



Just Future Programme – Cordaid  
Perception survey conducted from 29 September to 8 October 2022

# Perceptions of security in the regions of Mopti, Gao and Timbuktu in Mali

////// Restitution of Q2 field survey



SIPRI and POINT SUD  
Cordaid funding

JUST FUTURE  
PROGRAMME

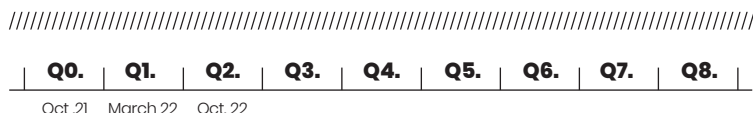
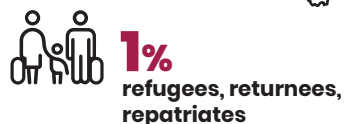
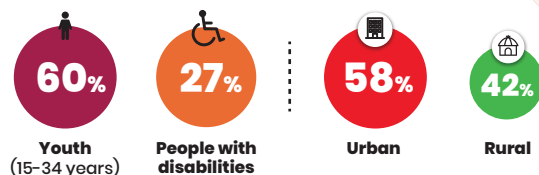


## Methodology

As part of the Cordaid-funded "Just Future" programme, SIPRI and its partner POINT SUD are conducting perception surveys in the regions of Mopti, Timbuktu and Gao. The surveys cover 16 localities spread over 16 communes and have a representative sample size of 524 respondents.

The questionnaires are administered by a team of three female facilitators and seven male facilitators.

In line with CORDAID's expectations of the least represented groups, particular attention was paid to the inclusion of women, youth, people with disabilities and displaced persons or refugees. The sample is therefore distributed as follows:



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## Survey areas

/// Source: mapping of Mali, carried out by Dr. O. Dembélé, coordinator of POINT SUD.

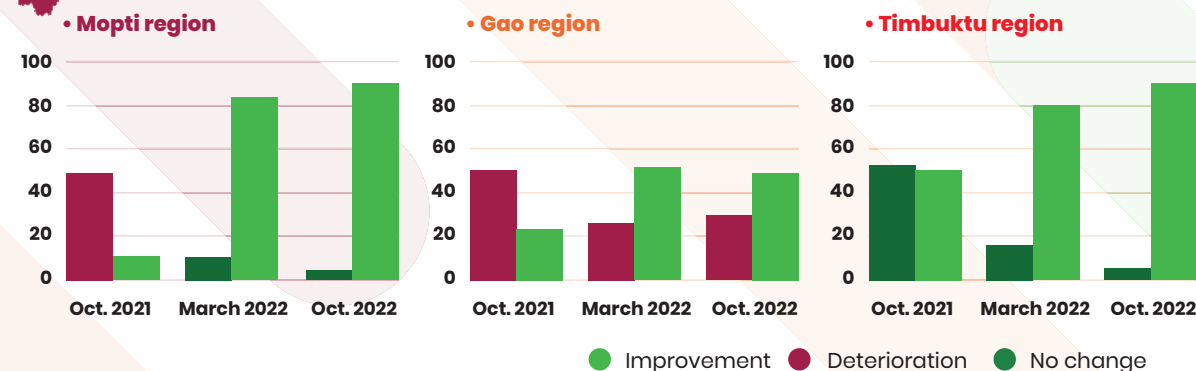
- Borders of the study municipalities
- Borders of the study regions



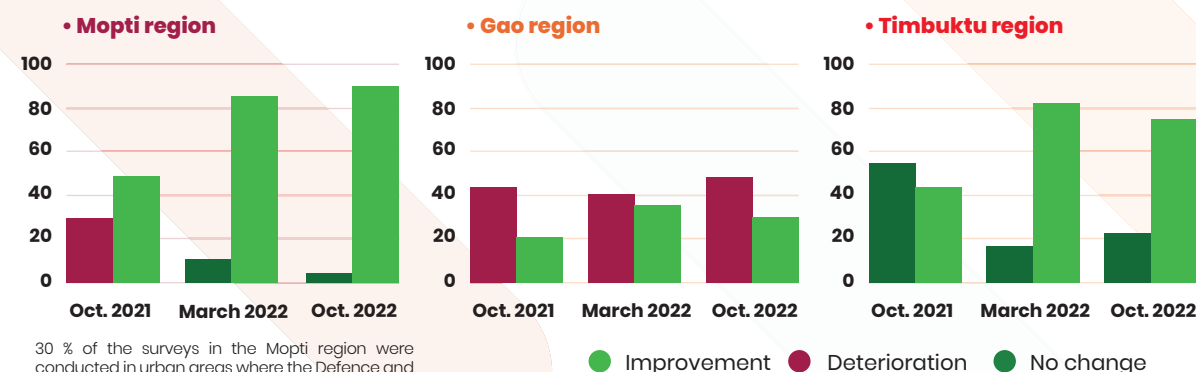
## Perceptions of security



### Perceptions of the security situation at national level



### Perceptions of the security situation at local level



30 % of the surveys in the Mopti region were conducted in urban areas where the Defence and Security Forces (DSF) are more visible. Perceptions in rural areas differ.



## Main reasons for insecurity

### Gao region:

24%

Attacks, robberies and threats against the population

15%

Violence from non-state armed groups

15%

Proximity to combat zones

In October 2022, the clashes between elements of the MSA-D (Mouvement pour le Salut de l'Azawad- Dawsahak) signatory group and members of the Islamic State in the Sahel Province in the Ménaka region resulted in the displacement of a significant section of the population to urban areas. This raised concerns about the capacity for host communities to provide for the IDPs' daily needs in a tense economic context.

### Mopti region:

28%

Poverty unemployment and food insecurity

28%

Violence from non-state armed groups

14%

Absence of local authorities (mayors)

14%

Absence of defence and security forces

### Timbuktu region:

50%

Absence of local authorities (mayors) (Especially in rural areas)

50%

Absence of defence and security forces

## Relations between the population and the state security forces



The perceptions reflect the respondents' subjective impressions. They provide information about how people understand and interpret what they see, believe, think and feel, and most importantly, how they make sense of their environment.



## Security actors perceived as most visible and present at local level

56%

FAMa

49%

Gendarmerie

48%

National guard

45%

Police

The presence of the army and the perception of security varies by region. Respondents indicate that Defence and Security Forces (DSF) patrols are spotted more frequently within cities and on major roads than in outlying neighbourhoods and peripheral areas. The presence of DSF may also represent an additional risk of exposure to the population as they are prime targets for jihadist groups.



## Confidence in security actors expressed towards

96%

The army, gendarmerie, national guard, and police



## Actors considered as sources of insecurity

43%

Self-defence groups

47%

MINUSMA

Although they play an important role in protecting communities in the absence of the forces or act as intermediaries between the population and them, they are accused of outlawed behaviour (racketeering) and arbitrary violence (intimidation, discrimination), particularly in the regions of Gao and Timbuktu.

Respondents said that the UN mission does not respond to attacks and is a prime target for jihadist groups, exposing the surrounding population. The mandate is misunderstood and subject to many rumours.



## Limitations expressed by the populations on their relations with Defence and Security Forces

The subject is considered "sensitive" by the respondents and due to the following limitations:

- **Lack of intervention** of forces in case of attacks (especially in case of theft of livestock);
- **Fear of retaliation** by jihadi groups in case of contact with the forces;
- **Arbitrary behaviour** including bribery and blackmailing, which are particularly blamed on the gendarmerie and police forces;
- **Mutual mistrust** between the forces and the population due to insecurity, lack of confidentiality during procedures, lack of knowledge of local realities and prejudices that may exist.



In October 2022, respondents expressed concern over Defence and Security Forces' inability to distinguish between combatants and civilian actors and the daily risks this entailed for the population living in the three regions surveyed.

## Local civil society and security issues



For **76%** of respondents, local civil society actors have a role to play in security issues. The most cited actors, in order of frequency, are:



**Youth associations**

81 %



**Women's associations**

77 %



**Religious associations and organisations**

73 %



**Community associations and movements / herders' and farmers' associations, citizens' associations**

57 %



**Village groupings**

53 %

### Roles and activities carried out

- Security awareness and information meetings
- Transmission of security-related information to local and national political authorities
- Establishment of direct contacts and exchanges with the forces
- Awareness raising against local tensions and mediation



## Limitations faced by local civil society on security issues

The population does not resort directly to civil society actors on security issues. The main reasons are:

- The **lack of human and financial resources**;
- The **lack of unity** of actors around the theme of insecurity;
- The **lack of competence and information** in a complex security context;
- The **suspicion of corruption** and **politicisation**;
- The **seriousness of insecurity** and the **predominant fear of reprisals**.



## Conclusion

The second survey in 2022 confirms the respondents' high expectation of receiving **protection from the Defence and Security Forces**, in a context where local insecurity persists and even worsening in the North.

While the increased visibility of army patrols continues to be seen as positive, the **daily risks and the growing number of IDPs are still high in the areas most affected by attacks and the jihadi presence**.

The **risk of confusion and blundering** by the forces in relation to the population was expressed more insistently during this collection.

In **both rural and urban areas, the population expects the forces to improve the manner of dealing with corruption, identification and distinction between combatants and civilians**.



## Recommendations

- **Train and empower local civil society actors on security issues** and provide them with the means to play a role in this area. In particular to facilitate the exchange of information between the defence and security forces and the population.
- People expect the forces to **protect them**, to interact with them through the local authorities and to participate in community life, including social activities.
- The battalions should **be trained on human rights and gender-based violence** so that soldiers are not guilty of abuses, discrimination and violence.