

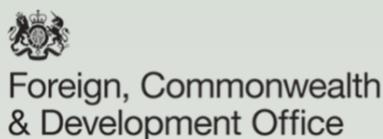
# Humanitarian protection in the Liptako-Gourma region

## Local protection mechanisms and humanitarian response

Field survey conducted in the  
Liptako-Gourma region  
(June–July 2021)

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## Contents

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b><i>I. Introduction</i></b> .....   | <b>6</b>  |
| <b><i>II. General context of the research: humanitarian protection in the Liptako-Gourma region</i></b> ..... | <b>8</b>  |
| Methodology.....  | 8         |
| <b><i>III. Identification of threats, risks and vulnerabilities</i></b> .....                                 | <b>14</b> |
| <b>A. Economic problems</b> .....   | <b>15</b> |
| <b>B. Governance problems</b> .....   | <b>22</b> |
| <b>C. Security problems</b> .....   | <b>23</b> |
| <b><i>IV. Local mechanisms and humanitarian protection responses</i></b> .....                                | <b>28</b> |
| <b>A. Local protection mechanisms</b> .....   | <b>29</b> |
| 1. The family and the community, the first actors in protection.....  | 29        |
| 2. Traditional protection mechanisms.....   | 32        |
| <b>B. The state response</b> .....  | <b>33</b> |
| <b>C. Some recent local mechanisms</b> .....  | <b>36</b> |
| 1. The example of Niger's land commissions .....  | 36        |
| 2. The signing of local agreements in Mali .....  | 36        |
| <b>D. The strain on local mechanisms and social tensions</b> .....  | <b>37</b> |
| <b><i>V. Humanitarian protection: people's perceptions of the aid provided</i></b> .....                      | <b>40</b> |
| <b>A. Assessment of protection services</b> .....   | <b>40</b> |
| <b>B. Coordination problems</b> .....   | <b>43</b> |
| <b><i>VI. CONCLUSION</i></b> .....  | <b>47</b> |
| <b><i>Annex</i></b> .....   | <b>49</b> |
| <b><i>Table of maps, tables and charts</i></b> .....  | <b>57</b> |
| <b>Maps</b> .....   | <b>57</b> |
| <b>Tables</b> .....   | <b>57</b> |
| <b>Charts</b> .....   | <b>57</b> |

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## List of abbreviations and acronyms

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| <b>AHRC</b>   | Arts and Humanities Research Council   |
| <b>ACLED</b>  | Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project   |
| <b>AQIM</b>   | Al Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb  |
| <b>CsRef</b>  | Referral health centre [Centre de santé de référence]  |
| <b>CGD</b>    | Centre for Democratic Governance [Centre pour la gouvernance démocratique]   |
| <b>CAFO</b>   | Coordination of Women's Associations and NGOs of Mali [Coordination des associations et ONG féminines du Mali]   |
| <b>COFO</b>   | Land commission [Commission foncière]  |
| <b>CVD</b>    | Village Development Committee [Comité villageois de développement]   |
| <b>DFID</b>   | Department for International Development   |
| <b>DRC</b>    | Danish Refugee Council   |
| <b>ISGS</b>   | Islamic State in the Greater Sahara  |
| <b>FCDO</b>   | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office   |
| <b>FDS</b>    | Defence and security forces [Forces de défense et de sécurité]   |
| <b>NSAG</b>   | Non-state armed group  |
| <b>HD</b>     | Centre for humanitarian dialogue   |
| <b>UNHCR</b>  | Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  |
| <b>IASC</b>   | Inter-Agency Standing Committee  |
| <b>LASDEL</b> | Laboratory of Studies and Research on Social Dynamics and Local Development [Laboratoire d'études et de recherche sur les dynamiques sociales et le développement] |
| <b>MUJAO</b>  | Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa  |
| <b>NRC</b>    | Norwegian Refugee Council  |
| <b>OCHA</b>   | Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs  |
| <b>NGO</b>    | Non-governmental organisation  |
| <b>IDP</b>    | Internally displaced person  |
| <b>SIPRI</b>  | Stockholm International Peace Research Institute   |
| <b>UNHAS</b>  | United Nations Humanitarian Air Service  |
| <b>GBV</b>    | Gender-based violence  |
| <b>VDP</b>    | Volunteers for the Defence of the Homeland [Volontaires pour la défense de la patrie]  |
| <b>WASH</b>   | Water Sanitation and Hygiene   |

## **Main results**

This two-year research project (2020-2022) was carried out in the Liptako-Gourma region, or the tri-border area between Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso. Since 2015, this region has been the epicentre of the Sahel crisis, characterised by a continuously deteriorating security situation. This research conducted by SIPRI, DRC and their local partners is part of a research programme on humanitarian protection in conflict zones (AHRC-FCDO) which includes 26 research sites. It aims to study the effectiveness of humanitarian protection programmes in the Liptako-Gourma region, and, in particular, the local protection systems and the links between local protection mechanisms and humanitarian protection mechanisms. The objective of this action research is to improve the effectiveness of humanitarian protection programmes and their integration or complementarity with local protection systems. It is based on empirical data, both qualitative and quantitative, collected in Burkina Faso (Nord and Sahel regions), Mali (Mopti region) and Niger (Tillabéri region), during two research phases in August-September 2020 and June-July 2021.

## **The main problems**

- Unemployment, lack of economic opportunities as well as difficulties in accessing water and food are among the main economic and governance problems.
- Attacks by armed groups against the means of production (looting of fields, theft of livestock, limited access to markets) increase the vulnerability of the local population.
- The security situation has deteriorated in a year, further restricting people's freedom of movement, which limits their travel and production activities.
- Structural poverty is a decisive factor in the involvement of young people in non-state armed groups.
- Increased economic vulnerability: the duration of the crisis has a significant impact on the reception of displaced persons. In one year, fatigue has become very noticeable among both host communities and displaced communities. The pressure on livelihoods, which was already a concern in 2020, has increased.
- Poor governance, whether political, economic, social or legal, is seen as having contributed to the outbreak and persistence of the crisis.

## **Protection mechanisms**

- Every displacement triggers a chain of solidarity, at first traditional. The initial protection is family and friends/neighbours, and primarily covers security and physical protection.
- Protection mechanisms can be community-based or state-based:
  - Local protection mechanisms are considered effective by the populations and are their preferred option. Traditional and customary authorities play a fundamental role in the reception and settlement of displaced persons. However, the crisis is weakening community mechanisms for regulating social relations.
  - Assistance from families or communities usually precedes that from the state and NGOs.
  - Humanitarian protection mechanisms are seen as effective and complementary to local systems and respectful of local cultural codes.

- Coordination of aid poses a problem, particularly between the states and the humanitarian organisations.
- The protracted nature of the crisis has significant consequences both for the aspirations of internally displaced people (IDPs) (in particular, in terms of housing and employment) and the capacities of host communities, sometimes weakening relations between communities.
- The support given to host communities does not compensate for the assistance provided to the people hosted.
- People report a lack of communication and poor coordination between NGOs.

# I. Introduction

As part of the research programme on humanitarian protection in conflict zones, this research-action project aims to understand the impact of humanitarian protection programmes in the Liptako-Gourma region by researching the links between local protection mechanisms and humanitarian protection mechanisms. Strengthening the effectiveness of protection programmes requires a clear understanding of the issues, based on empirical data collected through surveys and in-depth interviews. This report is based on quantitative and qualitative data collected in Burkina Faso (Nord region), Mali (Mopti region) and Niger (Tillabéri region) in June-July 2021.

The Liptako-Gourma region, located on the borders of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, is the epicentre of the Sahara-Sahel crisis that first broke out in Mali in 2012. While some causes are common to all three countries – the pre-existence of local conflicts, often related to access to and the management of natural resources, strong social stratifications, an uneven state presence and governance issues – other dynamics are specific to each country and relate to different historical trajectories and social contexts. Since 2015, the security situation has continued to deteriorate, resulting in growing humanitarian needs and an increased vulnerability of the populations living in these areas of conflict. Attacks are increasing not only on the civilian population, but also on representatives and symbols of the state, whether they be the defence and security forces (FDS), local authorities (administrative, religious and customary), or even government employees and traders. Between 2017 and 2020, the number of civilian casualties has increased sevenfold<sup>1</sup>.

Historically, the Liptako-Gourma region spans several administrative regions in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger<sup>2</sup>. In December 1970, the Integrated Development Authority of the Liptako-Gourma Region was created: this landlocked area, which includes the poorest parts of the region, is now home to a population of almost twenty million people, 80% of whom live in rural areas. The main economic activities are farming, livestock herding, fishing and the exploitation of natural resources. In 2011, the organisation was transformed into an integrated economic space covering the three states and in 2018 it became the Integrated Development Authority of the Liptako-Gourma States<sup>3</sup>. The Liptako-Gourma region is a historic transhumance area, but today a reduction in grazing areas, due to land being used for crops, as well as the depletion of water and fodder resources and, on a wider scale, the impact of climate change, is having serious consequences on the way of life of local populations. Various droughts have already seriously increased the vulnerability of the population and their livestock, exacerbating tensions between communities. It is currently an area where numerous non-state armed groups (NSAGs), militias and/or self-defence groups, and violent extremist groups are active<sup>4</sup>, causing the population to live in fear in areas where the state presence is very uneven or non-existent. This area is the theatre of operations for transnational jihadist groups including Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara

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<sup>1</sup> Peoples' Coalition for the Sahel, "The Sahel: What Needs To Change. Towards a new people-centred approach", April 2021, <https://www.sahelpeoplescoalition.org/rapport-sahel-ce-qui-doit-changer> (page accessed on 5 September 2022).

<sup>2</sup> The regions concerned are as follows: in Burkina Faso, the central (Ouagadougou), central-eastern (Tenkodogo), central-southern (Manga), central-northern (Kaya), eastern (Fada N'Gourma), central plateau (Ziniaré), northern (Ouahigouya), and Sahelian (Dori) regions; in Mali, the regions of Mopti, Timbuktu, and Kidal; and in Niger, the regions of Tillabéri and Dosso, and the city of Niamey (<https://www.liptakogourma.org/zones-dintervention/> page accessed on 5 September 2022).

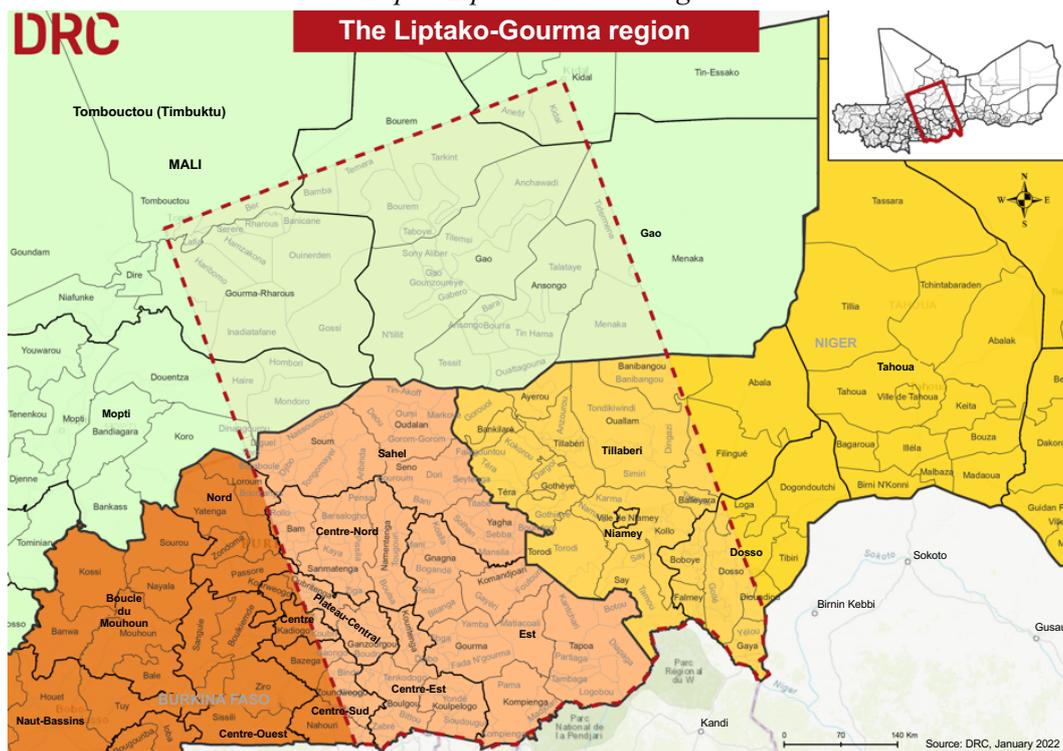
<sup>3</sup> The actions of the Liptako-Gourma Authority are extended to all national territories. Its fields of expertise are: agriculture and livestock, environment and fisheries, water, energy, development infrastructure, mining, social development, cross-border cooperation and security.

<sup>4</sup> Increase in violent groups with a local combatant base that are "led, at least in mid-level positions, by individuals predominantly from the communities within which they established", testifying to a "localisation of the threat", in the Institute for Security Studies, "Violent extremism, organised crime and local conflicts in Liptako-Gourma", West Africa Report no. 26, December 2019, p. 7.

(ISGS) and Ansarul Islam<sup>5</sup>. All these groups fuel social tensions, contributing to the aggravation of local conflicts, with serious consequences for social cohesion.

In this crisis, several factors need to be taken into account, including the uneven state presence, the absence of the FDS, poor governance, competition for natural resources, violent extremism, the increase in armed groups, militias and self-defence groups. In this area, the populations are subjected to incessant attacks of limitless violence, with villages being attacked and burned, and targeted assassinations of individuals and religious or community leaders.

Map 1. Liptako-Gourma region



Since 2015, conflicts have led to massive population displacements, increasing the vulnerability of populations already weakened by the recurrence of poor agricultural seasons and the consequent drop in food and fodder production. The number of IDPs is constantly increasing<sup>6</sup>.

Table 1. Number of IDPs

| IDPs         | June-July 2020 | 31 July 2021 | 31 March 2022 |
|--------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| Mali         | 266,832        | 377,781      | 363,946       |
| Niger        | 265,522        | 291,061      | 264,257       |
| Burkina Faso | 1,013,234      | 1,368,164    | 1,850,293     |

<sup>5</sup> [https://ecfr.eu/special/sahel\\_mapping](https://ecfr.eu/special/sahel_mapping) (page accessed on 5 September 2022).

<sup>6</sup> <https://r4sahel.info/en/situations/sahelcrisis> (page accessed in March 2022).

## II. General context of the research: humanitarian protection in the Liptako-Gourma region

The research focuses on humanitarian protection in the Liptako-Gourma region and aims to *understand the impact of humanitarian protection programmes implemented in the Liptako-Gourma region, and more specifically the links between humanitarian protection programmes and local protection mechanisms*. A better understanding of existing protection mechanisms should, among other things, help to identify the most effective interventions and adapt interventions to better meet the expectations and needs of the communities affected.

### Methodology

Launched in June 2020, this study aims to understand the impact of humanitarian protection programmes on the populations of this region, which is severely affected by the multidimensional crisis currently taking place in the central Sahel. More specifically, the aim of this research is to analyse humanitarian response mechanisms in order to make them more effective and, above all, more adapted to the expectations of affected communities, as well as to understand how mechanisms are integrated – or not – at a community level and structured – or not – to local contexts. Taking into account the perceptions and priorities of populations, and in particular the beneficiary populations of humanitarian protection programs, is necessary to improve their design and implementation, based on empirically contextualized data - qualitative and quantitative. Data collection takes into account local differences but also the institutional context of each country.

#### Research areas:

- analysis of the threats, risks and vulnerabilities of the populations of Liptako-Gourma;
- identification of local protection mechanisms and understanding the social norms and rules on which they are based;
- identification of humanitarian protection responses and analysis of the interaction between humanitarian protection responses and local protection mechanisms;
- evaluation of the impact of the responses provided and the adequacy of the assistance offered in relation to the needs identified.

#### **1) Research partners**

The research was coordinated by SIPRI and supported by local partner institutions in each country: CGD in Burkina Faso, POINT SUD in Mali and LASDEL in Niger, each of which deployed facilitators and researchers in the field. The field research was carried out in June 2021 in the administrative region of Nord in Burkina Faso, in the Mopti region in Mali and in the Tillabéri region in Niger.

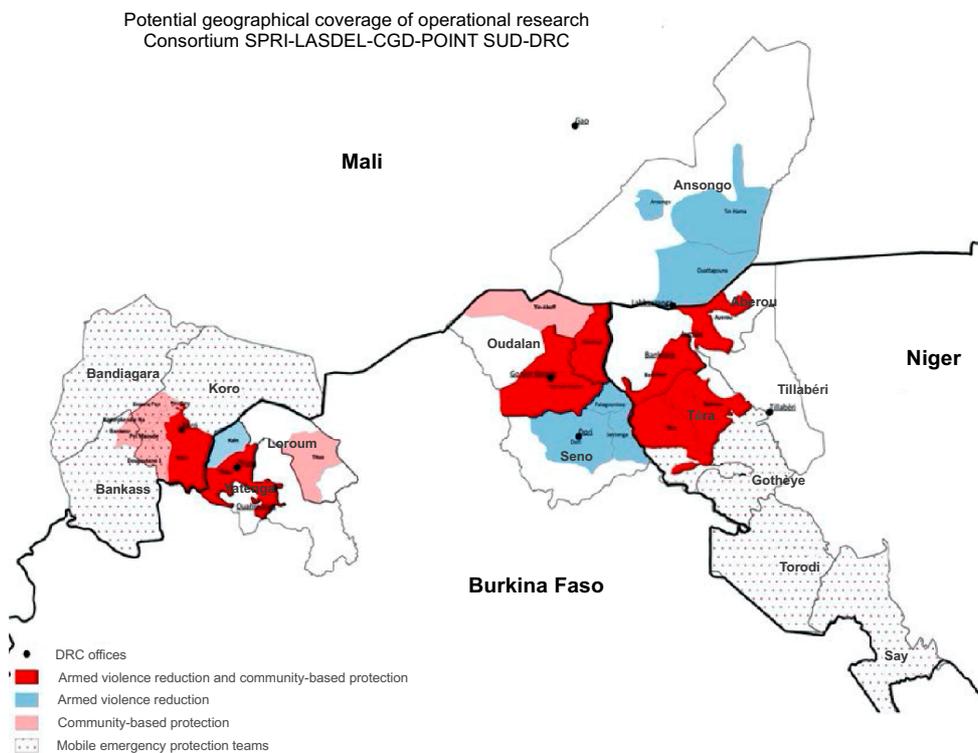
Working in the Liptako-Gourma region since 2013, DRC provides a wide variety of emergency aid such as food security, protection and armed violence reduction.

- In the Sahel region of Burkina Faso, it runs a follow-up programme to protect and assist vulnerable people near the Malian border, including through emergency multi-sector assistance.

- In the Mopti region of Mali, DRC has been responding to the security crisis since January 2013. It is one of the main actors in community-based protection and has been running a project for five years to prevent sexual and gender-based violence and implement child protection measures.
- In Niger, it has been implementing protection programmes in the Tillabéri region since 2018, as well as providing rapid response emergency assistance (housing, non-food items, IGAs).

DRC's community-based approach to the security and management of its activities focuses on identifying the needs and priorities of affected communities and promoting the implementation of locally defined solutions in the context of human security. Community participation is fundamental in strengthening local resources and capacities.

*Map 2. Potential geographical coverage of operational research Consortium SIPRI-LASDEL-CGD-POINT SUD-DRC*



## 2) Research area and surveyed communes in Burkina Faso

*Table 2. Research area and surveyed communes in Burkina Faso*

| 2020   |          |             | 2021     |            |
|--------|----------|-------------|----------|------------|
| Region | Province | Locality    | Province | Locality   |
| Sahel  | Soum     | Djibo       | X        |            |
|        | Séno     | Dori        |          |            |
|        | Oudalan  | Markoye     |          |            |
|        |          | Gorom-Gorom |          |            |
| Nord   | Yatenga  | Kain        | Yatenga  | Ouahigouya |
|        |          | Yensé       |          | Thiou      |
|        |          | Thiou       | Loroum   | Titao      |
|        |          | Ouahigouya  |          |            |
|        | Loroum   | Banh        |          |            |

### 3) Research area and surveyed communes in Mali

Table 3. Research area and surveyed communes in Mali

| 2020    |         |                          | 2021       |         |              |
|---------|---------|--------------------------|------------|---------|--------------|
| Region  | Cercle  | Locality                 | Region     | Cercle  | Locality     |
| Mopti   | Koro    | Koro                     | Bandiagara | Koro    | Koro         |
|         |         | Kiri                     |            |         | Kiri         |
|         |         | Edjibara <sup>7</sup>    |            |         | Edjibara     |
|         |         | Tagou-Souan <sup>8</sup> |            |         | Tagou-Souan  |
|         | Mopti   | Mopti/Sévaré             | Mopti      | Mopti   | Mopti/Sévaré |
| Bankass | Bankass | Bankass                  | Bankass    | Bankass |              |

Note: Following the new administrative structure, the Mopti region was divided in three: Bandiagara, Douentza and Mopti<sup>9</sup>.

### 4) Research area and surveyed communes in Niger

Table 4. Research area and surveyed communes in Niger

| 2020      |            |           |            | 2021      |            |          |                  |            |
|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|----------|------------------|------------|
| Region    | Department | Communes  | Villages   | Region    | Department | Communes | Villages         |            |
| Tillabéri | Bankilaré  | Bankilaré | Amarsingué | Tillabéri | Torodi     | Torodi   | Torodi           |            |
|           |            |           | Petelkolé  |           |            |          | Chantier         |            |
|           |            |           | Bankilaré  |           |            |          | Zongo<br>Pengona |            |
|           | Téra       | Diagourou | Bangaré    |           |            |          | Ballare          |            |
|           | Tillabéri  | Dessa     | Dessa      |           |            |          | Dessa            | Zoulo      |
|           |            |           |            |           |            |          | Kandadji         | Sabon Kare |
|           |            |           |            |           |            |          | Sanguilé         | Makalondi  |
|           |            |           |            |           |            |          | Seno             | Bankata    |
|           |            |           |            |           |            |          | Famale           | Paate      |
|           | Ayorou     | Commune   | Commune    |           |            |          | Kongotchiré      | Banteeri   |
|           |            |           |            |           |            |          | Koutougou        | Garage     |
|           |            |           |            |           |            |          | Gaoudel          | Makalondi  |
|           |            |           |            |           |            |          |                  |            |
|           |            |           |            |           |            |          | Bagouba          |            |
|           |            |           |            |           | Téra       | Téra     | Doumba           |            |
|           |            |           |            |           |            |          | Dondiel          |            |
|           |            |           |            |           | Dessa      | Dessa    | Dessa            |            |

### 5) Data collection

The research was conducted using a mixed-method approach, combining in-depth semi-structured interviews, focus groups and the administration of questionnaires. This method makes it possible to measure people's perceptions, but also to deepen certain aspects through qualitative research.

For each phase of the survey, training was organised for facilitators and junior researchers on qualitative and quantitative survey techniques (conducting interviews, leading focus groups, reporting techniques, etc.). Following the training, each centre participated in the development of the research protocol and the interview guide. The questionnaire was developed by SIPRI and DRC and tested with the facilitators during the training workshops. In 2021, DRC trained the teams

<sup>7</sup> Bargou (Koro) was replaced by Edjibara in the commune of Koro for security reasons during the survey.

<sup>8</sup> Bih was replaced by Tagou-Souan in the commune of Koro for security reasons during the survey.

<sup>9</sup> Law no. 2012-017 of 2 March 2012 on the creation of administrative districts in the Republic of Mali.

in humanitarian protection in the three countries. Each team then prepared its fieldwork by informing the administrative authorities and with the support of focal points.

The qualitative research was based on the administration of semi-structured interviews and the organisation of focus groups, in particular with:

- local leaders such as village chiefs, religious leaders, leaders of youth and women's groups;
- communes and communities: people responsible for community structures, associations and displaced persons;
- families: heads of household, vulnerable people.

*Table 5. Distribution of interviews*

|                               | 2020         |      |       | 2021         |      |       |
|-------------------------------|--------------|------|-------|--------------|------|-------|
|                               | Burkina Faso | Mali | Niger | Burkina Faso | Mali | Niger |
| <b>Questionnaires</b>         | 540          | 394  | 394   | 658          | 344  | 455   |
| <b>Focus groups</b>           | 10           | 26   | 7     | 9            | 4    |       |
| <b>Qualitative interviews</b> | 30           | 22   | 71    | 30           | 63   | 30    |

## 6) *Limitations of the study*

### *The inaccessibility of some localities*

The limitations of the study are primarily security-related. Between 2020 and 2021, the security situation deteriorated in Burkina Faso, remained stable in Mali and improved in Niger. In particular, two events that occurred at the time of the surveys had a direct impact on the deployment of the teams: in the first year, the attack on aid workers from the NGO ACTED in August 2020 in Kouré, Niger, restricted the areas that could be accessed due to the subsequent military operations<sup>10</sup>; in the second year, in early June 2021, the attack in Solhan, Burkina Faso, was the deadliest (160 dead) since 2015 and was also followed by military operations<sup>11</sup>. According to the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), 1,857 civilian deaths were recorded between December 2020 and December 2021, with a peak in the second half of the year<sup>12</sup>. Due to the situation, the Sahel region of Burkina Faso was abandoned for security reasons, while the Titao area was also under attack during the survey and the Loroum and Yatenga provinces were experiencing an increase in terrorist attacks. The Thiou area was accessible but only for a short time. In Mali, the cercles of Koro, Bankass and Mopti have seen many displacements. The situation was the same in the Tillabéri region with numerous displacements and recurrent attacks.

<sup>10</sup> Antoine Delpierre, Kader Mazou, “Attaque au Niger: la zone de Kouré n'est plus épargnée par l'insécurité”, *TV5 monde*, 11 August 2020, <https://information.tv5monde.com/video/attaque-au-niger-la-zone-de-koure-n-est-plus-epargnee-par-l-insecurite> (page accessed on 5 September 2022).

<sup>11</sup> “Burkina Faso: le bilan de l'attaque de Solhan s'accroît à 160 morts”, *TV5 monde*, 5 June 2021, <https://information.tv5monde.com/afrique/burkina-faso-une-centaine-de-civils-executes-dans-le-nord-est-du-pays-411598> (page accessed on 5 September 2022).

<sup>12</sup> <https://acleddata.com/dashboard/#/dashboard> (page accessed on 27 December 2021).

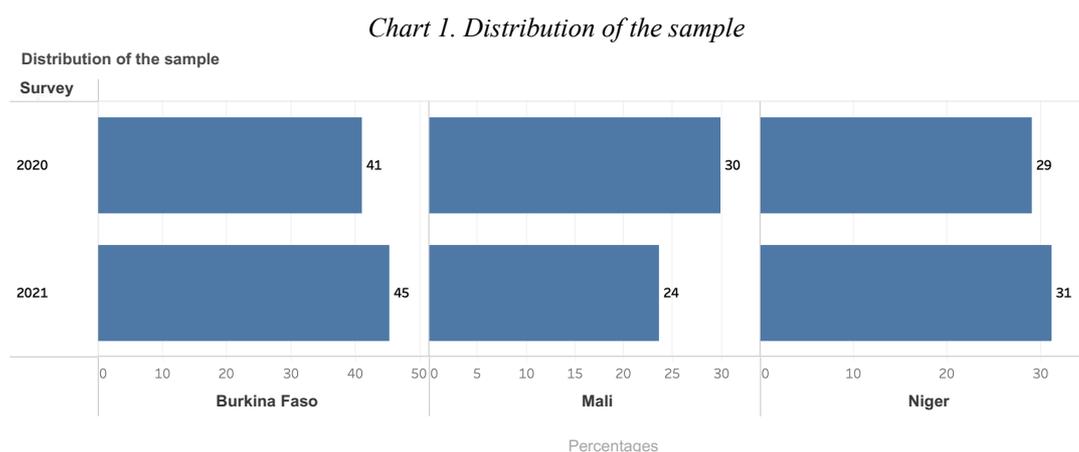
### *The survey conditions*

Security conditions have an impact on the conduct of the research: the administration of questionnaires requires more and more precautions as people are increasingly reluctant to talk to outsiders; conducting focus groups is also increasingly difficult and the number of people consequently restricted. Recording qualitative interviews is less and less possible and note-taking has been favoured in Burkina Faso, which explains the reduced use of *verbatim*. Finally, the displaced populations are also very often “over-solicited” to respond to surveys, which results in a mastery of the “right answers” and expectations of the interviewers.

The language difficulty arises everywhere when interviewing IDPs. Despite the care taken by the centres to prioritise the deployment of inhabitants from the research areas, IDPs often do not speak the language of the facilitator and have to rely on local interpreters.

## **The sample**

The quantitative survey involved 1,318 respondents in 2020 and 1,457 in 2021, distributed as follows:

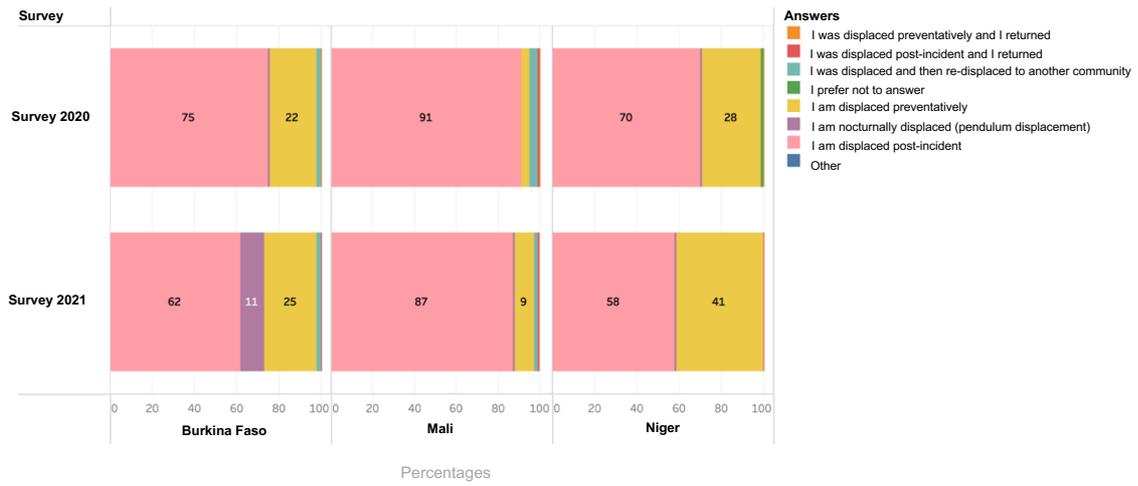


### Characteristics of the sample:

- Men and women are equally represented.
- In 2021, three age categories were selected: 15-24 years, 25-45 years and 46 years and over.
- The two most represented socio-professional categories are farmers and homemakers.
- More than half of the sample is not educated.
- Status of the respondents: residents represent half of the sample (50.61% in 2020 and 49.97% in 2021) and IDPs the other half (44.16% in 2020 and 42.96% in 2021).

Regarding the nature of displacements, in 2020, **78%** of respondents were displaced post-incident and **18%** were displaced preventatively. In 2021, **67%** were displaced post-incident, **26%** were displaced preventatively, 5% were displaced (pendulum displacement) and 2% were displaced then re-displaced to another community.

Chart 2. Nature of displacements



### III. Identification of threats, risks and vulnerabilities

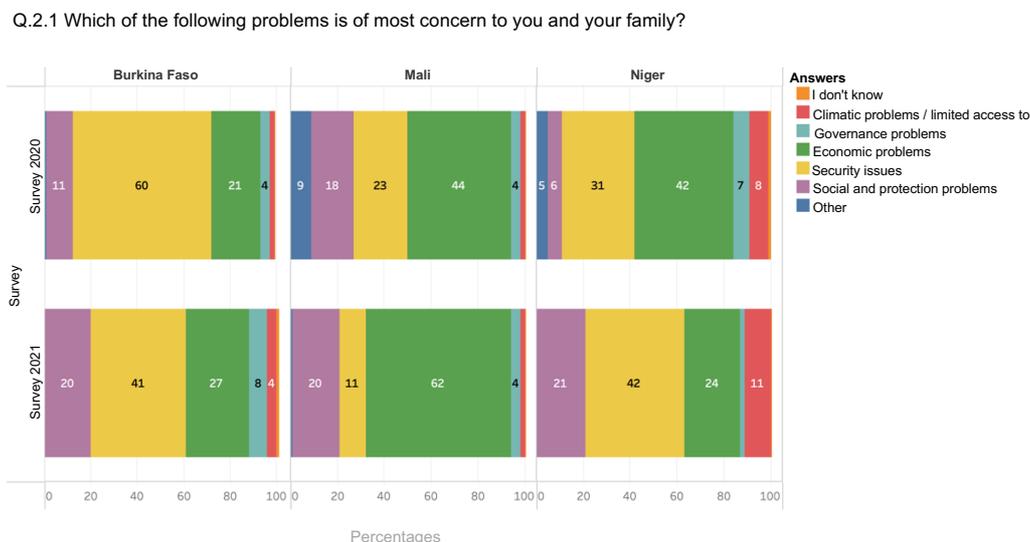
Fear of attack, forced displacements, inter-community conflict and a strong sense of abandonment characterise the daily life of the people in the Liptako-Gourma region. States in the region do not have or no longer have the means to be present everywhere and insecurity is a major constraint, leading to the departure of local authorities and state employees whose lives are at risk, and to more difficult and irregular access to basic social services. Finally, insecurity limits the access of humanitarian organisations. The dysfunctions of the state, such as the uneven administrative coverage, are linked to structural weaknesses, which have been aggravated in recent years by insecurity and the presence of armed jihadist groups. As a result, the provision of services, such as education, justice and security, is sometimes provided by non-state actors including armed groups.

The crisis exacerbates structural vulnerabilities such as extreme poverty, social divisions and the degradation of natural resources.

Regarding the main risks, threats and vulnerabilities, in 2020 **41%** of those surveyed ranked **security issues as their top concern**, while in 2021, **security and economic issues were at the same level (34%)**. **Social problems come second (20%)**. The difference is mainly due to abandoning the Sahel region in Burkina Faso, where insecurity is higher, and due to the increased perception of economic problems in Mali. At the country level:

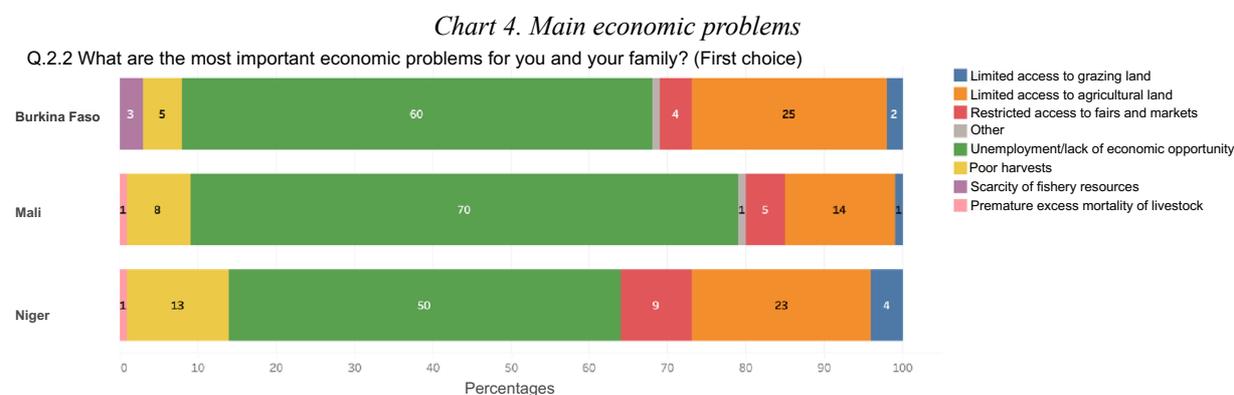
- In 2020: the main problem of the respondents is economic in Mali and Niger and security in Burkina Faso.
- In 2021: the main problem of the respondents is economic in Mali but security in Burkina Faso and Niger.

Chart 3. Nature of the risks, threats and vulnerabilities



## A. Economic problems

**Unemployment and lack of economic opportunities** remain the main problem for 60% of respondents in 2020 and 59% in 2021. Men rank these problems in first place at 61% and women at 58%. It decreases with age: 15-24 year olds at 63%, 25-45 year olds at 60% and 46+ year olds at 51%. The second most important problem is the limited access to agricultural land (33% in 2020 and 31% in 2021), in all three countries (Burkina Faso: 27%, Mali: 42% and Niger: 29%).



There are several aspects to be noted here. Located in the heart of the Sahelo-Saharan strip, the Liptako-Gourma region is characterised by an **economy that is highly dependent on agriculture and livestock breeding**, the main economic activities of local communities. Local agricultural and pastoral production systems are currently very disrupted by the deterioration of the security situation, which has led to large-scale population movements and an increase in livestock theft organised and maintained by armed groups.

Attacks by armed groups on the means of production – fields and livestock – increase the vulnerability of the population.

Agricultural activities are greatly affected by the insecurity: burnt fields, prevented from going to cultivate distant fields. Farming is increasingly difficult: although some agreements with armed jihadist groups in the areas surveyed in Mali allow farmers to return to cultivate their fields, this mostly only concerns fields close to the villages and not the more distant ones, which are also often the most fertile:

Armed men now set distances that must not be exceeded. They told us here not to exceed three kilometres. But the fertile land is further away. The agreement allowed us to farm but we were not told not to go beyond a certain distance. And that's what they're telling us now. The land nearby is infertile but we have no choice. (Interview with a religious leader conducted on 5 July 2021 in Edjibara, Koro commune, Mopti region)

These restrictions have a negative impact on agricultural production and farmers abandon their fields for fear of reprisals from armed groups. For example, slash-and-burn agriculture, the main form of agriculture, is becoming less and less possible as fallowing is not practised due to distance restrictions. The proximity of combat zones or the deployment of military operations in the area prevent farmers from cultivating their fields. Fear of going to the fields also limits activities.

Livestock theft – often on a large scale – is a widespread phenomenon and **owning livestock has become a vulnerability factor**. Not only is the possession of animals no longer sufficient to guarantee a certain economic security, but it is now a source of insecurity due to the actions of armed jihadist groups whose tax on livestock constitutes a local source of financing. Transhumance is particularly affected.

Commercial activities are dominated by the sale of agricultural products, including cereals (millet, sorghum, maize, beans) and cash crops (sesame or shallots, for example), but the limitations on the movement of people and goods have a negative impact on the weekly markets. The fairs are often deserted by both traders and the population, although it is these markets that used to allow the latter to buy basic necessities and sell products from the harvest and agriculture. In the absence of a regular market, trafficking is increasing and the price of food is rising. On the border between Mali and Burkina Faso, the economy is seriously compromised by attacks on roads and the sabotage of bridges linking different localities. While people's livelihoods are severely affected, the communes are also cut off from their main resource, namely the taxes on the markets, which are now rarely visited – and when they are, the time spent in these community trading places is considerably reduced. **This situation increases the economic vulnerability and food insecurity of the population and results in a decline in household income.**

Economic vulnerability is increasing as a result of the deteriorating security situation, with populations suffering extortion from NSAG and FDS, livestock theft, a decline in agricultural and commercial activities, and restrictions on movement. Trading places are often deserted.

### *Niger: tensions over access to agricultural cropland and grazing areas*

Field surveys revealed that access to agricultural cropland and grazing areas for livestock is a major factor of tension in the communes of Dessa and Téra. Historically, access to land resources has given rise to competition and tensions between different rural actors, notably agricultural producers and pastoralists. This trend is reflected in the data collected because respondents strongly mentioned (1) conflicts between farmers and farmers, farmers and livestock herders, and between pastoralists and pastoralists; and (2) an increasing trend in these conflicts. The economy in these areas is mainly based on farming and livestock herding, the main activities practised by the majority of the populations.

However, the agricultural production system in the communes of Dessa and Téra has now reached exhaustion: extensive, non-mechanised farming is land-intensive, since increasing production means increasing the area under cultivation. The expansion of cropland at the expense of grazing land is becoming increasingly difficult to manage despite the existence of Niger's Rural Code, which incorporates land tenure and conflict management. These conflicts should also be seen in the context of strong demographic growth. The combined consequences of population growth, rudimentary agricultural practices and poor land governance have significantly contributed to the exacerbation of land conflicts in the areas of Dessa and Téra. The change in traditional modes of land regulation and the adoption of legislation advocating equality between men and women in access to land are also factors of conflict:

Before, the land belonged to the family. That's why nobody bothered to make a land title. Each member of the family is entitled to enjoy the usufruct of the land, meaning the right to use it, but no one should claim private ownership of the land or sell the land. But today, things have changed. Young people, at a very early age, ask to be autonomous from their families and therefore also ask for their share of the land. And now women are also demanding their rights to the land. The people are increasingly numerous and divided, while the size of Niger has not changed since independence. It is the same land that we are using. It is clear that this land is now becoming worn out and insufficient, leading to tensions and land conflicts that are becoming more and more frequent. (Interview with a customary leader conducted on 25 June 2021 in Tera)

The scarcity in quality and size of agricultural cropland contributes to the increasing tensions between communities, which is not unrelated to political rivalries.

### *The impact on gender and age*

While unemployment and lack of economic opportunities are mentioned as the main problem by both men and women, young people and adults, the consequences are different according to age.

Chart 5. Main reasons for engaging in conflict

Q.4.1 What do you think is the main reason why people engage in conflict?

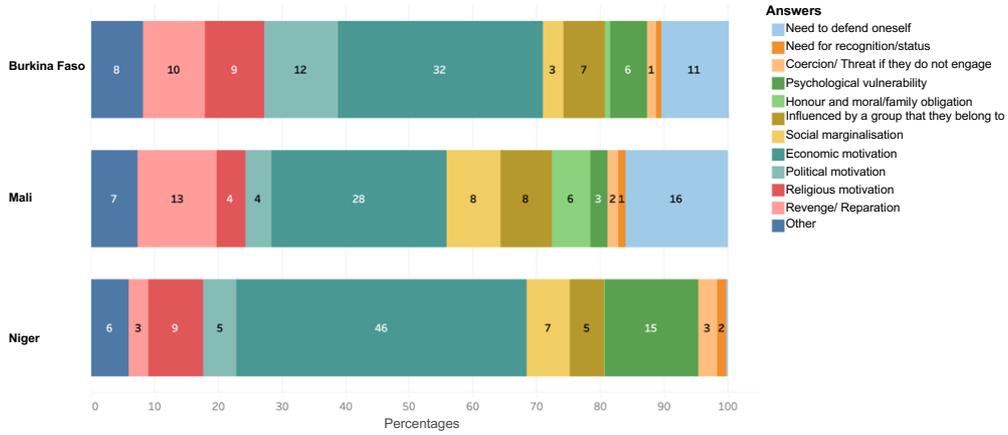


Chart 6. Main reasons for engaging in conflict, Mali

Q.4.1 What do you think is the main reason why people engage in conflict?

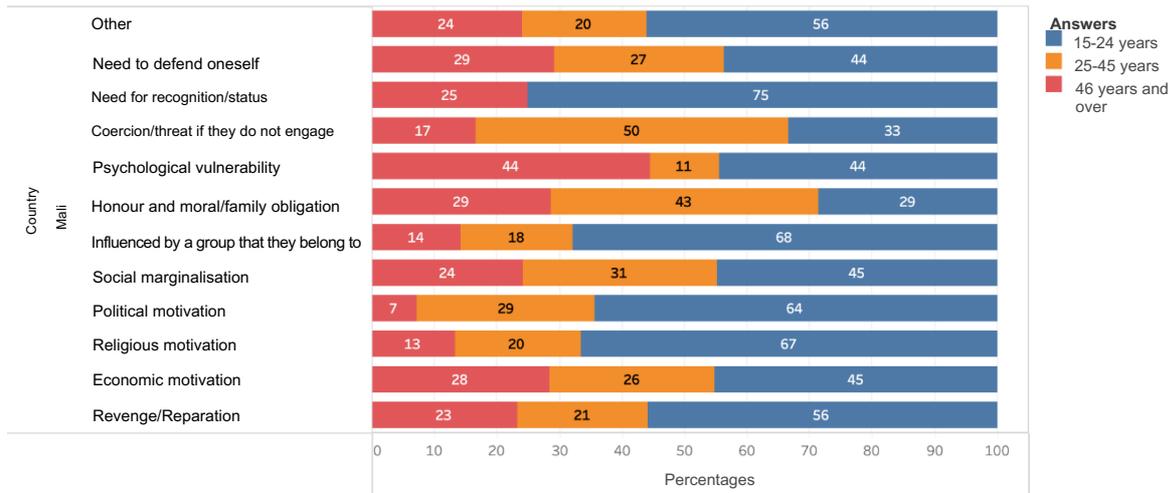


Chart 7. Main reasons for engaging in conflict, Burkina Faso

Q.4.1 What do you think is the main reason why people engage in conflict?

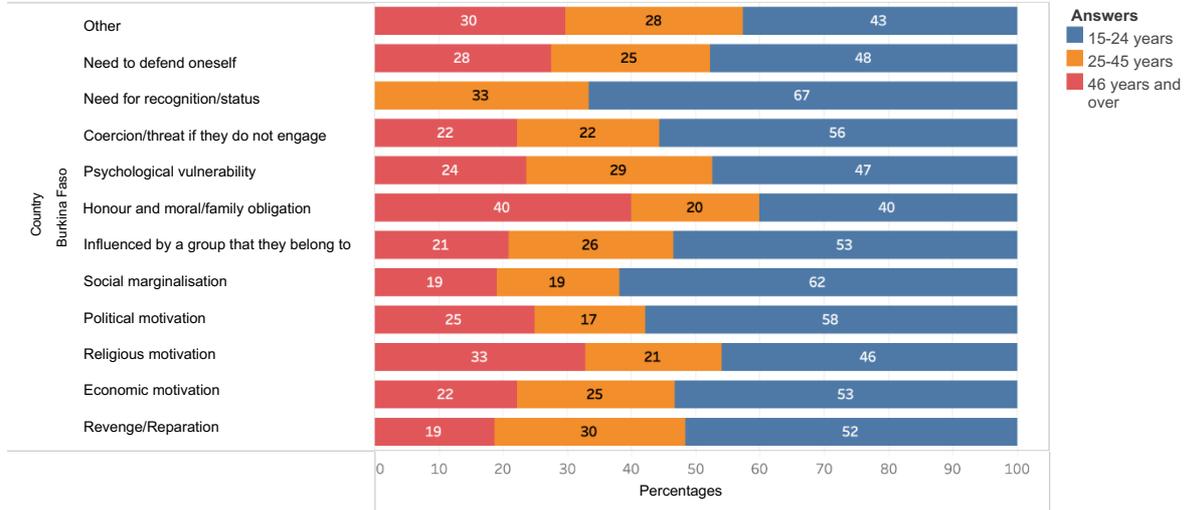


Chart 8. Main reasons for engaging in conflict, Niger

Q.4.1 What do you think is the main reason why people engage in conflict?

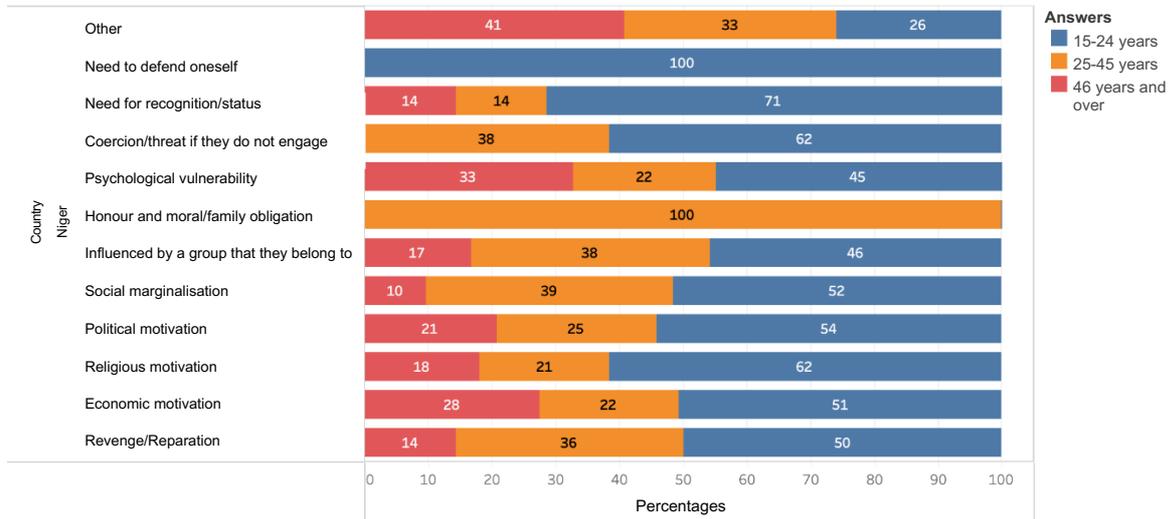
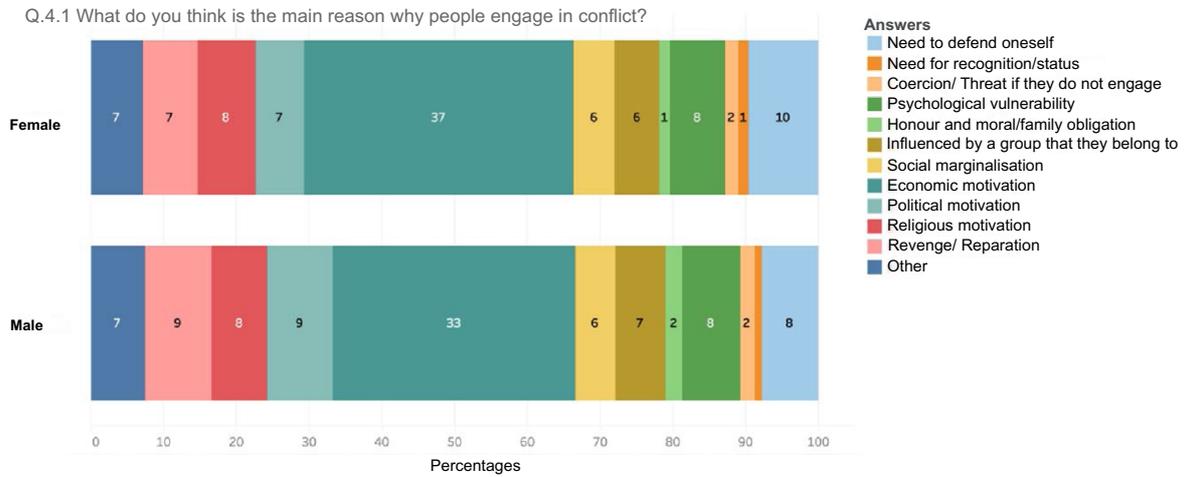
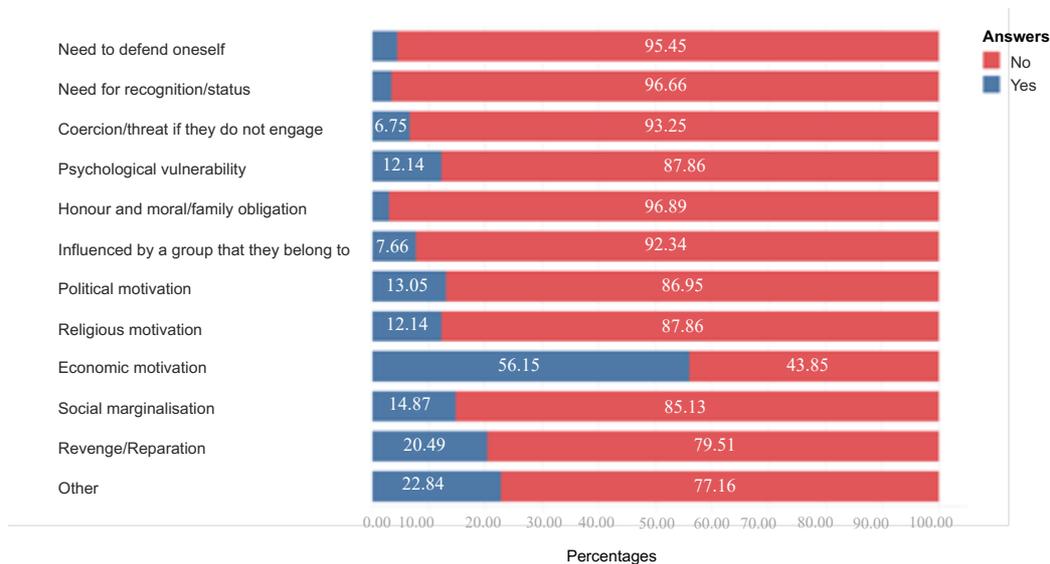


Chart 9. Main reasons for engaging in conflict, by gender



As in 2020, the main motivation for joining armed groups remains economic (35% of respondents; 32% in Burkina Faso, 45% in Niger and 28% in Mali, where the need to defend oneself is also mentioned by 16% of respondents). The economic reason comes first among all the categories surveyed (country, age and gender combined). This factor must be understood from a systemic perspective of pressure on resources, due to the scarcity of natural resources, and inequalities between social groups, particularly regarding access to resources.

Chart 10. Main reasons for engaging in conflict, 2020



### *The impact on young people: leaving for the gold zones*

In Burkina Faso, displaced families report that young people go to gold panning sites in Senegal, Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire. Leaving is a result of family pressure or individual choice.

Our sons went to the mountains [refers to gold panning sites in the Nord region]. They have no other hope than gold panning. It's because I'm old, otherwise I would have left. I agree that it's dangerous with the banditry that goes on there but it's better than staying here going round in circles with social action all day long with no response. Often, some officials talk to us in a way not fit for a head of family. We put up with it, we have no choice. (Interview with a head of a displaced family conducted on 24 July 2021 in Ouahigouya, Nord region)

It should be remembered that the migration of young people to the gold zones of Côte d'Ivoire or Guinea is not new, but that this phenomenon has increased with the insecurity.

The departure of young men was also reported in Mali:

In my opinion, the situation has had more of an impact on young people because it is young people who are on the front line and it is young people who were the self-defence groups. Now with the signing of the local agreements many young people have fled, even abandoned the villages to go on adventures because they are afraid of being killed and they are afraid of being abducted. (Interview with a humanitarian worker conducted on 2 July 2021 in the commune of Koro, Mopti region)

Women and children are the main victims. When the conflict started people fled to big cities such as Bamako, leaving the women behind. These women live in really distressing situations. (Interview with an elected leader conducted on 2 July 2021 in the commune of Koro, Mopti region)

Women find small housekeeping jobs and daily work in the gardens in exchange for a few coins or food. Displaced women often bear the responsibility for the family and it is they who are most often in contact with humanitarian aid NGOs, while men report refusing to engage in state social services when there are discussion or food sharing sessions because of frustrating remarks made by social service employees. This lack of respect has consequences for gender dynamics and is likely to undermine the dignity of the people in need. This attitude can also play a role in coping and/or avoidance strategies that can have a negative impact on the safety and living conditions of women and children.

The impact is also visible on the mobility of young girls who can no longer always engage in traditional activities such as collecting shea fruits or looking for firewood. Insecurity and the lack of economic opportunities also push young girls to migrate to urban centres or even neighbouring countries. They are then confronted with other types of risks.

Once they leave, that's a difficulty. Where the girls go is often still difficult, some get pregnant, others arrive already pregnant. There are these difficulties, also as a mother it's difficult. (Interview with an elected leader conducted on 2 July 2021 in the commune of Koro, Mopti region)

Taking care of these children is an additional expense for relatives already weakened by the current situation.

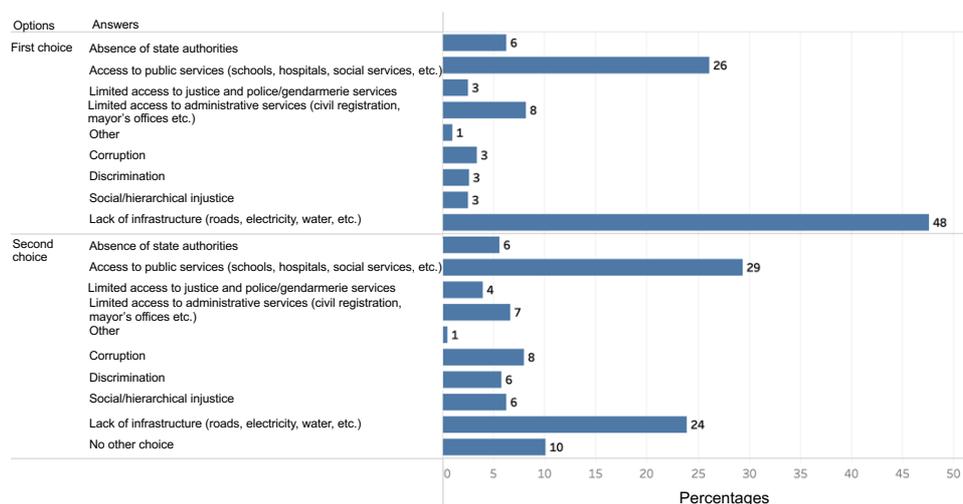
The displacement of young women and men is significantly influenced by the fear of violence, including kidnapping and revenge. Escape is often seen as a way out of these threats.

## B. Governance problems

The **lack of infrastructure** (roads, electricity, water, etc.) is cited as the main governance problem (43% in 2020 and 48% in 2021). The second major problem is access to public services (29%). Among the social problems, the most important is limited access to water and food (56% in total; 45% in Mali, 61% in Burkina Faso and 57% in Niger).

Chart 11. Main governance problems

Q.2.3 What are the most important governance problems for you and your family?



During the qualitative interviews, social injustice and the lack of equity in governance by public authorities, whether local or national, were often reported, and in particular the distribution of resources:

When you deprive someone of their rights, you are in a way forcing them to use all the means at their disposal, including violence, to wrest them. In reality, they are not given a choice. It is a question of dignity. (Interview with a young person conducted on 2 July 2021 in the commune of Dessa, Tillabéri region)

Many interviewees reported the frustrations caused by poor political, economic, social and legal governance as a major factor for the outbreak and persistence of insecurity in the regions surveyed.

The problem of governance is mainly understood at the local level. Many respondents believe that in order to break the cycle of violence, it is imperative to create the conditions for economic opportunity, social justice and equitable access to basic resources and social services, which would safeguard the interests and concerns of all socio-economic and cultural groups. Struggles for community leadership bring to the surface previously latent conflicts, accentuated by demographics, social changes and group dynamics.

Poverty is another aggravating factor in that it “creates frustration, malice, resentment and hatred in people. Poverty breeds intolerance. It is the source of all the ills and tensions<sup>13</sup>.” This perception was widely shared by respondents who **saw poverty as a factor in the tensions that underlie most current conflicts**. By way of illustration, several respondents mention that poverty is one of the reasons for theft, fraud and banditry, and thus plays an important role in the problems that threaten community life.

It should also be noted that the populations in the areas surveyed suffer significant damage due to the loss of a large part of their resources, whether it be livestock theft, burnt granaries or the imposition of *zakat* payments. This situation plunges the victims into a cycle of increased impoverishment and vulnerability.

### C. Security problems

In 2021, in addition to attacks on state representatives (FDS and local staff) and traditional and religious authorities, violence against civilians has also increased significantly. In June 2021, the attack on the village of Solhan in Burkina Faso killed more than 160 people; in Niger, more than 100 civilians were killed in January 2021 in two villages in the commune of Tondikiwindi near the Malian border, 58 people returning from the market in Banibangou were coldly executed in a public transport vehicle, and more recently some 30 people were killed in a village in the commune of Banibangou, including women and children<sup>14</sup>. The modus operandi of terrorist groups in the Tillabéri region remains the same, but the targets, the number of people executed, the places of execution – people returning from the market, farmers in their fields, etc. – have changed. This situation can be observed in all the communes located in the tri-border area, and the escalation of violence and the recurrence of terrorist attacks are forcing mass population displacements. Entire villages have been emptied of their inhabitants.

The security situation in the tri-border area continues to deteriorate. The first problem cited is **banditry and armed and unarmed robbery (45%)**.

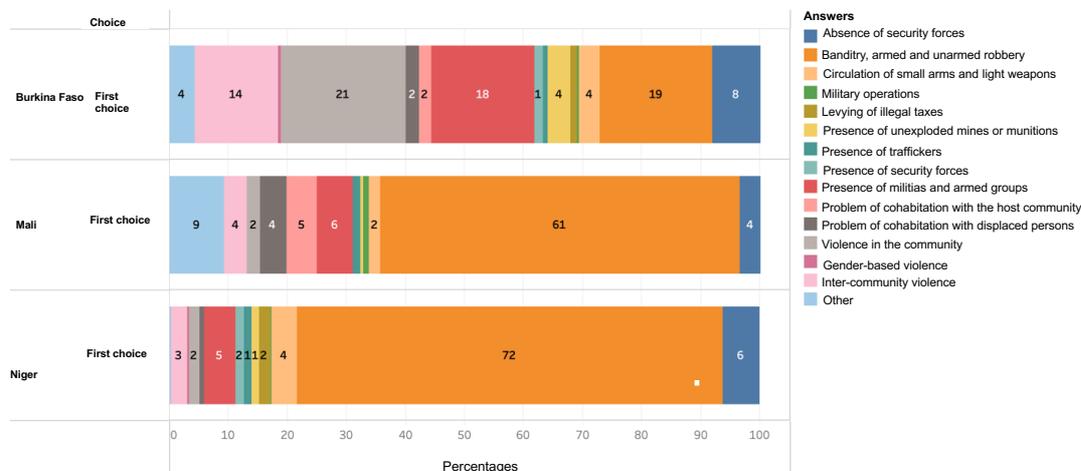
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<sup>13</sup> Interview with a young leader conducted on 2 July 2021 in the commune of Dessa, Tillabéri region.

<sup>14</sup> Tchomabangou and Zaroumdarey.

Chart 12. Main security problems

Q.2.4 What are the most important security problems for you and your family?



**Violence within and between communities is more often mentioned in Burkina Faso**, where there is more stigmatisation of certain groups, including in the recruitment of Volunteers for the Defence of the Homeland (VDP). In Niger, there has been a recent trend towards the militiaisation of some groups towards the Malian border<sup>15</sup>, where resource scarcity is experienced more severely due to displacement and pressure on host communities. The populations say they are primarily confronted with theft and looting (62% in total; 54% in Burkina Faso, 64% in Mali and 72% in Niger), reprisals against villages (51%; 54% in Niger, 52% in Burkina Faso and 49% in Mali), and conflicts between farmers and herders (51%; 70% in Niger). The phenomenon of armed highway bandits (*coupeurs de route*) is mainly noted in Mali (53%) and the levying of illegal taxes in Niger (41%).

### Can you move freely outside your community?

**In 2020, 51% said they could move freely outside their community** (54% in Burkina Faso and 51% in Mali). In Niger, 55% of respondents said the opposite.

**In 2021, 60% say they can NO LONGER move freely outside their community** (75% in the Mopti region, 59% in the Nord region and 49% in the Tillabéri region).

**The localities where travel is difficult are Bankass, Dessa, Koro, Thiou and Titao.** This concerns more than 70% of respondents in the departments of Bankass, Dessa, Koro and Loroum.

**Insecurity on the roads was cited by over 95% of respondents as the main reason for limiting travel.**

The perception of safety is different in 2021 compared to 2020: while people limit their movements outside communities, they feel safe in their host localities (61% in 2020 and 57% in 2021). The perception of the situation at the national level is often much worse than at the local level: people

<sup>15</sup> “Niger: attaque meurtrière de djihadistes dans la zone dite ‘des trois frontières’” [Niger: deadly attack by jihadists in the area known as the “three borders”], *Le Monde*, 4 November 2001, [www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2021/11/04/niger-attaque-meurtriere-de-djihadistes-dans-la-zone-des-trois-frontieres\\_6100982\\_3212.html](http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2021/11/04/niger-attaque-meurtriere-de-djihadistes-dans-la-zone-des-trois-frontieres_6100982_3212.html) (page accessed on 5 September 2022).

adapt their habits to the conditions of insecurity (limiting travel, moving to more secure communes, stopping certain activities) and feel safer in their communities. On the other hand, any movement is dangerous. However, the situation varies from place to place: this is the case for 56% of respondents in Burkina Faso and 78% in Niger, but only 32% in Mali (Mopti region). In Bankass (79%), Koro (88%) and Loroum (91%), the vast majority of respondents do not feel safe.

Table 6. Main reasons for insecurity

| Burkina Faso                           | Mali                                   | Niger                                  |
|--|--|--|
| Proximity to combat zones              | Proximity to combat zones              | Proximity to combat zones              |
| Attacks/threats against the population | Attacks/threats against the population | Criminal activities                    |
| Criminal activities                    | Presence of armed non-state actors     | Attacks/threats against the population |

In addition, the inaccessibility of certain areas also affects national and international NGOs, which limit their movements because of the threats to their staff or the inaccessibility of localities. As reported by an NGO worker in Burkina Faso, “before, some areas were accessible but now the situation has become more complicated, the terrorists are setting up checkpoints where they check identities. Those who have a relationship with the state are taken hostage<sup>16</sup>.” In 2021, 145 incidents involving an NGO were reported in Mali, 54 in Burkina Faso and 16 in Niger, and 67 cases of abduction in Mali, nine in Burkina Faso and one in Niger<sup>17</sup>. In response to this situation, the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) has opened a route linking the capital Ouagadougou to the Sahel region (Dori and Gorom-Gorom) to enable humanitarian workers to reach the population. In Mali, similar measures were taken to reach Bandiagara.

Faced with insecurity, people adapt their behaviour. The majority of respondents said that they had stopped some of their activities, then changed or limited their movements, and then moved to safer communes.

In Mali, some roads in the Mopti region are considered very dangerous to use, such as the Sévaré-Bandiagara-Bankass-Koro axis<sup>18</sup>. In addition to roadside robberies, hold-ups, armed robberies, reprisals and cattle rustling are frequent.

Jihadists are scattered in our area, but the situation is very complex because an Islamist can also be a bandit and a bandit can be a jihadist. We have come to understand that people are taking advantage of the situation. Even the people of Dan Nan Amassagou are cited in exactions and extortion of goods from the population. Their leader Toloba no longer controls them and they do what they want. (Interview with a community leader conducted on 5 July 2021 in Bankass, Mopti region, Mali)

<sup>16</sup> Interview with an NGO worker conducted on 30 July 2021 in Loroum, Nord region, Burkina Faso.

<sup>17</sup> “INSO Key Data Dashboard”: [www.ngosafety.org/keydata-dashboard/](http://www.ngosafety.org/keydata-dashboard/), March 2022.

<sup>18</sup> 33 people killed in the bus fire that was taking market traders from the village of Songho to the Bandiagara market. “Axe Sévaré-Bandiagara-Bankass-Koro: Des carnages de trop !” [Axis Sévaré-Bandiagara-Bankass-Koro: Too much carnage!] abamako.com, 6 December 2021, <http://news.abamako.com/h/262901.html> (page accessed on 5 September 2022).

Some people report recognising local armed bandits in assaults on Dogon villages in the Bankass area. A participant in the focus group organised with the women displaced from Bailly said:

During the attack on Sobane-Da, our surviving relatives testified that they recognised the attackers who had been in the village for a long time. Some of them were already known for their abuses in the past, they joined the attackers in order to benefit from the dividends of the attack, from the goods taken, especially livestock.

The prevailing view among respondents tends to be that relations between the different populations are “good”. Generally, cohabitation between the communities is peaceful and based on the principle of mutual solidarity and assistance, but behind this positive picture of inter-community relations lie more or less latent tensions linked in particular to access to natural resources.

Conflicts between herders and farmers are mentioned in all countries. In Niger, for example, it is a “structural” characteristic in all the communities surveyed, conflicts between farmers and herders are considered “normal” and do not call into question the way people live together because the communities have always managed to settle their differences.

Human relationships are always characterised by small disputes. It is normal, it is part of the dynamics of societies. At home, as elsewhere, relations are sometimes tense, but nothing serious really and on the whole our relations are good and we live in symbiosis. (Interview with a local elected official conducted on 23 June 2021 in Téra, Tillabéri region, Niger)

However, the analysis of some discourse also shows that relations between groups, particularly herders and farmers, have weakened in recent years due to insecurity, which creates a climate of suspicion and mistrust among the populations. Tensions have increased and relations between communities have deteriorated, particularly with the Fulani community. Some comments made by the people surveyed help us to understand the extent to which trust between the Fulani and other communities has weakened:

The vast majority of bandits are Fulani. We must have the courage to tell the truth. Today, nobody trusts the Fulani in our whole area. Even if the person has a Fulani wife, he does not trust her. (Interview with a local elected official conducted on 2 July 2021 in Koro, Mopti region, Mali)

The village of Dessa has been the target of NSAG attacks on several occasions, and during these terrorist incursions, the use of the Fulfulde language by the bandits reinforces the idea of the victims of these attacks that their persecutors are Fulani. The persistence of insecurity in the research areas therefore puts a strain on social cohesion and peaceful coexistence in areas where violence is rife.

According to the respondents, the fight against violent extremism must involve all communities, which implies restoring trust between them and strengthening social cohesion by increasing the number of spaces for exchange and dialogue.

The Mopti region has also experienced a deterioration in security over several years. The instrumentalisation of social frustrations often due to the feeling of marginalisation of certain social groups or to the bad behaviour of state employees (judges, water and forestry workers, etc.) can make populations receptive to the discourse of certain armed groups who want to challenge the existing order. The sense of injustice towards state institutions and abandonment by the state was the main slogan of the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO), particularly in Douentza, which promised fair justice. In Mali, the conflict is often interpreted in terms of the disagreement between the Dogon and Fulani communities:

In the past, the two communities, Fulani and Dogon, always lived together. There are often disagreements but they manage to deal with them. Now there has been an invisible hand that is making the two not get along. This is why the conflict has become so widespread. (Interview with a local elected official conducted on 2 July 2021 in Koro, Mopti region, Mali)

Some people also say that they do not know who the conflicting actors are. In Burkina Faso, community conflicts based on ethnic discrimination or stigmatisation lead to abuses, human rights violations and displacement of thousands of people. In an attempt to combat the phenomenon of stigmatisation, the state is trying to raise awareness among the population through adverts calling for peaceful cohabitation, but this is not enough and attacks against the Fulani population are recurrent<sup>19</sup>. People live in daily fear of attacks, whether they occur or not. In July 2021, attacks were carried out a few kilometres from the capital of Lorum, Titao, and their proximity caused significant panic and mass displacement towards Titao and the commune of Ouindigui. In addition, respondents often reported being threatened by telephone.

Finally, the populations surveyed cite three main actors that they believe can reduce violence: individual citizens (36%), the government (32%) and the FDS (15%).

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<sup>19</sup> “Burkina/Drame in Lorum: Le Collectif contre l'impunité et la stigmatisation des communautés dénonce une descente dans le village de Hargo”, *Lefaso.net*, 28 September 2021, <https://lefaso.net/spip.php?article107861> (page accessed on 5 September 2022). The Collective Against Impunity and Stigmatisation of Communities (CISC) was created in the aftermath of the Yirgou massacres (January 2019).

## IV. Local mechanisms and humanitarian protection responses

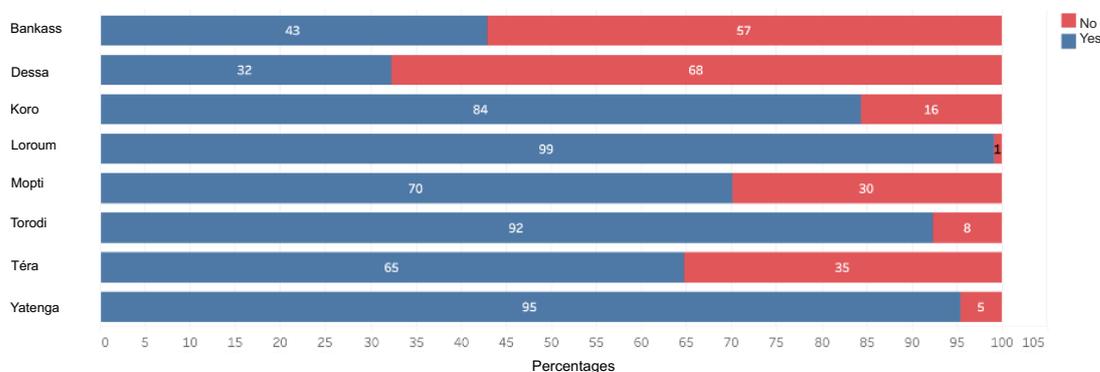
Insecurity is the main cause of massive population displacement in the Liptako-Gourma region. While protecting the populations is the primary responsibility of the states, multiple actors carry out protection activities, including the state, community actors, local actors, national and international NGOs and UN agencies. Protection strategies are local, national and international.

At the international level, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) defines protection as “all activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the relevant bodies of law, in particular HR law, IHL, refugee law<sup>20</sup>.” Humanitarian actors must ensure that the rights of affected persons “in accordance with international human rights law are respected, protected and fulfilled without discrimination<sup>21</sup>.” At the local level, protection mechanisms can be understood as all of the response, prevention and social adaptation mechanisms that are available to those affected or at risk. These mechanisms include decentralised services, informal/local mechanisms set up by individuals, families and communities through which communities protect people, property and services. All these mechanisms and actors together constitute the local protection system. In conflict-affected areas, existing mechanisms adapt or transform, which can lead to a redefinition not only of local norms but also of community identity.

Protection mechanisms exist in all localities but are the responsibility of different authorities or institutions.

*Chart 13. Local protection mechanisms*

Q.3.9 Are there any protection services in your area?

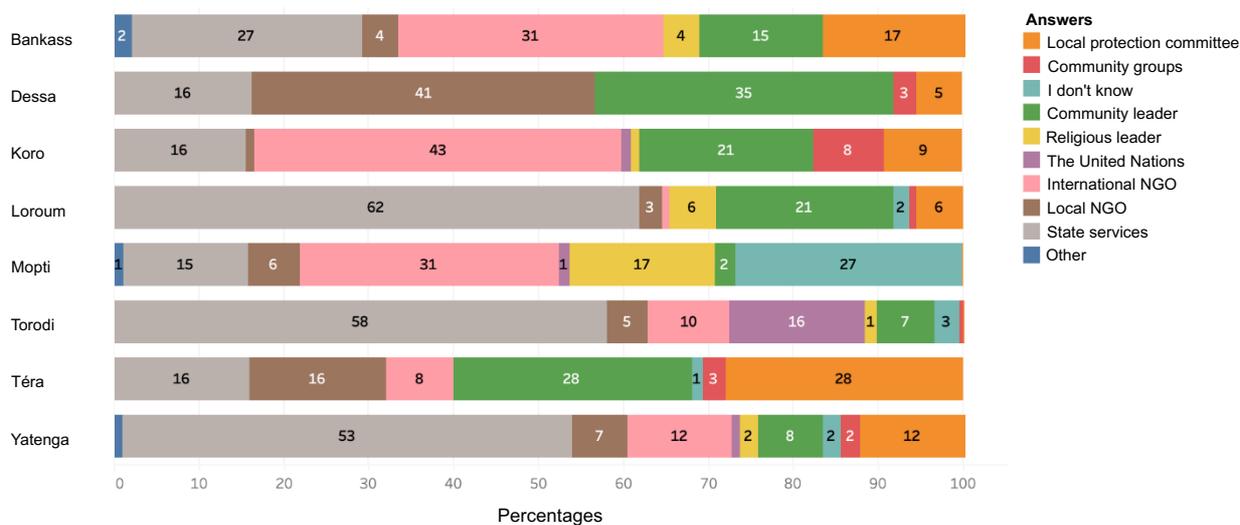


<sup>20</sup> IASC, Protection Policy for Displaced Persons 1999.

<sup>21</sup> “IASC Operational Guidelines on the Protection of People Affected by Natural Disasters”, Brookings-LES Project on Internal Displacement, September 2011 Brookings-LES Project on Internal Displacement, September 2011, [www.brookings.edu/wpcontent/uploads/2016/07/0106\\_operational\\_guidelines\\_nd\\_french.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/wpcontent/uploads/2016/07/0106_operational_guidelines_nd_french.pdf) (page accessed 05/09/2022).

Chart 14. Organisers of local protection mechanisms

Q.3.10 If yes, who organises it?



The plurality of protection mechanisms is due to the differing security contexts from one country to another, from one locality to another, but also due to the strategic position of the different categories of actors, each of which defines a particular course of action for protection. Depending on their socio-professional, cultural, economic and political status, among others, the actors resort to a multitude of strategies in order to protect themselves. These local mechanisms interact with humanitarian mechanisms and it is important for humanitarian organisations to ensure that responses do not (re)create discrimination and harm the populations they are meant to serve. Based on the discourse of populations and actors, we were able to isolate and analyse several types of local protection mechanisms used in the areas covered by this study. These mechanisms vary according to the populations affected by insecurity: on the one hand, the populations that are direct victims of insecurity and violence, and on the other hand, the populations and authorities from the areas hosting refugees and displaced populations.

## A. Local protection mechanisms

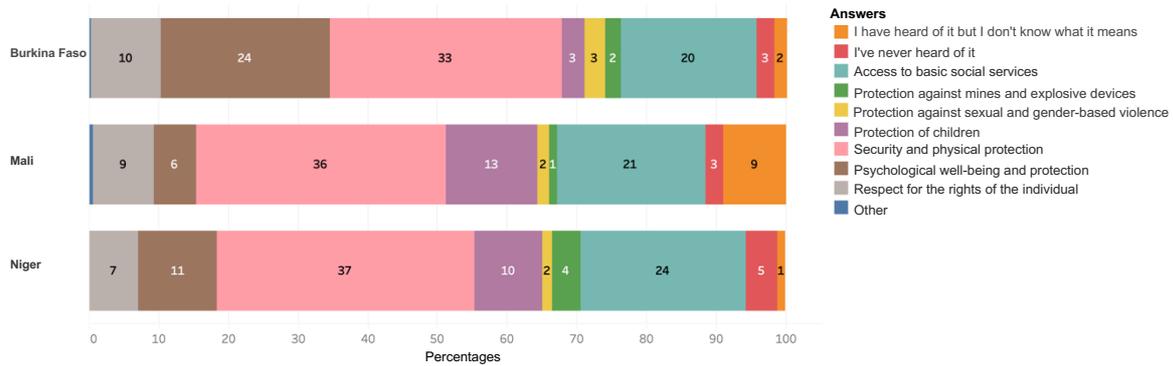
Local protection mechanisms are key to addressing urgent needs. The field surveys revealed that the initial aid comes from local communities who assist displaced people, often before any intervention by NGOs and associations. These local mechanisms are based on traditional values of solidarity and mutual aid.

### 1. The family and the community, the first actors in protection

It is important to note that each individual, each family feels responsible for their own protection. For the people surveyed, protection means firstly **security and physical protection**, secondly access to basic social services and thirdly psychological well-being and protection.

Chart 15. Meaning of the word “protection”

Q.3.2 What does “protection” mean to you?



In the event of an incident, people turn first to their family (46%), then to community leaders (25%). This is followed by the FDS and friends and neighbours. All other proposed actors (justice, decentralised local authorities, local elected officials, international forces, DAG, NGOs, etc.) are mentioned by less than 5% of respondents. Family solidarity is essential in times of crisis and most often victims of attacks seek to reach relatives and family who are in safe places.

Here, when a person flees, they go to their relatives. It is the relatives who inform the village chief and ask for solutions. The village chief provides support. He gives information to the mosque, to the youth leaders. Everyone is supportive. Everyone gives what they can. Also, during the harvest, everyone gives a bit of millet. (Interview with a local authority conducted on 2 July 2021 in Tagou Souan, Mopti region, Mali)

As I see it, all the displaced people are our relatives. They are our relatives. They had left because there is not enough land here. Because of the conflict, they fled to come here. They returned to their home village. We were able to find houses for them. We gave them food and drink. However, we didn't collect supplies for them. We don't have this capacity. However, we share the food we prepare. (Interview with a religious leader conducted on 2 July 2021 in Tagou Souan, Mopti region, Mali)

76% of people say they have stopped some of their activities and 74% have changed or limited their travel. 46% have moved to safer municipalities, either temporarily or for a longer period.

The role of traditional and customary authorities – of displaced populations or host communities – is fundamental in the reception and settlement. These authorities support the administration in the reception and management of IDPs, participate in reception and management committees.

On one side, administrative and social service officials welcome the displaced persons, visit them and distribute food. While host populations, whether or not they are related to the displaced persons, welcome them, including through gifts in kind or the provision of land for agriculture. This informal aid generally precedes that of the state or NGOs, which have more lengthy procedures, including the identification of beneficiaries. In this form of solidarity, traditional leaders or religious leaders are very active:

When we arrived here en masse, it scared the people nearby a little. It was panic at their level because the gendarmerie came to search us. But everything went back to normal when Naba Kiiba (leader of Ouahigouya) came in person to visit us. He even said that whoever attacks a displaced person unjustly is attacking the entire royal court. Since then, I have yet to hear of a major incident involving displaced people. Some people are not happy having to live alongside us, but Naba's authority and warning are always present. (Interview with a displaced man from Barsalogo conducted on 26 June 2021 in Ouahigouya, Northern Region, Burkina Faso)

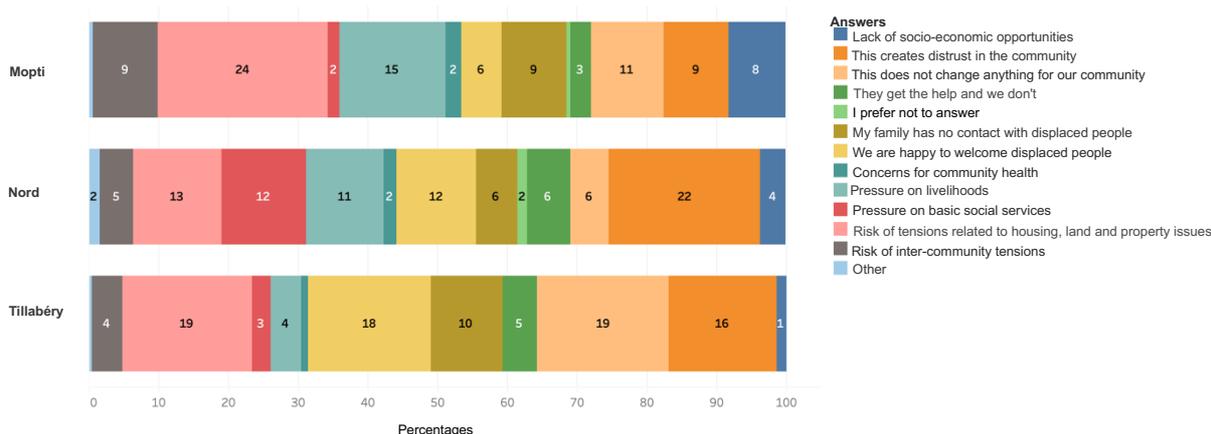
Aid is a burden on host communities, and host respondents mention the distrust it can create in the community (17%), the risk of tensions over housing, land and property issues (17%) or pressure on livelihoods (10%).

Among the negative impacts, it is important to mention the economic pressure on host populations whose “granaries” are often insufficient to support the weight of several households.

Chart 16. Impact of the presence of refugees and displaced persons in the community

Q.2.8 If you are a member of the host community or a resident

What do you think about the presence of refugees and displaced people in your community?



In Burkina Faso, the surveys reveal the exploitation of the misery of IDPs, which manifests itself, on the one hand, by taking advantage of the law of supply and demand in a context of scarcity of housing, and on the other hand, by employment contracts that are not respected or modified during the course of their execution, with the employee not daring to express his or her discontent. While at the beginning of the crisis, space and even housing were given up by the host populations, today some people rent out this space even for setting up tents.

We are from Arbinda, with the attacks, they killed some of our husbands. We took refuge in Djibo, but there, the crackling of the weapons scared us a lot and we decided to come here. But since we've been here, we are not on a site for displaced people like those on the Youba road. We have rented the houses that you see, one for 4,000 and the other for 5,000. There are many of us with our children, with the help of the UNHCR [Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees] we have had tents, even there the landlord asks us for 2,000 CFA francs a month to set up each tent. (Interview with displaced women from Abinda conducted on 23 June 2021 in Ouahigouya, Nord region, Burkina Faso)

**Inhabitants of the area** are very involved in “managing” the situation of their displaced relatives. Through social networks, especially WhatsApp, they follow the evolution of the security situation in their home villages, relayed on the networks, including beyond the country's borders (especially information on attacks, displacements, aid, etc.). Inhabitants play an important role in organising the first emergency aid for “their” displaced people. To do this, they organise themselves into committees in order to better coordinate their actions. It is the committee members who are responsible for mobilising resources through voluntary contributions and who organise field missions to meet the displaced, to get a feel for their reception and living conditions and to collect their testimonies. They are also involved in raising awareness and organising meetings with local authorities to discuss reception and/or return conditions.

In Niger, the involvement of inhabitants in humanitarian work has become more important since the forced displacements of the populations of the communes of Anzourou and Gorouol. Inhabitants helped the authorities to create the security conditions that allowed for people to return to their villages. Their support is important in the management, assistance and protection of IDPs. It also reflects the willingness of the population to be resolutely involved in the search for solutions to the security crisis. It equally reflects a growing awareness among inhabitants who are setting up new humanitarian assistance mechanisms to support displaced people.

## ***2. Traditional protection mechanisms***

Mechanisms for resolving conflicts exist in all localities and are perceived as successful for more than 90% of respondents. However, the forms are **not very institutionalised** and the most cited mechanisms are the management committees for displaced persons, local conflict resolution committees, committees of elders or traditional authorities. For example, the communes of Dessa and Téra in Niger have a rich heritage of local conflict management mechanisms at several levels: between individuals, within families, between villages and community groups. Local social mechanisms for regulating tensions – *cousinage à plaisanterie*, inter-community alliances, mediation by elders – remain effective and help resolve crises at the local level. They are still involved in peace initiatives and social cohesion, but are also suffering from the crisis.

One of the consequences of insecurity is the weakening of local powers and community mechanisms for regulating social relations.

These mechanisms are effective in the management and prevention of certain social and land conflicts, but not for recent conflicts linked to the presence of jihadist groups. Mechanisms for dialogue, mediation and inter-communal alliances can be counter-productive in the fight against terrorism.

The NSAG attack the civilian populations and particularly target local authorities – local elected officials, traditional and customary authorities, religious authorities – but also state employees and the FDS in order to overturn the existing social order. Faced with threats, some authorities and state employees take refuge in urban communes or in more secure communes and only occasionally travel to the localities where they work or administrate which contributes to the population's feeling of abandonment. This situation significantly weakens local governance and all systems of regulation

of social relations, as well as local conflict resolution mechanisms. In response to this situation of insecurity, initiatives are appearing, such as the very recent communal mediation committee in Téra, which brings together traditional leaders, municipal authorities, youth leaders, women and religious leaders. The aim is to create a space for exchange and dialogue between actors with a view to finding community-based solutions adapted to the nature of the current conflicts.

Conflict management is usually a “matter” for traditional leaders, namely village, lineage, canton and group chiefs, whose task is to reconcile the conflicting parties. The village or lineage chief is the first level of tension regulation and dispute resolution and, in the event of disagreement, the matter can be taken to the next level, namely the formal justice system. Traditional and community-based conflict management, which favours dialogue and mediation, seeks first and foremost to preserve social equilibrium and safeguard social ties. This mechanism does not provide for sanctions but rehabilitates.

### *The weakening of traditional authorities*

In the current context, marked by the appearance of new forms of conflict, the traditional mechanisms of regulation are being undermined and there is a decline in the authority of traditional leaders, linked to divisions and the break-up of families, to intra-family rivalries which are sometimes also fuelled by political divisions. On one hand, the processes for electing traditional leaders, particularly at the canton level in Niger, contribute to some leaders being contested. On the other hand, by forcing leaders (of villages, cantons and groups) to leave their administrative entities and seek refuge outside their territories, the NSAG contribute to weakening their power vis-à-vis their constituents.

In Burkina Faso, displaced leaders continue to exercise their customary authority in the place where they are displaced. Often, it is the representatives of the village development committees (CVDs) who take on the task of finding solutions to administrative problems such as the issue of civil status documents. According to the respondents, mayors of affected communes who move to the major urban centres go through the CVD representatives to find out about the situation of their populations residing in the temporary hosting site, and some mayors continue to operate in secret. In some areas, regular or crisis meetings are convened among displaced people. This attempt to maintain social order is not without its problems when some displaced people no longer want to submit to the authority of traditional leaders or CVD representatives because they no longer see the need to be under the jurisdiction of a leader or CVD “without land” and outside their territory.

## **B. The state response**

The state has the primary responsibility for protecting the population, but the structural weaknesses of the states in the Liptako-Gourma region are accentuated by the security crisis and competition from NSAGs. The uneven state presence and the dysfunctions encountered in the delivery of basic services are amplified by the insecurity that forces state employees to abandon their places of work because of the threats they face. This insecurity also has a significant impact on services, preventing, for example, the collection of taxes, the continuity of services or the maintenance of infrastructure. All these consequences feed the feeling of abandonment of populations, discrimination and *ultimately* negative reactions towards the states because they do not ensure the physical protection of their citizens.

In Mali, for example, the provision of basic social services is focused on health, education and civil registration services, sectors that are deeply affected by insecurity. People working in these sectors are mostly resident in the cities and work more rarely in the villages because of the risks involved

in travelling there. The schooling of displaced children is often hampered by the lack of civil status documents, as reported in Koro, Bankass, Sévaré and Mopti. For example, many displaced children from Dinangourou and Gorou do not have birth certificates, which is an obstacle to their re-enrolment in school. To ensure that these children do not drop out of school, some NGOs such as the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) intervene in the issuing of birth certificates or supplementary judgements<sup>22</sup>. Managing and supervising these children is a major challenge for school administrators:

There are many displaced children who are there in schools in the first cycle, second cycle, secondary school, in vocational schools. These children are everywhere. They are more numerous in schools in the first cycle and some in the second cycle. Many schools have been closed. (Interview with a local authority conducted on 2 July 2021 in the commune of Koro, Mopti region, Mali)

An empirical comparison with the situation last year shows an increase in precariousness among the populations. Surveys conducted in Bankass clearly indicate the level of fatigue of the displaced people who arrive with health emergencies:

Often we receive people at the CsRéf [referral health centre] who are running on empty. The most common illness among displaced people is anaemia, often severe. There is also malnutrition. It should be noted that these patients cannot even pay for a prescription of 2,000 CFA francs. In such cases, we see them at the NGO MUSO, which supports them and sends us the files. It's really moving for these displaced people who are weakened by famine and disease. (Interview with a matrone (midwifery assistant) conducted on 7 July 2021 in a commune of Bankass, Mopti region, Mali)

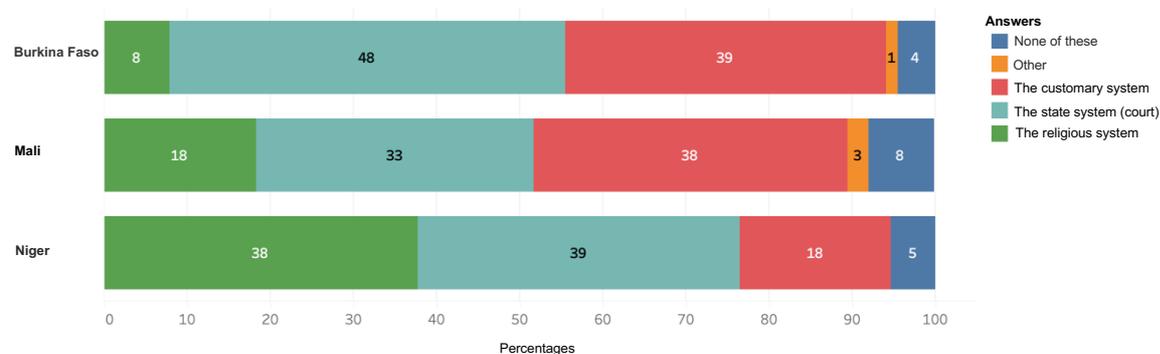
A minimum mechanism exists for dealing with severe situations of precariousness in the health sector. However, health workers are overwhelmed by the number of cases requiring urgent care.

In Burkina Faso, the lack of identity papers is an obstacle to mobility. The municipalities of Kain and Koumbri have set up services in the provincial capital, Ouahigouya, to issue civil status documents, including birth certificates and supplementary judgements, but not all requests can be met.

More than 80% of people in all the areas surveyed say that “judicial institutions are functional” for dealing with disputes. The civil court is considered the most impartial (42%), followed by the customary court (32%) and the religious court (20%).

*Chart 17. Judicial system considered the most impartial*

Q.3.6 In your opinion, which of the following justice systems is the most impartial:



<sup>22</sup>Interview with an official for the promotion of women, children and the family conducted on 3 July 2021 in the commune of Koro, Mopti region, Mali.

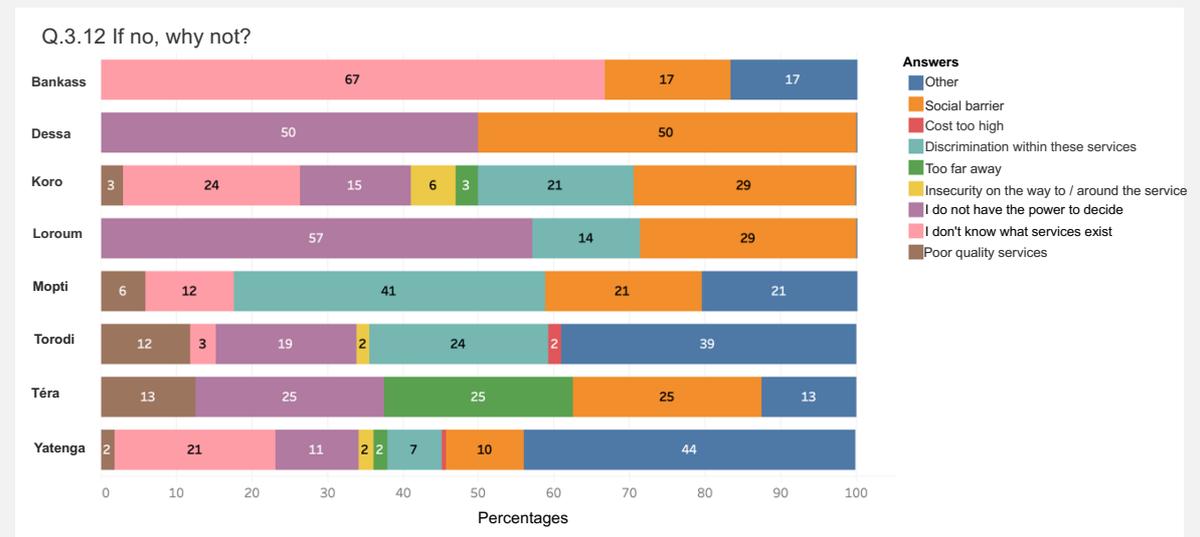
The more urban areas are surveyed, the more important the reference to the state system is, whether we consider the population as a whole, men and women or age groups. IDPs in particular express a preference for the state system, which is explained by the sedentary nature of the customary authorities and the fact that these populations do not always know the authorities of the host communities. Customary authorities have a very important role in mediation and conciliation, but they do not have the means to act and are not suitable for all types of conflicts.

Overall, respondents do not find it difficult to report violations, but half of them consider that the major constraint is fear of reprisals if they do. The following most common responses were:

- the places exist but I lack the financial means to use them (40%);
- we are discriminated against by the community or our families when we speak out (35%);
- those who commit violations are relatives and this is dealt with in the family (35%).

Access to protection services is somewhat more difficult in the Mopti region. Those who do not have access give very different reasons depending on the area.

*Chart 18. Accessibility of protection services*



## C. Some recent local mechanisms

In addition to so-called “traditional” conflict management mechanisms, other mechanisms are likely to play a role, such as land commissions (COFOs) in charge of land management, communal mediation committees and security advisory committees.

### 1. *The example of Niger's land commissions*<sup>23</sup>

Established in 2004, COFOs were created to prevent conflicts over land and natural resource management. With the more or less permanent settlement of displaced persons, will we see a reconfiguration of these community structures responsible for land management in the villages? The issue deserves particular attention in a context where land and pastoral areas are the main means of production for the population. This question, evoked by the composition of the COFO, can be generalised to all the existing community structures in villages hosting displaced persons: how can these “new” categories be integrated into the village community structures?

### 2. *The signing of local agreements in Mali*

Thirty-six agreements were signed in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger between 2017 and 2021<sup>24</sup>. These agreements vary in nature and can be signed between armed groups, between armed groups and communities and between communities themselves. In Mali, in the cercle of Koro, three agreements<sup>25</sup> were signed covering eleven communes, and a lull was observed allowing the free movement of people and their goods and the return of some IDPs. In the cercle of Bankass, an agreement was signed<sup>26</sup> between Fulani and Dogon communities. Other agreements have also been reached in the Djenné cercle, but these have been met with mixed reactions from members of the community and it has not put an end to hostilities in all localities, a situation also present in Douentza: “Agreements have been signed, but so far the problem persists. People used to go to Douentza but that road is impassable today. For us, after signing the agreement, we had thought that the problem would be completely resolved<sup>27</sup>.”

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<sup>23</sup> The Rural Code was adopted in 1993 under Ordinance 93-015 on the guiding principles of the Rural Code, and the commissions were set up in 2004. COFOs issue all land transaction documents (land sale certificate, customary holding certificate, donation certificate, land loan contract, land lease contract and customary pledge). They also carry out awareness-raising activities on natural resource management and land tenure. Conflicts between two villages over access to natural resources are the responsibility of the communal COFO; between two communes, it is the departmental COFO. Each year, the COFO's internal regulations provide an action plan, drawn up with the participation of all members and involving the administrative and customary authorities.

<sup>24</sup> According to the coordinator of the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD), interview conducted on 10 July 2021 in Sévaré.

<sup>25</sup> The three agreements signed in the cercle of Koro are: the Dangatène agreement between the Dogon and Fulani communities on 12 January 2021, the Pel agreement between the Dogon and Fulani communities on 22 January 2021 and the Madougou agreement between the Dogon and Fulani communities on 24 January 2021. Cf. [www.hdcentre.org/fr/updates/three-peace-agreements-signed-between-the-fulani-and-dogon-of-the-area-circle-of-koro-in-central-mali/](http://www.hdcentre.org/fr/updates/three-peace-agreements-signed-between-the-fulani-and-dogon-of-the-area-circle-of-koro-in-central-mali/) (page accessed on 14 September 2021).

<sup>26</sup> An agreement was signed between the Dogon, Dafing and Fulani communities in the communes of Diallassagou, Koulogon, Habé, Lessagou Habé, Soubala, Sokoura and Tori in the Bankass cercle on 9 February 2021. Cf. [www.hdcentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Accord-de-Diallassagou-07.02.2021-signe.pdf](http://www.hdcentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Accord-de-Diallassagou-07.02.2021-signe.pdf) (page accessed on 14 September 2021).

<sup>27</sup> Interview with a representative from the Coordination of Women's Associations and NGOs of Mali [Coordination des associations et ONG féminines du Mali] (CAFO) conducted on 2 July 2021 in Koro, Mopti region, Mali.

They [village representatives] met many Fulani in the bush. The Fulani and Dogon were both present. There were fifteen villages represented and there were many jihadists present too. They talked and reached an agreement. Following this meeting, there has been a lull. Alhamdulillah. It's not over but there is a lull. (Interview with a local authority conducted on 2 July 2021 in Tagou Souan, Mopti region, Mali)

It is important to distinguish between signing and upholding agreements, which are two different processes.

#### **D. The strain on local mechanisms and social tensions**

Traditional protection systems are now running out of steam due to the prolonged crisis. The populations feel “tired” of this situation, which continues to deteriorate, with the major consequences being the increasing impoverishment of the populations and the destruction of the local economic fabric, partly due to extortion, the imposition of the *zakat* and the theft of livestock by violent NSAGs. Local mechanisms also falter because, in a context of conflict, social and power relations change. Social stratifications are redefined and the legitimacy of traditional and customary authorities is challenged by armed groups.

The combined effects of continuing insecurity, impoverishment of displaced populations and insufficient compensation for the assistance provided by host communities to displaced persons are undermining the “goodwill” of the host population. The words of a municipal official met in Téra sum up the host population's feeling of weariness:

At the beginning, the population was very active in assisting displaced people when they arrived. It was thanks to the solidarity and assistance of the host populations that the displaced people had food, water and shelter before the state and humanitarian assistance arrived. However, with the displaced people this year, mobilisation is very low. People have become poorer and do not have the means to help even if they want to. I found that only a few groups were able to mobilise. Otherwise, it is citizens of the displaced populations who have organised themselves to provide basic necessities. (Interview with a municipal official on 28 June 2021 in Téra, Tillabéri region, Niger)

Mayors are at the heart of the system organising the reception and distribution of humanitarian aid. Interviews report frustrations among beneficiaries in the distribution of aid, with rumours of aid diversion.

I had my doubts about the diversion of food but today it is the reality that mayors are diverting food. They even got rich on this basis. I am part of the humanitarian commission at the mayor's office in Koro, but I have never been consulted about grain distribution since the commission was set up. I did a little research at my level which allowed me to know more: it is a mafia. (Interview with a member of the social commission of the mayor's offices in Koro conducted on 2 July 2021, Mopti region, Mali)

Beyond the testimony, in Mali, displaced people themselves regularly mention cases of diversion of humanitarian aid by elected officials. Aid distribution intervals varied from seven to twelve months for displaced people. Some displaced people have never received food aid despite registering with the distribution team. In the focus group organised in Sévaré, participants expressed their shock at seeing residents benefiting from aid at the expense of displaced people:

During one distribution, I met people who were native to this area and were given food as a displaced person. Even the members of the distribution team have their quota of food. This humanitarian aid has lost all its meaning, I think it should even be stopped. (Interview with a displaced person from Baye conducted on 8 July 2021 in the commune of Sévaré, Mopti region)

Frustration is also increasingly common among displaced people in Niger:

We did not leave home because we were hungry. So we are not here so that you give us food or drink. The reason that forced us to leave the land of our ancestors was insecurity. They killed our relatives, stole our animals and looted our property. We have come to ask you to take responsibility for making our home safe so that we can return to our houses and cultivate our fields. Our whole life is based on agriculture. If you take away our ability to grow this year, you are taking away our ability to live a decent life for the next few months. (Interview with a displaced person from Gorouol in the presence of the citizen's committee and the prefectural authorities of Téra on 27 June 2021)

This excerpt from a conversation with a displaced person reflects internally displaced people's demand for security and return to their home villages. Since the influx of people from the rural commune of Anzourou (approximately 11,000 people)<sup>28</sup>, who had settled in the regional capital of Tillabéri, displaced people are no longer satisfied with what they are offered as a solution to their situation, rejecting the idea of being settled permanently in host sites and being supported by humanitarian organisations. These populations organise nightly general meetings, use traditional media and social networks, such as WhatsApp, to get their messages across, to demand their return. Following all these actions, the government sent two Ministers of the Republic (the Minister of Defence and the Minister of the Interior) to Tillabéri to talk with displaced people and regional leaders. Their return to their home villages was organised nine days after the displacement and people were transported by the army and the national guard while the FDS were deployed in the commune. After the return of the IDPs from the commune of Anzourou, displaced people from Gorouol adopted the same strategy and were satisfied since they were able to return to their villages two weeks after their arrival in Téra. The government has since made the gradual return of all IDPs a priority. This new government policy started to be implemented through the organisation of displaced persons from Diffa, who had left their villages under pressure from Boko Haram. However, this return momentum is a political momentum that must first ensure that the causes of displacement have been resolved before people return to their villages. If minimum security conditions are not guaranteed, if returning is not voluntary and participatory with the involvement of displaced and host communities, the return will not be long-term.

Finally, insecurity changes ways of life in the long term and displacement highlights two types of actors (residents and displaced persons) whose relations are increasingly tense because of insecurity.

**Residents:** Although humanitarian programmes target displaced populations as a priority, the reality on the ground is that residents are also in a growing state of insecurity. The continuous reception of displaced persons has greatly weakened households, sometimes exposing them to hunger: “We who are here, each family has contributed to the reception of displaced people. But we are exhausted

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<sup>28</sup> “Niger : plus de 11 000 personnes déplacées en 48 heures par des attaques récurrentes contre les civils (ONU)” [Niger: More than 11,000 people displaced in 48 hours by recurrent attacks on civilians (UN)], *UN News*, 18 May 2021, <https://news.un.org/fr/story/2021/05/1096232> (page accessed on 7 September 2022).

by the fact that the conflict is dragging on. Because we thought it would end sooner rather than later. We no longer have the strength to really welcome them, we have nothing to eat<sup>29</sup>.”

In Burkina Faso, aid provided by humanitarian NGOs sometimes creates tensions between displaced populations and host communities. More and more NGOs are giving cash to displaced people, transferring money through mobile phones or giving goods in kind such as gas cylinders<sup>30</sup>. This gives rise to the image of the “wealthy displaced person”, which creates frustration among host populations who consider that displaced persons are maintained by NGOs and state social services and that they are “often treated better than we are<sup>31</sup>”. This image negatively influences the relationship between host populations and IDPs. A group of women tell us what they experience on a daily basis in the following terms: “Often when we go to fetch wood from our hosts' fields, they start to chase us away because they think that the NGOs have given us gas cylinders and that we are now better off than their women<sup>32</sup>.”

**Displaced people:** The increasingly long duration of displacement gradually creates a gap between the displaced and the residents. The former are seen by the latter as privileged beneficiaries of humanitarian protection and the aid they receive reduces their possibility of social integration. According to the accounts of the residents interviewed, humanitarian aid excludes residents who are often in the same precarious situation as the displaced:

If NGOs arrive, they call on displaced people. Some have cards, they are given food and often these displaced people eat better than we do. They prepare better than we do. It's true, no one wants to be displaced, but we feel that we have played a crucial role and we should be taken into account in the distribution of aid, otherwise the displaced are more comfortable than we are. (Interview with displaced women from Arbinda conducted on 23 June 2021 in Ouahigouya, Nord Region, Burkina Faso)

This complaint by the residents expresses a feeling that was often shared during the focus group discussions and interviews. Humanitarian action creates a certain inequality of treatment between IDPs who receive aid and host communities who share their (meagre) resources and see their standard of living decline.

Host families are supporting displaced people without being part of the humanitarian response and supporting families in the form of monetary compensation or food and basic necessities would restore some balance, especially as the crisis continues.

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<sup>29</sup> Interview conducted on 5 July 2021 with a traditional leader, Edjibara village, Koro circle, Mopti region, Mali.

<sup>30</sup> The state, through its social project “NONG Sayan” (which means “poverty is over” in English), gives mobile phones and makes cash transfers to vulnerable people in the Nord region. In this project, there seem to be more displaced people according to our surveys.

<sup>31</sup> Interview with a female kiosk manager conducted on 28 June 2021 in Ouahigouya, Nord Region, Burkina Faso.

<sup>32</sup> Interview with displaced women from Arbinda conducted on 23 June 2021 in Ouahigouya, Nord Region, Burkina Faso.

## V. Humanitarian protection: people's perceptions of the aid provided

The violence perpetrated by armed groups has led to massive displacements of civilian populations to areas considered safer. Researchers have directly observed a clear increase in the number of displaced persons compared to last year. For example, between our visits in 2020 and 2021, Téra recorded the arrival of 2,414<sup>33</sup> displaced persons, including 1,939 children, from the rural commune of Gorouol. And in Dessa, more than 300 displaced households have settled. In addition, the deteriorating security situation in some cercles of Timbuktu and Gao, namely in the cercles of Ansongo, Gourma Rharous, Niafunké and Timbuktu, has also influenced displacements in the border regions with Niger and Burkina Faso, but also Mauritania. In Niger, the localities of Intikane and Abala were already hosting 20,257 and 16,208 Malian refugees respectively on 31 March 2021<sup>34</sup>. According to figures from the UN Humanitarian Cluster on February 2021, 61% of the internally displaced population are children under 18 years of age<sup>35</sup>. The registered population of IDPs is 56% female and 44% male.

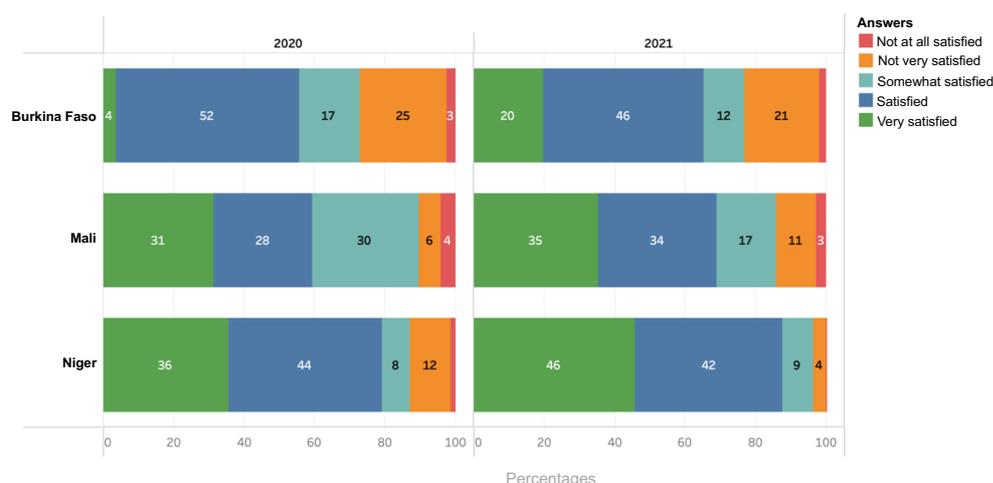
While the state is primarily responsible for protection, humanitarian organisations intervene in a complementary manner when the state is unable to meet all its obligations.

### A. Assessment of protection services

In the six months prior to the survey, the rate of respondents claiming to have received humanitarian aid is roughly the same in 2021 (39% overall; 38% in Burkina Faso, 21% in Mali and 53% in Niger) as in 2020 (41% overall; 30% in Burkina Faso, 36% in Mali but 62% in Niger). In 2021, this is the case for 59% of the IDPs and 66% of the refugees surveyed, compared to 53% and 55% in 2020. The aid received consists of food assistance (cash or vouchers in kind), household and hygiene kits and money.

Chart 19. Satisfaction with the assistance provided

Q.5.3 If you have been a direct beneficiary of a humanitarian protection programme, are you satisfied with the assistance provided to you?



<sup>33</sup> Source: Direction départementale de la protection civile, situation as of 29 June 2022 at 18:00.

<sup>34</sup> “UNHCR Niger : Situation des réfugiés maliens (31 mars 2021)” [UNHCR Niger: Situation of Malian refugees (31 March 2021)], OCHA, 27 April 2021, <https://reliefweb.int/map/niger/unhcr-niger-situation-des-r-fugis-maliens-31-mar-2021> (page accessed on 24 May 2022).

<sup>35</sup> “Rapport sur les mouvements de populations” [Report on Population Movements], UN Humanitarian Cluster, January 2021, [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/rapport\\_cmp\\_23\\_fevrier.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/rapport_cmp_23_fevrier.pdf) (page accessed on 12 October 2021).

The proportion of respondents who have received humanitarian assistance and are satisfied is stable in 2020 (42%) and 2021 (43%). Appreciation is declining in Burkina Faso with 52% in 2020 and 46% in 2021. In Loroum province, 63% are “not very satisfied” and 16% “not at all satisfied”. In Mali and Niger, 35% and 46% of the population respectively are “very satisfied”. In the Mopti region, 75% said they were “very satisfied”.

*Table 7. Main problems encountered to get in contact with humanitarian organisations*

|  | 2020 | 2021 |
|--|------|------|
| <b>We don't know how to contact them</b>   | 47 % | 55 % |
| <b>We are not consulted in decision making</b>   | 39 % | 52 % |
| <b>It is not our habit to interact with them</b>                                       | 33 % | 51 % |
| <b>We don't really understand what they are saying to us</b>                           | 22 % | 33 % |
| <b>Organisations do not respond to our questions/needs</b>                             | 18 % | 29 % |
| <b>Organisations do not hold meetings/assemblies with the community or its leaders</b> | 27 % | 27 % |
| <b>We are afraid of the consequences if we talk to them</b>                            | 13 % | 27 % |
| <b>Humanitarian organisations don't talk to people like me</b>                         | 13 % | 26 % |
| <b>The way of communicating is not respectful</b>                                      | 11 % | 23 % |
| <b>No particular problem</b>   | 18 % | 28 % |
| <b>I prefer not to answer</b>  | -    | 30 % |

61% of respondents think that humanitarian organisations interact primarily with public authorities and local elected officials; only 16% believe that they interact directly with beneficiaries.

*Table 8. Do humanitarian protection activities meet the needs of your community?*

| Country             | Never | Rarely | Often       | Always |
|---------------------|-------|--------|-------------|--------|
| <b>Burkina Faso</b> | 3 %   | 23 %   | <b>55 %</b> | 19 %   |
| <b>Mali</b>         | 9 %   | 23 %   | <b>56 %</b> | 12 %   |
| <b>Niger</b>        | 2 %   | 12 %   | <b>59 %</b> | 27 %   |
| <b>Total</b>        | 4 %   | 20 %   | <b>56 %</b> | 20 %   |

The perception of the help provided is mostly positive (56%) and when it is “rarely” or “never” the main reason given is that “not all the people who need the activities benefit from them” (64%) or because of the lack of information about the activities (21%). It should be noted that in Tera, 61% of respondents felt that the activities did not meet their needs and 71% of IDPs felt that the activities did not benefit all those who needed them.

Reinforcing this positive assessment, **humanitarian protection activities are seen as respecting local cultural codes by 57%, and by 21% “most of the time”**. Only 20% of respondents think that they do not respect them “very much” or “at all”. The programmes are not seen as discriminating in favour of one social group over another and help to strengthen local protection mechanisms (72%).

However, although protection services are valued and not questioned, information on protection services should be improved.

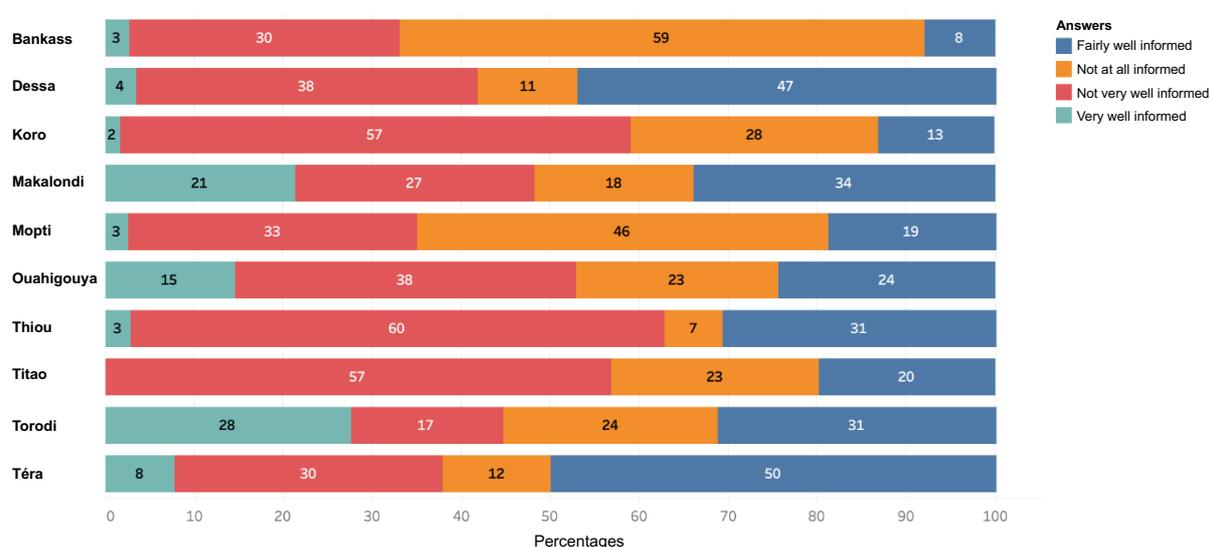
Table 9. Level of information on the protection services offered

| Country      | Not at all informed | Not very well informed | Fairly well informed | Very well informed |
|--------------|---------------------|------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Burkina Faso | 19 %                | 46 %                   | 25 %                 | 10 %               |
| Mali         | 44 %                | 40 %                   | 14 %                 | 2 %                |
| Niger        | 16 %                | 28 %                   | 41 %                 | 15 %               |
| Total        | 24 %                | 39 %                   | 27 %                 | 10 %               |

IDPs are less well informed (“not very well informed” at 42%) than refugees who say they are “fairly well informed” at 36% and “very well informed” (36%).

Chart 20. Level of information on protection services

Q.5.13 Do you consider yourself informed about the protection services available to you?



The main source of information is family and neighbours (32%), radio (17%) and then leaders and representatives of displaced persons (17%). Neither WhatsApp nor text and phone are widely used (4% each). The need for information primarily concerns general information on the assistance and services available (53%) and awareness-raising on protection issues (civil registration, child protection, gender-based violence [GBV], etc.) at 25%.

39% of respondents think that actors of protection services take their views sufficiently into account when defining aid programmes and 27% think that their views are “rarely” taken into account.

Chart 21. Type of information expected

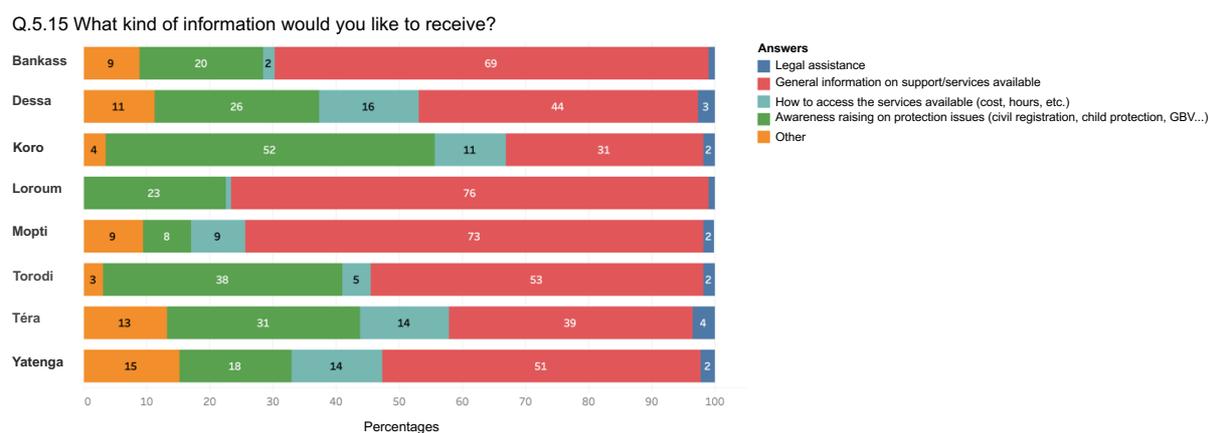
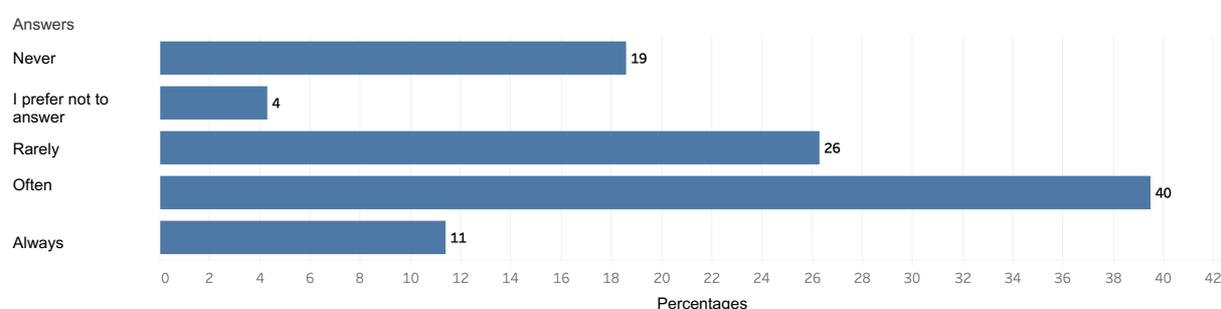


Chart 22. Taking opinions into account in humanitarian aid programmes

Q.5.16 Do you consider that humanitarian protection actors take your opinion sufficiently into account when defining their aid programmes?



Among the people who, according to the respondents, have the most influence on the definition of protection programmes, local authorities are cited first (30%), followed by women (21%) and customary and traditional leaders (10%). Women cite local authorities first (30%) and then themselves (24%); men cite local authorities (30%) and then women (19%).

76% of respondents said they did not know how to make a suggestion or complaint to humanitarian protection organisations (Burkina Faso 78%, Mali 92% and Niger 62%), and **would prefer to make it first to the leaders or representatives of the displaced persons** (21%), to the leaders or representatives of the host community or a toll-free number (14% each), at community meetings (12%) or before a complaints management committee (10%).

## B. Coordination problems

The localities studied are areas where national and international humanitarian actors converge to provide a wide range of assistance to the population, particularly in terms of basic needs such as food, water, health and shelter. However, there is a significant coordination challenge in managing humanitarian responses that was widely mentioned in the individual interviews and focus group discussions.

In Burkina Faso, more than 30 local and international NGOs are active in the Nord region. The state and NGOs officially work in a cooperative relationship, but the primacy of the initiatives lies with the

state through the Ministry of Women, National Solidarity, Family and Humanitarian Action<sup>36</sup>. However, the analysis suggests a form of competition between state social services and NGOs on the one hand, and between NGOs on the other. The state presides over the work of the different clusters and gives guidelines according to its national strategy for dealing with displaced people. Therefore, the first step in this process, namely the identification and registration of internally displaced people, is the responsibility of the state, which makes the lists available to NGOs wishing to intervene. While the initial role is theoretically that of the state, the inability of the state to act due to insufficient staff or administrative delays puts NGOs in the forefront. In the Nord region, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) took the initiative of convening public services (the regional directorate of social action, the mayor's office in Ouahigouya, the High Commission) for meetings on the situation of internally displaced persons, before the governorate reminded them in an official note that the state and its decentralised services were responsible for taking care of them<sup>37</sup>. Similarly, interviews with NGO actors show that the flow of information between NGOs is insufficient, which may also reflect implicit competition between them. They do not communicate enough with each other about their actions, despite the existence of clusters which should encourage the circulation of information. As one NGO worker indicated:

There is a sort of competition between our structures. For example, NGO X has aid for displaced people. It collects the lists with the social action services and shares them. Often, the aid doesn't reach everyone. Then, when another NGO comes, it makes the donations without knowing who were the beneficiaries of the other aid. This results in the same people receiving the aid. This creates duplication. Our organisation has tried several times to obtain lists of beneficiaries from another organisation, to no avail. (Interview with a monitoring and evaluation officer from an NGO operating in the Nord region on 29 August 2021)

This insufficient flow of information leads to situations where the beneficiaries of aid are often the same displaced people, resulting in disparities between displaced people, with some having food to spare and others waiting and eventually losing hope. This reveals a significant weakness in the identification systems and the criteria for targeting and coordinating authorities, which could be improved by greater sharing of information by authorities, but also within the protection cluster and between organisations. These shortcomings lead to exclusions and favouritism which require advocacy for more transparency and the establishment of control and accountability mechanisms.

The role of the state also differs from country to country, depending on the state's perception of the humanitarian mandate. In Burkina Faso and Niger, the state coordinates the humanitarian response and participates in clusters as a co-leader, but access to populations must be allowed everywhere, including those considered close to NSAGs. However, the reduction of humanitarian space to areas "authorised" by the government is a major constraint limiting work, access to vulnerable populations and the means to collect data, particularly concerning human rights violations perpetrated by armed groups or the FDS. In Niger, the researchers noted the absence of a permanent and functional framework for consultation and coordination on a decentralised level where the surveys took place, as well as difficulties in harmonising data between the different actors, particularly between the state and humanitarian agencies. Duplications appear in the types of support

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<sup>36</sup> Loi n° 012-20147an du 12 avril 2014 portant loi d'orientation relative à la prévention et à la gestion des risques, des crises humanitaires et des catastrophes au Burkina Faso. [Law no. 012-20147an of 12 April 2014 on the orientation law relating to the prevention and management of risks, humanitarian crises and disasters in Burkina Faso].

<sup>37</sup> Recently, the state suspended the activities of the Norwegian Refugee Council. It was accused of sabotaging government efforts to deal with internally displaced people. "Burkina Faso : les activités de l'ONG Norwegian Refugee Council suspendues" [Burkina Faso: the activities of the NGO Norwegian Refugee Council suspended], RFI, 2 October 2021, [www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20211002-burkina-faso-les-activit%C3%A9s-de-l-ong-norwegian-refugee-council-suspendues](http://www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20211002-burkina-faso-les-activit%C3%A9s-de-l-ong-norwegian-refugee-council-suspendues) (page accessed on 7 September 2022).

provided by the different humanitarian aid partners. Each humanitarian organisation or NGO makes its own assessment as a basis for assisting the displaced persons. However, it would seem more appropriate to carry out a coordinated evaluation that would provide harmonised data to serve as a basis for action by all actors. The disparate nature of this data is an obstacle to meeting needs and the effectiveness of the proposed humanitarian response. In this regard, it is up to the state to ensure better visibility of humanitarian interventions.

Respondents provide different explanations for the problems in coordinating humanitarian responses. According to a widely held view among state actors, these problems are linked to the refusal of humanitarian partners to fit their actions into the institutional framework for the coordination of assistance established by the authorities. It is the national and international humanitarian agencies that define and implement their own agendas. Most of the resources and assistance to displaced persons come from these agencies, which gives them a certain freedom and power to impose their diktat. This explains the powerlessness of the authorities to deal with them.

The state has put in place a framework for coordinating humanitarian actions at both central and decentralised levels. The problem is that the partners refuse to align themselves because they do not like transparency. We sometimes turn a blind eye because their support is essential in dealing with the humanitarian emergency created by the massive displacement of our populations fleeing the violence of bandits. (Interview with a departmental official conducted on 27 June 2021 in Téra, Tillabéri region, Mali)

However, it also emerged that the shortcomings in the mechanism for coordinating humanitarian actions are also attributable to the public authority, which is responsible for coordinating all actions and interventions that concern its administrative entity.

There is no permanent framework for consultation that brings together all the technical services and humanitarian and development partners working in the department. Instead of such a framework, committees are created on an ad hoc basis, i.e. when an emergency situation arises. Even then, most actors do not attend the meetings. In addition, there is no monitoring of the implementation of decisions taken. Like the partners... they are the ones who have the means, they do what they want. Some may intervene without the authority even being fully aware of what they are doing. It's a shame, but that's the sad reality we're witnessing. (Interview with a departmental official conducted on 27 June 2021 in Téra, Tillabéri region, Mali)

In Mali, in the areas surveyed, there are a large number of humanitarian actors, each of whom is involved in a different segment of the crisis according to their skills. However, there are actors who provide the same services but with different approaches. In a focus group in Mopti, people mentioned a multitude of actors:

Here in Koro, we benefited from distributions of cereal and we were also given a small living allowance by Mercy Corps. For food, it was mainly the Red Cross. But it has been about seven months for some and a year for others since we received anything. And worse, we found that the aid is used for other purposes, as even residents often benefit from it. Help is coming in our name but we are being left out. (Focus group with IDPs held on 3 July 2021 in the commune of Koro, Mopti region, Mali)

It seems from observation that humanitarian and state actors evolve in a kind of collaboration “in spite of themselves” and that the populations have a different perception of their role. For the latter, these actors must adapt to the populations and not the other way round. The working relationships are not conflicting, but they are far from complementary.

The types of assistance are many and varied. Each humanitarian organisation acts according to its field of intervention, according to its agenda and for a different duration of intervention. Both the host and displaced communities benefit from aid (food, training and vocational integration, Water Sanitation and Hygiene [WASH], cash support, health support, economic recovery, housing, civil status documentation for those who do not have it).

There are many humanitarian actors and their areas of intervention are varied, but the population considers the aid provided to be insufficient in the context of insecurity. Many people in need do not benefit from this humanitarian aid. One explanation for the shortfall is the size of the displaced families. Through humanitarian aid, heads of household can obtain one or two bags of rice, millet and oil when the household has more than ten people to feed. This is what one of our respondents explained in a focus group: “There are many children and the family is large, the provision for two men is not enough for us<sup>38</sup>.” According to an NGO worker:

Despite the list, many IDPs there now are not registered at the social development level. With our interventions, when we assist an IDP once, now we should not assist them again. We have to choose other IDPs who have not received assistance while the assisted IDPs are still there, they have not left. (Interview with a humanitarian worker conducted on 6 July 2021 in Bankass, Mopti region, Mali)

Another aspect of the limitations of aid relates to the identification mechanism for IDPs. Many humanitarian actors rely on state data. People interviewed in the field felt that the system for identifying people in need of assistance should be reviewed.

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<sup>38</sup> Focus group on 7 July 2021 with displaced women from Dinangourou in Koro.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The issues of human security are at the top of people's concerns, whether they relate to their role in triggering or managing the crisis: poor governance, social injustice, lack of equity (particularly in the distribution of natural resources), and impunity are decisive factors in this crisis in the central Sahel. The weakness of the Liptako-Gourma states, aggravated today by political instability and tumultuous relations with international partners, has an impact on the populations who are the first victims of NSAGs, when they are not also victims of exactions by the national armed forces and self-defence groups. This crisis has had serious humanitarian consequences and its protracted nature continues to increase the number of people in need.

While traditional mechanisms offer people initial aid, it is important that they are supported by state and international mechanisms. The lack of trust in state services is reflected in the sometimes negative assessment of the aid provided by the state and the associated frustrations. Strengthening and respecting local cultural codes is a priority, and while the local level is not necessarily the most inclusive, it does provide immediate and emergency assistance, which the states then need to support with the support of international humanitarian organisations and UN agencies. This aid should not only provide assistance for those faced with emergency displacement (health, education, food, shelter) but also economic opportunities for the displaced population and support for host communities. In the space of two surveys (2020 and 2021), the pressure on host communities is increasing and there is a risk that conflicts between communities will be exacerbated by the scarcity of available resources, demographic pressure and attacks by armed groups, with opportunities for the return of displaced people becoming more remote.

### Recommendations

1. Poverty is a decisive factor that not only generates tensions but also threatens the way people live together. Human security issues – access to employment, social justice, equitable access to public services – are people's main concerns. Programs that take into account these needs, and in particular those of the most vulnerable groups, are expected in these areas.
2. Actions to rebuild trust between community groups and strengthen social cohesion need to be intensified. For the respondents, the fight against violent extremism must be carried out in the framework of a participatory synergy involving all communities.
3. The security situation is leading to changes in local humanitarian protection systems, but local, state and international systems coexist without one undermining the others. Complementarity exists between them, but local protection mechanisms are not integrated into the official mechanisms, although they are the main mechanisms and are called upon in the first instance. It is essential to support them without institutionalising them. The role of traditional and customary authorities should also be supported. These mechanisms are immediately recognised by the population. Although they are not always the most inclusive, strengthening them should be a priority, notably through the involvement of communities and in particular the most vulnerable groups.

4. For humanitarian organisations: the length of the displacement must be taken into account. The continuing crisis is having an impact on both host and displaced communities. Frustrations are high in all communities and will only increase as the crisis continues and the pressure on resources increases. The inclusion of host communities in support mechanisms should be taken into account. Communication with the beneficiary populations must also be strengthened and systematised.
5. For the state: the role of the states, while different in the three countries, is also sometimes a constraint on humanitarian action. Although the states are not parties to the conflict in the Liptako-Gourma region but the targets of NSAGs, they have a primary responsibility to ensure the protection of their populations. It is up to them to support displaced communities and ensure that they receive assistance and can return to their homes once security is restored. However, access to conflict areas and to all affected populations is sometimes questioned and not guaranteed to humanitarian organisations. Collaboration between the traditional, state and humanitarian mechanisms is even more essential as the crisis persists and actions are complementary. Coordinated work is essential and will also enable beneficiaries to better understand and access protection mechanisms when almost half of the people asked say they do not know how to contact them.

# Annex

## AHCR-DFID-SIPRI-DRC questionnaire

### Humanitarian research programme on the protection of people in war and conflict zones in the Liptako-Gourma region

| QUESTIONNAIRE     |   |  |  |                                  |
|-------------------|---|--|--|----------------------------------|
| CONSENTEMENT      |   |  |  |                                  |
| <b>CST</b>        | <b>Note to facilitator:</b> Please inform the applicant:  |  |  |                                  |
|                   | <i>(a) the subject and objectives of this study; (b) how this research will be conducted; (c) the type of data collected and how this data is processed; (d) the recipients of this study; (e) the EU General Regulation (No. 2016/679) on data protection and the rights of individuals; and (f) the fact that participation in this study is voluntary.</i> |  |  |                                  |
|                   | <b>Contact:</b>   |  |  |                                  |
|                   | I declare that I have been sufficiently informed about the study and have had the opportunity to ask any questions I felt necessary to understand it.   |  | <b>Code: 1 = Yes; 0 = No</b>   |                                  |
|                   | I agree to participate in the AHRC-DFID Liptako-Gourma study and understand how my data will be processed as described in this information notice.  |  | <b>If CST = 0 then the survey is over.</b> [Please look for another person] <input type="checkbox"/>   |                                  |
| I. IDENTIFICATION |   |  |  |                                  |
| ID                | Survey ID   | Facilitator code:<br> _ _ _ _  | Household code:  _ _ _ _ _   | Questionnaire number:  _ _Q_ _ _ |
| <b>1.1</b>        | Country   |  | _____  |                                  |
| <b>1.2</b>        | Name of the region  |  | _____  |                                  |
| <b>1.3</b>        | Name of the cercle/province/department  |  | _____  |                                  |
| <b>1.4</b>        | Name of the commune/  |  | _____  |                                  |
| <b>1.5</b>        | Name of the village/neighbourhood   |  | _____  |                                  |
| <b>1.6</b>        | Place of residence  |  | <b>Code: 1 = Urban;</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
|                   |   |  | <b>2 = Rural</b>   |                                  |
| <b>1.7</b>        | Date of the survey  |  | _ _  /  _ _  /  _ _ _  DD/MM/YYYY  |                                  |
|                   | Start time/end time   |  | _ _ :  _ _  -  _ _ :  _ _  (HH: MM – HH: MM)   |                                  |
| <b>1.8</b>        | Gender of respondent  |  | <b>Code: 1 = Male; 2 = Female</b> <input type="checkbox"/>   |                                  |
| <b>1.9</b>        | Age of the respondent   |  | Age: _____   |                                  |
| <b>1.10</b>       | Marital status  |  | <b>Code:</b><br><br>1. Single<br>2. Married<br>3. Separated<br>4. Divorced<br>5. Widow(er)   |                                  |
| <b>1.11</b>       | Number of children  |  | _ _  |                                  |
| <b>1.12</b>       | <b>1.12. a</b>  | Educational level of the respondent (last qualification obtained)<br><br><b>If 1.12.a = 1 go to 1.16</b> | <b>Code:</b><br><br>1. Not enrolled<br>2. Primary<br>3. Middle (lower secondary school)<br>4. Secondary (upper secondary school)<br>5. Higher education (university) |                                  |
|                   | <b>1.12. b</b>  | Type of school attended  | <b>Code:</b><br><br>1. Formal state or private school<br>2. Official Franco-Arabic school  |                                  |

|             |               |  |  |
|-------------|---------------|--|--|
|             |               |  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Denominational: Koranic/Bible school</li> <li>4. Both (denominational and formal)</li> </ol>   |
| <b>1.13</b> |               | What is your main job/(socio-professional) activity?   | <p><b>Code:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Farmer/market gardener</li> <li>2. Livestock herder</li> <li>3. Fisher</li> <li>4. Trader</li> <li>5. Salaried employee (non-civil servant)</li> <li>6. Public official</li> <li>7. Artisan</li> <li>8. Not in paid employment</li> <li>9. Homemaker</li> <li>10. Student/pupil/apprentice</li> <li>11. Other</li> </ol>   |
| <b>1.14</b> | <b>1.14.a</b> | Do you have a particular social role in your community?<br><br><b>If 1= yes go to 1.14 b otherwise 1.15</b>      | <p><b>Code:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Yes</li> <li>2. No</li> </ol>  |
| <b>1.14</b> | <b>1.14.b</b> | If so, which? (one possible answer)  | <p><b>Code:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Community leader (village chief, neighbourhood chief, clan chief, fraction/tribe chief)</li> <li>2. Religious leader (imam, priest, traditional cult...)</li> <li>3. Head of land</li> <li>4. M/F involved in an association or community group</li> <li>5. Member of a women's group</li> <li>6. Member of a youth group</li> <li>7. Member of a professional confederation</li> <li>8. Traditional communicators (griots)</li> <li>9. Other to be specified _____</li> </ol> |
| <b>1.15</b> | <b>1.15.a</b> | Status of the household/respondent<br><br><b>If 1.15.a = 1 go to 1.15.b<br/>If 1.15.a is not 1, go to 1.15.c</b> | <p><b>Code:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Resident</li> <li>2. Nomad/transhumant on the move</li> <li>3. Internally displaced person</li> <li>4. Refugee</li> <li>5. Asylum seeker</li> <li>6. Stateless</li> <li>7. Rejected</li> <li>8. Migrant</li> <li>9. Internally displaced person or returned refugee</li> <li>10. Other _____</li> </ol>  |
|             | <b>1.15.b</b> | If you are a resident, why did you move here?  | <p><b>Code:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. From the locality</li> <li>2. Family reason</li> <li>3. Work</li> <li>4. Forced displacement</li> <li>5. Studies</li> <li>6. Other</li> </ol>  |
|             | <b>1.15.c</b> | If you are displaced, what type of displacement fits your situation?   | <p><b>Code:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I am displaced post-incident</li> <li>2. I am displaced preventatively</li> <li>3. I am nocturnally displaced (pendulum displacement)</li> <li>4. I was displaced and then re-displaced to another community</li> <li>5. I was displaced post-incident and I returned</li> <li>6. I was displaced preventatively and I returned</li> <li>7. I prefer not to answer</li> </ol>  |

|  |  |  |                                 |
|--|--|--|---------------------------------|
|  |  |  | 8. Other to be specified: _____ |
|--|--|--|---------------------------------|

| II. Identification of threats, risks and vulnerabilities |   |              |   |
|--|---|--------------|---|
| 2.1  | Which of the following problems is of most concern to you and your family?  | <b>Code:</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Economic problems (unemployment, lack of resources)</li> <li>2. Governance problems (corruption, absence of the state, lack of justice/basic social services)</li> <li>3. Security problems (violence, presence of armed state and non-state actors, banditry)</li> <li>4. Social and protection problems (access to housing, education, health, etc.)</li> <li>5. Climate problems/limited access to natural resources (deforestation, floods, drought/desertification, erosion...)</li> <li>6. I don't know.</li> <li>7. Other (please specify) __</li> </ol>   |
| 2.2  | What are the most important economic issues for you and your family?<br><br><b>Give 3 choices and rank them in order of importance with the most important (1) important (2) less important (3)</b>   | <b>Code:</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Unemployment/lack of economic opportunity</li> <li>2. Poor harvests</li> <li>3. Limited access to agricultural land</li> <li>4. Limited access to grazing land</li> <li>5. Restricted access to fairs and markets</li> <li>6. Scarcity of fishery resources</li> <li>7. Premature excess mortality of livestock</li> <li>8. Other (please specify) __</li> </ol>  |
| 2.3  | What are the most important governance issues for you and your family?<br><br><b>Give 3 choices and rank them in order of importance with the most important (1) important (2) less important (3)</b> | <b>Code:</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Limited access to administrative services (civil status, mayor's offices, etc.)</li> <li>2. Limited access to justice and police/gendarmerie services</li> <li>3. Lack of infrastructure (roads, electricity, water, etc.)</li> <li>4. Access to public services (schools, hospitals, social services, etc.)</li> <li>5. Absence of state authorities</li> <li>6. Discrimination</li> <li>7. Corruption</li> <li>8. Social/hierarchical injustice</li> <li>9. Other (please specify) _</li> </ol>   |
| 2.4  | What are the most important security issues for you and your family?<br><br><b>Give 3 choices and rank them in order of importance with the most important (1) important (2) less important (3)</b>   | <b>Code:</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Banditry, armed and unarmed robbery</li> <li>2. Violence between communities</li> <li>3. Violence within the community</li> <li>4. Presence of militias and armed groups</li> <li>5. Absence of security forces</li> <li>6. Presence of security forces</li> <li>7. Presence of and cohabitation with displaced persons</li> <li>8. Presence of mines or unexploded ordnance</li> <li>9. Circulation of small arms and light weapons</li> <li>10. Military operations</li> <li>11. Levying of illegal taxes</li> <li>12. Presence of traffickers</li> <li>13. Problem of cohabitation with displaced persons</li> <li>14. Problem of cohabitation with the host community</li> <li>15. Gender-based violence</li> <li>16. Other (please specify) _</li> </ol> |

|                   |  |   |
|-------------------|--|---|
| <p><b>2.5</b></p> | <p>For you and your family, what are the most important issues related to basic social services?</p> <p><b>Give 3 choices and rank them in order of importance with the most important (1) important (2) less important (3)</b></p>                                | <p><b>Code:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Limited access to housing</li> <li>2. Limited access to civil status services</li> <li>3. Limited access to education</li> <li>4. Limited access to health facilities</li> <li>5. Limited access to psychosocial support</li> <li>6. Limited access to water and food</li> <li>7. Other (please specify) _____</li> </ol>   |
| <p><b>2.6</b></p> | <p>Have you or any member of your family experienced the following?</p> <p><b>Code for each option:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Yes</li> <li>2. No</li> </ol>  | <p><b>Code:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discrimination related to age</li> <li>2. Discrimination related to gender</li> <li>3. Discrimination related to socio-occupational status</li> <li>4. Discrimination related to religion</li> <li>5. Discrimination related to your ethnic group</li> <li>6. Conflicts between communities/villages</li> <li>7. Conflicts between farmers/farmers</li> <li>8. Conflicts between farmers/herders</li> <li>9. Conflicts between herders/herders</li> <li>10. Armed highway bandits (coupeurs de route)</li> <li>11. Physical aggression</li> <li>12. Retaliatory attacks on villages</li> <li>13. Murder, assassination</li> <li>14. Theft, looting</li> <li>15. Abductions</li> <li>16. Gender-based and sexual violence</li> <li>17. Early/forced marriages</li> <li>18. Torture and inhuman treatment</li> <li>19. Arbitrary arrest/illegal detention</li> <li>20. Forced recruitment</li> <li>21. Discovery of mines or unexploded ordnance</li> <li>22. Collection of illegal taxes (racketeering, extortion).</li> </ol> |
| <p><b>2.7</b></p> | <p>Who are the main victims of violence that you know?</p> <p><b>Code for each option:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Yes</li> <li>2. No</li> </ol>   | <p><b>Code:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Children</li> <li>2. Women</li> <li>3. Men</li> <li>4. Elderly</li> <li>5. People with a disability</li> <li>6. Religious minorities</li> <li>7. Ethnic groups</li> <li>8. Foreigners</li> <li>9. Displaced persons</li> <li>10. Local, traditional or religious authorities</li> <li>11. Defence and security forces</li> <li>12. Livestock herders</li> <li>13. Farmers</li> <li>14. Other (please specify) ___</li> </ol>  |
| <p><b>2.8</b></p> | <p><b>If you are a member of the host community or a resident</b></p> <p>What do you think about the presence of refugees and displaced people in your community?</p> <p><b>If the person is displaced or a refugee do not ask this question and go to 2.9</b></p> | <p><b>Code:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. This creates mistrust in the community</li> <li>2. Risk of tension related to housing, land and property</li> <li>3. Risk of inter-community tensions</li> <li>4. Pressure on basic social services (education, health)</li> <li>5. Pressure on livelihoods</li> <li>6. They get the help and we don't</li> <li>7. Lack of socio-economic opportunities</li> <li>8. Concerns for community health</li> <li>9. We are happy to welcome displaced people</li> <li>10. This does not change anything for our community</li> <li>11. My family has no contact with displaced persons</li> <li>12. Other (please specify) ___</li> <li>13. I prefer not to answer</li> </ol>   |
| <p><b>2.9</b></p> | <p>Can you move freely outside your community?</p>   | <p><b>Code:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Yes</li> <li>2. No</li> <li>3. I prefer not to answer</li> </ol>  |

|             |  |  |
|-------------|--|--|
| <b>2.10</b> | If not, why?   | <b>Code:</b><br><br>1. I have no identity papers<br>2. Proximity to combat zones<br>3. Insecurity on the roads<br>4. Other to be specified   |
| <b>2.11</b> | Do you feel safe?<br><br><b>If 2.11 = 2, go to 2.12 otherwise go to 2.13</b>                         | <b>Code:</b><br><br>1. Yes<br>2. No<br>3. I prefer not to answer   |
| <b>2.12</b> | If you feel unsafe, what are the reasons?<br><br><b>Code for each option:</b><br><br>1. Yes<br>2. No | <b>Code:</b><br><br>1. Proximity to combat zones<br>2. Absence of state authorities<br>3. Presence of armed state actors<br>4. Presence of armed non-state actors<br>5. Destruction of public infrastructure<br>6. Occupation/destruction of houses<br>7. Extortion of property<br>8. Illegal/arbitrary detention<br>9. Levying of illegal taxes<br>10. Attacks/threats against the population<br>11. Criminal activities<br>12. Gender-based violence<br>13. Ethnic, religious and/or social discrimination<br>14. Presence of mines and explosive devices<br>15. Other: (please specify) _<br>16. I prefer not to answer |

| <b>Local protection mechanisms and the social norms and rules on which they are based</b> |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>3.1</b>  | How do you adapt your living habits to the situation of insecurity?<br><br><b>Code: (for each answer)</b><br><br>1. Yes<br>2. No                   | <b>Code:</b><br><br>1. I stopped some of my activities<br>2. I joined a self-defence group<br>3. I joined a religious group<br>4. I bought a gun to defend myself<br>5. I have changed or limited my travel<br>6. My husband/wife/children do some of my activities for me<br>7. I moved to a safer area<br>8. Other (please specify) _____   |
| <b>3.2</b>  | What does "protection" mean to you?<br><br><b>3 possible answers</b><br><b>If 3.2 = 9 and 10 go to 3.3</b>   | <b>Code:</b><br><br>1. Security and physical protection<br>2. Psychological well-being and protection<br>3. Respect for the rights of the individual<br>4. Protection of children<br>5. Protection against sexual and gender-based violence<br>6. Protection against mines and explosive devices<br>7. Access to basic social services (such as education, health, water, justice, civil registration, economic resources)<br>8. I have heard of it but I don't know what it means<br>9. I've never heard of it<br>10. Other (please specify) _____ |
| <b>3.3</b>  | In the event of a protection incident, who would you report it to first?<br><br><b>3 possible answers</b><br><b>If 3.3 = 13/14 or 15 go to 3.4</b> | <b>Code:</b><br><br>1. To family<br>2. To friends or neighbours<br>3. Community leaders<br>4. Local elected officials (mayors and councillors)<br>5. Local authorities (governors, prefects and sub-prefects)<br>6. Defence and security forces (army, gendarmerie, police, national guard)<br>7. To a non-state militia or armed group<br>8. To the justice system<br>9. To the international forces/United Nations  |

|   |  |  |                           |  |   |  |                                   |  |   |  |                       |  |                           |  |   |  |                             |  |                                |  |                    |  |
|---|--|--|---------------------------|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|--|---|--|-----------------------|--|---------------------------|--|---|--|-----------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|--------------------|--|
|   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. To a member of the community protection committee (CLPC)</li> <li>11. To the religious leader</li> <li>12. To the social worker/local NGO association</li> <li>13. No one, because I don't know who to talk to</li> <li>14. Other (please specify) _____</li> <li>15. I prefer not to answer.</li> </ul>  |                           |  |   |  |                                   |  |   |  |                       |  |                           |  |   |  |                             |  |                                |  |                    |  |
| <b>3.4</b>  | <p>Are judicial institutions operational in your area?</p> <p><b>If 3.4 = 1 go to 3.5 otherwise go to 3.6</b></p>  | <p><b>Code:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Yes</li> <li>2. No</li> <li>3. I don't know</li> <li>4. I prefer not to answer</li> </ul>  |                           |  |   |  |                                   |  |   |  |                       |  |                           |  |   |  |                             |  |                                |  |                    |  |
| <b>3.5</b>  | If so, which ones?   | <p><b>Code:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Civil court</li> <li>2. Military court</li> <li>3. Customary court</li> <li>4. Religious court</li> <li>5. Other to be specified: _____</li> <li>6. I prefer not to answer</li> </ul>  |                           |  |   |  |                                   |  |   |  |                       |  |                           |  |   |  |                             |  |                                |  |                    |  |
| <b>3.6</b>  | Which of the justice systems do you think is more impartial?   | <p><b>Code:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The state system (court)</li> <li>2. The customary system</li> <li>3. The religious system</li> <li>4. None of these</li> <li>5. Other to be specified _____</li> </ul>  |                           |  |   |  |                                   |  |   |  |                       |  |                           |  |   |  |                             |  |                                |  |                    |  |
| <b>3.7</b>  | <p>When you have difficulties in reporting violations, give your level of agreement with the following statements:</p> <p><b>Code for each option:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Disagree</li> <li>2. Neither agree nor disagree,</li> <li>3. Agree</li> <li>4. Do not wish to answer</li> </ul> | <p><b>Code:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I am not the one who can make the decision to report a violation, even if I am the victim</li> <li>2. There is nowhere to report violations</li> <li>3. The places that exist to report violations are too far away</li> <li>4. The places exist but I lack the financial means to use them</li> <li>5. Even if violations are reported, nothing is done to punish those who violate rights</li> <li>6. If we report violations, we could face reprisals</li> <li>7. We do not trust the authorities</li> <li>8. We are discriminated against by the community or our families when we speak out</li> <li>9. Those who commit these violations are relatives and it is dealt with in the family</li> <li>10. I don't have any difficulties.</li> </ul> |                           |  |   |  |                                   |  |   |  |                       |  |                           |  |   |  |                             |  |                                |  |                    |  |
| <b>3.8</b>  | <p>In the following situations, who do you consult first?</p> <p>Open-ended response for each option. The respondent must reply with an actor</p>  | <table border="1"> <tr><td>You are a victim of theft</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Your field has been destroyed by a herd</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Your child has hurt another child</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Your husband/wife/friend was injured on the way to the market</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Your child is missing</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>You receive death threats</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Young people in the family have no work</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>The health centre is closed</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Your family has nothing to eat</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Your father is ill</td><td></td></tr> </table>  | You are a victim of theft |  | Your field has been destroyed by a herd |  | Your child has hurt another child |  | Your husband/wife/friend was injured on the way to the market |  | Your child is missing |  | You receive death threats |  | Young people in the family have no work |  | The health centre is closed |  | Your family has nothing to eat |  | Your father is ill |  |
| You are a victim of theft                                     |  |  |                           |  |   |  |                                   |  |   |  |                       |  |                           |  |   |  |                             |  |                                |  |                    |  |
| Your field has been destroyed by a herd                       |  |  |                           |  |   |  |                                   |  |   |  |                       |  |                           |  |   |  |                             |  |                                |  |                    |  |
| Your child has hurt another child                             |  |  |                           |  |   |  |                                   |  |   |  |                       |  |                           |  |   |  |                             |  |                                |  |                    |  |
| Your husband/wife/friend was injured on the way to the market |  |  |                           |  |   |  |                                   |  |   |  |                       |  |                           |  |   |  |                             |  |                                |  |                    |  |
| Your child is missing   |  |  |                           |  |   |  |                                   |  |   |  |                       |  |                           |  |   |  |                             |  |                                |  |                    |  |
| You receive death threats                                     |  |  |                           |  |   |  |                                   |  |   |  |                       |  |                           |  |   |  |                             |  |                                |  |                    |  |
| Young people in the family have no work                       |  |  |                           |  |   |  |                                   |  |   |  |                       |  |                           |  |   |  |                             |  |                                |  |                    |  |
| The health centre is closed                                   |  |  |                           |  |   |  |                                   |  |   |  |                       |  |                           |  |   |  |                             |  |                                |  |                    |  |
| Your family has nothing to eat                                |  |  |                           |  |   |  |                                   |  |   |  |                       |  |                           |  |   |  |                             |  |                                |  |                    |  |
| Your father is ill  |  |  |                           |  |   |  |                                   |  |   |  |                       |  |                           |  |   |  |                             |  |                                |  |                    |  |
| <b>3.9</b>  | <p>Are there any protection services in your area?</p> <p><b>If 3.9= 2 go to 3.13</b></p>  | <p><b>Code:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Yes</li> <li>2. No</li> </ul>  |                           |  |   |  |                                   |  |   |  |                       |  |                           |  |   |  |                             |  |                                |  |                    |  |

|             |   |  |
|-------------|---|--|
| <b>3.10</b> | If so, who organises it?  | <b>Code:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Local protection committee</li> <li>2. Community leader</li> <li>3. Religious leader</li> <li>4. State authorities</li> <li>5. Local NGO</li> <li>6. International NGO</li> <li>7. Community groups</li> <li>8. The United Nations</li> <li>9. Other (please specify) __</li> </ol>   |
| <b>3.11</b> | Do you have access to it?<br><br><b>If 3.11 = 1 and 3 go to 3.13</b>  | <b>Code:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Yes</li> <li>2. No</li> <li>3. I prefer not to answer</li> </ol>  |
| <b>3.12</b> | If no, why not?   | <b>Code:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Social barrier</li> <li>2. I do not have the power to decide</li> <li>3. Cost too high</li> <li>4. Too far away</li> <li>5. Insecurity on the way to/near the service</li> <li>6. Poor quality services</li> <li>7. Discrimination within these services</li> <li>8. I don't know what services exist</li> <li>9. Other (please specify) __</li> </ol>                            |
| <b>3.13</b> | Is there a state or non-state mechanism to resolve tensions/conflicts?<br><br><b>If 3.13 = 1 go to 3.14 and 3.15</b><br><b>If 3.13 = 2 and 3 go to 3.16</b> | <b>Code:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Yes</li> <li>2. No</li> <li>3. I don't know</li> </ol>  |
| <b>3.14</b> | If yes, which?  | _____  |
| <b>3.15</b> | If yes, does the system effectively avoid or resolve tensions/conflicts?  | <b>Code:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Yes</li> <li>2. No</li> <li>3. I don't know</li> </ol>  |
| <b>3.16</b> | In the area where you live, do you feel represented by members of your community?   | <b>Code:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Yes</li> <li>2. No</li> <li>3. I prefer not to answer</li> </ol>  |
| <b>3.17</b> | <b>If the respondent is male</b><br><br>How are men are represented in these community bodies?  | <b>Code:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Not represented at all</li> <li>2. Less than 1 man for every 4 representatives</li> <li>3. Approximately 1 man for every 4 representatives</li> <li>4. Approximately 1 man for every 3 representatives</li> <li>5. Approximately 1 man for every 2 representatives</li> <li>6. All representatives are men</li> <li>7. I don't know</li> <li>8. I prefer not to answer</li> </ol> |
| <b>3.19</b> | <b>If the person is female</b><br><br>How are women represented in these community bodies?  | <b>Code:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Not represented at all</li> <li>2. Less than 1 woman for every 4 representatives</li> <li>3. Approximately 1 woman for every 4 representatives</li> <li>4. Approximately 1 woman for every 3 representatives</li> <li>5. Approximately 1 woman for every 2 representatives</li> <li>6. All representatives are women</li> </ol>   |

|             |  |   |
|-------------|--|---|
|             |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. I don't know</li> <li>8. I prefer not to answer</li> </ul>  |
| <b>3.20</b> | <p><b>If the person is an IDP</b></p> <p>How are displaced people represented in these community bodies?</p>   | <p><b>Code:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Not represented at all</li> <li>2. Less than 1 IDP for every 4 representatives</li> <li>3. Approximately 1 IDP for every 4 representatives</li> <li>4. Approximately 1 IDP for every 3 representatives</li> <li>5. Approximately 1 IDP for every 2 representatives</li> <li>6. IDPs are represented outside the community structures</li> <li>7. I don't know</li> <li>8. I prefer not to answer</li> </ul> |
| <b>3.21</b> | <p><b>If the person is between 15 and 24 years old</b></p> <p>How are young people aged 15-24 represented in community management structures (community bodies, management committee, etc.)?</p> | <p><b>Code:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Not represented at all</li> <li>2. Less than 1 young person for every 4 representatives</li> <li>3. Approximately 1 young person for every 4 representatives</li> <li>4. Approximately 1 young person for every 3 representatives</li> <li>5. Approximately 1 young person for every 2 representatives</li> <li>6. I don't know</li> <li>7. I prefer not to answer</li> </ul>                               |

| <b>Logics of engagement and proposal for resolution</b> |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>4.1</b>  | <p>What do you think is the main reason why people engage in conflict?</p>   | <p><b>Code:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Economic motivation</li> <li>2. Political motivation</li> <li>3. Social marginalisation</li> <li>4. Religious motivation</li> <li>5. Psychological vulnerability</li> <li>6. Influence of social group</li> <li>7. Need for recognition/status</li> <li>8. Honour and moral/family obligation</li> <li>9. Revenge/Reparation</li> <li>10. Coercion/threat if they do not engage</li> <li>11. Need to defend oneself</li> <li>12. Other (please specify) __</li> </ul>   |
| <b>4.2</b>  | <p>Reducing violence requires:</p> <p><b>Give your level of agreement with the following statements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Disagree,</li> <li>2. Neither agree nor disagree,</li> <li>3. Agree,</li> <li>4. Does not want to answer</li> </ul> | <p><b>Code:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strengthening the customary justice system</li> <li>2. Strengthening peace and citizenship education</li> <li>3. Strengthening the role of community actors</li> <li>4. Creating work opportunities for young people</li> <li>5. Reducing access to weapons</li> <li>6. Assisting in the integration of displaced persons</li> <li>7. Strengthening the role of women</li> <li>8. Strengthening the role of young people</li> <li>9. Promoting dialogue/mediation between people (parties in conflict)</li> <li>10. Regulating access to and the use of natural resources in an equitable manner</li> </ul> |
| <b>4.3</b>  | <p>Which actors do you think would be best suited to reducing violence?</p>  | <p><b>Code:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Every citizen</li> <li>2. Traditional and customary authorities/leaders</li> <li>3. Religious authorities/leaders</li> <li>4. The defence and security forces</li> <li>5. The government</li> <li>6. Local elected officials</li> </ul>   |

## Table of maps, tables and charts

### Maps

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Map 1. Liptako-Gourma region .....   | 7 |
| Map 2. Potential geographical coverage of operational research Consortium SIPRI-LASDEL-CGD-POINT SUD-DRC ..... | 9 |

### Tables

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Table 1. Number of IDPs .....   | 7  |
| Table 2. Research area and surveyed communes in Burkina Faso .....                        | 9  |
| Table 3. Research area and surveyed communes in Mali .....                                | 10 |
| Table 4. Research area and surveyed communes in Niger.....                                | 10 |
| Table 5. Distribution of interviews .....   | 11 |
| Table 6. Main reasons for insecurity.....   | 25 |
| Table 7. Main problems encountered to get in contact with humanitarian organisations..... | 41 |
| Table 8. Do humanitarian protection activities meet the needs of your community?.....     | 41 |
| Table 9. Level of information on the protection services offered.....                     | 42 |

### Charts

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Chart 1. Distribution of the sample.....  | 12 |
| Chart 2. Nature of displacements.....   | 13 |
| Chart 3. Nature of the risks, threats and vulnerabilities.....                            | 14 |
| Chart 4. Main economic problems.....  | 15 |
| Chart 5. Main reasons for engaging in conflict.....                                       | 18 |
| Chart 6. Main reasons for engaging in conflict, Mali .....                                | 18 |
| Chart 7. Main reasons for engaging in conflict, Burkina Faso .....                        | 19 |
| Chart 8. Main reasons for engaging in conflict, Niger .....                               | 19 |
| Chart 9. Main reasons for engaging in conflict, by gender.....                            | 20 |
| Chart 10. Main reasons for engaging in conflict, 2020.....                                | 20 |
| Chart 11. Main governance problems .....  | 22 |
| Chart 12. Main security problems.....   | 24 |
| Chart 13. Local protection mechanisms.....  | 28 |
| Chart 14. Organisers of local protection mechanisms .....                                 | 29 |
| Chart 15. Meaning of the word “protection” .....  | 30 |
| Chart 16. Impact of the presence of refugees and displaced persons in the community ..... | 31 |
| Chart 17. Judicial system considered the most impartial.....                              | 34 |
| Chart 18. Accessibility of protection services.....                                       | 35 |
| Chart 19. Satisfaction with the assistance provided.....                                  | 40 |
| Chart 20. Level of information on protection services .....                               | 42 |
| Chart 21. Type of information expected .....  | 43 |
| Chart 22. Taking opinions into account in humanitarian aid programmes .....               | 43 |