



Just Future programme – Cordaid
Perception survey conducted 07 to 18 April 2025

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

///// Update from the Q7 field survey



SIPRI and POINT SUD
Funded by Cordaid

**JUST FUTURE
PROGRAMME**



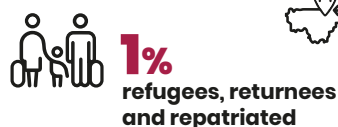
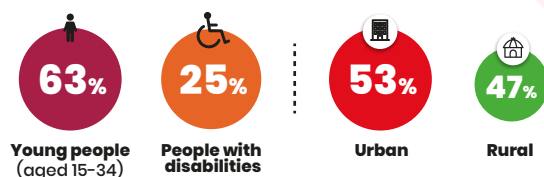
Methodology

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 562 people, in 16 communes, 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 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 broken down as follows:



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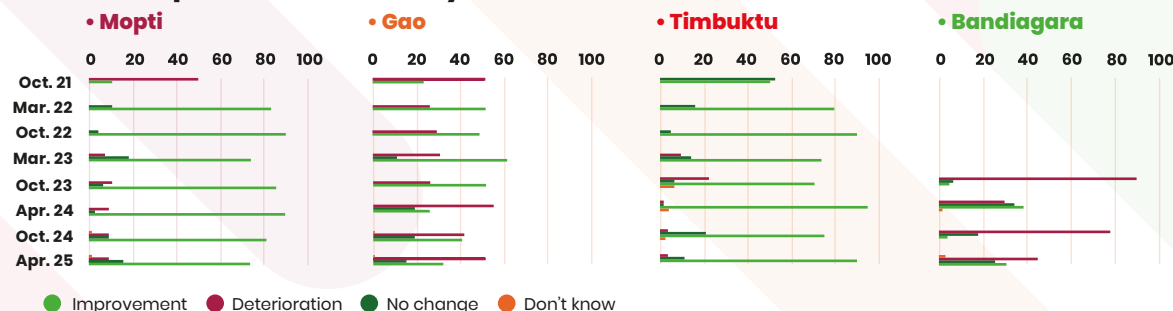
Survey areas

/// Source: map of Mali, produced by Dr O. Dembélé, coordinator of the Just Future project at POINT SUD, April 2025.

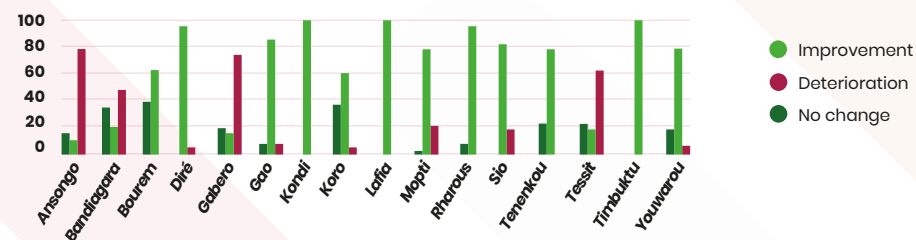


Perceptions of insecurity

Perceptions of the security situation at national level



Perceptions of the security situation at local level



Main sources of insecurity



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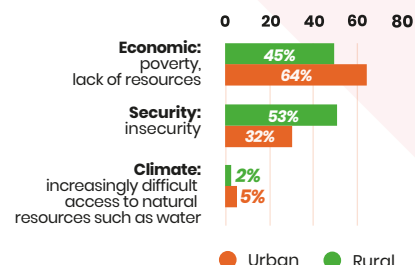
In their immediate environment, respondents say they feel:



By region:



Main sources of insecurity:



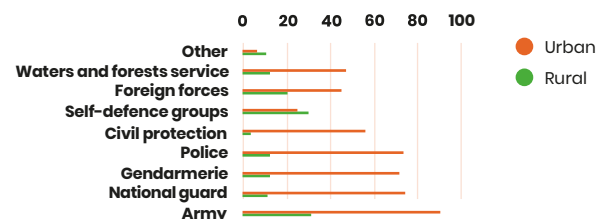
The security situation at the national level has deteriorated because there is too much propaganda, what is said in the media and the reality on the ground are different. They say they've struck the enemy, but if you check, most of the time it's civilians who've been hit. (Testimony from a resident, Gao, April 2025)

Relations between populations and defence and security forces (FDS)

The perceptions collected reflect the subjective impressions of the respondents. They provide information on how people understand and interpret what they see, believe, think and feel, and, above all, how they make sense of their environment.



State forces are mainly present in urban areas.



Expressed confidence in security actors

Confidence in security actors remains high (between 60% and 85% depending on the actor), but the behaviour of the FDS and Russian forces is increasingly criticised. Self-defence groups, Russian forces and state armed forces are both targeted by armed groups and criticised for their violent behaviour.

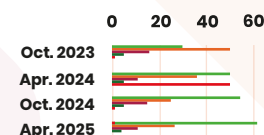


There are jihadists in the area. Yesterday, the children went into the bush to look for firewood: axes, machetes, donkeys, our carts, everything was taken by the jihadists, which meant we couldn't collect plants to use. Some mediation or intervention is needed to put an end to this. (Testimony from a resident, Youwarou city, April 2025).

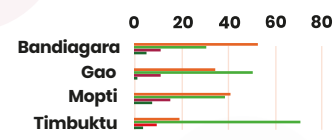


Withdrawal of MINUSMA

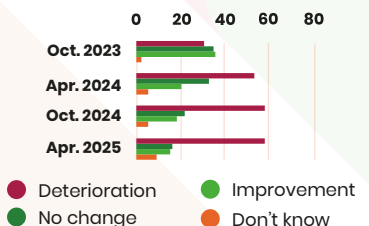
Impact:



Impact by region:



Impact on the economic situation:

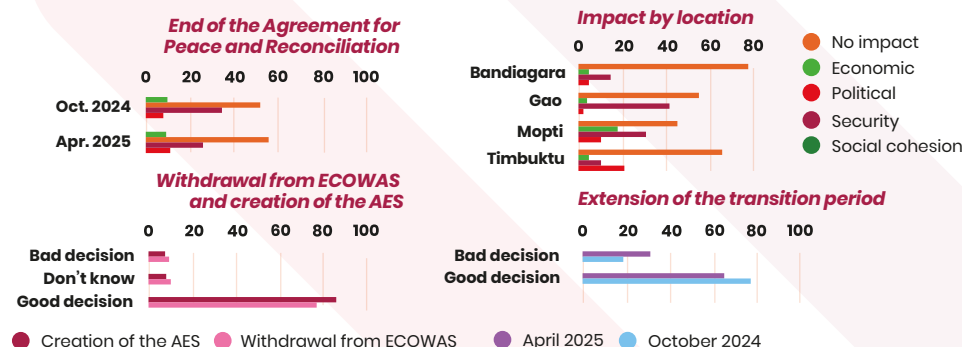


Role of the defence and security forces



Despite ongoing insecurity, relations between the populations interviewed and the FDS are described as "good" and "fair".

National-level policy

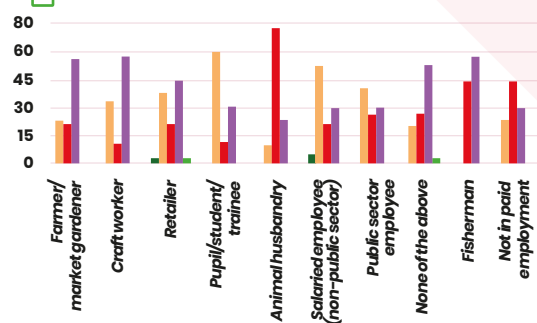
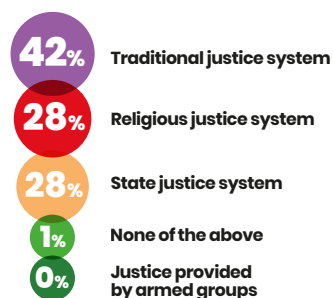


Local civil society and security issues

- Civil society has a strong presence at local level, involving a wide range of actors from populations, ranging from **traditional and customary authorities** and **religious leaders** to **women's and youth organisations**.
- The main activities are the organisation of meetings and **awareness-raising sessions**, but **concrete actions are limited**.
- Young people's associations** and **movements** are recognised as playing a more important role in everyday relations with the **FDS**. The role of youth organisations in providing security for villages is particularly highlighted.

Access to justice

Level of confidence



- Perception of the independence of the state justice system: **46% say the justice system is not very independent**.
- 36% of people expect justice to be free from corruption** and 38% expect it to be dispensed with respect for all.
- Traditional justice: **32% say that traditional justice can deal with problems quickly**.
- 75% would like to receive a written record of the chief's decision**.
- 73% of people say that, after a decision from traditional justice, matters should then be transferred/centralised to the state level.



Conclusions

- This survey was conducted in a difficult economic context marked by power shortages and rising prices. Shortages of basic necessities are a major consequence of insecurity.
- Urban and rural populations are not subject to the same threats. Rural populations suffer attacks, kidnappings, livestock theft and pay zakat in certain areas (effectively used as a form of taxation and funding by non-state armed groups). Urban populations feel more protected but also suffer theft, robbery and other forms of violence.
- Jihadist groups exert considerable pressure on populations, imposing their own social norms and taxes. Livestock has disappeared from certain areas.



Recommendations



Strengthen the deployment of the FDS in rural areas.



Combat discrimination that leads to abuse, and train the FDS to respect human rights.



Support the introduction of local security advisory committees on a national scale.



Support the introduction of community policing to facilitate communication and trust between populations and the FDS.



Increase the security of roads and marketplaces to overcome the isolation of rural areas by enabling the transport of essential goods.