayor* (executive authority). The *cercle* and the *region* represent intermediate levels of decentralization.

The **cercle** serves primarily as a framework for intercommunal cooperation and for coordinating development actions within its territory. The **region** functions as a strategic development planning level. It coordinates sectoral policies, ensuring their coherence with national development strategies.

In addition to elected councils, the State is represented in each local government by **deconcentrated administrative authorities**: governors at the regional level, prefects at the cercle level, and sub-prefects at the commune level. These officials represent the central government and exercise oversight of the legality of acts adopted by local councils.

Institutional Framework

The **Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization (MATD)** is the main institution responsible for implementing decentralization policy. It ensures coherence among the actions of all administrative levels and oversees compliance with national regulations.

The **General Directorate of Territorial Collectivities (DGCT)** plays a central role in supporting and supervising local governments. It is responsible for drafting and monitoring the implementation of decentralization policies, providing technical assistance to local authorities, and coordinating with technical and financial partners.

Other key actors include:

- The **National Directorate of Local Government Budget (DNBCT)**, responsible for managing financial transfers from the State to local governments and ensuring fiscal discipline;
- The **National Agency for Investment in Territorial Collectivities (ANICT)**, which manages the *National Fund for Local Government Investment (FNACT)*;
- The **National Association of Local Governments of Mali (AMM)** and other networks of elected officials that represent local governments in dialogue with the central government.

Together, these institutions form the backbone of Mali's decentralized administrative system.

Transfer of Powers and Resources

The transfer of powers and resources is one of the fundamental pillars of decentralization. It is meant to give local governments real autonomy in decision-making and service delivery.

In Mali, this transfer is organized through decrees that specify the powers transferred to local governments in key sectors such as education, health, water supply, sanitation, and rural development. For instance, communes are responsible for primary education and basic health services, while regions focus on secondary education, regional infrastructure, and development planning.

However, despite the existence of these legal provisions, the **effective transfer** of powers and resources remains limited. The State continues to play a dominant role in service delivery, while local governments often lack the financial and human resources necessary to exercise their responsibilities fully.

The discrepancy between the *transferred powers* (in law) and the *transferred means* (in practice) has been identified as one of the main obstacles to effective decentralization in Mali. As a result, local governments' autonomy often remains more theoretical than real.

Fiscal Decentralization and Financial Transfers

Fiscal decentralization seeks to provide local governments with the financial means necessary to carry out their responsibilities. It is based on three components:

1. **Own revenues**, derived from local taxes and fees;
2. **State transfers**, in the form of operating and investment subsidies;
3. **External resources**, particularly from development partners.

Mali's main local taxes include the *patente* (business license tax), property tax, market and slaughterhouse fees, and various service charges. These revenues, however, remain modest due to limited tax base, weak administrative capacity, and difficulties in tax collection.

To supplement these revenues, the central government provides **intergovernmental fiscal transfers**, which constitute a significant part of local budgets. These transfers are managed through the FNACT, whose resources come from the national budget and development partners. The FNACT finances local investment projects on the basis of transparent criteria.

Despite progress, the volume of transfers remains insufficient compared to the growing responsibilities of local governments. Moreover, delays in disbursement and complex administrative procedures often hinder the timely implementation of local projects.

Institutional Coordination and Oversight

Decentralization also requires strong mechanisms of institutional coordination and oversight to ensure the legality, coherence, and effectiveness of local action.

Administrative oversight is exercised by the State's representatives (governors, prefects, and sub-prefects), who verify the legality of local government decisions and may suspend or annul acts deemed contrary to the law.

Financial oversight is carried out by the **Court of Accounts** and by the **Public Treasury**, which monitor local financial management. Local councils are also required to adopt budgets in conformity with national regulations and to submit annual accounts for review.

However, these control mechanisms often suffer from capacity constraints, insufficient staffing, and weak information systems, limiting their effectiveness. Strengthening both administrative and financial oversight remains an essential component of deepening decentralization.

The Sociocultural Perception of Decentralization

The introduction of decentralization in Mali has encountered a complex sociocultural environment, shaped by historical, ethnic, and traditional structures. Understanding this environment is crucial for assessing the success and challenges of the reform.

In many localities, **traditional authorities**—chiefs, village elders, and religious leaders—retain significant legitimacy and influence over local governance. The coexistence of elected officials and traditional leaders has sometimes been marked by competition, as the latter perceive decentralization as a challenge to their traditional authority.

Nevertheless, experience has shown that when traditional authorities are integrated into local governance structures, they can play a stabilizing and facilitating role. Their participation enhances local legitimacy and helps mediate conflicts.

Decentralization has also fostered the emergence of new social actors, particularly **civil-society organizations** and **women's associations**, which have gained increased visibility and influence in local decision-making. However, women's participation in local politics remains limited, due to cultural barriers, low literacy rates, and economic constraints.

The success of decentralization thus depends not only on legal and institutional reforms but also on a profound cultural adaptation—one that reconciles modern democratic institutions with traditional systems of authority and social organization.

Achievements of Decentralization

Since the launch of decentralization in 1999, Mali has recorded significant progress, both institutionally and operationally. These achievements demonstrate that decentralization, despite difficulties, is a viable and relevant path toward more inclusive governance and improved public service delivery.

1. Establishment of Elected Local Authorities

The most visible achievement of decentralization has been the creation of local democratic institutions. Through successive municipal and regional elections, thousands of representatives have been elected at the commune, cercle, and regional levels. This has allowed citizens to participate directly in local decision-making and development planning.

These elected officials represent the political, administrative, and social diversity of Mali. Local elections have become a crucial mechanism for political inclusion and a school of democracy, helping to consolidate national political stability.

In particular, the emergence of local leadership—especially among youth and women—has contributed to the renewal of the political class and to greater citizen participation in governance.

2. Development Planning and Local Management

Each local government has prepared **Economic, Social, and Cultural Development Plans (PDESC)**, which serve as strategic frameworks for development. These plans are prepared through participatory processes involving the general population, civil society, and technical services.

The PDESCs have allowed communities to identify and prioritize their development needs in areas such as education, health, infrastructure, water supply, agriculture, and environmental management.

The participatory approach has improved transparency and accountability, while ensuring that development priorities reflect the aspirations of local populations. Moreover, these plans have facilitated the alignment of local interventions with national policies and donor programs.

3. Improvement in Basic Social Services

Decentralization has contributed to the creation and rehabilitation of basic social infrastructure. Many communes have invested in the construction of schools, health centers, wells, boreholes, and local roads, thanks to the support of the State and development partners.

For instance, in the health sector, the transfer of powers to communes has enabled them to support the management of **Community Health Centers (CSCOM)**, improve the availability of medicines, and strengthen preventive health programs. In the education sector, communes have been involved in constructing classrooms, maintaining school facilities, and recruiting support staff.

In addition, decentralization has encouraged better coordination between local governments and technical services, making service delivery more responsive to local realities.

4. Creation of a Local Civil Service

To strengthen local administrative capacity, Mali established a **Local Civil Service (Fonction Publique des Collectivités Territoriales)**. This reform aimed to professsionalize local administration by recruiting qualified personnel dedicated to local governments.

The Local Civil Service operates alongside the national civil service but is managed by local governments, under the oversight of the central government. Its establishment represents an important step toward institutionalizing decentralization and ensuring the sustainability of local administration.

5. Development of Intercommunal Cooperation

To address common challenges and achieve economies of scale, many communes have formed **intercommunal groupings**. These partnerships enable neighboring communes to pool resources for infrastructure projects, environmental management, and service provision.

Intercommunal cooperation has been particularly effective in areas such as waste management, road maintenance, and natural resource management. It also fosters solidarity among communes and strengthens territorial cohesion.

Challenges and Constraints

Despite these achievements, decentralization in Mali faces numerous structural and operational challenges that limit its effectiveness.

1. Security Crisis and Political Instability

The persistence of insecurity in the northern and central regions has severely disrupted decentralization. Armed conflicts, terrorist attacks, and the absence of State authority in large areas have paralyzed local institutions, displaced populations, and destroyed infrastructure.

Many communes in conflict zones have ceased to function effectively, and elected officials have been forced to flee or suspend their activities. The lack of security also prevents administrative staff and development partners from working in these areas, further weakening governance and service delivery.

2. Weak Institutional and Human Capacity

Local governments often lack the technical and managerial capacitiy required to plan, budget, and implement development programs. In many communes, administrative staff are insufficient or poorly trained. High turnover among local officials also hampers institutional continuity.

Capacity-building efforts by the State and donors have yielded mixed results. Training sessions are often short-term, donor-driven, and not integrated into a broader strategy of professional development. The lack of adequate training institutions for local governance remains a major bottleneck.

3. Limited Financial Resources

Fiscal decentralization remains weak. Local tax bases are narrow, and collection rates are low. Dependence on central government transfers is high, yet these transfers are often delayed, unpredictable, and insufficient.

Many communes face chronic budget deficits, making it difficult to maintain infrastructure or provide basic services. Without stable and adequate funding, the autonomy of local governments remains largely nominal.

4. Incomplete Transfer of Powers

Although laws provide for extensive devolution of powers to local governments, in practice, many sectoral ministries continue to exercise control over decision-making and resources. The lack of clarity in responsibilities between deconcentrated services and decentralized entities leads to frequent conflicts.

Sectoral policies are still designed and implemented at the central level, with limited participation from local governments. This undermines the spirit of decentralization and discourages local initiative.

5. Weak Citizen Participation and Accountability

While decentralization has promoted local democracy, citizen participation remains limited in practice. Public consultations are sometimes formalities rather than genuine opportunities for participation. Many citizens are unaware of their rights or of local governance mechanisms.

Similarly, mechanisms for accountability and transparency are still weak. Local councils rarely publish budget information, and audit procedures are not always enforced. This fosters mistrust and reduces public confidence in local institutions.

Prospects for Strengthening the Process

Despite these challenges, decentralization in Mali continues to enjoy strong political support, both domestically and among development partners. Several strategies have been proposed to consolidate and deepen the process.

1. Enhancing Security and Restoring State Authority

The restoration of security is a prerequisite for the revival of decentralization in conflict-affected areas. The re-establishment of State authority and the redeployment of administrative and technical services are essential for restoring confidence and enabling the functioning of local governments.

Peacebuilding initiatives should integrate local governance as a central component, ensuring that decentralization contributes to stability and reconciliation.

2. Strengthening Institutional Capacity

Sustainable decentralization requires investment in human capital. This involves establishing permanent training programs for local officials, creating regional training centers, and integrating local governance into the curricula of universities and professional schools.

Institutional support must also focus on improving management tools, information systems, and communication among the different levels of government.

3. Increasing Financial Transfers and Local Revenue Mobilization

The financial autonomy of local governments must be reinforced through the expansion of fiscal transfers and better mobilization of local revenues. The criteria for allocation of transfers should be transparent and equitable, based on population, poverty levels, and development needs.

Simplifying administrative procedures for accessing funds and accelerating disbursements will improve local investment capacity. Moreover, digital technologies can be used to modernize tax collection and enhance transparency.

4. Clarifying Roles and Strengthening Coordination

Clarifying the respective roles of decentralized and deconcentrated structures is crucial for avoiding overlaps and improving efficiency. This may involve revising the legal framework to specify the exclusive, shared, and delegated responsibilities of each level.

Strengthening interministerial coordination mechanisms, such as the *National Council for Decentralization (CND)*, can also promote coherence between sectoral policies and local development plans.

5. Promoting Inclusive and Participatory Governance

Finally, the success of decentralization depends on citizens' trust in local institutions. Efforts must therefore be made to promote transparency, gender equality, and participatory planning.

Encouraging women and youth to participate in local politics, creating local accountability mechanisms, and supporting community-based monitoring initiatives will help ensure that decentralization genuinely serves development and democracy.

The Effective Transfer of Resources to Local Governments

The effective transfer of resources—intended to accompany the transfer of responsibility and to enable concrete development actions—depends on political will and on partner support to accelerate the process. In Mali, these two key factors conditioning the transfer of resources have proved to be serious obstacles in several areas. Indeed, nearly two decades after the effective installation of the executive and deliberative bodies of local governments, it is evident that the transfer of technical competencies remains insufficient, while the transfer of resources constitutes a major barrier to the operationalization of decentralization as conceived and desired by practitioners. The transfer of resources is estimated to be effectively implemented at only 30%.

Transparent Management of Financial Resources

Despite institutional mechanisms such as financial reporting, oversight of local government management, and optional mechanisms such as citizen oversight of public action (CCAP), significant efforts are still needed to improve transparency in the management of local public affairs, especially financial management. Many communes still do not inform taxpayers about the use of fiscal revenues, the financial resources mobilized from development partners, or the procedures followed to execute public expenditures carried out in the name and on behalf of the population. Moreover, administrative and financial accounts remain inaccessible to most citizens.

Developing the Capacity for Financial Management

Most local elected officials in rural communes—which number 684 out of Mali's 703 communes—are illiterate. The first obstacle to sound financial management is therefore the widespread illiteracy of many elected officials. Indeed, no method or technique, not even translating documents into national languages, can enable illiterate individuals to read, understand, and critically assess technical documents of this level, particularly because such analysis requires specialized knowledge beyond simple translation.

Most local officials responsible for managing local governments have only elementary education, which does not allow them to contribute effectively to the design, implementtation, and monitoring of financial management documents (annual budgets, administrative and management accounts, etc.). Even the creation of technical management positions within commune offices does not sustainably resolve this issue.

Consequently, the primary challenge is to build local capacity for financial management within the socio-professional groups that are potential sources of future elected officials. These actors must be identified in both the private sector and civil society. Before being elected, they may prepare and carry out CCAP mechanisms; once elected, they must be subject to such mechanisms as well as to financial accountability procedures. In both cases, transparency in financial management will improve, and with it, trust between elected officials and citizens will be strengthened.

Maintaining Financial Support from Development Partners

Decentralization has enabled development partners (who so wished) to better reach grassroots communities through targeted development initiatives. It has provided an additional incentive to support the country's development. However, the relevance of intervention choices, the quality of local governance, and the effectiveness of programs will ultimately be decisive factors for maintaining partner support. Local governments must therefore be particularly attentive in selecting development priorities and in ensuring transparent and effective procedures for their implementation.

Improving Tax Compliance Among Taxpayers

In nearly all environments, taxpayers are reluctant to pay taxes voluntarily, including withholding taxes. This attitude is rooted in a limited understanding of, and weak adherence to, the very principle underlying taxation and tax mobilization, for several reasons, including:

- insufficient efforts in explanation, information, and awareness raising directed at taxpayers;
- insufficient transparency in the use of collected fiscal revenues for public purposes.

As a result, most taxpayers pay taxes more out of necessity than out of conviction in the validity of the principle.

Opportunities

Fiscal decentralization offers numerous opportunities which, if properly utilized, foster local development by enabling timely responses to the relevant needs of all social and professional groups. Below, we review the main opportunities in light of field experience.

Institution of Local Government Taxation

The advent of decentralization created the need to identify and allocate resources for the development of local governments. Accordingly, while some taxes and duties were transferred to local governments for their use, others were newly created for their benefit. In all cases, the collection of these taxes remains the responsibility of the competent technical services within the central tax administration.

Transfer of Certain Fiscal Revenues to Local Governments

At the outset of local government management by elected authorities and the transfer of project ownership to their executive bodies, several sources of tax revenue were transferred by the central State, including business licenses and vehicle stickers. The same applies to certain services previously provided by security services such as the National Police and Gendarmerie, which were transferred to the communes. This includes services for certifying civil status records or official documents that cannot be duplicated (degree certificates, diplomas, etc.), as well as the legalization of agreements between parties.

Transfer of Financial Resources

Following the transfer of technical competencies from the central State to local governments across various development sectors, the transfer of associated financial resources is also planned, to be implemented progressively.

Financial Accountability

Public reporting of management activities by the executive bodies of local governments—previously optional—is now mandated by the Local Government Code, making it compulsory for all administrators. This provides an opportunity for taxpayers and voters to learn more about the use of public funds and the mechanisms adopted for that purpose. This measure has two advantages: it strengthens transparency in the management of local public affairs and improves tax compliance among citizens.

Creation of a Local Government Development Fund

To operationalize decentralization, the Malian government adopted both a technical support mechanism and a financial support mechanism. The latter led to the creation of the *Fonds pour l'Investissement des Collectivités Territoriales* (FICT). Due to shortcomings in the management of this fund—particularly its exclusive focus on financing investments—it was replaced by the *Fonds National d'Investissement des Collectivités Territoriales* (FNACT). More flexible and better suited to the financing needs of local government development, the FNACT comprises five allocations corresponding to five financing windows:

- the Local Government Investment Allocation (DIN);
- the Local Government Loan Guarantee Allocation (DGECT);
- the Technical Support Allocation (DAT);
- the Local Government Operating Support Allocation (DAFCT);
- and the Inter-Local Government Allocation (DIC).

The Preparation and Adoption of the Budget by the Governing Bodies of the Local Government Unit

For any given local government unit, the executive body is responsible for preparing the annual budget, which is intended to financially support the implementation of the annual activity program. Thus, local officials have the opportunity to include activities in the agenda they deem appropriate and to organize themselves accordingly, while also overseeing the process in accordance with required rules and standards, the specific realities of the physical, economic, and social environments, as well as the pressing needs and deeper aspirations of the moment.

Approval of the Budget by the Supervisory Authority

For each tier of local government, the law provides for a public authority—representing the State—responsible for approving the budget. This authority must receive the budget adopted by the deliberative body of the local government and must approve it within a specific timeframe, ensuring that the required norms and principles have been followed. Therefore, approving authorities and the executive and deliberative bodies of local governments are required to work transparently and complementarily, ensuring the application of practices that guarantee an efficient, effective, and equitable use of public funds.

Codification of the Budgetary Process

The budgetary process of local governments is codified. The document is widely disseminated and gives rise to several training sessions both for elected officials and for actors from the private sector and civil society—thus including potential future leaders of local governments. The budget process clearly defines the actors and their roles and responsebilities, organized in a logical and chronological order, all within precise timeframes established by regulation.

Guaranteeing Citizen Participation and Transparency

One of the foremost opportunities of fiscal decentralization is the managerial autonomy granted to local governments and the promotion of grassroots participation in the management of local public affairs. Thus, the entire budgetary process is participatory because it consists of steps involving truly inclusive and transparent activities. For example, the preparation of the initial budget is always preceded by an assessment of the needs and priorities of the communities within the local government area. Moreover, the sessions discussing the draft budget are public, and the draft budget as well as the minutes of its adoption are made public before they are submitted to the supervisory authority. This enables citizens to make observations or even complaints. When correctly implemented, this process not only addresses the shortcomings of representative democracy but also improves local governance by strengthening trust between governing authorities and the governed, through better consideration of the needs and aspirations of the local population.

Conclusion

Despite the many challenges it faces, the decentralization process in Mali represents an excellent opportunity to bring the central government closer to local communities. The conflict that the country has been experiencing since the early 2010s, which has severed it from much of its territory, makes the need for autonomy—together with a more effective presence of the State in decentralized communities—all the more urgent. In what follows, we propose a set of economic policy measures that, if properly implemented, should enable

Mali's government to finally succeed in the decentralization exercise that it has struggled to achieve since independence.

Reconciling Decentralization and the Reduction of Inequality

Research on decentralization continues to highlight the hesitation of decision-makers to demonstrate stronger political will in support of the process in all its components. Decentralization should be more clearly regarded as a means of reducing inequality. Indeed, due to the strategic position of local governments and their executive bodies in addressing development issues, if the necessary resources are allocated and required capacities developed, living conditions can be rapidly improved through better access to public services.

Strengthening the State's Presence on the "Periphery"

In Mali, decentralization has made it possible to create numerous local governments—particularly communes—for which the role of the State's representative is and remains irreplaceable. However, the staffing levels and resources of the State scarcely allow it to meet new needs, whether in the short, medium, or long term. This situation has been worsened by the current security challenges facing the country. Since the operationalization of decentralization has led to a repositioning of central authority—shifting from development planning to legality oversight and regulation—the latter remains an indispensable actor for the proper functioning of the process. Consequently, the State must be present everywhere it is needed, regardless of the cost.

Transferring Financial Resources as a Driver of Development

The Ministry of Decentralization and Urban Affairs (2014) noted in its analysis that "the difficulties that hindered the reform prevented the achievement of the objectives of embedding the democratization process and establishing a development approach led by local actors... Decentralization, as implemented, was not accompanied by a corresponding transfer of resources nor by significant human reinforcement of the new local governments." The authors conclude their analysis with the following observation: "Local governments, which remain an important component of the State, manage less than 10% of public financial resources." It is therefore necessary to take appropriate measures to allocate resources as closely as possible to the local governments that are meant to use them.

Strengthening the Capacities of Actors

It is common for officials in financial administrations and elsewhere to point to the insufficient—or even nonexistent—technical capacities within the executive bodies of local governments as justification for opposing the transfer of financial resources to that level. It is true that elected officials generally lack technical capacity in nearly all areas. However, it would also be unreasonable to believe that capacity must first be created in all aspects of local governance before directly allocating resources under their management.

Since local governments are established as legal entities endowed with managerial autonomy, State representatives, decentralized technical services, partners, and other stakeholders

(NGOs and humanitarian actors) should instead commit to meeting the challenge of building the necessary capacities for development planning and management, including the processes of budgeting, mobilizing public financial resources, and producing financial reports.

Increasing Stakeholder Interest in Decentralization

Since the early stages of designing and implementing decentralization in Mali, multiple official documents—including the National Decentralization Policy Framework—have highlighted limited adherence in some cases, disinterest among certain actors, and reluctance or even resistance in others. After two decades of decentralization, such attitudes must be studied and addressed differently. We therefore suggest identifying the motivational factors that could encourage actors to support or even contribute to the implementation of policies and strategies, to the consolidation of progress, and to the capitalization of successes. These "motivations" should be identified according to each actor, and their implementation should be determined on a case-by-case basis.

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Chapter XI : TOWARD A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE EMERGENCE OF BOKO HARAM: THE CASE OF THE DIFFA REGION IN NIGER

Ahmadou Aly Mbaye & Mamane Bello Garba Hima

Introduction

Armed groups (rebellions and separatist movements) and terrorist organizations represent a real threat to peace and security in West Africa. In this chapter, we trace the evolution of Boko Haram, a subregional Islamist movement, mainly through its establishment in the Diffa region (Niger), in order to understand the ideological and economic nature of its "claims" as well as its connections within the population and among political actors. The chapter outlines the actions undertaken by the group in Diffa and the responses provided by the Nigerien State to contain it.

The findings presented in this chapter are based on data collected through focus groups held in Diffa in 2018—twelve (12) in total— involving 93 participants overall, in addition to 25 individual interviews conducted with individuals selected for their knowledge of, or exposure to, the activities of the terrorist group (imams, local and administrative authorities, NGOs, technical services of the State, etc.). The villages and municipalities visited were selected according to their accessibility. Indeed, some villages located only five (5) kilometers from Diffa were nonetheless inaccessible, as the actors in the conflict (the State and the Boko Haram sect) clashed there continually, making them very unsafe for field missions.

Etymologically, the expression *Boko Haram* (BH) is a juxtaposition of the words **"Boko"**, which in Hausa means "Western education," and **"haram"**, which in Arabic means "sin." Although militants of this group have always claimed that "Western education is a sin," they never truly liked being called Boko Haram. Their official designation is *"Jamaʿat Ahl al-Sunna li'l-Daʿwa wa'l-Jihad,"* which in Arabic means "the community of the faithful devoted to the propagation of the teachings of the Prophet's tradition and to jihad." Founded by Muhammad Yusuf, the sect was originally (in 2001 or slightly earlier) established in Maiduguri (Northeastern Nigeria), and its activities were initially limited to teachings in mosques, public spaces, and on television and radio channels.

Since its creation, the militants were organized and preached everywhere, including in Niger. According to the founders of BH, Western schooling was considered from the outset as the number one enemy of Islam and Muslims. In July 2009, Muhammad Yusuf was arrested and killed (an extrajudicial execution) during a police operation. After a very rapid reorganization and heightened radicalization, under the leadership of Abubakar Shekau and with support from other Islamist terrorist groups—such as Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Al-Shabaab in Somalia, and the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat—BH "internationalized" its actions in Cameroon, Niger, and Chad.

At the national and even subregional level, it is important to recall that BH's rhetoric has consistently targeted the injustice of political leaders, poor governance, and an alleged conspiracy against African societies—engineered by the West and its multinational corporations, in collusion with African governments. By using this narrative, among other recruitment strategies, the group succeeded in enlisting a growing number of young people, primarily from disadvantaged or poorly educated regions.

A Brief Description of the Diffa Region

The Diffa region, located in Southeastern Niger (Figure XII-1), is predominantly agricultural (fishing, irrigated crops, and livestock). It plays an important role in Niger's economy (Table XII-1). More than 80% of households in Diffa depend on agriculture, while the remaining 20% are divided among the administration, NGOs, and other international organizations. Among the six (6) departments that make up the region, Bosso—an agricultural department par excellence—was the first to suffer Boko Haram attacks.

The comparison between Diffa and Agadez is not accidental, as these are the two regions that are most similar, both demographically and climatically. Niamey, the capital region, serves as a reference point for measuring the distance that separates these regions from the center of the country.

Table XI-1. Demographic status of Diffa compared with Agadez and Niamey

Localités	État de la Population	Nombre de ménages	Nombre de ménages agricoles	Ratio ménages agricoles / ménages totaux (%)
Niger	17138707	2419836	1867002	77
Niger: Urbaine	2778337	434192	80745	18
Niger: Rurale	14360370	1985644	1786257	89
Région de Niamey	1026848	166998	13394	08
Région d'Agadez	487620	86105	43697	50
Région de Diffa	593821	93621	75339	80
Département de Bosso	76735	12629	11463	90
Département de Diffa	159722	24725	18007	73
Département de Goudoumaria	100559	15993	13440	84
Département de Maine- Soroa	131664	18890	16487	87
Département de N'gourti	51767	9408	8333	88
Département de N'guigmi	73374	11976	7609	63

Source: *Institut National de la Statistique, Répertoire National 2014.*

Figure XI-1. Map of the region of Diffa and its six departments

Source: Profil humanitaire de la région de Diffa, octobre 2017, OCHA

The region ranks first in the country in cattle farming (a position sometimes shared with the Tahoua region) and in fishing. Indeed, up until 2010, the region produced more than 65% of the annual inland fisheries output, with peaks reaching 80% in certain years. Table XII-2 presents several statistics on fishing and livestock production in Niger.

Tableau XI-2. Fish (in tons) et livestock (cattle, in 1000s) by region

Région	2000		2006		2013	
	Pêche	Élevage	Pêche	Élevage	Pêche	Élevage
Niger	16.520	6.644,5	13.937	7.482,8	9.419	10.733
Niamey	606	33,1	360	37,3	444	58,297
Agadez	NA	47.4	NA	53,4	NA	29,241
Diffa	**10.370**	**724,4**	**7.448**	**815,8**	**7.350**	**1.023**

Source: *Direction des Statistiques/Ministère de l'Élevage*

Given its relatively low population density and the richness of its land, Diffa was the second least poor region in the country up to 2010, after Niamey. Beginning in 2011, when insecurity started to become noticeable, the proportion of non-poor individuals fell from 81.1% to 66% and continued to decline in the period leading up to the conflict. Table XII-3 traces the evolution of poverty in the region.

Table XI-3. Poverty rate in Diffa and in regions of comparison (%)

Région	2005		2008		2011	
	Pauvre	Non Pauvre	Pauvre	Non Pauvre	Pauvre	Non Pauvre
Niger	62,1	37,9	59,5	40,5	48,2	51,8
Niamey	27,1	72,9	27,8	72,2	10,2	89,8
Agadez	45,9	54,1	16,1	83,9	20,7	79,3
Diffa	**18,8**	**81,2**	**18,3**	**81,7**	**34**	**66**

Source: *INS 2014. Le Niger en Chiffre*

Emergence of Boko Haram in Niger

To begin with, it must be noted that Niger and Nigeria share more than 1,400 km of land border. They also share, above all, numerous characteristics in terms of economic, political, and social inequalities.

Administratively, the Diffa region is composed of twelve (12) municipalities (six urban and six rural) spread across six departments. In the department of Gueskerou, inhabited predominantly by Kanuri populations, the main activity is irrigated agriculture. The department of Nguigmi is highly diverse ethnically (Kanuri, Toubou, Boudouma, Arabs, and Fulani), but displays little diversity in terms of economic activities. Transhumant livestock herding predominates. The department of Ngourti is largely inhabited by Toubou, Fulani, and Arabs—formerly nomadic groups who became transhumant due to water scarcity. The department of Mainé is primarily populated by sedentary farmers and transhumant Fulani. The department of Bosso consists of sedentary farmers, Boudouma fishers, and transhumant herders. Finally, in the department of Goudoumariya, all communities are found around the oases, where they produce salt, natron, cassava, and dates, and also practice livestock herding.

Among the zone's economic activities, some contribute more than others to conflict prevention. For example, cheese production—an extremely valued commodity in the area—is an activity exclusively reserved for certain Fulani herders. These producers are known for being very open to all the other communities, among whom they have many clients they try to retain. Apart from such cases, however, recurring community conflicts were observed long before BH arrived in the locality. For example, in 2014, a violent conflict opposed Arabs (Mouhmid) and Fulani due to a dispute over a well; during the same period, another conflict that caused more than one hundred (100) deaths broke out between Fulani and Boudouma over issues of cattle theft. In June 2017, yet another conflict erupted between Kanuri and Fulani, resulting in seven (7) deaths. All these community conflicts have today been amplified by the Boko Haram phenomenon.

The Lake Chad area was unstable even without Boko Haram. Nearly 95% of the lake territory is occupied by the Boudouma. It is important to note that this ethnic group is found nowhere else in the world except in the Lake Chad region. Their activities include fishing, livestock raising, and cultivating some of the richest land in Niger, and they are genuine nomads. They may leave for transhumance and return much later (sometimes more than fifty years afterward) to claim their land. In 2004, the Niger government undertook a broad decentralization initiative that resulted in a contested redistribution of community lands, generating substantial frustration and further undermining social cohesion, which was already severely tested.

Factors Facilitating the Establishment of Boko Haram in the Diffa Region

A number of social, political, and economic factors significantly facilitated BH's penetration into the Diffa region, according to the various interlocutors in our interviews and focus groups. The Nigerien State exhibited a degree of laxity by allowing proselytizing activities to flourish among certain youths, who tended to use the platforms offered by places of worship to spread subversive ideas, similar to what BH was doing in Nigeria.

As early as 2004, imams and key community actors had reported the radicalization of individuals in their surroundings, as well as clear signs of unexplained wealth among some young people. These warnings were not taken seriously by the Nigerien State. In fact, administrative authorities tended to interpret these denunciations as mere expressions of jealousy, in an environment marked by strong competition between imams, between marabouts, and between young people and elders. Two activists known to be quite close to BH—Ali Sayadi (24 years old at the time) and Kaka Bounou (39–40 years old)—were particularly influential among the youth. They operated for a long time with total impunity, even when BH seized the town of Malam-Fatori in Nigeria (2 km from Bosso) in 2014.

The frustrations of local populations, born of a deep sense of marginalization by the State, constituted another fertile ground for the spread of BH's radical ideology in the region. The Lake Chad region in Niger is predominantly inhabited by the Boudouma ethnic group. A recurrent complaint emerging from our focus groups was that their children were completely excluded from the ranks of the security forces (police, gendarmerie). Basic social services such as quality education also seemed inaccessible to them. The most recent school built in the area dates back to 2004, according to their estimates. They reported seeing State officials in the locality only once per week, on the village's weekly market day, when a tax officer and a member of the national guard would visit.

The assassination of the Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi and the subsequent civil war in Libya appear to have accelerated developments. Between 2011 and 2012, an estimated eighty thousand Nigeriens returned home, fleeing the war across the border. Among them were thousands of former combatants who had gone to support Gaddafi's army at the onset of the civil war. Without any qualifications and without any real reintegration system, these young men were left vulnerable to jihadist movements. Thus, on 22 April 2014, it came as no surprise when the BBC Hausa service reported that Boko Haram was conducting large-scale recruitment in Niger. That same year, refugee camps were established to host civilians fleeing massacres committed by the Nigerian army and Boko Haram (in Baga, Malam-Fatori, and Damassak). Among the supposed refugees were many BH fighters who used the camps to strengthen their ranks.

With the election of President Buhari in Nigeria in 2015—whose campaign and early mandate clearly emphasized a security agenda targeting BH—the group strategically retreated to Diffa, which it opportunely used as a rear base.

During its early period in Niger, BH took the time to settle in. Exploiting the high porosity of the long Niger–Nigeria border, the group methodically established an extensive network of smuggling and money transfers, under the complacent and nonchalant gaze of local administrative authorities. The modus operandi was simple: any young person wishing to join the movement would disappear for two days and return with one hundred thousand Naira (about sixty dollars) and a motorcycle, often used as a "motorbike taxi." For young people wishing to engage in trade, they received equivalent amounts in goods and transportation means. The subsoil of the Diffa area is very rich in petroleum; since 2012, crude oil has been produced there, but the wealth generated does not benefit the local population nor its disillusioned youth, thereby creating a perfect target for BH's recruitment campaigns.

The first attack by the group dates to February 2015 and targeted the Lake Chad/ Koumadougou area, a watercourse more than 195 km long. Along these waters, economic activities vital to the local population flourished, such as livestock herding, inland fishing, rice cultivation, and the production of the pepper known as "RED GOLD."

The Nigerien State's Response to the Emergence of Boko Haram

Following BH's first attacks, the government of Niger reacted by adopting rather radical measures in the Diffa region. They began by banning the circulation of motorcycles, which are the primary means of transport for local populations. They then closed schools and health centers in areas deemed sensitive, and also prohibited livestock sales. Within a span of forty-eight hours, populations from more than one hundred and eight villages and hamlets along Lake Chad and the Koumadougou were displaced. The sale of fuel was completely banned, as were chemical fertilizers. A curfew was implemented, and massive arrests and detentions were carried out among certain populations, often on the basis of simple denunciations.

There were numerous allegations of theft during police search operations in some houses, as well as reports—verified or not—of extrajudicial executions. While fishing was prohibited, many participants in our focus groups reported numerous instances of favoritism linked to fishing permits, granted in exchange for illicit payments to security forces. Similarly, cases of confiscated equipment being improperly resold were reported. All these measures contributed significantly to distancing the State from certain populations, who consequently moved closer to the insurgents. This was especially the case since the latter carried out violent reprisals against unprotected populations suspected of collaborating with government forces.

A Climate of Terror Among Local Religious and Traditional Elites

In a climate of generalized terror in the areas controlled by Boko Haram, certain actors (imams, traditional chiefs, and local populations) were particularly targeted. Members of the BH group monitored them closely and did not hesitate to eliminate physically those they believed to be collaborators of the Nigerien State. Their vulnerability thus exposed in broad daylight, they enjoyed less and less of the respect and consideration that the population had previously accorded them. One participant in our focus groups expressed it as follows:

"Do not be surprised that someone who was not poor but suddenly becomes poor accepts any proposal coming from anyone whatsoever. An elderly man showed us the four (4) cows he has left out of the thirty-eight (38) he owned before the State's measures, and added:

By Allah, if these 4 cows are ever gone, I will push my children to go and join the sect, for there is nothing more shameful than a father seeing his family collapse with no alternative whatsoever."

The war waged by Boko Haram can easily be described as an economic war, for it halted economic activities and took control of arable lands. It should be noted that, to this day, the Nigerien government controls neither the Komadougou nor Lake Chad. This is alarming, given that there are ethnic groups in these areas who remain without any means of subsistence because they are deprived of access to these resources.

Insecurity and Migration

During our focus groups, the question of migration surfaced repeatedly in discussions. Most participants insisted that migration was not a widespread phenomenon in the locality. The majority emphasized that most inhabitants of Diffa had never left the area from birth to death, as they lived well from their fishing and herding activities. The only time most of these populations moved away from their locality was when they were displaced and regrouped into camps.

Consequently, the populations from the 108 villages along Lake Chad and the Komadougou who were displaced found themselves in refugee camps. Many of them clandestinely returned to their region of origin, while others ultimately joined BH.

Returning to Normalcy?

One dimension of the discussions conducted in the focus groups concerned solutions for achieving lasting peace in the region. Proposals were made, and we summarize them in this section. A central theme that emerged was the promotion of greater social justice. One participant observed:

"I will only feel concerned by this issue when I see the soldier who stole my motorcycle punished like any thief and not treated like an authority. Otherwise, for me, the soldiers and the members of the sect are all thieves of our property and they may as well kill each other."

Others emphasized the need to extend coverage of the national television network (ORTN) to the Lake area. Although broadcasts are delivered at least once a week in the Boudouma language, the area is not actually covered. The presence of the State must be more strongly asserted, and the BH group must be driven out of the area to allow a gradual resumption of economic activities. According to our interlocutors, Niger is the only country affected by the BH phenomenon where there is practically no longer any activity on the lake's lands.

Some insisted that the State must help herders who have suffered livestock theft to rebuild their herds. It must also avoid repeating the mistake made during the 1995 security crisis, when the State responded to rebel attacks by arming certain ethnic groups (Arabs and Fulani) to fight others (Toubou). In the same vein, the State must ensure that stigmatization of certain ethnic groups (Boudouma, Kanuri, and Toubou) as allies of BH comes to an end. It is also necessary to combat corruption vigorously, especially among administrative authorities who seek personal gain from certain disputes (farmer–herder conflicts, community conflicts, etc.).

Conclusion

In this chapter, drawing on the results of our interviews and focus groups conducted in 2018 in the Diffa region, we trace the evolution of Boko Haram's establishment in the area. The first attacks by BH in the region were followed by disproportionate and indiscriminate reactions by administrative authorities against the populations of Diffa. Thus torn between the cruelty of militants and the blind and counterproductive actions of State represent-tatives, populations who had lost most of their means of subsistence—and who were displaced into refugee camps—suffered a double penalty.

A vicious cycle gradually took hold, in which interventions by both the State and the militia endangered the livelihoods of already distressed communities. The security crisis afflicting the region had the perverse effect of significantly dividing ethnic groups that had previously coexisted peacefully. For a gradual return to normalcy, the State must work to halt interethnic tensions, restore the means of subsistence, and offer these marginalized populations a genuine sense of belonging to the national community.

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Chapter XII: MUST CRIME AND VIOLENCE HAVE THE LAST WORD IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA?

Lamine Ndiaye

Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to offer a socio-anthropological reflection on the dynamics and stakes of security in Sub-Saharan Africa. This is a vast—and even inexhaustible—subject, but one that deserves interrogation in order to better understand and learn, that is, "to take with…".

This is therefore a reflection, indeed a line of thought, grounded in known experiences and concretely lived "realities" for which it is urgent to propose elements of response so that they do not overwhelm us. In this way, the path is laid for allowing a plurality of perspectives, a plurality that rejects dogmatism—sometimes naïve—the particular habit and aptitude of which is to promote the "truth" of the dominant ideology. This ideology imposes itself as authoritative discourse, considered the only legitimate one to conquer and convince.

Are we aware of the objective reality that no researcher holds a monopoly on truth? What we are certain of, at least, is that in matters of security analysis, the words of all protagonists—even the most "deviant"—must be included. Let us not forget that acts of organized violence are humanly meaningful. We are thus sometimes led to think that there is violence everywhere.

Whether we wish it or not, we must recognize that violence underpins "our" life in society. The examples abound. Who can deny it? Human history is punctuated by acts of violence which, although often regarded as the concern of the "savages of civilization"—the expression is from Bessette (1982a)—always "find" ways to open a breach through which the true face of our "humanity" is revealed, a face that is sometimes dehumanizing for us all. This explains certain violent actions, whether direct or indirect, positive or negative, physical, symbolic, or physico-symbolic, depending on the circumstances. Violence is everywhere: in us, for us, and upon us. In the very moment that we exercise it, it also applies to us.[46]

Let us simply consider that the mere presence of the police or security services may suffice to restore order, even momentarily, among members of the community tempted to violate the legal social norm upon which depend the balance, maintenance, and preservation of the values that both found and regulate the social bond. Alas, this symbolic violence adds itself to physical violence in its multiple forms, the most visible and the least discreet. When Power grants itself the legitimate right to use violence in the name of raison d'État—the "executioner" of the Industrial Revolution is not a criminal[47]—one tends to forget that recourse to physical action may be, in the eyes of the dominated—those occupying the

46. L. Ndiaye, 2004, « De la violence partout, regard socio-anthropologique sur les formes de violence », *Les Cahiers Histoire et Civilisations*, n° 2, *La violence*, Université Cheikh Anta Diop, Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines, pp. 163-174.

47. J.-M. Bessette, 1982, *Il était une fois la guillotine*, Paris, Éditions Alternatives, 126 p.

lowest rungs of the social ladder and living in what we call “sensitive neighborhoods”—a sure means of making oneself heard[48]. Indeed, criminological writings teach us much, and sufficiently so, about the authority of discourse on rules of incrimination[49].

To open the subject—an intellectually meaningful activity that can, from the outset, disturb the (con)secrated order of thought—it appears appropriate to pose four fundamental questions that concern us all and invite us, consequently, to challenge the well-anchored “ready-made truths” that prevent us from seeing and stating “reality” as it is. These questions, to which we attempt to respond, form the foundation upon which we build our contribution to the increasingly worrying insecurity problems, particularly in the Sudano-Sahelian zone.

Today, is it even relevant to speak of African security, in Africa, in an African way, or about Africa as though there existed a specifically African “security need,” understandable only because the continent is portrayed as an island of malice, malevolence, “dis-ease,” and existential “wickedness”—a symbol of horror?

Speaking about Africa—especially its Sub-Saharan part—often evokes an environment of disorder whose deeply embedded vulnerability is increasingly measured by rampant insecurity. This instability is related to the vastness of territories and their porous borders, which are difficult to control; hence they provide a “favorable terrain” for a range of criminal activities (illicit trafficking of arms, drugs, and human beings, terrorism, religious extremism, etc.)[50]. One need only read the work of Fall (2023), which examines the security challenges ECOWAS has faced since independence and the geopolitical difficulties manifested most visibly in recent coups d’État in Mali, Burkina Faso, and Guinea. Fall invites an evaluation of the regional institution’s security mechanisms, which struggle to prove effective[51].

Similarly, Kanté and Faye (2022) attempt to explain the current Sahelian situation plagued by the rise of terrorism, linked to the Tuareg rebellion in Mali and Niger, the Libyan war—which generated an illicit arms trade—and to the weak economies and poor governance afflicting Sahelian states. It was in this context that the G5 Sahel was created in February 2014 to promote development and subregional security[52].

But must Africa embody the isolated enclave upon which essential insecurity crystallizes, and thus symbolize declining, “orphaned,” missing, or failing security—indeed, total disillusionment?

Does the global security condition not ultimately depend on a peaceful African condition? This is what Niang (2023) seems to suggest in his work *Le Sahel, Épicentre géopolitique.*

48. Voir A. Leroi-Gourhan, *Le geste et la parole*, Paris, Albin Michel, t. 1-2.

49. M. Foucault, 1970, *L’ordre du discours*, Paris, Gallimard, 35 p.

50. Peer de Jong (dir.), 2018, *G5 Sahel, une initiative régionale pour une nouvelle architecture de paix*, Paris, L’Harmattan, p. 44.

51. A. Fall, 2023, *La CEDEAO face aux défis de la sécurité en Afrique de l’Ouest*, L’Harmattan, Sénégal.

52. Kanté & Faye reference as in original text

Des Solutions endogènes face à l'enjeu sécuritaire.[53] This highly interesting text examines and analyzes the security challenges confronting Sahelian countries, which must propose appropriate solutions to address extremism and multifaceted criminality at work in Africa.

Is the "Old Continent" capable of developing while continuing to maintain relations with criminal activities, from the most visible to the most subterranean, thus paving the way for insecurity and its corollary—a generalized sense of insecurity? We must not lose sight of the fact that even if Africa is vulnerable today—because of its place and standing in relation to globalization[54], the youthfulness of its population, and the economic, political, institutional, social, cultural, and legal instabilities of its states—it remains part of this world, counts in this world, and weighs in this world. Accordingly, Africa must listen to the world, hear the world, and be heard by the world, for the humanitarian equilibrium and peace desired always and everywhere.

There are still challenges to face… The challenge of security and of coming to the forefront. Must we ask ourselves whether it is meaningful to believe in a situation of "emergence-development" that can occur outside a codified, pacified, and secured living environment? We must agree that there is no development without security, and likewise, no security without a corresponding level of development.

Security for emergence has a price that must be paid. And for our argument to be meaningful, we cannot overlook contemporary "security challenges" in the face of rising insecurity and the need for solutions for sustainable development. "Too much theory," some will say. Yes—but do we have the right to forget that it is the word that makes and unmakes the world?

Crime, Culture, and Society

Human beings are beings of desire, as Sartre, Girard, and Fanon have argued. From this perspective, the relationship between violence and society becomes a consubstantial one. Society, through its capacity to structure an "inside," also "gives itself" the means to define an "outside," a "zone-other-than-the-inside,"[55] where it projects and rejects outsiders—those who refuse to align themselves with the norm and thus become inadmissible. Between what is permitted and what is forbidden, the existence of a "border-zone" of social demarcation is decided in order to exclude.[56] Thus, the dividing line between "the normal and the pathological"[57] is "drawn" with clarity. This is to say that it is adherence to rules that makes us, socially speaking, "good citizens," "civilized beings." We must be aware of this.

"Society always traps those who engage in subversion of values. Transgression of limits breaches the barrier of prohibition; it incurs a stigmatizing sanction because the Regents

53. Niang, 2023, *Le Sahel, Épicentre géopolitique. Des Solutions endogènes face à l'enjeu sécuritaire*.

54. We prefer the Anglo-Saxon term to that of *mondialisation*, which may, to a large extent, imply the imposition of a Euro-Judeo-Christian Western monoculture.

55. G. Canguilhem, 1966, *Le normal et le pathologique*, Paris, PUF.

56. L. Ndiaye, 2014, *Culture, crime et violence au Sénégal*, préface A.-B. Diané.

57. *Sociologie des "quartiers sensibles"*, 2007, Paris, Armand Colin, p. 86.

of Order are there to supervise and punish (Foucault, 1975). Since the Other bears a novelty that threatens society, the Same must remain the same."[58]

A considerable potential for violence—one that must be channelled—lies dormant within society. Society, according to its interests and for the preservation of peace, establishes defensive strategies against possible agitators and potential creators of "insecurity-related" disturbances. Violence, whatever its nature, is subordinated to problems of perception and social representation. This is why its definition depends closely on the context and the society in which it is considered.

There is no doubt concerning the relationship between human beings, violence, and delinquency. Can we think seriously about security without understanding and explaining the causes of delinquency and violence which, being "complex and heterogeneous," "cannot be reduced to a single explanation but require a multifactorial analysis combining structural variables, actors' logics, and contextual effects," as Avenel (2007) aptly highlights? The latter, by showing the conditions for the resurgence of delinquency, emphasizes a set of social situations closely linked to the passage to delinquent action. These include:

- **Conformism**, whose explanations—however insufficient—help us understand the meaning of certain recourses to deviance and violence. High unemployment rates and deep-rooted precarity in working-class environments can often be at the origin of loss of hope, a sense of impossibility in achieving positive self-realization. From this viewpoint, deviant behavior becomes a deliberate way to demonstrate one's belonging and integration into a reference group. It appears as a refusal of randomness, "a desperate response to social confinement and social death, the ultimate gesture that momentarily tears apart the status quo of a malfunctioning society."[59]
- **The crisis of social control**, linked to the dissolution of the social bond, characterized by the rise of the ego and the development of individualism accompanied by a distancing from "traditional social roles," and the weakening of self-control, leading to a situation of generalized deregulation, or *anomie* in Durkheim's terms.
- **The rise of educational frustration**, essentially owing to low school enrollment and high failure rates, compounded by unemployment, poverty, and growing social and spatial inequalities, along with the existence of "poorly performing classes" accommodating children and youth from disadvantaged families.
- **The role of the family**, which increasingly loses its monopoly over the education of its members. Indeed, by analyzing the functioning of the contemporary—if not "modern"—family, we realize that its place in society is no longer central. It no longer acts in isolation. Thus, to understand the mechanisms of young people's entry into a "gang" or any group whatsoever, it is essential to examine the now inextricable relationship between the family, the lived or frequented space, and the school environment.

58. M. Foucault, 1971, *L'ordre du discours*, Paris, Gallimard.

59. Let us not forget that deviants belong to society, outside of which they lose their existence.

- **Sexual violence and gang rape**, which must be correlated with a crisis in "masculinity," exacerbated by "the valorization of virility."[60]
- **Segregation and ghetto culture**, which facilitate the association of socially deprived individuals, and which can be better understood through the growth of cities and widening gaps between "privileged neighborhoods" and "disadvantaged neighborhoods." Decreasing social mixing creates insecurity by allowing community members, enclosed within themselves and sharing the same sociocultural references, to identify with one another through shared values, visions, and practices. A "subculture" of deviance is then established through the transmission of identity models.
- **Dominating violence**, which operates especially in so-called "hot" neighborhoods marked by concentrated poverty and where social inequalities are easily "read." Here, deviance and violence are expressed as negative actions directed against the power of authority that seems unwilling to meet their needs and expectations. We know that each time dialogue disappears between the dominant and the dominated, between rulers and ruled, between those at the top and those at the bottom of the social hierarchy, the tendency for those who consider themselves "left behind" is to resort to the ultimate gesture—the only remaining action through which they feel they can make themselves heard.

In this regard, it is futile to try, at all costs, to "erase" deviant acts from the "social landscape"; this does not mean, however, that they should be allowed to flourish. It is urgent—out of necessity and obligation—to constantly seek to control them so they do not overflow.

After this theoretical overview of issues that concern all of us—thinkers, researchers, policymakers, judges, citizens, believers, atheists, rural and urban populations, foreigners, poor and rich, all social categories combined—we must now turn to the security question, a problematic whose deciphering and proper understanding concerns us all.

Nevertheless, we must not expect this work to claim to say everything about security. Consider it as a "communication," a term derived from the Latin *communicare*, meaning "to enter into relation." From this perspective, we can enter into relation by thinking together about terrorism—signifier of negation, signified of materialized horror. For the evil of our contemporary condition, the evil of daily life that "keeps us from sleeping," is terrorism, a formidable and feared "weapon" of the blind-minded, a shield of thought made blind—becoming today not merely a social fact but a "total social phenomenon."

And moreover, if everyone is concerned—indeed obsessed—with questions of security, insecurity, and suspended development processes, it is because, like a sword of Damocles, terrorist attacks and crimes of all kinds hang over our heads and place us all in danger. No State is safe. And the "shelters" that exist are only temporary, more imaginary and symbolic than real. Some States are not even safe from a fatal attack, and those that believe themselves sufficiently protected seem to have nothing more than makeshift shelters, made of straw. One of the clearest proofs of this lies in the assaults suffered by "Great World Powers," whose vigilance, though considered unshakeable, fails to escape the "dictatorship" of modern specialists of terror. Understand, then, why we must speak of

60. P. Duret, 1990, *Les jeunes et l'identité masculine*, Paris, PUF.

terrorism as apprehended by criminologists—experts among many others. Especially since Voltaire taught us that "The secret to being a bore is to tell everything"—or, I would say, "to want to tell everything."

Securing Oneself for Survival

"Charity well ordered begins with oneself," teaches the adage. Are the countries of the subregion in a state of security danger? Is Senegal a country ruled by insecurity?

From the terrorist attacks in Grand-Bassam, Ouagadougou, Timbuktu, Gao, and Bamako, have we learned that "we" coexist with formidable jihadists and that West Africa has also become "fertile ground" for effective terrorist activity. In Nigeria and its surroundings, Boko Haram makes itself "heard" through its unusual attacks carried out via "suicide bombings." The massacres of innocents—civilians, soldiers, and police officers—kidnappings of women and children, etc., are numerous, especially in the face of the weakness of our States to fight effectively against terrorism.

But, to return to the matter, we say once again that, in light of the dramatic and tragic abuses committed by extremist groups around the world, terrorism presents itself as a problem on which the criminologist must reflect in order to propose "appropriate preventive and repressive solutions" for an effective "polyvalent counter-terrorism"—the expression is from Cusson et al. (2017).[61]

Security as a Solution

To address terrorism and the necessity of security—indeed, of securing our borders—we will draw upon a study carried out between 2010 and 2014 with Cusson, focusing on four (04) Francophone African countries: Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Niger, and Senegal. This research led to the publication, in 2018, of the book *Mille homicides en Afrique de l'Ouest*. Among the 1,000 homicide cases recorded in the subregion—familial, quarrelsome, vindictive, etc.—seven (7) stemmed from terrorist attacks.

To examine such a problem, the criminologist begins with the criminal act itself and asks a series of questions. How are terrorist attacks carried out? With which weapons? In what situations? Who are the perpetrators? What are the probable targets of terrorists? What are the conditions for the success of an attack? Next, the criminologist turns attention toward the social reaction, asking how terrorism is prevented and repressed by the police and intelligence services. With what results? How might these "services" do better?

By doing so, we must understand the conditions under which a terrorist attack succeeds, in order to analyze and identify the targets of counter-terrorism, that is, the means used by police and intelligence services to thwart a potential criminal action. From this perspective, knowledge of risk factors, indicators, and precursors is essential.

In recent years, in Europe and Africa, detailed analysis of malevolent acts committed by terrorists has made it possible to compile a list that identifies the conditions for successful

61. *Mille homicides en Afrique de l'Ouest*, PUM, 332 p.

attacks. Reading this list helps us understand that a terrorist attack is feasible only if, and only if, the following exist:

- terrorists (extremists, moreover, or resembling ordinary criminals);
- vulnerable sites exposed to a “surprise attack,” since terrorists choose their targets carefully;
- weapons, ammunition, and explosives;
- a team of fanatics and a network connecting them to one another;
- a plot, preparations, planning;
- firearms training and weapons handling;
- a breeding ground and a sanctuary;
- secrecy and falsifications;
- mobility and proximity;
- the time factor.

Analyzing this list, we may agree that the objective of any form of struggle against terrorist activity must be the elimination of the conditions for a successful attack. In this regard, the military solution is not only limited, but “counterproductive and exorbitant, especially when it results in the occupation of the enemy’s territory.” By contrast, according to Cusson, “defense is effective, as demonstrated by the successes—supported by figures—of airport protection and pre-boarding controls in preventing aircraft hijackings.” Thus, he continues:

“Clausewitz was therefore right in affirming that defense is the superior form of warfare. Why? Because the nation that defends itself benefits from the support of its population and its state apparatus. It fights on its own terrain, which it knows well. It can shelter its forces on well-protected and fortified sites.”

In this perspective, the need to establish defense strategies to circumscribe the conditions for successful terrorist acts must be a *sine qua non* condition. These strategies include:

- detecting;
- inspecting and verifying;
- defending oneself;
- arresting;
- destroying;
- protecting;
- disarming;
- distancing.

Thus, the fight against terrorism is possible and effective only if we have knowledge of risk factors, indicators, and precursors.

Among these risk factors—selected for identifying criminals and predicting recidivism, according to Cusson—are:

- a history of violent criminal behavior;
- a history of non-violent criminal behavior (vandalism, drug possession, etc.);
- youth aged between 18 and 30;
- instability in employment or unemployment;
- at least one prior incarceration;
- association with delinquent peers;
- conflictual or difficult family relationships;
- having a parent or partner with a criminal record;
- substance abuse;
- carrying a weapon.

As for indicators for detecting a potential terrorist, the following list may enlighten us:

- purchase of a firearm;
- possession of explosives, detonators, or instructions for constructing a bomb;
- association with individuals suspected of belonging to a terrorist cell or advocating jihadist values;
- telephone or Internet communication with these suspected individuals;
- staying or planning to travel to Syria, Iraq, Pakistan, etc.;
- frequent consultation of jihadist websites;
- living in a suburb or locality known to be a breeding ground for jihadists;
- attending places of worship known for promoting radicalization;
- severing ties with family members who reject fanaticism;
- monetary movements that could serve a terrorist enterprise (e.g., rental of a vehicle or apartment, money transfers);
- recent conversion to Islam;
- training at a shooting range;
- possession of forged identification documents (passport, driver's license, etc.);
- possession of multiple mobile phones and numerous SIM cards.

There are also certain targets that attract terrorists, including:

- churches, mosques, hotels, schools, synagogues, embassies, newspaper offices—especially if these locations are frequented by Americans, French nationals, expatriates, Christians, "blasphemers," "heretics," journalists;
- barracks, police stations, gendarmerie or police headquarters;

- festive venues frequently visited by tourists (nightclubs, bars, beaches, for example);
- public spaces such as train stations, commercial areas, etc. These environments are attractive to terrorists who may cause significant damage if they succeed in their endeavor;
- poorly protected sites.

Finally, we must consider certain characteristics related to the precursor conditions of a terrorist attack on a site that must be rigorously protected.

The following non-exhaustive list can help us be more effective in combating terrorist attacks. It concerns increasing vigilance with regard to the following situations:

- all attacks or attempted attacks committed in the past against this site;
- all threats targeting this site;
- threats against a site relayed by the media;
- publicly expressed hatred aimed at persons occupying or frequenting this site;
- espionage;
- reconnaissance of the site by suspicious individuals;
- an individual taking photographs of sites that are not extraordinary;
- an idle, curious person;
- someone who asks many questions about the security of a location;
- someone who enters or attempts to enter an area that is protected or prohibited to the public;
- an unknown person drawing the layout of a symbolic site or a gathering place.

However, it is important to recognize that information about early signs of a potential terrorist attack may be known by those directly concerned. Within an establishment, such individuals may include staff members, the security director, guards, receptionists, etc. In Africa, for example, “repentant” delinquents may possess information about minor and major criminals. The same applies to security guards, who are well positioned to observe attempted intrusions and suspicious activity around certain sites. These security actors—often not professionally trained—can, if properly involved, identify useful informants and, in this regard, provide crucial intelligence for combating terrorism.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we defend the sociological “reality” that the security of our countries cannot be achieved without the establishment of community-based policing, whose efficiency depends fundamentally on high-quality training and on a relationship of trust with the population. Thus, we must establish a culture of reporting, a practice that appears culturally “negatively colored” in Sub-Saharan Africa but has proven effective in the West. For we must not forget that wrongdoers live under “our” roofs, among us. They do not “fall” from the sky. What differentiates us from them is that they have chosen to contradict the legitimate and/or legal social norm. Most of them do not act out of ignorance of the rule or of the risks associated with certain objectionable behaviors. They have taken the winding path of denial to act harmfully whenever the conditions appear favorable to them.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS