



Just Future Programme – Cordaid
Perception survey conducted 12–31 October 2023

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

///// Update from the Q4 field survey



SIPRI and POINT SUD
Cordaid funding

**JUST FUTURE
PROGRAMME**

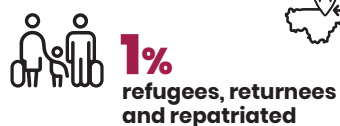
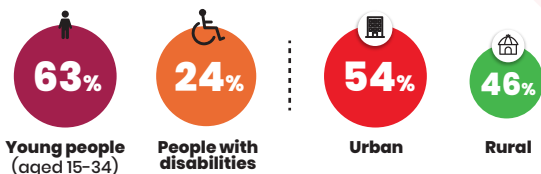


Methodology

As part of the “Just Future” programme, funded by Cordaid, SIPRI and its partner POINT SUD are conducting regular perception surveys among a representative sample of 531 people in 16 communes and 19 villages in the Bandiagara, Gao, Mopti and Timbuktu regions of Mali.

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

In line with Cordaid's expressed aim of reaching the sections of the population with the least voice, particular attention is paid to the inclusion of women, young people, people with disabilities and displaced persons or refugees. The **sample** is distributed as follows:



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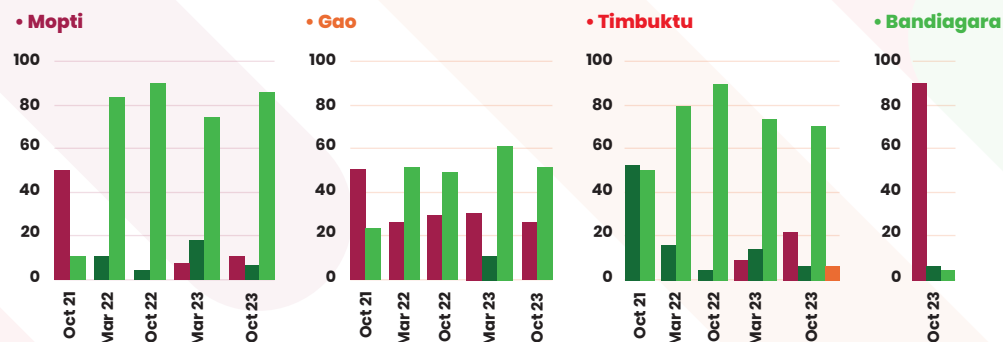
Survey areas

/// Source: map of Mali, produced by Dr O. Dembélé, coordinator of the Just Future project at POINT SUD.

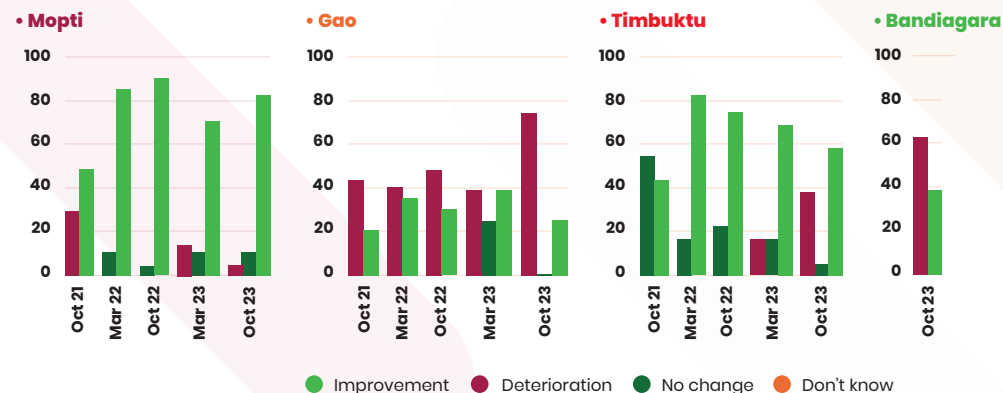


Perceptions of insecurity

Perceptions of the security situation at national level



Perceptions of the security situation at local level



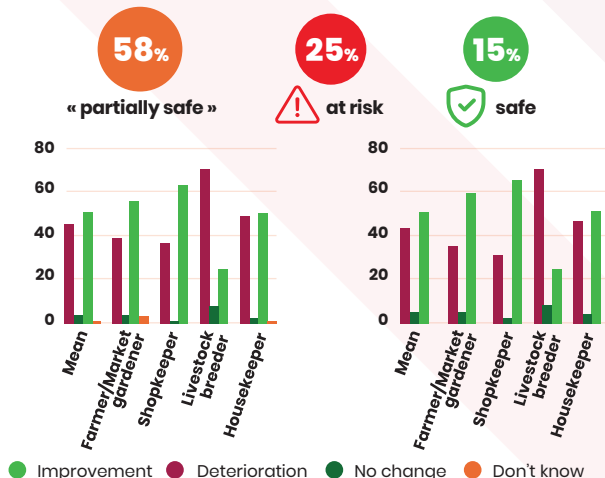
Improvement Deterioration No change Don't know



Main sources of insecurity by region



In their immediate environment, respondents say they feel:



“Terrorists send threatening voice messages all the time on WhatsApp...”
(statement by a young female resident, Timbuktu, 13 October 2023).

Relations between populations and defence and security forces

The perceptions collected reflect the subjective impressions of the respondents. They provide information about how people understand and interpret what they see, believe, think and feel, and how they give meaning to their environment.



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



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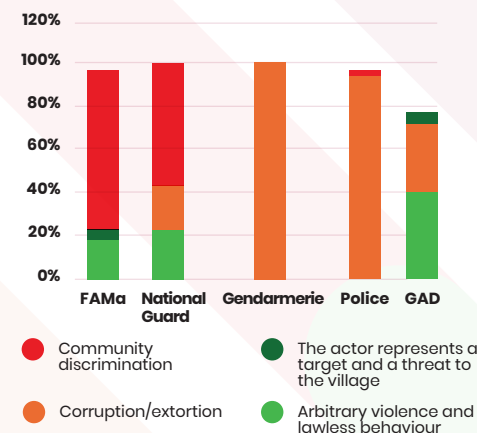


Expressed confidence in security actors

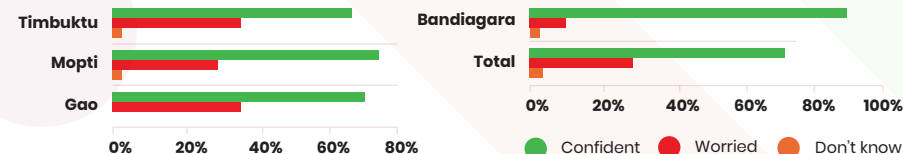
Confidence in security actors remains high (between 80% and 95%), but perceptions of these actors vary from region to region and from commune to commune.



Reasons why the following actors are considered to be sources of insecurity:



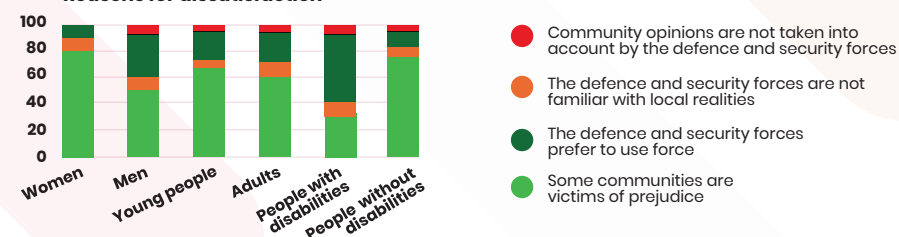
Withdrawal of MINUSMA



Relations between the defence and security forces and populations

Despite the continuing insecurity, relations between the populations interviewed and the defence and security forces were described as “good” and “fair”. In Ansongo and Bourem, however, relations are “not good”.

Reasons for dissatisfaction



Local civil society and safety issues

- “Civil society” has a strong presence at the local level: it involves a wide variety of actors from local populations, ranging from traditional and customary authorities and religious leaders to women’s and youth organisations.
- The most visible actors are, in order of importance, religious associations, local and national NGOs, professional associations, community associations, associations of “ressortissants” (people from the village who live in the capital city) and other village groups.
- Most of the actors and organisations interviewed say that they deal with security issues. The most active are youth organisations, which organise security patrols and monitor neighbourhoods, property and livestock. Civil society organisations hold discussions with the defence and security forces and organise meetings on collaboration between the defence and security forces and the local population, as well as intelligence and information-sharing.

Expectations for civil society actors regarding safety issues



Difficulties encountered by local civil society on security issues

There are still **significant limits** to their **ability to operate and to take action** on the ground:

- Severity of insecurity and fear of reprisals
- Lack of funding
- Lack of unity
- Lack of transparency
- Limited access to information on the security situation



Conclusions

- **The perception of the security situation is less positive than in March 2023.** Confidence in the transitional government and its determination to fight armed terrorist groups has been renewed, but populations do not often see any improvement in their day-to-day situation.
- **Populations are economically suffocated by rising prices, blockades and attacks on goods transport.** Restrictions on freedom of movement are multiplying, and people are growing increasingly weary of the situation. Food insecurity is a common concern.
- **Every citizen wants to be a security actor,** but the choice to “report suspicious persons” inevitably raises the question of the possible consequences of that act. Populations are very aware of the need to work with the defence and security forces and civil society organisations to take action against “common enemies”, but the lack of training and supervision, together with effect of fear, can have dramatic consequences.
- Faced with the daily situation of insecurity, populations are calling for a more long-term presence from the defence and security forces, **greater responsiveness, more extensive territorial coverage, and more joint patrols.**



Recommendations



More operational deployment of the defence and security forces in rural areas



Combat discrimination that leads to abuse, and train the defence and security forces to respect human rights



Support the introduction of community policing



Institutionalise local security committees at the national scale



Security information should be shared through confidential and secure mechanisms so as not to place people in danger