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GOVERNANCE AND SECURITY IN THE SAHEL: TACKLING MOBILITY, DEMOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE CHANGE



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AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

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FOREWORD

ERNST STETTER AND NATHALIE TOCCI

The salience of the Sahel region in Africa has risen in recent years. Its importance has increased tremendously also for the European Union. Afflicted by a combination of armed conflict, terrorism, extreme weather conditions and economic instability, the region has been in the spotlight of international policy debates, not least because of its security challenges and development needs.

The joint work of the Foundation for European Progressive Studies and the Istituto Affari Internazionali on the Sahel started almost three years ago. It has been informed by our strong belief in the need to provide sharp analytical focus on the Sahel's *real* needs and to inject a progressive impulse to the relevant policy debates both in Africa and in Europe.

Building on earlier joint research that explored the nexus between security, migration and development, our two organisations decided to focus now on the quality of democratic governance and its consequences in this very turbulent region. We did so with the invaluable support of the National Democratic Institute, to whom we are very grateful.

Why governance? Governance is a crucial prism through which to view all the key elements of progress we would like to see materialise in the Sahel region, and by extension in the African continent. Without good governance, there can be no security, no democracy, no human rights protection, nor any sustainable development. Without good governance, women empowerment remains elusive, as does as effective climate policies aimed at addressing the major collective action problem of our age.

This edited volume presents the findings of a year-long project, revolving around four main axes: first, analysing the factors underpinning good governance in the Sahel, including its main actors, structures and policies; second, focusing on the governance of mobility, demography and climate to explore the relationship between governance and these areas; third, examining specific case studies, namely Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, so as to uncover important insights from the ground; and finally, addressing the role of key international actors in the region, including the EU.

This book provides a valuable analytical window to the Sahel, complemented by insightful policy recommendations. It is our expectation that this book will constitute a valuable resource for anyone interested in the current and future dynamics of this diverse region. We also hope that this book will contribute to a more evidence-based discussion on the Sahel, which is sorely needed to shape a more progressive European policy approach towards the region. We trust that this book represents an important contribution to this broader goal.

Brussels – Rome, April 2019

INTRODUCTION

BERNARDO VENTURI AND VASSILIS NTOUSAS

This publication is the result of the project “Governance and Security in the Sahel: Tackling Mobility, Demography and Climate Change”, conducted by the Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS) based in Brussels and the Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI) based in Rome together with the National Democratic Institute (NDI), Washington, DC and with the support of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and of the European Parliament.

This research analyses the factors underpinning good governance in the Sahel, and it explores how the quality of governance is influenced by and can affect the management of demographic changes, climate change and mobility. Each chapter also sets out some recommendations for local and international stakeholders.

Two main questions drive the overall research behind the project, and underpin the focus of each case study:

- What are the main actors, structures and policies that contribute to shaping governance in the Sahel? and
- What is the impact of existing governance – especially in the fields of climate change, demography and security – on mobility in and across the region?

Throughout this volume, “governance” refers to the way in which power is distributed and shared, and how policies are prioritised, formulated and implemented. The term “governance” is considered to be more all-encompassing in scope than “government” as it also involves the role of state and non-state actors (the private sector, civil society organisations and transnational networks); of national, international and sub-national organisations; and of formal and informal deci-

sion-making processes, such as institutions, norms and dispute-resolution mechanisms.

Geographically, the Sahel is usually considered as running from the Atlantic Ocean coast of Mauritania and Senegal in the west to the Red Sea coast of Sudan and Eritrea in the east. In this research, the focus is narrowed to a part of western and central Sahel encompassing five countries: Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger. However, references to other neighbouring countries (Libya, Nigeria, Algeria, etc.) are present.

The first chapter, by Luca Raineri and Youssouf Bâ, invites us to focus less on governments and more on governance. It does so in order to help us grasp the interplay between the various actors involved in the region and to analyse better the complex political dynamics that mould the local implementation of international responses to cross-border threats. Based on an analysis of the cases of Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso, the identification of “hybrid” forms of governance proper to the situation in the Sahel allows us to better understand the origin of the structural weaknesses of the region vis-à-vis the breadth of emerging challenges that it faces. In particular, an analysis of the concrete practices that regulate the governance of natural resources, demographics and migration in the Sahel calls into question the stabilisation measures affecting mobility and borders in the region. The unsuitability of these measures highlights their dependence on foreign security needs and political agendas.

Nana Alassane Toure worked on the first case study on climate change, mobility and the demographic dynamic in the northern regions of Burkina Faso and of Mali, paying particular attention to their effects on women and children. With the support of ethnographic interviews in the region, she investigates how linking climate change, mobility and the demographic dynamic forms a very important model of analysis due to the fact that there is a crucial cause-and-effect relationship between these three factors. Climate change and the demographic dynamic can impact on migrant flows and vice versa. In other words, mass movements towards areas considered less hostile can in-

crease the impact of climate change. This mobility, which has a considerable impact on their precarious condition, cannot be underestimated. It offers us a perfect illustration of a system of governance that is out of tune with the real needs of the communities involved – particularly of rural communities, which are being increasingly relegated to the “back row” in terms of public policy. This situation must therefore prompt governments to reconsider their relationship with those whom they govern.

In the second case study, Hamidou Issaka Maga analyses the role and impact of governance on demographic change and migrant movements in Niger. In particular, he elaborates on how the persistence of strong population growth in Niger and the development challenges that this entails in a context of ongoing economic, social and environmental hardship – and of the pressure brought to bear by development partners – have eventually led leaders to address the issue of demographic management, with greater or lesser enthusiasm according to cultural and religious pressures. After a historical overview of demography and migration flows, the author shows how it is necessary to bring family-planning services and products to the community level, with specific attention paid to the rural environment. Finally, Maga claims that to ward off the spectre of famine in Niger and to allow the country’s population to enjoy a decent standard of living, a fully-fledged “green revolution” is required.

The final case study, by Saleh Bala and Richard Ali, examines the challenges of Lake Chad within the context of the southern West African Sahel. It explores how the effects of climate change are instigating significant migration in the face of a shrinking Lake Chad. The ongoing criminal and insurgency activities in the region are identified as resulting from a long history of poor, or total lack of, governance for territories around the lake by its constituent nations. Research also shows a history of lack of inclusiveness in the governance of the region. The chapter supports a strategy of strengthening resilience and productivity in the region through increased funding and government presence. The importance of education in creat-

ing and fostering a culture of sustainable consumption and development in the region's people is also identified. Corruption is noted as an impediment to effective security and development in the region. The several initiatives that exist in order to combat underdevelopment, especially using aid, should be implemented through innovative approaches to eliminate mismanagement.

Following these three case studies, the publication includes two chapters focused on international actors – the first on the role of the European Union, and the second on that of China and the Gulf Countries in the region.

Bernardo Venturi argues that the role that the EU plays in governance in the Sahel is multi-layered. Focusing specifically on the Union's approach and involvement across two components of governance performance – safety and the rule of law, and participation and human rights – evidence emerges that the EU has no fully coherent long-term strategy for the region. Brussels applies an integrated approach, and the Sahel is probably the region where its use is most evident. However, its application is at the experimental level and is significantly conditioned by short-term needs, such as curbing migration, that risk trumping reforms in local governance.

Anca-Elena Ursu analyses how, in addition to traditional Western donors, China and the Gulf states have assumed a more vigorous posture in the region and increased their presence with development and investment projects while simultaneously deepening diplomatic ties. This chapter explores the interests of the newly arrived donor countries with an eye to China's activities and the Gulf states' (re-)engagement with the Sahel in the light of the Qatar crisis. Since coordinated actions are often the most (cost-)effective ones, but also politically the most difficult to achieve, the paper concludes by arguing that Sahelian governments should create interest-based regional coalitions that can engage in political bargaining with donor countries nationally and internationally and avoid funding dispersion or mischannelling.

The final chapter presents the main issues discussed during the final conference of the research project, held in Rome on 12 February 2019 to discuss the most pressing issues related to governance in the Sahel region. This chapter, “Notes for further research”, offers a summary of the main features, shortfalls and dilemmas discussed by the experts, diplomats, stakeholders, policymakers and practitioners who attended the conference.

In conclusion, we would like to thank Ulrike Rodgers (NDI Programme Director, Francophone West Africa), Nicoletta Pirozzi (IAI Head of Programme - EU Politics and Institutions), Ernst Stetter (FEPS Secretary General) and Elisabetta Farroni (IAI Programme Assistant) for their valuable insights and essential support.

1

HYBRID GOVERNANCE AND MOBILITY IN THE SAHEL: STABILISATION PRACTICES PUT TO THE TEST

LUCA RAINERI AND YOUSOUF BÂ

The Sahel is a region characterised by ease of circulation and connection. The relationship between mobility and control in this area has always been a key issue in the construction of its political authority. A wealth of research testifies to the tension inherent in this relationship from the colonial era,¹ through independence,² right up to the present day.³ In recent years, an increased focus on security has caused this tension to become even more acute, with a proliferation of initiatives and strategies seeking to control and to restrain cross-border mobility in the countries of the Sahel in an effort to curb migrant flows and to forestall the spread of terrorism throughout the region. Yet given that they are sometimes hastily negotiated in international forums and crafted in national capitals, these measures are in danger of affording insufficient consideration to the astonishing complexity of the context in which they are to be implemented. One should stress, in fact, that the governments of the Sahelian countries deploy their action in a context that

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1. Hélène Claudot-Hawad, "Un territoire bâti comme une tente nomade", in *Réfractations*, No. 21 (2008), p. 51-60, <https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-00649486>.
 2. Gregory Mann, *From Empires to NGOs in the West African Sahel. The Road to Nongovernmentality*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2015; Denis Retaillé, "From Nomadic to Mobile Spaces, A Theoretical Experiment (1976-2012)", in Judith Miggelbrink et al. (eds), *Nomadic and Indigenous Spaces. Productions and Cognitions*, Farnham/Burlington, Ashgate, 2013, p. 55-75.
 3. Luca Raineri and Francesco Strazzari, "State, Secession, and Jihad: The Micropolitical Economy of Conflict in Northern Mali", in *African Security*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (2015), p. 249-278.

includes other actors both non-governmental (international non-governmental organisations [NGOs], local civil society organisations and traditional hierarchies and authorities) and intergovernmental (regional and international organisations, United Nations (UN) agencies, development policy partners and so forth). This plurality of actors, standards and practices suggests that we should expand the frame of our analysis and dispense with all oversimplified reductionism. In other words, we need to focus more on governance than on governments if we are to comprehend the complex political dynamics that fashion the Sahel area and its responses to cross-border threats.

This analysis, therefore, sets out to probe the mutual relationship between governance and mobility in order to explain the gap so often observed between the stated aims of the policies adopted for controlling mobility and borders in the Sahel region and their actual implementation.⁴ A discussion of concrete examples seen in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso will help us to illustrate the topic and to make practical recommendations.

1. The hybrid governance of fragile states in the Sahel

In addition to their shared environment, the Sahel countries also display remarkable similarities in terms of their governance. Fragile states *par excellence*, Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso rank systematically at the bottom of international index-

4. Andrew Lebovich, "Halting Ambition: EU Migration and Security Policy in the Sahel", in *ECFR Policy Briefs*, No. 266 (September 2018), https://www.ecfr.eu/publications/summary/halting_ambition_eu_migration_and_security_policy_in_the_sahel; Fransje Molenaar, "Why the EU Should Help Former Smugglers Get a Job. An Integrated Approach for Agadez (and Beyond)", in *Clingendael CRU Policy Briefs*, April 2018, <https://www.clingendael.org/node/9070>; Luca Raineri, "Human Smuggling Across Niger: State-sponsored Protection Rackets and Contradictory Security Imperatives", in *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 56, No. 1 (March 2018), p. 63-86.

es such as the Fragile State Index,⁵ the UN Development Programme's (UNDP) Human Development Index⁶ and the World Bank's governance indicators⁷ – particularly with regard to political stability.⁸

These structural weaknesses help explain Sahelian countries' oft-noticed tendency to outsource some of their sovereign functions to non-governmental actors. On the one hand, the governments of Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso rely increasingly on the support of local chiefs and traditional tribal hierarchies to consolidate (albeit indirectly) the state's grip in their respective peripheral regions. Subscribing to the international trend towards decentralisation, this social contract has made it possible since the 1990s to curb the centrifugal tendency evinced by those ethnic groups that had been relegated to the sidelines in the construction of the post-colonial state in each of the three countries.⁹ On the other hand, the Sahel countries have developed a growing dependence on international aid. This was first seen with the environmental crises of the 1970s and 80s; the structural adjustment plans of the 1990s, as well as the security and development plans of the 2000s, have further reinforced it. In 2015, development aid accounted for 9.11 per cent of GDP in Burkina Faso, 9.45 per cent in Mali and 12.23 per cent in Niger. These rates are far higher than the average figure for Africa, which stands at 2.36 per cent.¹⁰ In 2016, 45 per cent of Niger's public budget and 62 per cent of Mali's investment budget depended on multilateral aid – in particular,

5. Fund for Peace, *Fragile States Index 2018*, Washington, April 2018, <http://fundforpeace.org/global/?p=569>.
6. UNDP website: *Human Development Index (HDI)*, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/node/149>.
7. World Bank website: *Worldwide Governance Indicators*, <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/#reports>.
8. World Bank website: *Harmonized List of Fragile Situations*, <https://goo.gl/QfFIMg>.
9. See for example: Adam Thiam, *Centre du Mali: enjeux et dangers d'une crise négligée*, Geneva, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, March 2017, <https://www.hdcentre.org/fr/?p=6290>.
10. OECD website: *Aid Statistics by Donor, Recipient and Sector: Compare Your Country*, <https://www2.compareyourcountry.org/aid-statistics>.

from the European Union, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) – and on bilateral aid, with France and the United States topping the bill in that regard.¹¹ Consequently, international donors have inevitably wielded considerable influence over the prioritisation of governance strategies in the Sahel, thus turning the region into a fully-fledged “laboratory” for the implementation of plans chiefly devised elsewhere.¹²

In view of the asymmetrical nature of the powers involved, resource management has not always reflected international standards of transparency, ownership or accountability. This is because, on the one hand, the local actors – whether national or regional, governmental or non-governmental – designated as “implementers” or “beneficiaries” have a tendency to accept without questioning the strategies and terminology of international governance, and, on the other hand, they jealously protect their scant room for manoeuvre and agency in the implementation phase by dithering, circumventing and bending international plans to their own ends and for their own purposes.¹³ In that sense, access to the resources mobilised by the international community has allowed local elites to forge relations based on cronyism through the distribution of appointments and sinecures, resulting in the crystallisation of a rentier economy and the rise of a courtier class.¹⁴ From the 2000s on, there have been numerous examples illustrating this trend throughout the Sahel: the hijacking of extra-budgetary funds earmarked for emergency food aid to oil patronage politics in Burkina

11. Isaline Bergamaschi, *Aid in the Sahel in the 2000s: Tales of Dependence and Appropriation*, 2017.

12. Bernardo Venturi, “The EU and the Sahel: A Laboratory of Experimentation for the Security–Migration–Development Nexus”, in Bernardo Venturi (ed.), *The Security–Migration–Development Nexus Revised: A Perspective from the Sahel*, Brussels/Rome, FEPS and IAI, 2017, p. 109–128, <https://www.iai.it/en/node/8764>.

13. Jean-Louis Sagot-Duvaurox, “Quelques traits du Mali en Crise”, in Michel Galy (ed.), *La guerre au Mali. Comprendre la crise au Sahel et au Sahara. Enjeux et zones d'ombre*, Paris, La Découverte, 2013, p. 91–105.

14. Thomas Bierschenk, Jean-Pierre Chauveau and Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan, *Courtiers en développement. Les villages africains en quête de projets*, Paris, Khartala/APAD, 2000.

Faso;¹⁵ the clientelist management of borders and the “institutionalisation of fraud” in Niger;¹⁶ and the establishment of a “policy of consensus” on the far-from-transparent distribution of public resources among political parties and civil society in Mali.¹⁷

The tendency to outsource areas of responsibility – be it in management of the economy, local administration, service provision or security – has ended up establishing a highly distinctive form of governance in the Sahel, which we might call “hybrid”.¹⁸ Its features include the interaction of national bureaucracies and policies with international aid resources (financial resources, strategies) and personnel (consultants, experts, auditors, advisers) – a phenomenon, the spread of which is making it increasingly difficult, or even irrelevant, to distinguish between “domestic” and “foreign” actors. They also encompass the informalisation of the institutions prompted by the merger between traditional authorities and public functions,¹⁹ and the personalisation of the state’s power due

15. Rolf Meier and Marc Raffinot, “S’appropriier les politiques de développement: nouvelle mode ou vieille rengaine? Une analyse à partir des expériences du Burkina Faso et du Rwanda”, in *Revue Tiers Monde*, No. 183 (2005), p. 625-649, <https://doi.org/10.3917/rtm.183.0625>.
16. Mahaman Tidjani Alou, “Monitoring the Neopatrimonial State on a Day-to-day Basis. Politicians, Customs Officials and Traders in Niger”, in Daniel C. Bach and Mamoudou Gazibo (eds), *Neopatrimonialism in Africa and Beyond*, London/New York, Routledge, 2012, p. 142-154.
17. Isaline Bergamaschi, “The Fall of a Donor Darling: The Role of Aid In Mali’s Crisis”, in *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 52, No. 3 (September 2014), p. 347-378.
18. Niagale Bagayoko, Eboe Hutchful and Robin Luckham, “Hybrid Security Governance in Africa: Rethinking the Foundations of Security, Justice and Legitimate Public Authority”, in *Conflict, Security & Development*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (2016), p. 1-32.
19. For Mali, see: Thomas Hüsken and Georg Klute, “Emerging Forms of Power in Two African Borderlands. A Theoretical and Empirical Research Outline”, in *Journal of Borderlands Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (2010), p. 107-121. For Niger: Luca Raineri, “Cross-border Smuggling in North Niger: The Morality of the Informal and the Construction of a Hybrid Order”, in Abel Polese, Alessandra Russo and Francesco Strazzari (eds), *Governance Beyond the Law. The Immoral, the Illegal and the Criminal*, Cham, Palgrave Macmillan, 2019 forthcoming. For Burkina Faso: Hubert M.G. Ouedraogo, “Décentralisation et pouvoirs traditionnels: le paradoxe des légitimités locales”, in *Mondes en développement*, No. 133 (2006), p. 9-29, <https://doi.org/10.3917/med.133.0009>.

to the replacement of the administrative apparatus by a patronage network. While these features are common throughout the Sahel, a number of examples show that there is no lack of country-specific peculiarities: in Niger, foreign functionaries are seconded to each ministry, some of which depend almost entirely on international funding; in Mali, traditional leaders demand to be represented in the newly established territorial communities in the north of the country, which exacerbates the complexity of crisis response negotiations; and in Burkina Faso, the deterioration of the security situation is linked to the undermining of the patronage networks entertained by former president Blaise Compaoré's now-ousted authoritarian regime.

Such a system clearly derogates from the principles of good governance. Mixing public and private interests or the murky mingling of politics and business explain why Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso – whose governance indicators are broadly in line with, not to say higher than, the average for African countries – perform substantially less well in the spheres of accountability and transparency,²⁰ resulting in an exacerbation of those countries' vulnerability to corruption.²¹ Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index reiterates the same observation and confirms that all three nations regularly feature in the ranks of the world's countries in which corruption is most acutely perceived.²² Local studies tell us that this perception is nothing new, and allow us to break down our analysis by country: in Mali, three-quarters of the citizens perceive corruption as being present or extremely present;²³ in Burkina Faso, that

20. See Mo Ibrahim Foundation website: *Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG)*, <http://mo.ibrahim.foundation/iiag>.

21. Alex Thurston, "For Corruption, Few Places Worse Than the Sahel", in *IPI Global Observatory*, 24 September 2012, <https://theglobalobservatory.org/?p=357>; Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, "Le Sahel face à la corruption", in *Centre 4S Articles*, 14 May 2018, <https://newcentre4s.org/le-sahel-face-a-la-corruption>.

22. See Transparency International website: *Corruption Perceptions Index 2018*, <https://www.transparency.org/cpi2018>.

23. Abdrahmane Coulibaly et al., *L'état de la gouvernance, de la paix et de la sécurité au Mali en 2014*, Bamako, INSTAT, December 2014, p. 12, http://www.instat-mali.org/contenu/eq/ranagouver14_eq.pdf.

figure rises to 95 per cent;²⁴ and in Niger, it stands at 88 per cent.²⁵ From political corruption to the minor everyday sort, the most recurrent forms of corruption observed in the region include the misappropriation of undue sums of money (bribes, protection money, kickbacks and so on); intimidation; influence peddling; nepotism; under- or over-billing; and, above all, the rigging of public contracts, impacting in particular on the security sphere (police, gendarmerie, justice), infrastructures, social services (health, education) and public finance (customs, tax authorities, public contracts). Yet corruption in the Sahel countries enjoys an ambiguous status, maybe precisely because it is so deep-rooted: on the one hand, opinion surveys fault it along with bad governance as sources of political instability and, by extension, as being genuine security threats²⁶ while, on the other, numerous reports confirm the importance and legitimacy of informality as a means of subsistence for local populations.²⁷ Social surveys have indeed suggested that the *de facto* institutionalisation of smuggling and trafficking in the Sahel, as well as the systematic corruption that goes hand in hand with such activities, transcends individual preferences to form an unspoken rule that is deeply rooted in everyday practices.²⁸

24. Christian Lemaire (ed.), *Rapport sur le développement humain Burkina Faso 2003. Corruption et développement humain*, UNDP, 2003, p. 1, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/node/574>.
25. Transparency International and Association Nigérienne de Lutte contre la Corruption (ANLC), *Etat de la corruption au Niger*, Niamey, ANLC, 2007, p. 117, <http://www.transparencyniger.org/index.php/publications/etudes?download=1:etat-de-la-corruption-au-niger>.
26. See the Afrobarometer website: <http://afrobarometer.org/countries>. See in particular the surveys regarding Mali after 2012, which rank corruption as an even more important source of concern than food security or unemployment among young people.
27. Ruta Nimkar, *Border Security Needs Assessment. Liptako-Gourma Region: Mali, Burkina and Niger*, Copenhagen, Danish Demining Group, July 2014, <https://danishdemininggroup.dk/media/1309834/Border-Security-Needs-Assessment-2014-ENG.pdf>; Tuesday Reitano and Mark Shaw, "People's Perspectives of Organised Crime in West Africa and the Sahel", in *ISS Papers*, No. 254 (April 2014), <https://issafrica.org/research/papers/peoples-perspectives-of-organised-crime-in-west-africa-and-the-sahel>.
28. Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan, "Niger: les quatre prisons du pouvoir", in *Le Républicain (Niamey)*, No. 2059, 31 December 2015, <https://www.marianne.net/node/99487>.

This ambiguity has created fertile ground for the spread of transnational organised crime, a development that we would be wrong to consider totally divorced from societal dynamics.²⁹ Rooted in traditional practices and in cross-border mobility, organised criminal networks have proven capable of intercepting both the international flow of illegal economies and the local demand for protection.³⁰ Whetting appetites, smuggling revenues today fuel the networks of connivance and corruption that imbue the governance of the Sahel countries at every level. This points up an ambiguous relationship between government authorities and illegal interests, in which cooperation often wins the day over competition.³¹

The hybridisation of governance in the Sahel made it possible for a while to maintain a *sui generis* form of political stability, albeit at the cost of gradually exacerbating the region's hierarchical divides of identity and social relations.³² The (perception of) corruption led to a gradual loss of legitimacy on the part of institutions, a phenomenon that was particularly exacerbated when it ended up impacting on the vital spheres of the administration, which in certain peripheral areas of the Sahel represent the only contact between citizens and governments. The contradictions inherent in this model soon revealed the precarious nature of the fragile balance. Growing discontent at the grass-roots level in the face of widespread bad governance lies at the heart of the major political crises that have rocked the Sahel countries over the past decade: Niger in 2007–10, Mali in 2012 and Burkina Faso in 2014–15.

29. This is far from unique to the Sahel. See for example: Ray Hudson, "Thinking Through the Relationships Between Legal and Illegal Activities and Economies: Spaces, Flows and Pathways", in *Journal of Economic Geography*, Vol. 14, No. 4 (July 2014), p. 775-795.

30. Judith Scheele, *Smugglers and Saints of the Sahara. Regional Connectivity in the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012.

31. Wolfram Lacher, "Organized Crime and Conflict in the Sahel-Sahara Region", in *Carnegie Papers*, September 2012, <https://carnegieendowment.org/publications/49360>; Mark Shaw, Tuesday Reitano and Marcena Hunter, *Comprehensive Assessment of Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime in West and Central Africa*, January 2014, <https://wp.me/pagYoN-2N5>.

32. Luca Raineri and Francesco Strazzari, "State, Secession, and Jihad", cit.

And yet the strategies adopted in recent years to accompany the rebuilding of these states on less fragile bases do not seem able to appreciate the depth of the existing challenges. In particular, a purely technocratic approach to governance, pegged to the security imperatives of the moment and hypnotised by the urge to display immediate results, has ended up neglecting the actual conditions in which mobility governance is implemented in the Sahel. The following paragraphs provide concrete examples to illustrate these general considerations.

2. Governance and mobility: examples of bad practices

The management of natural resources in the Sahel is closely linked to mobility. The rhythmic pattern of the River Niger and its vast interior delta dictated by rainfall determine the sequencing of the activities in which an overwhelming majority of the population in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso are involved – namely, agriculture and pastoralism. In the rainy season (from June to October), the swelling river and its flooding delta require that livestock is moved to dry areas with abundant grazing, while rice-growing flourishes in the flooded areas. When the floods recede in the dry season (roughly from November to July), once the rice has been harvested the shepherds and their flocks leave the desert north of the country and return to the flooded regions to take advantage of the *bourgou* (grass) fields. While cultural interaction and the sharing of a common territory has fashioned the way of life and subsistence of various different peoples in the Sahel throughout history, in recent years dwindling resources and demographic pressure have come together to undermine this fragile balance.

And yet it is primarily the fault of inadequate governance if these tensions have translated into the violent clashes that are currently undermining the stability of the entire region.³³ This

33. This observation further corroborates the conclusions reached by most studies on environmental safety. These studies have shown that environmental

is because while the management of natural resources in the Sahel countries is marked by the existence of a fairly substantive body of law, the regulatory framework has evolved from exclusive state control into the decentralised governance of natural resources.³⁴ The authorities – be they traditional, like customary leaders, or public, like the water and forest agents – to whom governments in the region tend to outsource land management, have offered frequent examples of the misuse of their power. From this perspective, the grievances of nomadic and pastoralist communities are common to all the Sahel countries. The abusive exploitation of the right of access to *bourgou* fields provides an eloquent example of this,³⁵ explaining why access to justice and social mobility is a priority for the peoples of the region.³⁶ It is in the context of such a gap between the needs of a society in transition and a mode of governance charged with corruption on both the moral and material levels that we should interpret the gradual entrenchment of violent extremism in the central Sahel.³⁷ Failure to take local people's demands into account is also the result of weak coordination between the governance of security and the governance of natural resources, which a better appreciation of the human and food security situation would make it possible to reconcile.

and demographic factors per se do not tend to result automatically in increased competition and conflict, but that competition and conflict depend broadly on the way natural resources are managed. See: Thomas F. Homer-Dixon, "Environmental Scarcities and Violent Conflict: Evidence from Cases", in *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Summer 1994), p. 5-40; and Tor A. Benjaminsen et al., "Does Climate Change Drive Land-use Conflicts in the Sahel?", in *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 49, No. 1 (January 2012), p. 97-111.

34. Philippe Lavigne Delville, "Quelle gouvernance pour les ressources renouvelables? La gestion des ressources renouvelables dans le contexte de la décentralisation en Afrique de l'Ouest", in *Études de l'AFD*, January 2001, <http://www.hubrural.org/Quelle-gouvernance-pour-les.html?lang=en>.
35. Boukary Sangaré, "Le centre du Mali: épice du djihadisme?", in *Note d'Analyse du GRIP*, 20 May 2016, <https://www.grip.org/en/node/2008>.
36. See for example: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, *Mali-Mètre. Enquête d'opinion: "Que pensent les Maliens?"*, No. 7, 21-30 décembre 2015, <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/mali/10100>.
37. International Crisis Group (ICG), "The Central Sahel: A Perfect Sandstorm", in *ICG Africa Reports*, No. 227 (25 June 2015), <https://www.crisisgroup.org/node/459>; Mathieu Pellerin, "Les trajectoires de radicalisation religieuse au Sahel", in *Notes de l'IFRI*, February 2017, <https://www.ifri.org/fr/node/12758>.

On the contrary, the stabilisation policies implemented by the Sahel countries, often with the backing of their Western partners, have afforded priority to a basically security-related approach that has ended up exacerbating tensions, eventually leading to widespread violence. On the one hand, the constraints on mobility (enhanced border controls, a ban on the use of motorbikes and so on) have simply made further inroads into people's paltry means of subsistence, while, on the other hand, the outsourcing of the governance of the three countries' border regions to armed actors – including national forces (their respective armed forces), international forces (international missions run by the United Nations, the G5 Sahel,³⁸ France and the United States) and even non-governmental forces (pro-governmental armed groups) – has led to numerous instances of abuse and human rights violations, which have further fuelled the inclination to rebel and the destabilisation of the Sahel.³⁹ The creation of community-based self-defence militia groups throughout the Sahel countries can be explained by people's exasperation with the official defence and security forces' abusive practices, with several of those forces' members being involved in protection racket and the release of arrested criminals in return for under-the-counter handouts. The summary "justice" that these militia groups aim to set up often enjoys the broad support of the local people, who see it as a bulwark against the bad governance of the authorities. And yet the spread of counter-

38. The G5 Sahel is an initiative launched in 2014, grouping together five Sahelian countries – Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger – sponsored by France and aiming to strengthen cross-border cooperation in the fields of security and development. The creation of a joint military force to conduct co-ordinated counter-terrorism operations is one of its flagship initiatives. See: Cyril Robinet, "Genèse de la force conjointe du G5 Sahel", in *Ultima Ratio*, 16 January 2018, <http://ultimaratio-blog.org/archives/8650>.

39. International Crisis Group (ICG), "The Niger-Mali Border: Subordinating Military Action to a Political Strategy", in *ICG Africa Reports*, No. 261 (12 June 2018), <https://www.crisisgroup.org/node/6146>; Luca Raineri, "If Victims Become Perpetrators. Factors Contributing to Vulnerability and Resilience to Violent Extremism in the Central Sahel", in *International Alert*, June 2018, <https://www.international-alert.org/node/14504>; MINUSMA, *Point de presse de la MINUSMA du 12 avril 2018*, <https://minusma.unmissions.org/node/100042180>.

terrorism policies,⁴⁰ often devised by foreign “secureaucrats” and unquestioningly adopted by the Sahel countries willing to display their eagerness to their international partners, is hardly fine-tuned with a nuanced understanding of, and adaptation to, the specificities of local dynamics.

The governance of cross-border human mobility and migration lends itself to similar considerations. Dating back to well before national borders were institutionalised, regional mobility enjoys considerable legitimacy with the local populace, many of whom consider movement to be a fully fledged lifestyle.⁴¹ Since the end of the colonial era, Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger have sat at the heart of migrant routes linking West Africa to North Africa via the Sahel. While nationals of the Sahel countries are generally poorly represented in the migrant contingents bound for Europe, regional, intra-continental and seasonal migration has traditionally been a crucial source of resilience for the local population.⁴² It is thus hardly surprising that, regardless of the regulatory frameworks formally in place, the authorities in the region’s countries have generally adopted a tolerant attitude towards these practices.⁴³ In recent years, that tolerance has occasionally turned into outright connivance when the redistribution of revenue from migration has been drummed into service as a political resource. Reports focusing on Mali⁴⁴ and Niger⁴⁵ have shown the growing involvement of the two coun-

40. Zoë Gorman and Grégory Chauzal, “Establishing a Regional Security Architecture in the Sahel”, in *SIPRI Commentaries*, 25 June 2018, <https://www.sipri.org/node/4551>.

41. Hélène Claudot-Hawad, “Un territoire bâti comme une tente nomade”, cit.; Judith Scheele, *Smugglers and Saints of the Sahara*, cit.

42. Tahar Benattia, Florence Armitano and Holly Robinson, *Irregular Migration Between West Africa, North Africa and the Mediterranean*, Altai Consulting for IOM Nigeria, November 2015, <https://fmmwestafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/en-altai.pdf>.

43. Tara Brian and Frank Laczko (eds), *Fatal Journeys: Tracking Lives Lost during Migration*, Geneva, IOM, October 2014, <https://publications.iom.int/node/113>.

44. Fransje Molenaar and Thibault van Damme, “Irregular Migration and Human Smuggling Networks in Mali”, in *Clingendael CRU Reports*, February 2017, https://www.clingendael.nl/sites/default/files/irregular_migration_and_human_smuggling_networks_in_mali.pdf.

45. Luca Raineri, “Human Smuggling Across Niger”, cit.

tries' respective political and military authorities in informal-migration infrastructures: turning a blind eye to the transport of undocumented migrants and to the corruption of customs officers, mutually profitable cooperation schemes have made it possible to oil the machinery of the patronage networks in power, including in the unruly peripheral regions.

Yet this hybrid governance of migrations has been upset in recent years. The collapse of the Libyan regime, the reconfiguration of Saharan trafficking networks and fluctuations in the formal economy linked to the price of raw materials have led, since 2014, to an intensification in the number of migrants bound for Europe.⁴⁶ The perception of a "migration crisis" and the rise in the European Union of a sentiment of encirclement have prompted Brussels to adopt a series of urgent measures designed to contain so-called irregular immigration. These measures have targeted first and foremost the Sahel countries, considered more eager to cooperate with the EU than a Libyan state on the verge of collapse.⁴⁷ Thus, the EU has encouraged the Sahel countries to adopt migration policies (adopted in Mali in 2015, in Burkina Faso in 2017 and currently under adoption in Niger) and laws criminalising human smuggling (adopted in Mali in 2012, in Niger in 2015 and in Burkina Faso in 2018). At the same time, the *EU Agenda on Migration* issued in May 2015⁴⁸ went out of its way to couch these developments in terms of a multi-level and multi-actor regional strategy. As of 2016, the fight against irregular migration had ended up re-absorbing and redirecting the EU's most important initiatives in the Sahel countries, including its Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions – with the new EUCAP Sahel Ni-

46. Tuesday Reitano and Peter Tinti, "Survive and Advance. The Economics of Smuggling Refugees and Migrants into Europe", in *ISS Papers*, No. 289 (November 2015), <https://issafrica.org/research/papers/survive-and-advance-the-economics-of-smuggling-refugees-and-migrants-into-europe>.

47. Kateryna Ivashchenko-Stadnik et al., "How the EU Is Facing Crises in Its Neighbourhood. Evidence from Libya and Ukraine", in *EUNPACK Papers*, 31 March 2017, <http://www.eunpack.eu/node/77>.

48. European Commission, *A European Agenda on Migration* (COM/2015/240), 13 May 2015, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=celex:52015DC0240>.

ger and EUCAP Sahel Mali mandates – and development aid – with the new allocation mechanisms provided for under the EU Trust Fund and Framework Partnerships with third countries.⁴⁹

The emergency adoption of these measures urged by the EU shows that only limited attention has been paid to the complexity of the issues and, in broader terms, that there has been insufficient understanding of the hybrid governance of migration in the Sahel region.⁵⁰ The consequences of this neglect may prove destabilising. Even if they are chiefly concerned with irregular immigration towards Europe, the new migration policies have ended up also hobbling regional and seasonal mobility. Police pressure on the migrant flows setting out from the Nigerien city of Agadez, for example, has ended up curbing the migration of Sahel nationals towards Libya, which previously served as an “overflow valve” for coping with food insecurity during the dry season.⁵¹ This has led not only to the kind of discontent on the part of the local population that was only to be expected but also, and above all to a strengthening of the better-organised criminal actors capable of ensuring the protection of transactions and an alternative source of income.⁵² Moreover, the (sometimes purely skin-deep) contribution to the fight against irregular migration demanded by the EU has paved the way for imparting national and international legitimacy to questionable actors – for example to the non-governmental armed militia groups that flourish in the region in the hope of sharing in the peace dividends from the conflicts that they themselves help to ignite⁵³ but also to the

49. European Commission, *Establishing a New Partnership Framework with Third Countries under the European Agenda on Migration* (COM/2016/0385), 7 June 2016, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52016DC0385>.

50. Elise Kervyn and Raphael Shilhav, “An Emergency for Whom? The EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa – Migratory Routes and Development Aid in Africa”, in *Oxfam Briefing Notes*, November 2017, <https://oxf.am/2zG8aaU>.

51. See IOM website: *Niger – Flow Monitoring Reports*, <http://www.globaldtm.info/niger>.

52. Fransje Molenaar et al., “A Line in the Sand. Roadmap for Sustainable Migration Management in Agadez”, in *Clingendael CRU Reports*, October 2017, <https://www.clingendael.org/node/8550>.

53. Jérôme Tubiana, Clotilde Warin and Gaffar Mohammud Saeneen, “Multilater-

elected government officials whose participation in the struggle against irregular migration ensures that they enjoy their international partners' support despite the deterioration of governance, flagrant corruption and a growing slide into authoritarianism.⁵⁴

While national and international actors' attention is broadly focused on the complex and often controversial governance of mobility that they assert is linked to terrorism and to irregular migration, other extremely harmful trafficking is freely proliferating in the Sahel area under the umbrella of a far weaker political will to regulate it. This applies, in particular, to trafficking in gold and in drugs, which works its way without any real opposition into the gap between international law and hybrid local governance. The numerous, often artisanal, gold-mining sites punctuating the Sahel are a major source of resilience for the region's population and of revenue for its governments. Yet the weak regulation of the sector, buoyed up by multiple interests, facilitates illegal export (typically towards the Arab Emirates)⁵⁵ and the proliferation of armed banditry.⁵⁶ At the same time, drugs produced either locally or in Latin America target the Sahel as a preferred transit hub, as a result not only of the region's physically porous borders but also of its local authorities' political tolerance, which several reports have highlighted.⁵⁷ While the conflict in Mali is alleged to have facilitated

al Damage. The Impact of EU Migration Policies on Central Saharan Routes", in *Clingendael CRU Reports*, September 2018, <https://www.clingendael.org/node/9485>.

54. Andrew Lebovich, "Halting Ambition: EU Migration and Security Policy in the Sahel", cit.
55. Alan Martin and H el ene Helbig de Balzac, "The West African El Dorado: Mapping the Illicit Trade of Gold in C ote d'Ivoire, Mali and Burkina Faso", in *IMPACT Research Reports*, January 2017, <https://impacttransform.org/?p=3197>.
56. Mathieu Pellerin, "Beyond the 'Wild West'. The Gold Rush in Northern Niger", in *SANA Briefing Papers*, June 2017, <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/?highlight=bp-sana-niger-gold>; J er ome Tubiana, Clotilde Warin and Gaffar Mohammed Saeneen, "Multilateral Damage", cit.
57. Wolfram Lacher, "Organized Crime and Conflict in the Sahel-Sahara Region", cit; Ivan Briscoe, "Crime After Jihad: Armed Groups, the State, and Illicit Business in Post-conflict Mali", in *Clingendael CRU Reports*, May 2014, <https://www.clingendael.org/node/4816>.

the pulverisation of networks throughout the region,⁵⁸ officials in charge of cross-border security privately admit that they cannot fight against too many enemies at once – thereby raising questions about the degree of impunity enjoyed by drug trafficking in the Sahel.

We encounter very similar negligence in other spheres too, in which the overemphasis on emergency measures (which often mirror international actors' goals) has ended up affording priority to short-term, poorly-sustainable actions over determined investment targeting structural gaps. This is the case, for instance, with demographics and their governance. The international humanitarian community responded with determination to the catastrophic famines that struck the Sahel in the 1970s and 80s. However, the Sahelian governments, for their part, stepped back, which made it impossible to frame the emergency humanitarian measures within a comprehensive, sustainable demographic policy.⁵⁹ Thus, the considerable drop in the mortality rate was not accompanied by an equivalent investment in family planning, with the result that the Sahel today has one of the highest birth rates on the planet, driving extremely rapid demographic growth: 3.16 per cent per year in Burkina Faso, 3.36 per cent per year in Mali and 3.83 per cent per year in Niger – the highest in the world – compared with an average for Africa of 2.6 per cent.⁶⁰ As a consequence, these countries, like the rest of the continent, have a very broad majority of youngsters in their population, with under-15s accounting for almost half their overall populace.⁶¹ But these young people's numerical weight is by no means reflected in the gerontocracy

58. Ines Kohl, "Afrod, le business touareg avec la frontière: nouvelles conditions et nouveaux défis", in *Politique Africaine*, No. 132 (2013), p. 139-159, <https://doi.org/10.3917/polaf.132.0139>.

59. Gregory Mann, *From Empires to NGOs in the West African Sahel*, cit. See also: John F. May and Jean-Pierre Guengant, "Les défis démographiques des pays sahéliens", in *Études*, No. 2014/6 (June 2014), p. 19-30, <https://www.cairn.info/revue-etudes-2014-6-page-19.htm>.

60. See Population Data website: <https://en.populationdata.net/continents/africa>. See also chapter 3 in this volume.

61. As confirmed by the data of the National Institutes of Statistics of Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso.

that dominates both the traditional and modern institutions in Sahel countries, and calls for democracy increasingly translate into an in-depth questioning of the hybrid governance that benefits the old elites.⁶² The weakness of school and job provision contributes to young people's precarious situation. In such a context, the growing constraints on mobility reduce resilience and absorb resources that are earmarked for stabilisation but which are, on the contrary, in danger of exacerbating the destabilising potential of the demographic crisis in the Sahel: in Mali and in Niger, for example, international actors' support has swollen the budget of the security sector, which may now surpass the resources destined for public education.⁶³

3. Conclusions: stabilisation versus good governance?

The Sahel region is afflicted by numerous problems: poverty, political instability, demographic growth, climate change, radicalisation and others besides. Yet available scholarship shows that these issues do not turn into sources of "crisis" automatically but only through the political filter of inappropriate governance. Hybrid governance, which has underwritten the social pact in the Sahel countries to date, is being called into question today by the scope of the new challenges affecting the region.

Lying at the crossroads of the exercise of authority, the search for emancipation and resilience strategies, mobility practices provide a lens of choice for examining the complexity of the

62. See for example: Christian Leuprecht and Philippe Roseberry, "Political Demography of Conflict in Mali", in *Stabilizing Mali Project Reports*, June 2018, <https://dandurand.uqam.ca/publication/political-demography-of-conflict-in-mali>; Clara Arnaud, "Jeunesses sahéliennes: dynamiques d'exclusion, moyens d'insertion", in *Notes Techniques AFD*, No. 15 (March 2016), <https://www.afd.fr/fr/node/807>.

63. See SIPRI Military Expenditure Database: <https://www.sipri.org/databases/milex>. See also: Georges Berghezan, "Dépenses militaires et importations d'armes dans cinq États ouest-africains", in *GRIP Analysis Notes*, 15 June 2016, <https://www.grip.org/fr/node/2027>.

issues involved in governance in the Sahel. On the one hand, these practices are part of a complex framework involving the economic, social, political and security spheres. On the other, the concern triggered – particularly abroad – by irregular migration and transnational terrorism has turned mobility and borders into the principal investment targets of stabilisation strategies in the Sahel countries. These strategies afford priority to limited, short-term measures expected to provide quick-fix solutions for isolated problems perceived as being especially urgent. Yet it has been proven that the lack of a comprehensive and sensitive approach capable of intervening in the broader context of national and regional governance produces a situation that is not up to the challenges, and in fact, could even lead to counterproductive outcomes. The absence of reliable indicators and systematic assessments of the new stabilisation and mobility-governance measures is, in and of itself, an anomaly that makes it impossible to anticipate collateral effects and, on a broader level, to evaluate the soundness of such an approach. We might therefore suppose that international actors' lack of appetite for approaches that are politically and economically burdensome has ended up facilitating the adoption of measures in which the mere announcement effect takes precedence over the concrete impact that such measures might have on the ground. Nor can such an approach fail to arouse interest among certain local actors bent on preserving the status quo.⁶⁴ The gap between the perspectives and interests of the actors involved at different levels can, indeed, make it impossible to grasp the actual impact of any kind of regulation. Neglecting the reality on the ground in favour of abstract normative templates does not provide a viable basis for effective and sustainable governance, and instead runs the risk of endorsing a superficial oversimplification that is doomed to fail.

64. Denis M. Tull, "Mali, the G5 and Security Sector Assistance: Political Obstacles to Effective Cooperation", in *SWP Comments*, No. 2017/52 (December 2017), <https://www.swp-berlin.org/en/publication/mali-the-g5-and-security-sector-assistance>.

Modes of governance inspired by an inclusive approach and rooted in dialogue, on the other hand, are far more likely to achieve the expected outcomes – although, of course, it may take far longer to forge a consensus among the players involved over shared goals. A few examples of best practice show that mobility-governance initiatives that are sensitive to the complexity of the actual needs, players and issues involved have been successful, even in particularly controversial spheres. These examples lay the groundwork for the path to be pursued. For instance, the regional protocols for freedom of movement developed by the ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) – of which Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso are all members – are the result of negotiations that, while complex, have not failed to produce remarkable results, particularly in the spheres of economic development and of regional integration.⁶⁵ By the same token, participatory processes involving economic actors and communities in the three countries have made it possible to launch initiatives for tackling their governments' disengagement in the field of land tenure. In Mali,⁶⁶ Niger⁶⁷ and Burkina Faso⁶⁸ conflicts pitting farmers, herders and property developers against one another are a major source of concern that undermines social harmony, peaceful coexistence and agro-pastoral activities in the rural world. In a context characterised by few constraints on the circulation of arms, such conflicts increasingly escalate into lethal clashes and forced displacement, leaving behind them a wake of polarisation and vengeance killings. Yet coordination among the various actors has led to the implementation of very effective governance measures: in Mali, a law adopted in April 2017 after consultation with grass-roots committees, trade unions and some international organisations, has formally enshrined

65. Tahar Benattia, Florence Armitano and Holly Robinson, *Irregular Migration Between West Africa, North Africa and the Mediterranean*, cit.

66. Adam Thiam, *Centre du Mali: enjeux et dangers d'une crise négligée*, cit.

67. International Crisis Group (ICG), "The Niger-Mali Border", cit.

68. Malian Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and Civic Promotion, *L'état des lieux des conflits communautaires au Burkina-Faso* (draft version), Ouagadougou, June 2015.

customary laws in the country's legal framework, thereby strengthening transparency, accountability and accessibility in the governance of natural resources;⁶⁹ in Niger, the marking of land perimeters has considerably reduced the conflict rate in certain regions (even though hybrid governance has mitigated that success in the presence of illicit interests);⁷⁰ and in Burkina Faso, the establishment of a national observatory for the prevention and management of communal conflict aims to facilitate not only social mediation but also the legal treatment of cases.⁷¹

Moreover, it is worth pointing out that the community regulations devised by the UEMOA (West African Economic and Monetary Union) have made it possible to internalise a relatively substantive institutional and legal framework to fight against corruption and illicit financial flows in the three countries.⁷² Today Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso are equipped with binding legal provisions against corruption, they have set up their Courts of Accounts and they have relatively independent watchdog authorities. Yet the international donors that have traditionally sponsored these measures, politically and economically, seem to be turning towards other priorities. At the same time, the

69. Anca-Elena Ursu, "Finding Justice Amidst Insecurity: Policy Initiatives to Strengthen Customary Justice Systems and Mitigate Conflicts in Central Mali", in *Clingendael CRU Policy Briefs*, February 2018, <https://www.clingendael.org/node/8909>.

70. Luca Raineri, "Drug Trafficking in the Sahara Desert: Follow the Money and Find Land Grabbing", in Francesco Chiodelli, Tim Hall and Ray Hudson (eds), *The Illicit and Illegal in Regional and Urban Governance and Development*, London/New York, Routledge, p. 20-36.

71. Décret n°2015-1645 du 28 décembre 2015 portant création, composition, attributions et fonctionnement d'un Observatoire national de prévention et de gestion des conflits communautaires au Burkina Faso, <http://extwprlegs1.fao.org/docs/pdf/bkfl65552.pdf>

72. In particular, UEMOA Directive No. 07/2002/CM/UEMOA relating to the struggle against money laundering, http://www.uemoa.int/sites/default/files/bibliothèque/pages_-_reglement_6_2002_cm_uemoa.pdf; Directive No. 08/2002/CM/UEMOA on measures to promote the spread of banking and the use of non-cash means of payment, http://www.uemoa.int/sites/default/files/bibliothèque/pages_-_directive_08_2002_cm.pdf; and Directive No. 01/2009/CM/UEMOA on the transparency code in public finance management, <http://www.uemoa.int/fr/node/989>.

escalating security concerns of the Sahel countries' partners increase the emphasis on emergency administrative and executive measures, which only increases the opaqueness of transactions and thus helps to bolster a hybrid form of governance. It would be far more preferable for them to back the efforts agreed on to date to strengthen the Sahel countries' defences against corruption, because the governance of mobility risks proving ineffective and basically "blind" unless financial flows are also taken into account.

To conclude, then, we need to dispel a misunderstanding: whether it be people or capital, physical or social mobility, international flows or local micro-circulation, stabilisation must not be interpreted as requiring a halt to all movement – a halt whose sustainability is likely to be rapidly called into question. On the contrary, stabilisation must aim to build less fragile bases, thus making possible to absorb the inevitable blows and shocks of historical change. As this chapter has endeavoured to demonstrate, good governance is the key to preventing problems from turning into crises. Good governance is therefore a guarantee of resilience, and the strategies to strengthen it cannot be restricted to isolated measures because the erection of walls and other props will not be able to achieve much if the building's foundations remain rotten.

Recommendations

- The struggle against corruption is not only an end in itself to contribute to good governance, it is also a crucial prerequisite impacting on numerous sensitive spheres – including upholding democracy, bolstering the effectiveness of international aid, and strengthening resilience vis-à-vis the drivers of radicalisation. The international community has numerous tools at its disposal allowing it to accompany the moralisation of political and economic life in the Sahel countries and to stanch excesses of corruption at every level. These include: (a) pegging the release of international aid to performance indicators in the strug-

gle against corruption; (b) providing political, economic and technical support to the various national authorities tasked with monitoring and verifying public accounts; (c) facilitating the internalisation of international measures in the struggle against organised crime and irregular capital movements; and (d) supporting independent media, investigative journalism and professionalisation in the information industry.

- The articulation of powers within the Sahelian states risks entrenching patrimonial governance that is detrimental to the stability of a region exposed to numerous challenges. An inclusive approach fostering national dialogue can contribute to addressing sensitive issues concerning the separation of powers, including the subordination of the judiciary to the executive branch – a legacy of the French system which strengthens the latter’s hold on the former – and the politicisation of customary leaders within government authorities – which exacerbates cronyism.
- The security of borders and borderlands in the Sahel requires far more than localised, case-by-case support for the region’s defence and security forces. In this regard, emergency stabilisation measures may provide short-term relief, but the sustainability of the results achieved depends on the political will to intervene over the structural constraints undermining the operationality and legitimacy of the Sahel countries’ security apparatuses – including rampant corruption, the client-based management of human resources, and the poor handling of civil-military relations. International players should back reforms in favour of the professionalisation and depoliticisation of the security sector while, at the same time, encouraging diversity and representation of all social components. Resorting to security-based approaches in the governance of civilian affairs – such as military administration or the proclamation of a state of emergency – should be scrupulously restricted.

- It is paramount to ensure that international strategies targeting Sahelian countries, including in the spheres of stabilisation and mobility governance, are based on the best practices of and lessons learnt in international aid. In this respect, those strategies should: (a) ensure ownership through the expression of local actors' needs through inclusive, participatory and not only top-down approaches; (b) ensure the utmost transparency and accountability in the spheres of decision-making and resource management; and (c) be constantly monitored and systematically evaluated on the basis of reliable indicators in order to anticipate unexpected collateral effects and to ensure consistency between the means deployed and the stated goals.
- In a region in which the primary sector is responsible for an overwhelming majority of jobs, improved regulation of land, water and mining sectors is of crucial importance in order to help reduce both unemployment and hotbeds of tension. National and international players can capitalise on the numerous lessons learnt in the governance of land tenure in order to clarify the relationship between the formal and the informal, the government-based and the traditional, and the central and the decentralised. They should also support the adoption and implementation of a management of natural resources at once in harmony with traditional lifestyles, respectful of human rights (including economic and social rights) and equal to the challenges posed by climate change.
- Young people account for half the population of the Sahelian countries, but their social status is out of kilter with their potential and their aspirations, thereby amounting to nothing less than a demographic "time-bomb". While the mitigation of population growth can only have an appreciable impact in the longer term, adaptation measures can be adopted as of today in an effort to promote the involvement of young men and women in the political and economic life of their respective countries. National and internation-

al players can work to bolster the quantity and quality of education available; to multiply the platforms within which young people can express themselves, interact and feel valued; and to institutionalise measures for positive discrimination in the various social organisations.

2

CLIMATE CHANGE, MOBILITY AND THE DEMOGRAPHIC DYNAMIC IN BURKINA FASO AND MALI: WHAT IMPACT ON WOMEN AND CHILDREN?

NANA ALASSANE TOURE

With a view to assisting sub-Saharan African countries to more efficiently adopt a model of governance capable of fostering sustainable development, prior analysis of certain issues is one of the crucial conditions before proceeding. In that regard, concentrating on the demographic dynamic, climate change and migrant flows is essential for any form of inclusive development that takes into consideration the basic needs of the population – and, more especially, of its weaker strata. This is important as those needs often become major issues, necessitating the implementation of sound policies and the monitoring of their effectiveness.

This is because problems relating to the climate, to migration and to demography are becoming acute issues – in rural and urban areas alike – virtually all around the globe. Yet it is obvious that these issues are even more acute on the African continent, and more especially in its sub-Saharan area, on account of the absence of best-governance policies there. The environmental; social; anthropological; and, in some ways, even political consequences of this situation have made deep inroads into the means of subsistence of communities living in the north of both Burkina Faso and Mali. We offer a few examples of this phenomenon later on in this chapter.

Basing our work both on published material and on concrete evidence – particularly testimonials and first-hand accounts

gathered from interlocutors in the field – we propose in this chapter to explore migrant flows, climate change and the demographic dynamic in the north of both countries. As such, we endeavour, on the one hand, to see how the impact of these issues moulds and steers the lives of the communities in the two areas, paying particular attention to women and children – in other words to those segments of society considered the most vulnerable.

On the other hand, we analyse the manner in which the two countries' policies and systems of governance influence the management of demographic change, climate change and mobility. And in conclusion, we formulate a number of recommendations that, if properly embraced, will be able to reduce those issues' impact and to improve the lifestyle and living standards of the people living in those communities.

Where our methodology is concerned, in respect of our heuristic goals, we refer to published work that, among other things, addresses climate-related issues, climate change, migration, the demographic dynamic and their varying potential impacts. In addition to this document review, ethnographic interviews were conducted in the northern regions of both Burkina Faso and Mali by the investigation teams that we set up. The respondents came from a variety of different backgrounds; their number thus included women, young people, community officials, and members of the political authorities and private structures.

1. Differing views of climate change, its underlying factors and its consequences

The expression “climate change” refers to alterations in the Earth's climate that have been considerably influenced by human phenomena for quite some time.¹ The role played by these

1. According to Article 1(2) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), climate change is “a change of climate which is attrib-

phenomena – long ignored or overlooked for a variety of reasons, especially by the large industrially advanced countries that are major producers of greenhouse gases – has now become front-page news throughout the world. Global meetings leading to the adoption of such accords as the COP21 Paris Agreement perfectly illustrate this surge of interest in what we might call the “governance” of climate change.²

Today climate change is becoming a leitmotif for politicians, environmentalists and human rights activists, among others. Each actor – in relation to their concern, sensitivity, level of understanding and interests, as well as to the rationales supposedly steering their actions – addresses the issue in a different way.

In a large number of communities, especially rural ones, surveys show that in many respects appreciation of climate change still leaves much to be desired, despite their inhabitants being the people most heavily affected by its potentially damaging effects. On the strength of an analysis of the interviews conducted with our interlocutors in the north of both Burkina Faso and Mali, we rapidly realised that despite the promulgation of programmes designed to alert and to inform audiences regarding the thorny issue of climate change, several communities continue to be seriously under-informed.

In spite of the fact that these populations are particularly sensitive and vulnerable to any modification of their environment,³

uted directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods”. See *UN Framework Convention on Climate Change*, 1992, <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/conveng.pdf>.

2. Géraud de Lassus St-Geniès, “L'accord de Paris sur le climat: quelques éléments de décryptage”, in *Revue québécoise de droit international*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (2015), p. 27-51, https://www.persee.fr/doc/rqdi_0828-9999_2015_num_28_2_2183.
3. Marie-Joëlle Fluet, *Impacts des changements climatiques sur les agriculteurs de la province du Zondoma au Burkina Faso: adaptation, savoir et vulnérabilité*, Master's thesis, Université du Québec à Montréal, 2006, <http://www.giersa.ulaval.ca/node/547>.

they have received only snippets of objective information regarding the causes, dynamics and consequences of climate change. This is already causing a serious problem for community resilience in the face of climate change because these people simply are not fully conversant with the issue. According to a home-maker in Gourcy, "Climate change is just insufficient rainfall, shrinking ponds and lakes, forests disappearing and poor crop yields, all because of our bad behaviour [towards God]".⁴

Moreover, we encountered a fairly significant language gap, in terms of the words employed to define climate change, between experts and the people whom we interviewed while collecting data. The latter, in defining the phenomenon, referred above all to its environmental impact and only to a lesser degree to its underlying factors. Some of them were even prey to a certain amount of confusion between cause and effect.

Yet this problem in defining climate change does not necessarily mean that its causes and its impact are unknown to the population either in Mali or in Burkina Faso. Several respondents in each country – admittedly, a minority of them – had clear ideas with regard to a number of aspects relating to the issue. In general, they tended to highlight the visible aspects such as, for example, shrinking lakes and rivers or poor harvests.

Climate change is the destruction of growing cycles, poor crop yields, a shortage of fish, the desert rapidly gaining ground and the appearance of natural phenomena such as flooding or prolonged heavy drought.⁵

The consequences of climate change are fairly major in the two areas examined in this chapter. In some cases, they can prompt

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4. Author's interview with H.S. (illiterate home-maker), Gourcy (Burkina Faso), September 2018. In her view, climate change is the result of God's wrath towards mankind. She suggests that this is why it no longer rains the way it used to.
 5. Author's interview with A.M. (sociologist living in the Bourem Circle), Gao region (Mali), October 2018.

the population to migrate, voluntarily or otherwise, towards less hostile areas, while in others they can trigger situations of conflict. In fact, several analysts even associate climate change with the appearance of inter- or intra-community tension.

In this regard, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) states that

The relationship between climate change, migration and conflict remains complex. [...] However, with climate change threatening the integrity of ecosystems that are already made vulnerable by a rapidly growing population, it is evident that this situation will exacerbate competition over natural resources and trigger movements of people and conflicts.⁶

In the northern reaches of Burkina Faso and of Mali, drought has risen to a critical level and its consequences have included a depletion of resources and a decrease in the amount of fertile land, including grazing land. Robert Fourissala and Jean Gormo stress that “the impact of drought is even more striking on the security level. Increasingly scarce water supplies and farmers’ movements are often behind the flare-up of clashes in the region”.⁷

This growing scarcity can become a source of discontent that, in certain cases, leads to what Patrick Gonin and Véronique Lassailly-Jacob call “environmental refugees”,⁸ while in other cases that discontent can translate into inter- or intra-community tension and strife.⁹

6. UN Environment Programme (UNEP), *Livelihood Security. Climate Change, Migration and Conflict in the Sahel*, Geneva, UNEP, 2011, p. 5-6, <https://publications.iom.int/node/513>.

7. Robert Houli Fourissala and Jean Gormo, “Changement climatique et migration dans la bande sahélienne du Tchad”, in *Locus: revista de história*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (2013), p. 178, <https://locus.ufjf.emnuvens.com.br/locus/article/view/2532> [Our translation].

8. Patrick Gonin and Véronique Lassailly-Jacob, “Les réfugiés de l’environnement”, in *Revue européenne des migrations internationales*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (2002), p. 139-160, <http://journals.openedition.org/remi/1654>.

9. Mathieu Pellerin, “Les trajectoires de radicalisation religieuse au Sahel”, in *Notes de l’IFRI*, February 2017, <https://www.ifri.org/fr/node/12758>.

Thus climate change can be visualised as a factor lurking in the background yet likely to exacerbate conflict or tension within a community. By the same token, when discussing the case of Mali, Aly Tounkara shows that “climate disturbance, which is occurring with growing regularity, translates among other things into scantier rainfall and leads to tension among the pastoral (Fula) and sedentary (Bambara and Dogon) populations”.¹⁰

Climate change is often a source of illegal immigration and problems among the different populations in connection with access to land resources. According to the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), “Climate change is an urgent and potentially irreversible threat to human society and to the planet.”¹¹

In terms of impact, while every community suffers the consequences of climate change in one way or another, it needs to be stressed that certain strata of society are more deeply impacted than others. Our survey in the field has revealed that women and children are, in many ways, those most heavily affected both in the north of Burkina Faso and in the north of Mali, as pointed out by different interviewees:

Women suffer to obtain wood for heating, children suffer from hunger. [...] working men leave and women and children are abandoned. [...] women’s difficulties increase with the decrease in the production of wild fruit, which is an important source of income for them. Even children are no longer cared for using wild plants.¹²

The impact of climate change is social and economic in nature and affects women and children in particular. They have to cope with nutrition problems, with inter- and intra-community strife and with moves elsewhere.¹³

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10. Aly Tounkara, “Hiérarchisation ethnique et extrémisme violent au centre du Mali. Vers une nouvelle rébellion dans un contexte d’insécurité généralisée”, in *Contre-discours radical*, 4 July 2017, <https://cdradical.hypotheses.org/538>.
 11. UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), *Global Warming of 1.5°C*, 2018, p. 79, <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/chapter/chapter-1-pdf>.
 12. Author’s interview with M.D. (student), Gourcy (Burkina Faso), September 2018.
 13. Author’s interview with O.S. (housewife), Ouahigouya (Burkina Faso), September 2018.

Several kinds of action have been taken with a view to significantly reducing the impact of climate change and to bolstering communities' resilience and ability to adapt. For example, both Burkina Faso and Mali have a number of schemes designed to reduce climate change's impact on community life in one way or another. Some of these schemes are implemented by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), associations or private individuals, while others are the product of government policies for managing climate change. In addition to these schemes, our interlocutors themselves submitted a number of proposals:

It is necessary to bolster resilience through economic micro-projects, to improve children's and women's living standards and lifestyle by putting in place a controlled health and nutrition system. [...] given that climate change is irreversible, the state must ensure that the laws governing crop-growing and the use of natural resources are observed.¹⁴

Several interlocutors in the north of Burkina Faso urged the adoption of coercive measures to counter harmful human activity. In their view, it is a matter of explicitly establishing measures punishing detrimental human activity such as, among other things, deforestation through uncontrolled tree-felling and wildfires:

Given that climate change is due in part to human activity, it is necessary to apply the rules in force in each country and to punish offenders breaking existing laws [...]. Also, it is necessary to sensitise natural resource developers to ensure that they adopt good conduct for the recovery of the ecosystem.¹⁵

In the light of all this, it is important to note that governmental actors, NGOs and other bodies involved are in many respects perfectly aware of climate change's causes, manifestations and direct and indirect consequences. Yet at the same time, it is

14. Author's interview with A.A. (expert in development communication), Tombouctou (Mali), October 2018.

15. Author's interview with N.S. (teacher), Gourcy (Burkina Faso), September 2018.

equally clear that a considerable proportion of the population in the north of both Mali and Burkina Faso is not as well informed regarding these underlying factors. However, we noted that in the north of Mali, there is a very noticeable link between the scarcity of natural resources (due chiefly to climate change) and intra- and inter-community strife.

2. From uncontrolled demographic dynamics to 360-degree mobility

The issue of mobility in the Sahel has formed the subject of several publications at the university, political and NGO levels.¹⁶ Despite this interest in seeking to understand it, the establishment of underlying links with the demographic dynamic and climate change has hitherto failed to spark the same degree of interest as that shown in mobility itself.

In the Sahel, second only to the security issues triggered by the presence of radical groups, demographic and migration dynamics occupy an important place in terms of the prioritisation of major concerns by such countries as Mali and Burkina Faso. These two nations – and, in particular, their northernmost reaches – are seriously confronted with the problems that these dynamics currently trigger or may well trigger in the future. Some analysts think that this may be due to the fact that the Sahel remains the least advanced region in the demographic transition movement.¹⁷

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16. Jeanne Semin, "L'ethnologue dans les réseaux économiques des femmes migrantes: modes de présence simultanée entre la France et l'Afrique", in *Revue européenne des migrations internationales*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (2009), p. 101-113, <http://journals.openedition.org/remi/4989>; Famagan-Oulé Konaté, "La migration féminine dans la ville de Kayes au Mali", in *Hommes et migrations*, No. 1286-1287 (2010), p. 62-73, <https://doi.org/10.4000/hommesmigrations.1722>.
 17. Patrice Vimard and Raimi Fassassi, "Changements démographiques et développement durable en Afrique", in *Série Population Santé Documents de Recherche LPED*, No. 18 (2010), p. 6, <http://www.documentation.ird.fr/hor/fdi:010051208>.

For purposes of definition, we should explain that the fore-mentioned term¹⁸ alludes to the transition from a demographic situation with high mortality and birth rates to one in which those rates are significantly lower. The former situation is typical of African countries, particularly those south of the Sahara, and indeed several analysts argue that it is precisely this situation that is responsible for their “under-development”. The argument advanced by these analysts is that such countries’ governments have difficulty in properly controlling the demographic dynamic in force within their borders.

In gathering data, we were able to identify a number of different kinds of mobility within the communities covered by our study. Mobility in the Sahel tends to be seasonal, involving moving to placer-mining¹⁹ areas or other regions with easier access to the resources necessary for the population’s survival. We noted that movement towards placer-mining areas in Burkina Faso and, to a lesser degree, in Mali has had a huge impact on the expansion of plant life and animal species in those areas, according to a respondent questioned in Gourcy.

Regarding the factors behind the various kinds of mobility – whether within a country or cross-border, whether voluntary or enforced – our interlocutors invariably pointed to climate change and to the concentration of people in a given space. This shows just how important a link there is between climate change, the demographic dynamic and migrant flows, and why that link must not be overlooked when seeking to govern mobility. According to the president of an NGO, “The main causes of migration around here are linked to scanty rainfall and to

18. Vimard and Fassassi, define demographic transition as “the transition from a demographic situation with high mortality and birth rates to a demographic situation where birth and mortality rates are significantly lower. Given that the drop in the mortality rate precedes the drop in the fertility rate, this transition period translates into a phase of demographic growth whose magnitude and duration depend on the respective rates at which mortality and fertility decrease and on the time gap between those two drops” [Our translation]. Ibid.

19. Placer-mining is the mining of alluvial deposits for minerals.

the race for mining resources and land by big corporations and businesses”.²⁰

The consequences of this mobility for women and children are enormous. In order to seek means of subsistence, men are often forced to leave their families. This can lead to emotional disorders or disorders of a psycho-social nature caused by traumas related to moving and to how the sufferer has experienced separation from their parent.²¹ In addition: “Demographic change contributes to the social and economic destabilisation of women due to lack of a regular income and it increases children’s vulnerability through child malnutrition”.²²

Regarding the role of the state and of non-governmental actors in the governance of demography and population control, we noted that numerous institutional, political and socio-economic measures are in place in the areas covered by our research, but that there is still a very heated debate as to their effectiveness. Local environmental safeguard schemes are encouraged both in Mali and in Burkina Faso.

The state and the non-governmental actors [its partners] are the linchpins in the governance of demography and population control in the sense that they alone can define the policies to be adopted to master these situations; it is just a pity that their recommendations are so rarely followed up on.²³

In both countries, politicians and their various technical and financial partners are aware of the fact that adapting to climate change has passed the necessity stage and has now become

20. Author’s interview with B.O. (President of the Sougri-Nooma Association in Daryargo), Gourcy (Burkina Faso), September 2018.

21. International Organization for Migration (IOM), *Étude protection de l’enfance. L’impact psychosocial de la séparation familiale dans la ville de Tombouctou*, December 2013, p. 11, <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/node/29560> [Our translation].

22. Author’s interview with T.H. (trained sociologist, retailer), Timbuktu (Mali), October 2018.

23. Author’s interview with A.B. (expert in development communication), Timbuktu (Mali), October 2018.

a crucial step for sustainable development. That is why each country has strategies (or plans) in place for managing climate change.

Indeed unlike most other African sub-Saharan countries,

Burkina Faso has an advantage over many other LDC, in that its NAPA [National Adaptation Programme of Action on climate change], adopted in 2007, has been implemented under three projects with technical and financial support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Kingdom of Denmark, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and Japan.²⁴

Mali, too, has a national policy on climate change. Its aim “is to define a framework for sustainable social and economic development between now and 2025, building the challenges of climate change into every sphere of its development in order to improve the population’s welfare”.²⁵

The existence of these institutional measures reveals the interest shown by the two countries’ political actors in the governance of climate change. Yet we have feel obliged to note that the appropriation of these measures by communities “on the ground” – a gauge of the extent to which the measures have put down roots in society – is still far from a given. An overwhelming majority of the people whom we questioned in the course of our interviews emphasised that they were unaware of their country’s plans for adapting to and coping with climate change. Also, we realised that the plans do not afford any significant consideration to the role that local skills and knowledge can play in connection with the whole issue.

24. Burkina Faso Ministry of Environment and Fishery Resources, *Burkina Faso National Climate Change Adaptation Plan (NAP)*, June 2015, p. 9, https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/NAPC/Documents/Parties/PNA_Version_version%20finale%5bTransmission%5d.pdf.

25. Malian Agency for Environment and Sustainable Development (AEDD), *Politique nationale sur les changements climatiques. Rapport final*, July 2011, p. 5, <http://mdtf.undp.org/document/download/8100> [Our translation].

Conclusion

Linking climate change, mobility and the demographic dynamic forms a very important model due to the fact that in the majority of cases there is a considerable interaction between them. In the two areas involved in our fieldwork, the north of Burkina Faso and the north of Mali, we reached the conclusion that there is a very important cause-and-effect relationship between these three factors.

Climate change and the demographic dynamic can impact on migrant flows, and vice versa. In other words, mass movements towards areas considered less hostile can increase the impact of climate change where human phenomena are most present. In that regard, it would be beneficial for the region's political decision-makers and their various domestic and international partners to consider this dialectical relationship, which is frequently imperative in strategies for managing one or the other phenomenon.

We noted that the consequences of climate change, of mobility and of the demographic dynamic are numerous on both the social and economic levels, and that they have an impact on every stratum of society. We observed, however, how women and children are particularly negatively affected by them.

With the effects of climate change becoming increasingly prominent and, in that sense, difficult to bear, populations are moving from area to area in search of the means of subsistence. Their more fragile members (women and children), on the other hand, remain for the most part in their communities despite their wish to move to a more favourable area than their own.

This mobility, which has a considerable impact on their precarious condition, cannot be underestimated. It offers us a perfect illustration of a system of governance that is out of tune with the real needs of the communities involved – particularly of rural communities, which are being increasingly relegated to the “back row” in terms of public policy. So this situation

must prompt governments to reconsider their relationship with their citizens.

And lastly, we noted that several schemes are under way with a view to alerting and steering the population and to bolstering its capacity for adaptation and resilience. Our interlocutors both in Mali and in Burkina Faso were unanimous with regard to recognition of the efforts being made. Yet despite a certain amount of progress having been achieved, it is clear that there remains a great deal to do in view of the complexity of the phenomena involved. Another observation that caught our attention was the fact that the measures adopted hitherto acted less on the causes of the phenomena under consideration than on their effects. Consequently, the steps taken have focused more on remedy than on prevention.

Recommendations

We propose the following recommendations as a result of our work:

- The Malian and Burkinabe governments and their various partners must make room for the meaningful involvement of their grass-roots populations, particularly their more vulnerable strata – in the formulation and implementation of policies related to demography, migration and climate change. This involvement will lead to inclusive and efficient governance.
- The relevant channels of communication must be adapted to cater for the real factors, manifestations and consequences of climate change.
- Some of the people interviewed, both literate and illiterate, were unaware of the links discussed. It is therefore paramount that governmental actors and other relevant organisations improve their explanation of the dialectical links between climate change, demographic dynamics and migrant flows.

- In the course of our ethnographic conversations, many of our interlocutors – especially women in the north of Burkina Faso – voiced the opinion that climate change was not due to human activity so much as to divine will. It is therefore imperative to counter this kind of vision of climate change in order to optimise its management.
- Initiate information and awareness actions on the roles women can play in mitigating the effects of climate change, demographic dynamics, and mobility.
- Make policies and laws on women’s access to land effective in Burkina Faso and Mali.

3

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE AND MIGRANT MOVEMENTS IN NIGER: THE ROLE AND IMPACT OF GOVERNANCE

HAMIDOU ISSAKA MAGA

1. A poor country with a rapidly rising population

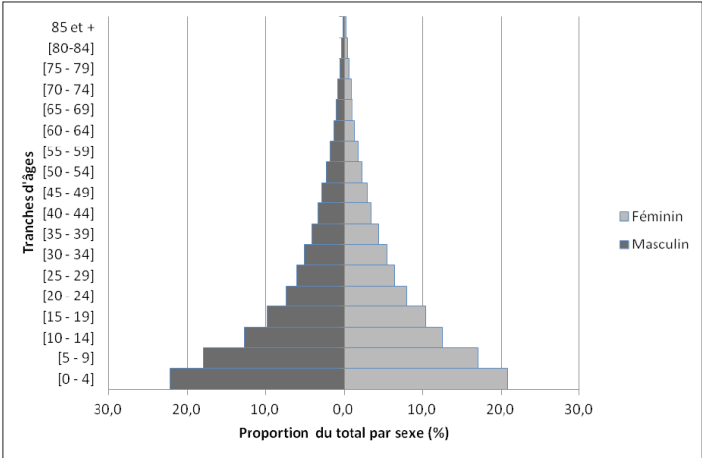
Niger, situated in the heart of the Sahel in West Africa, faces multiple development and environmental challenges. When the country achieved its independence in 1960, it had a population of roughly 3 million.¹ By the time a General Population and Housing Census (RGPH) was conducted in 2012, the Nigerien population had risen to 17,138,707 – in other words, an increase of nearly 15 million people in 52 years, meaning that the population had multiplied almost six times in a generation and a half. The figure topped the 20-million mark in 2018.² This rapid increase is a result of a demographic growth rate of over 3 per cent since the country's first population census in 1977.³

The persistence of strong population growth in Niger and the development challenges that it entails in a context of ongoing economic, social and environmental hardship – and of the pressure brought to bear by development partners – have even-

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1. John F. May, Soumana Harouna and Jean-Pierre Guengant, *Nourrir, éduquer et soigner tous les Nigériens. La démographie en perspective*, Washington, World Bank, March 2004, p. 19, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/792471468775761996>.
 2. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), *World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision*, 2017, <https://population.un.org/wpp/Publications>.
 3. National Institute of Statistics (INS), *Recensement général de la population et de l'habitat 2012. État et structure de la population du Niger en 2012*, Niamey, INS, November 2015, http://www.stat-niger.org/statistique/file/RGPH2012/ETAT_STRUCTURE_POPULATION.pdf.

tually prompted leaders to address the issue of demographic management, with greater or lesser enthusiasm.

Figure 1 | Age pyramid in Niger in 2017



Source: INS, *Recensement général de la population et de l'habitat 2012. État et structure de la population du Niger en 2012*, cit., p. 24.

2. Governance coping with the demographic challenges: best to dodge the constraints

The management of population problems, particularly those relating to population growth and fertility, continues to be a highly controversial issue in Niger – both within the political and intellectual classes and with the country’s Islamic associations, some of which have promoted campaigns against family planning.⁴ These tend to be groups of “*izalists*” (i.e. of a Shiite

4. Niger. Ministry of Population and Social Reforms, *Document des stratégies d'interventions en matière de population, 2007-2015*, Niamey, October 2007, <http://www.hcme.gouv.ne/index.php/documents/category/6-strategies?download=33:strategies-d-interventions-en-matiere-de-population-2007-2015>.

tendency), who are considered to be the most radical sectors of the populace and also the most impervious to propaganda in favour of the use of modern contraceptives by women. Yet several associations, working through the Group of Islamic Associations for Population and Social Development (GAIPDS), hold more moderate positions, being in favour of the use of modern contraceptives – albeit to space out births rather than to limit their number. However, these groups do not publicly air their view for fear of retaliation on the part of those associations predominantly in favour of births, and tend chiefly to take part in official meetings and workshops organised to address population-related issues. An Islamic Council does exist in Niger but it does not address family-planning issues.

In parallel, several international organisations and developed countries have come out in favour of curbing the birth rate in developing countries, and particularly those on the African continent. For most of these African nations, the demographic transition is only just getting under way – hence the adoption by over 200 countries of an action plan in the population and development sphere, a plan spawned by the International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo in 1994, which is still in force.⁵

We can split demographic governance or the management of demographic issues by Niger's public authorities into two main periods: the first period stretches from 1960 to the 1980s, while the second starts in around 1985 and is ongoing today.

1960 to 1985: a period of non-intervention in the demographic sphere

In the first period, which began after the proclamation of Niger's independence in 1960, the Nigerien population's rapid

See also John F. May, Soumana Harouna and Jean-Pierre Guengant, *Nourrir, éduquer et soigner tous les Nigériens*, cit.

5. United Nations, *Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development. 20th Anniversary Edition*, New York, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), 2014, <https://www.unfpa.org/node/9038>.

growth was seen chiefly as a burden from which the country would be unlikely to suffer in the presence of healthy economic growth. In other words, economic dynamism combined with healthy economic growth would be able to cope with the strong demographic growth rate.⁶

1985 to the present day: a few limited attempts to impact on the demographic sphere

In the second major period of demographic governance, which is still under way, government authorities have shown the will to intervene on demographic growth. Yet this second phase has witnessed several periods in which interest in demographic issues has waxed and waned: a first sub-phase, stretching from 1985 to 1992; a second one, stretching from 1992 to 2011; and a third, which is ongoing at the time of writing.

1985 to 1992: gaining control over demographic growth

Starting in 1980, the drop in the international price of uranium and in demand for that metal, which is Niger's chief official export, helped to trigger a drastic decrease in the country's revenues, leading to an economic crisis that was aggravated by several years of poor harvests.⁷ The persistence of this recession period over a number of years, together with adjustment measures demanded by such international financial institutions as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), were to prompt the government to see Niger's rapid demographic growth (over 3 per cent a year at the time)⁸ for the first time as an obstacle to development. The new head of state, General Sein Kountché, was to inform the World Bank and the IMF of the structural-adjustment policies being considered,

6. Niger. Ministry of Planning, *Plan de développement économique et social, 1967-1963* (Plan intérimaire), Vol. 1, Niamey, 1963.

7. Niger. Ministry of Planning, *Programme intérimaire de consolidation, 1984-1985*, Niamey, 1984.

8. Approximately 3.4 per cent according to the intercensus estimate for 1977-1988. National Institute of Statistics (INS), *Recensement général de la population et de l'habitat 2012. État et structure de la population du Niger en 2012*, cit., p. 10.

adopting measures to control public spending with a drop in the state's "lifestyle". Kountché himself became a neo-Malthusian, issuing an appeal in favour of family planning in Niger in the course of a historic address at Matameye (currently the capital of the Department of Kantché) in 1985.⁹

The proposals made by the then head of state were to be followed by the adoption of initial, and still hesitant, measures in favour of family planning for married couples in 1988. The 1987–91 development plan was to bolster the new national course in favour of controlling demographic growth.

Yet the stated will to control population growth continued to be more of an encouragement than an obligation so as to avoid offending the sensitivities of the very strongly Islamised population and, above all, of the Islamic Association of Niger, which grouped together all of these tendencies at the time, before the number of associations increased with the advent of formal democracy in 1992.

Taking a cue from General Kountché's commitment to the cause, the governance of demographic issues was to become a little more proactive in the sense that henceforth demography was to be seen as one of the country's development challenges. The Nigerien authorities considered it necessary to control it by announcing a national population policy, although that policy did not appear until 1992.¹⁰

1992 to 2011: adopting and implementing demographic control policies

Taking its cue from several other African countries, Niger adopt-

9. Monique Barrère, Idrissa Alichina Kourguéni and Sabine Attama, *Fécondité, planification familiale et santé de la mère et de l'enfant au Niger. Situation régionale*, Calverton, CARE International/Niger and Macro International, May 1999, p. 3, <https://dhsprogram.com/publications/publication-od15-other-documents.cfm>.

10. Niger. Ministry of Planning, *Plan de développement économique et social du Niger, 1987-1991*, Niamey, 1987.

ed a National Population Policy (NPP) Declaration in 1992.¹¹ The Nigerien NPP was espoused on the basis of a “realisation of the ineffectual nature of the development policies implemented hitherto”¹² and also of the country’s weak economic growth rates compared with its constantly increasing demographic growth rate, which topped 3 per cent per year.

Yet after approximately 15 years of the policy’s implementation (1992–2006), the overall annual demographic growth rate stood virtually unchanged. Infant mortality and the death rate among children under five, however, had dropped considerably, a trend that continues.¹³

Overall, a number of different factors explain the comprehensive failure of the NPP, particularly in relation to fertility and to demographic growth. The main ones were: (a) the political instability that held sway, in particular between 1992 and 2006 with two military coups d’état – one in 1996 and the other in 1999; (b) insufficient mobilisation of financial, human and material resources for the NPP; (c) coordination problems; and (d) a problematic Islamic environment, with associations reluctant to entertain any notion of, among other issues, family planning; legalisation on the age of first marriage; or, on a more general level, the adoption of a modern family code to replace the laws enshrined in the Qur’an.¹⁴

11. Niger, *Déclaration de politique nationale de population*, Niamey, 1992. See also John F. May, Soumana Harouna and Jean-Pierre Guengant, *Nourrir, éduquer et soigner tous les Nigériens*, cit.

12. Niger. Ministry of Population and Social Reforms, *Document des stratégies d’interventions en matière de population, 2007-2015*, cit., p. 43.

13. National Institute of Statistics (INS) and Macro International, *Enquête démographique et de santé et à indicateurs multiples du Niger 2006*, Calverton, INS and Macro International, 2007, <https://dhsprogram.com/publications/publication-FR193-DHS-Final-Reports.cfm>; and *Enquête démographique et de santé et à indicateurs multiples du Niger 2012*, Calverton, INS and Macro International, 2013, <https://dhsprogram.com/publications/publication-FR277-DHS-Final-Reports.cfm>.

14. John F. May, Soumana Harouna and Jean-Pierre Guengant, *Nourrir, éduquer et soigner tous les Nigériens*, cit.; Niger. Ministry of Population and Social Reforms, *Document des stratégies d’interventions en matière de population, 2007-2015*, cit.

In view of the still-high fertility level and demographic growth rate in a situation of endemic poverty and economic hardship, the government adopted a new population policy in February 2007, in the shape of a document enshrining a Population Policy Declaration.¹⁵ This second population policy was a little more aggressive because it focused more on demographic targets.

Yet, once again, this policy and its action plan, implemented also via a multi-sectoral demographic programme (PRODEM), have failed to have any impact on the average number of children per woman, which has not dropped to five as was hoped. The figure has continued to top seven children, and may even have exceeded that, hitting the national and world record of 7.6 children, according to the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS)'s figures for 2012.¹⁶

The change of political regime in 2011, with the accession to power of a new President of the Republic a little more committed to demographic issues, has made it possible to impart a fresh boost to demographic governance, redirecting it towards new goals more compatible with international recommendations.

Since 2011: the government promotes the demographic dividend

In 2011, a new political regime was installed, headed by a president who was relatively more committed to demographic issues than his predecessors from the democratic period. In the course of several important speeches, President Issoufou Mamadou formulated the opinion that the Nigerien demographic issue was one of his priorities and one of the challenges to be faced.

15. Niger, *Déclaration du Gouvernement en matière de politique de population*, Niamey, 2007.

16. INS and Macro International, *Enquête démographique et de santé et à indicateurs multiples du Niger 2012*, cit.; UNDESA, *World Population Prospects*, cit., p. 35.

Despite the delay built up in developing a new population policy, the regime in power was to adopt a number of initiatives (although their implementation continues in actual fact to be on the weak side): compulsory schooling for children up to the age of 16, especially for girls in order to save them from early marriage, and a fresh boost to a regional initiative entitled *Sahel Women's Empowerment and Demographic Dividend Project* (SWEDD) involving six African countries including Niger.

Security concerns have probably also played a part in reducing the priority with which the demographic issue is handled. This is because for some years now, the regions of Diffa (bordering Nigeria) and of Tillabéri (bordering Mali) have been in a “state of emergency” on account of the recurring and often lethal attacks visited on them by armed groups.

Multilateral international organisations' commitment

Niger's technical and financial partners (TFPs) have tended for several decades now to consider control of the high fertility rate and rapid demographic growth in Niger to be a crucial precondition for the country's development.¹⁷

One of the chief TFPs that intervenes directly on demographic issues is the United Nations with, in particular, its UN Population Fund (UNFPA) and its fund for women and children (UNICEF). The World Bank and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) are also active, as are a number of European countries. Despite the mobilisation of several billion CFA francs, the implementation of current projects is not going to fundamentally change the demographic situation in Niger in the absence of direct, widespread intervention in the family-planning sphere in rural areas.

We should also mention the fact that several successive French presidents have consistently considered strong population

17. John F. May, Soumana Harouna and Jean-Pierre Guengant, *Nourrir, éduquer et soigner tous les Nigériens*, cit.

growth in Africa to be a major challenge for the continent's development.

Proactive national and international NGOs

In the demographic sphere, with particular reference to family planning, there are also national and international NGOs that make a considerable contribution.¹⁸ Yet there is only a limited number of national NGOs, and they were not involved in the promotion of family planning for several decades. The Nigerien Government offers no direct financial subsidies to NGOs in the demographic sphere and only earmarks a tiny proportion of its budget for population issues – particularly in the case of family planning. Yet the Public Health Ministry, which also concerns itself with reproduction-health issues (including birth control), tends to receive one of the highest percentages of the overall national budget (up to 10 per cent).

National and international intervention by NGOs is important because they often operate in rural or semi-urban areas, which tend to have high fertility rates and little national-health or family-planning coverage. Thus, these NGOs offer and provide local services for populations – in particular, through the dispensing of contraceptives and advice to village communities – and also employ local, and thus easily accessible, personnel for the purpose. Yet in terms of direct intervention on the ground, the NGOs' geographical coverage is generally fairly restricted. In view of these circumstances, their impact on the country as a whole is still weak in the demographic sphere, inasmuch as the overall demand for modern birth control¹⁹ (pri-

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18. Niger. Ministry of Population and Social Reforms, *Rapport national de la conférence internationale sur la population et le développement (CIPD)+20*, Niamey, 2013; United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), *Evaluation du 8ème programme de pays UNFPA/Niger 2014-2018*, June 2018, https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/board-documents/Niger_Evaluation_Report_2014-2018_FR.pdf.
19. Overall demand reflects the sum of users of a given method of contraception, and of "unmet needs" expressed. See INS and Macro International, *Enquête démographique et de santé et à indicateurs multiples du Niger 2012*,

marily to space out births rather than to restrict them) continues to be weak.

3. Diversified migratory movements

Despite its major domestic exodus from the countryside, Niger has primarily been a nation of emigration before recently becoming a transit country for certain forms of migration. The exact number of Nigeriens living abroad continues to be unknown, and relevant data is limited both at the national level and in respect of certain international organisations. Only national migration surveys provide any degree of information on relatively recent emigration.

Major internal migratory movements

Niger's resident population included 3.7 per cent of interregional migrants²⁰ according to the General Population and Housing Census (RGPH) taken in 2012,²¹ as opposed to 4.5 per cent in 2001.²² Yet people with migration experience (internal migrants back in their region or returned from abroad, or those constantly migrating within Niger) account for at least 10 per cent of the population, without including "interdepartmental" migrants²³ from a single region or Nigerien migrants abroad who were out of the country when the census was conducted. Thus, migration is a far-from-negligible phenomenon in Niger.

cit. The results of the 2017 DHS-MICS were rejected by USAID (chief donor) and by the World Bank because the data collected was not reliable.

20. The percentage of Nigeriens not living in the region of their birth when the data was collected.
21. National Institute of Statistics (INS), *Recensement général de la population et de l'habitat 2012. Rapport sur les migrations*, Niamey, INS, 2015, <http://www.stat-niger.org/statistique/file/RGPH2012/MIGRATION.pdf>.
22. Bureau Central de Recensement (BCR), *Analyse des résultats définitifs du RGPH 2001: Les migrations*, Niamey, 2009.
23. If inter-municipal migration (not measured in the Niger population census) were also taken into account, the percentage with migratory experience would be very high indeed.

The issue of departure from the countryside is important because when the RGPH was conducted in 2012, eight internal migrants out of ten (roughly 80.4 per cent) lived in cities.²⁴ Niamey, the capital, which enjoys administrative regional status, has taken in almost five migrants in ten (47 per cent) on its own – a case of urban “macrocephaly”, which phenomenon has long been known to affect national capitals and certain cities that act as economic “magnets”.²⁵

Nigeriens' international emigration: West Africa continues to be their preferred destination

According to the limited number of existing international sources, the number of Nigerien migrants increased rapidly from roughly 16,000 in 1960 to almost 500,000 in the early 2000s.²⁶ Using the latest estimates to have been formulated by the UN, the World Bank estimated the number of Nigeriens resident abroad (for any length of time) to amount to only about 293,000 people in 2013. This heavily underestimated figure accounts for approximately 1.6 per cent of the overall population for the year examined.²⁷ In actual fact, the figures for the number of Nigerien emigrants supplied by international organisations using official data are often very seriously underestimated on account of the presence of irregular Nigerien migrants in several regions of the world – particularly North America, Europe, Asia and also sub-Saharan Africa and North

24. National Institute of Statistics (INS), *Recensement général de la population et de l'habitat 2012. État et structure de la population du Niger en 2012*, cit. Without it being possible to know what percentage was born in a rural environment or in a different city, because the place of birth in a rural or urban environment was not a question respondents were required to answer in the data collection process. They were required to specify only the department, and thus the region, of their birth.

25. Everett S. Lee, “A Theory of Migration”, in *Demography*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (March 1966), p. 47-57; United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Human Development Report 2009. Overcoming Barriers: Human Mobility and Development*, New York, UNDP, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/node/269>.

26. Hamidou Issaka Maga, *Migration au Niger. Profil national 2009*, Geneva, IOM, 2009, p. 71, <https://publications.iom.int/node/1141>.

27. World Bank, *Migration and Remittances Factbook 2016*, 3rd ed., Washington, World Bank, 2016, <http://hdl.handle.net/10986/23743>.

Africa.²⁸ In real terms, international emigration is considerable: according to the most recent national survey on migration, based on the responses provided by households questioned on their members' migratory status, about 583,000 Nigeriens emigrated over the five years preceding the survey date of 2010.²⁹ This five-yearly flow represents an average annual departure of roughly 116,600 people between 2005 and 2010.

Yet all national and international sources show that, since the 1960s, West Africa has been Nigerien migrants' primary destination.³⁰ In this regard, the national survey on migration conducted in 2010 reveals that over the previous five years the responses from households questioned with regard to their absent members' destination countries pointed primarily to West African countries³¹ (see Figure 2). These countries alone (all of them members of the Economic Community of West African States – ECOWAS)³² had taken in 71.4 per cent of all Nigerien migrants, without counting those already resident and the considerable number also in other West African countries such as Burkina Faso, Guinea Conakry and Mali. It is also worth pointing out that since the 2000s there have been destinations both old and new that have increased their intake: in addition to Libya, there have also been Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Gabon,

28. Hamidou Issaka Maga, *Migration au Niger. Profil national 2009*, cit.; Florence Boyer, "Les migrants nigériens expulsés d'Arabie Saoudite: une trajectoire dominée par l'incertitude", in *Espace, Populations, Sociétés*, No. 1/2017 (June 2017), <https://doi.org/10.4000/eps.7088>; Julien Brachet, *Un désert cosmopolite. Migrations de transit dans la région d'Agadez (Sahara nigérien)*, PhD thesis, Université Panthéon-Sorbonne-Paris I, 2007, <https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/tel-00339059>.

29. National Institute of Statistics (INS), *Enquête nationale sur la migration au Niger (ENAMI) 2011. Analyse des résultats*, Niamey, INS, 2013; African Development Bank (AfDB), *Niger Country Strategy Paper 2018-2022*, October 2018, p. xxvii, <https://www.afdb.org/en/documents/document/niger-country-strategy-paper-2018-2022-107590>.

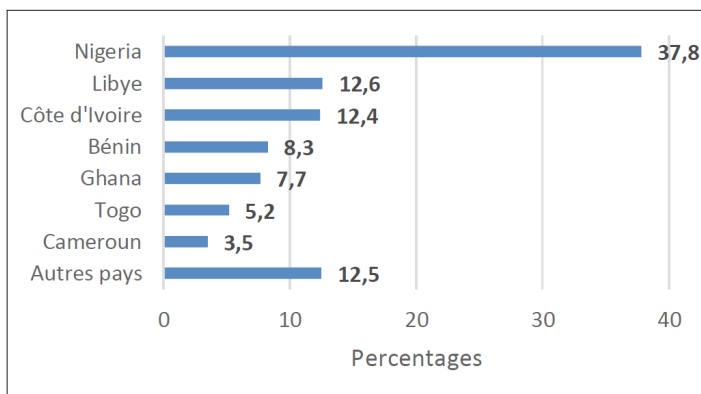
30. Hamidou Issaka Maga, *Migration au Niger. Profil national 2009*, cit.; INS, *Enquête nationale sur la migration au Niger (ENAMI) 2011*, cit.; World Bank, *Migration and Remittances Factbook 2016*, cit.

31. INS, *Enquête nationale sur la migration au Niger (ENAMI) 2011*, cit.

32. Economic Community of West African States, established in 1975 and currently comprising all the countries in West Africa with the exception of Mauritania.

Cameroon and Sudan, as well as developed countries such as the United States and Canada.³³

Figure 2 | Nigerien migrants' main destination countries, 2006-2010



Source: AfDB, *Niger Country Strategy Paper 2018-2022*, cit., p. xxvii.

Migrations to Niger

Two kinds of foreign migratory movements make for Niger: (1) the transit flow (i.e. migrants who then also leave the country, naturally); and (2) long-term migratory movements involving the voluntary or enforced migration of refugees.

The region of Agadez: a corridor for irregular cross-border migration under control

In the 2000s, it was estimated that about 5,000 irregular

33. Hamidou Issaka Maga, "Dynamique des migrations de retour au Niger de 1988 à 2001", in *CARIM Analytic and Synthetic Notes*, No. 2011/63 (October 2011), <http://hdl.handle.net/1814/18975>; Hamidou Issaka Maga, *Migration au Niger. Profil national 2009*, cit.; INS, *Recensement général de la population et de l'habitat 2012. Rapport sur les migrations*, cit.; Niger Horizons, *Etude en vue de l'élaboration d'une politique nationale en matière de migration*, Niamey, Ministère de l'Intérieur, June 2014; Florence Boyer, "Les migrants nigériens expulsés d'Arabie Saoudite", cit.

cross-border migrants per month (frequently including a majority of Nigeriens)³⁴ passed through Niger – in particular, through the region of Agadez – in order to enter Libyan or Algerian territory. These annual emigration flows, amounting to somewhere in the region of 65,000 people per year in the 2000s,³⁵ rose to an average of almost 30,000 per month (over 330,000 per year) over the course of 2016.³⁶ According to the same source, outgoing annual flows plummeted, to reach a rough figure of 69,000 in 2017, a figure closely matching the level in the 2000s, thanks to the application in 2016 of Law 2015-36 (adopted in May 2015) making irregular migrant trafficking on Nigerien national soil a crime.

The monitoring of the irregular migration corridor in the region of Agadez is also a result of cooperation between the Niger and the European Union, which is seeking to bar the way to irregular migrants reaching the shores of Italy and Spain.³⁷ In several analysts' view, this is an obsession for the EU,³⁸ which has shown no hesitation in bringing pressure to bear on Sahel countries threatened by terrorist groups – such as Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso – and thus in need of military aid. The Nigerien Government justifies its participation in the struggle against irregular migration, in particular by alluding to the risk of insecurity fuelled by networks trafficking in irregular adult and under-age migrants but also in arms and drugs.³⁹

34. Julien Brachet, *Un désert cosmopolite*, cit.

35. Ibid.; Niger Horizons, *Etude en vue de l'élaboration d'une politique nationale en matière de migration*, cit.

36. International Organization for Migration (IOM), *Niger – Flow Monitoring Report (December 2018)*, 28 January 2019, p. 2, <https://migration.iom.int/reports/niger-%E2%80%94-flow-monitoring-report-december-2018>.

37. Abdoulaye Hamadou, "La gestion des flux migratoires au Niger entre engagements et contraintes", in *La Revue des droits de l'homme*, No. 14|2018, <https://journals.openedition.org/revdh/4378>.

38. Bernardo Venturi, "The EU and the Sahel: A Laboratory of Experimentation for the Security-Migration-Development Nexus", in Bernardo Venturi (ed.), *The Security-Migration-Development Nexus Revised: A Perspective from the Sahel*, Brussels/Rome, FEPS and IAI, 2017, p. 112, <https://www.iai.it/en/node/8764>.

39. Samuel Hall, *Selling Sand in the Desert. The Economic Impact of Migration in Agadez*, a study commissioned IOM Niger, January 2017, <https://reliefweb>.

In addition to Nigeriens with no entry visa, the irregular flows heading for North Africa in recent years have consisted almost exclusively of migrants from sub-Saharan Africa and primarily of West Africans from ECOWAS member states – mainly Nigeria, Mali, Senegal, Guinea Conakry, Guinea Bissau, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Burkina Faso, Ghana and occasionally also Benin and Togo. We also find nationals from central African countries (Cameroon, Chad, the Central African Republic, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo).⁴⁰ The region of Agadez has thus become a hub for international irregular migration, making Niger a strategic partner for the EU in its struggle against this type of immigration.⁴¹

Insubstantial traditional international immigration

Niger is not one of the most important African countries in terms of migrant intake. Its foreign-immigrant population accounts for less than 1 per cent of its overall resident population, standing at roughly 17 million according to the RGPH take in 2012.⁴² Some 93 per cent of this foreign population originates from ECOWAS member states – in particular, from four neighbouring countries (Mali, Burkina Faso, Nigeria and Benin).⁴³

int/node/2166939; Abdoulaye Hamadou, "La gestion des flux migratoires au Niger...", cit.; Speech by the Nigerien Minister of the Interior, Mohamed Bazoum, to a G5 Sahel coordination meeting devoted to the struggle against irregular immigration, Niamey, 19 March 2018 (in French), <https://www.g5sahel.org/index.php/13-actualite-des-pays-g5/1290-discours-de-m-bazoum-mohamed-ministre-d-etat-ministre-de-l-interieur-a-la-reunion-de-coordination-de-la-lutte-contre-le-trafic-illicite-de-migrants>.

40. International Organization for Migration (IOM), *Sur la route des migrants au Niger. Profilage de l'OIM: migrants en transit, janvier-septembre 2014*, Niamey, IOM, 2014, <https://reliefweb.int/node/777466>; and *Niger 2016 Migrant Profiling Report*, Geneva, IOM, 2017, <https://gmdac.iom.int/node/324>.

41. Mahamadou Danda, "The Security-Migration-Development Nexus in the Sahel: A View from Niger", in Bernardo Venturi (ed.), *The Security-Migration-Development Nexus Revised: A Perspective from the Sahel*, Brussels/Rome, FEPS and IAI, 2017, p. 35-56, <https://www.iai.it/en/node/8764>

42. INS, *Recensement général de la population et de l'habitat 2012. État et structure de la population du Niger en 2012*, cit., p. 46.

43. INS, *Enquête nationale sur la migration au Niger (ENAMI) 2011*, cit.

Despite relatively low numbers of foreign immigrants, Niger benefits from considerable economic and social contributions due to international immigration through the multiple economic activities established and businesses created in the formal sector (industry, education, health, trade, catering and so forth).⁴⁴ Like a majority of Niger's working population, these immigrants tend to work primarily in the informal sector.

A major increase in refugees since 2012

In 2011, Niger had only 425 refugees and asylum seekers. With the outbreak of armed conflict in Mali, and particularly in Nigeria and on that country's border with Niger, that figure shot up to 50,618 (mostly Malians) in 2012,⁴⁵ and by 30 June 2018 the UNHCR recorded 177,565 refugees and asylum seekers in Niger, 66.9 per cent of whom were from Nigeria, 32.8 per cent from Mali and 0.3 per cent from other countries.⁴⁶

4. Governing migration: direct and indirect measures

Since the early 2000s in particular, migration issues have grown in importance in Niger on both the domestic and international levels. Therefore, the country has adopted domestic legislative measures to regulate immigration flows. It has also signed several international agreements and conventions on migration and mobility.⁴⁷ Niamey has additionally established administrative structures – particularly in the form of ministries

44. Hamidou Issaka Maga, "Les migrations hautement qualifiées depuis et vers le Niger: états des lieux et tentatives explicatives", in *CARIM Analytic and Synthetic Notes*, No. 2010/32, <http://hdl.handle.net/1814/13686>; Niger Horizons, *Etude en vue de l'élaboration d'une politique nationale en matière de migration*, cit.

45. See UNHCR *Statistical Yearbooks 2011 and 2012*, <https://www.unhcr.org/statistical-yearbooks.html>.

46. See UNHCR *Operational Portal - Refugee Situations: Niger*, <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/country/ner>.

47. Hamidou Issaka Maga, *Migration au Niger. Profil national 2009*, cit.; Niger Horizons, *Etude en vue de l'élaboration d'une politique nationale en matière de migration*, cit.

involved, in one way or another, in managing migration with the support of institutions at once bilateral and multilateral. Moreover, an inter-ministerial committee and a framework for consultation between the government and technical and financial partners have been set up to promote guidelines and action required.

This committee includes certain technical and financial partners, in order to develop a national migration policy that will address all forms of migration, whether internal or international.⁴⁸ Indeed for years now, steps have been taken to ensure the effective governance of migration and to allowing Niger to benefit considerably from it.

The management of international irregular migration: corruption, repression and humanitarian support

Complicity between formal (in the shape of the country's defence and security forces – the DSF) and informal components is one of the most important factors in irregular migration networks in Niger. The DSF forcefully extort funds or allow themselves to be corrupted by informal actors (carriers, *pass-seurs*, informers and so on) in the sphere of migration as well as by African migrants bound for the Maghreb or Europe for sometimes substantial sums of money.⁴⁹ According to surveys conducted by the Niger branch of the Alternatives-Espaces-Citoyens (AEC) association, the free movement of ECOWAS nationals is hampered by the DSF both at national border posts and at checkpoints within the country itself.⁵⁰ Prior to the im-

48. International Organization for Migration (IOM), *Rapport narratif Retraite du Comité Interministériel chargé de la Politique nationale de Migration pour la revue et formulation des priorités de la République du Niger sur les migrations et Position nigérienne sur le Pacte Mondial sur les Migrations*, Dosso, 26-29 septembre 2017.

49. Abdoussalami Hamani and Abdou Bontianti, "Agadez, un nœud de la migration internationale au Niger", in *Les Cahiers d'Outre-Mer*, No. 270 (April-June 2015), p. 189-206, <https://doi.org/10.4000/com.7427>.

50. Bruno Sonko, "Le Niger: une économie de transit. Interview avec Hamadou Tchernou Boulama", in *Afrique dans le monde*, No. 3/2018 (May 2018), <http://www.rosalux.sn/?p=2355>.

plementation of the policy repressing irregular migration by non-Nigerien ECOWAS nationals, corrupt defence and security forces demanded sums of money from migrants transiting through Niger as they entered, crossed and left the country – either at checkpoints or through random unannounced visits to migrant-intake centres (or “ghettos”) in the city of Agadez. Also, according to an IOM survey involving African migrants in transit centres, “Close to 80% of the migrants who answered such questions [...], were subject to abuse, violence and exploitation at each leg of the journey from their country of origin to North Africa”.⁵¹

To bolster the legal and practical framework of irregular migrant-flow control, on the one hand Niger’s National Assembly passes legislation (Law No. 2015-36) on 26 May 2015, and on the other, its Council of Ministers adopted a strategy for the struggle against irregular migration on 30 March 2018. These measures aim, in particular, to improve migrants’ protection by targeting the irregular migrant-trafficking networks that are responsible for extensive suffering, violence and loss of life during desert crossings.⁵² Moreover, irregular sojourns in countries of destination place migrants in further jeopardy and prevent them from enjoying decent access to basic social services (health care, education, drinking water and so forth).

While it has not yet totally eradicated the phenomenon (see above), the implementation of Law No. 2015-36 in September 2016 has made it possible to considerably slow down the irregular flow of sub-Saharan migrants (including Nigeriens) transiting through the region of Agadez bound for North African countries, especially Algeria and Libya. The various measures that have contributed to this success include, among others: (i) the dismantling of part of the irregular migrant-traffick-

51. IOM, *Niger 2016 Migrant Profiling Report*, cit., p. 17.

52. IOM, *Sur la route des migrants au Niger*, cit.; IOM, *Niger 2016 Migrant Profiling Report*, cit.; UNICEF, *Analyse de situation: enfants et migration irrégulière vers l’Algérie dans le département de Kantché*, 2017; Speech by the Nigerien Minister of the Interior, Mohamed Bazoum, to a G5 Sahel coordination..., cit.

ing networks, with the arrest of several drivers and owners of vehicles used for carrying cross-border irregular migrants; (ii) the closure of illegal houses set up to host migrants bound for North Africa; and (iii) the strengthening of surveillance along the migrants' chief transit routes, particularly in the region of Agadez.⁵³

To endeavour to gauge the loss of financial resources occasioned by the measures adopted to control the irregular migrant flow in the region of Agadez and also impacting on the populations of other regions such as those of Zinder (the Department of Kantché in particular), accompanying action has been initiated by the government with the help of international and bilateral cooperation such as the EU's Trust Fund, which currently comprises one of the most important sources of humanitarian support in the country.⁵⁴ Support for the population includes social and economic rehabilitation for irregular migration's informal actors (*passseurs*, carriers, guides, informers and so forth), for Nigerien migrants (and migrants of other nationalities) and also for their communities of origin. The various different forms of urgent action include, in particular, steps designed to alleviate food insecurity (the sale of cereals at moderate prices) and to foster agro-pastoral development, help in growing irrigated crops in every season, and support for activities capable of generating income through fattening cattle.⁵⁵

53. Speech by the Nigerien Minister of the Interior, Mohamed Bazoum, to a G5 Sahel coordination meeting..., cit.; Abdoulaye Hamadou, "La gestion des flux migratoires au Niger...", cit.

54. Bernardo Venturi, "The EU and the Sahel", cit.

55. Niger. Ministry of Planning, *Premier rapport annuel de mise en œuvre du Plan de Développement Economique et Social (PDES) 2012-2015*, Niamey, 2013; Niger, *Synthèse des travaux de l'atelier de partage sur l'analyse de situation: enfants et migration irrégulière dans le département de Kantché du 17 au 18 mai 2017*, Zinder, 2017; UNICEF, *Analyse de situation: enfants et migration irrégulière vers l'Algérie dans le département de Kantché*, cit.; Hamidou Issaka Maga and Habibou Aboubacar, *La migration de mendicité en Algérie des femmes et des enfants du département de Kantché: Analyses et propositions de solutions durables*, study for the Haute Autorité à la Consolidation de la Paix (HACP), Niamey, 2018.

Other actions are currently being implemented or planned by the government and its technical and financial partners in the context of a general improvement in people's standard of living through programmes and actions for development. These are contained, in particular, in the Programme for Economic and Social Development (PDES) 2017–2021, as part of the drive to render operational the Strategy for Sustainable Development and Inclusive Growth (SDDCI) Niger 2035 adopted by the government.⁵⁶ With regard to other sub-Saharan migrants wishing to return voluntarily to their countries of origin, multiple forms of humanitarian aid are also provided by the IOM.⁵⁷

Disputed management of African irregular migration

For economic and social reasons, the management of irregular migration both by the Nigerien Government and by the development partners has not been viewed in a positive light by certain political and civil society actors.

In financial terms, territorial communities (urban municipalities) in the region – particularly those of Agadez, Arlit and Dirkou – have seen their migratory income of millions of CFA francs dwindle in the wake of more stringent monitoring of sub-Saharan migrant flows transiting through the Agadez region bound for Algeria and Libya. This is because taxes are levied on the thousands of goods vehicles and passenger-carrying vehicles passing through certain urban communities.⁵⁸ By the same token, according to a survey conducted by the author, several million CFA francs are spent by migrants on food, lodging, transport and so on while in a town, particularly in Agadez, where migrants may spend up to a week before

56. Niger. Ministry of Planning, *Plan de développement économique et social, 2017-2021*, Niamey, 2018, <http://www.ne.undp.org/content/dam/niger/docs/UNDP-NE-PDES.pdf>.

57. IOM Niger, *Migration Response Infosheet December 2018*, February 2019, <http://www.nigermigrationresponse.org/sites/default/files/IOM%20Niger%20%20Migration%20Response%20%20Infosheet%20%20-December%202018%20-%20EN%20revised.pdf>.

58. Samuel Hall, *Selling Sand in the Desert*, cit.

continuing their journey. Other migration actors have also seen their considerable incomes disappear or drop drastically. Overall, the struggle against irregular migration is a catastrophe for the communities involved because it has put an end to the dividends that migration had generated.⁵⁹ For the municipalities, the level of financial aid supplied by the EU does little to make up for the losses suffered by the people and the urban municipalities in the Agadez region.

At the social level, there are also several NGOs and civil society associations that tend rather to promote the defence of migrants' rights, particularly of those from sub-Saharan Africa who are held to ransom by security forces. Incidents occur both at border posts and while crossing Niger in the direction of the region of Agadez. One of the most active of these organisations is the AEC Association, a structure involved primarily in campaigning on the issue of human rights, including migrants' rights, rights relating to the free movement of people, human trafficking, violence and the abuse of travellers at borders. The AEC cooperates with the Nigerien Association for the Defence of Human Rights (ANDDH),⁶⁰ which also concerns itself with protecting human rights.⁶¹

In view of the importance that migratory issues have acquired over the past decade in particular, several NGOs have been established or have taken an interest in participating in the management of this phenomenon.⁶² Most of the civil society organisations (CSOs) intervene in the management of mi-

59. Ibid.

60. Interviews with officials of the AEC and ANDDH in Agadez and Niamey in the course of three specific missions performed as national consultant for the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)-Niger in 2016 and 2017, with executives of the SDC-Morocco and international consultants. These missions are part and parcel of the preparatory work for a project on the protection of sub-Saharan migrants.

61. On one of the observation missions in Agadez in the context of irregular migration, see: MADE, *Observation Mission to Agadez, Niger*, 12 April 2017, <http://madenetwork.org/node/819>.

62. Niger Horizons, *Etude en vue de l'élaboration d'une politique nationale en matière de migration*, cit.

gration by sensitising the population to the risks associated with irregular migration, offering help and supervision for income-generating activities, providing support in relation to migrants' health, helping migrants to recover their place in society, or struggling against the irregular traffic in under-age migrants.

The action undertaken by national CSOs and NGOs in the field of migration has grown particularly in the wake of political crises – starting in 2011 in Côte d'Ivoire, in Libya, with the expansion of the Boko Haram sect in northern Nigeria⁶³ and with the recent struggle against irregular migration in Niger and on the international level. A majority of NGOs receive financial support, mainly from UN agencies and from the EU, to ensure prevention, care, and social and economic rehabilitation for migrants through income-generating activities in the rural environment.

Nigeriens from the outer world to the very core of several issues

On account of their considerable number and the substantial sums of money that they send back to their country of origin, Nigerien emigrants lie at the heart of a several developments of a social nature (particularly for households), an economic nature and a political nature.⁶⁴ In an effort to make the most of Nigerien migrants abroad, several sweeping actions have been initiated over the past few years – particularly with the support of development partners. For example, in August 2012 the government organised the first international forum of Nigeriens abroad in Niamey. The conference, attended by migrants from 40 countries, focused on the theme of “Mobilisation and involvement of the diaspora in national development strate-

63. Ibid.

64. Hamidou Issaka Maga, *Migration au Niger. Profil national 2009*, cit.; World Bank, *Migration and Remittances Factbook 2016*, cit.; Banque Centrale des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (BCEAO), *Synthèse des résultats des enquêtes sur les envois de fonds des travailleurs migrants dans les pays de l'UEMOA*, Dakar, Direction Générale des Etudes Economiques et de la Monnaie, May 2013, <https://www.bceao.int/fr/node/1272>.

gies".⁶⁵ Aside from engineering a rapprochement between the migrants and their country of origin, the encounter led to the establishment of an office attached to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Nigeriens Abroad for reception and guidance in the creation of business ventures and investment for Nigerien nationals abroad.⁶⁶ The forum also permitted to the Nigeriens abroad to obtain five parliamentary seats in the National Assembly. This commitment to parliamentary representation was confirmed in the general election of 2016. In parallel, the participation of Nigeriens abroad in the upcoming presidential election has also been bolstered, together with their contribution and participation in such national events as the festivities to commemorate the proclamation of the Republic of Niger on 18 December 1960. Similarly, migrants abroad have, either through their associations or personally, offered financial and material support during food shortages, epidemics and flooding in the country.

Settling rural populations better: a goal at the heart of development policies

The national policy that is currently being developed in the migration sphere will also endeavour to implement a better, indirect rationalisation of the exodus from the countryside, which has both positive consequences (boosting the urban labour force, for example) and a negative impact on the migrants' destination cities. In this regard, the guidelines and actions in the rural-development sphere that have been implemented for several decades now⁶⁷ have also been designed to stabilise village pop-

65. Niger Horizons, *Etude en vue de l'élaboration d'une politique nationale en matière de migration*, cit.

66. Ibid.

67. Niger, *Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté*, Niamey, January 2002, <http://www.hubrural.org/Niger-Strategie-de-reduction-de-la.html?lang=en>; Niger, *Stratégie de développement accéléré pour le réduction de la pauvreté, 2008-2012*, Niamey, August 2007, <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTNIGERINFRENCH/Resources/SDRP2008.pdf>; Niger, *Stratégie de développement rural (SDR)*, Niamey, November 2003, http://www.inter-reseaux.org/IMG/pdf_SDR_Niger_2003.pdf; Niger. Ministry of Planning, *Plan de développement économique et social, 2012-2015*, Niamey, 2012.

ulations so as to offer them alternatives other than migration for diversifying their income. This is because the financial resources that migration generates are often uncertain and fluctuate in view of the growing number of migrants bound both for Nigerien cities and for foreign countries, not to mention the social and economic difficulties unique to each migrant-intake country. What the people of Niger need more than anything else is an environmentally sound “green” revolution based on irrigation, among other things, so that they can be safe from demographic pressure on farmland and from irregular rainfall, which is often insufficient and unevenly spread across the country. This green revolution, which can boost productivity and farm yields,⁶⁸ is possible in Africa⁶⁹ and must rest on new crop-growing techniques developed in such countries as India and China.⁷⁰

5. Prospects and recommendations

In concluding this chapter on phenomena explained by several complex and often structural factors of an economic, social, psychological, and environmental nature – but also of a political nature – we will confine ourselves to identifying or recalling some key prospects and outline recommendations.

In the demographic sphere

The Nigerien Government, with the support of its main international donors, needs to speed up the country’s fertility transition by adopting a range of measures, including:

68. FAO, *Lessons from the Green Revolution: Towards a New Green Revolution*, World Food Summit Technical Background Document, No. 6, 1996, <http://www.fao.org/docrep/003/W2612E/w2612e06a.htm>.
69. Serge Michailof, “Révolution verte et équilibres géopolitiques au Sahel”, in *Revue internationale et stratégique*, No. 80 (2010), p. 139-148, <https://doi.org/10.3917/ris.080.0139>.
70. See also Rémi Vilain, *La nouvelle révolution verte en Afrique subsaharienne*, 28 December 2015, <http://www.cadtm.org/La-nouvelle-revolution-verte-en-Afrique-subsaharienne-Partie-1-sur-2>.

- bringing down the still-high infant- and child-mortality rate;
- increasing the predominance of modern contraception which is still progressing very slowly (at a rate of approximately 0.5 per cent uptake per year);
- bringing down the number of early marriages;
- increasing school attendance by girls and boys beyond primary-school level;
- enhancing the status of women so that they can have their say in decision-making in the home – particularly, in respect of reproduction.

In this regard, it is necessary to bring family-planning services and products close to the people through distribution at the community level – in particular, with the support of the NGOs working in the field. For this reason, we would insist above all on bolstering actions on the ground and locally, even though decision-makers' campaigning and mass sensitisation are equally to be hoped for – and, indeed, need to increase. Action in the field should be directed chiefly towards the rural environment through a community-based approach designed to bring family-planning services (information, sensitisation, contraception) and health services to the people, given the insufficiency of health infrastructures and personnel to cover the country in full. And even though a community approach requires the mobilisation of considerable financial resources, it will be beneficial, as has already been proven in several developing countries around the world – in Africa, in Asia and in Latin America – that have successfully completed their demographic transition process.

Without effective action in favour of family planning and against early marriage for young girls, it is going to be increasingly difficult for Niger to guarantee its development, and to simultaneously access the demographic dividend to boost its economy. This is because if current pro-birth conduct is maintained in a situation of constantly decreasing infant mortality, the Nigerien population is going to rapidly shoot up and the under-15s (a totally dependent sector of the population) will always outnumber the population of working age, who are the country's chief producers.

In the migration sphere

This chapter has dwelt on the three kinds of migration that affect Niger in particular: internal migration, regular international migration and irregular migration towards the countries of the Maghreb and of Europe. For these three kinds of migration, which are also part of the Nigerien population's resilience strategy above and beyond the demographic issue, local development action is crucial in order to alleviate both economic hardship and social difficulties (for instance, the social status of women and children) – particularly among the rural population.

- Where internal migration is concerned, given that virtually one migrant in two ends up in the national capital, it is going to be necessary to improve the creation of professional and economic opportunities in the country's other urban centres and also in its villages.
- Legal international migration, for its part, is virtually a normal phenomenon and is going to continue, but it is also a matter of persuading Nigeriens abroad to play a greater role in their country's struggle for development, in a "win-win" perspective that is also capable of improving the situation of migrant investors.
- With regard to the irregular migration of Nigeriens and other sub-Saharan Africans, which is played out in dangerous circumstances and in breach of other countries' borders, monitoring measures undoubtedly must be strengthened, but at the same time alternative and sustainable economic solutions need to be developed in order to allow these populations to live a better life in their own countries.
- In terms of scientific research, we consider necessary to insist on the improvement of data collection and analysis with regard to migratory flows – especially those on international emigration, figures on which are relatively poorly known.

The need for a "green" revolution in the rural environment

- To ward off the spectre of famine in Niger and to allow the country's population to enjoy a decent standard of living, a

fully-fledged green revolution is required in order to develop intensive, irrigated farming; the marketing and transformation of the agricultural produce thus obtained; and the establishment of small industrial units to create jobs. This is because the Niger's rural population continues to depend on the whims of nature – particularly on irregular, and poorly spaced-out, rainfall.

- In this connection, water control is crucially important in order to reduce dependence on rainfall and to ensure sufficient agricultural productivity through the practice of irrigation.
- In its capacity as a major cattle-breeding country, Niger also has to develop animal farms and fodder production, in view of the irregularity of rainfall and of the occupation of the land thus generated by human demographic growth.

4 GOVERNANCE, CLIMATE CHANGE AND SECURITY CHALLENGES: THE CASE OF LAKE CHAD

SALEH BALA AND RICHARD ALI

Over the few last decades, climate change has become a subject of public debate and also of political controversy. It remains indisputable that the face of the Earth has been changing as a result of rapid human and animal population growth, as well as the overexploitation of its land and resources.

This change is causing significant demographic shifts around the world – most noticeably of all, along coastal strips and their contiguous desert regions. Several research, policy and management systems have been introduced over the years to address the causes and effects of climate change for the Sahel, and for the Lake Chad Basin in particular, through the forums of governance and advocacy at various levels.

Several government structures are currently working, at different policy and functional levels, along with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) on the management of climate change and its effects on human life in the region. The leading document at the global level is the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change¹ and its subregional focus structures, as well as similar efforts at the level of the various continental and regional economic organisations. In Africa, for example, adoption of the climate-change framework is present in policies drafted by the African Union (AU) and regional economic blocs like

1. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, New York, 9 May 1992, <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/convkp/conveng.pdf>.

the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)² and the mandate of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC).

This chapter will look at climate change and its effect on the environment and general security of the Sahel, with a focus on the Lake Chad area – particularly, on the resultant mobility of people in the region. An assessment will be made of the existing local and international governance strategies aimed at dealing with the environmental, human and physical security challenges facing the region. This will form the basis of an evaluation of the prospects and challenges of addressing the issues – environmental and security-related – that are affecting the livelihood of people in the region. In doing so, the chapter will identify and discuss the main actors in the locality while outlining the specific and most pressing of its security challenges. Discussion will also identify structures and policies that contribute to “shape” governance in the Sahel and Lake Chad areas.

1. The Lake Chad Basin and its security in the context of the Sahel region

The Lake Chad region has been a historical hub of security challenges that were described in a 2017 article in the *New Yorker* as the world’s worst humanitarian disaster.³ Essentially, “The Sahara Coast region is one of the geo-strategic areas that have jumped to the forefront of global security concerns in recent times due to [its] ongoing crises and security disturbances”.⁴

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2. ECOWAS calls for increased coordination to address security and developmental challenges in Sahel region <http://www.ecowas.int/ecowas-calls-for-increased-coordination-to-address-security-and-developmental-challenges-in-sahel-region>.
 3. Ben Taub, “Lake Chad: The World’s Most Complex Humanitarian Disaster”, in *The New Yorker*, 4 December 2017, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/12/04/lake-chad-the-worlds-most-complex-humanitarian-disaster>.
 4. Karim Boudadi, “Security Cooperation in the African Sahel Region”, in *Defence Review*, Vol. 146, Special issue No. 2018/1, p. 113, https://honvedelem.hu/files/files/112426/dr_2018_1_beliv_angol_szemle_113_125.pdf.

The Sahel has become an axis for debilitating security challenges across Africa, resulting in irregular migration of people across the continent and even into Europe. The security and environmental problems of Lake Chad and its basin cannot be tackled without addressing these issues within the global security problems of the West African Sahel. Aside from the environmental challenge of desertification and its effect on livelihoods, these problems include terrorism; insurgencies; and the illicit trafficking of people, drugs, arms and contraband.

Principal insurgent activities in the Sahel are attributable to Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and *Jamā'at Ahl as-Sunnah lid-Da'wah wa'l-Jihād* (Boko Haram), while the disintegration of Libya following the removal of Mu'ammār al-Gaddafi fuels these insurgencies through small and light weapons (SALWs) proliferation. AQIM has concentrated its activities in Mali, leading or inspiring factions united in extremism such as Ansar Dine, al-Murabitun and the Macina Liberation Front (MLF). Boko Haram, which is the major group occupying the Lake Chad region, finds its roots in the extremist teachings of Mohammad Yusuf, who was extrajudicially killed by agents of the Nigerian state in 2009. At present, the group has associated itself with the Islamic State⁵ and has taken to calling itself Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP).

The Lake Chad Basin covers approximately 8 per cent of the entire African landmass. Today, however, the lake proper accounts for just 2,500 km².⁶ This is known as the “conventional basin” and it is what remains of a much larger inland sea called the Mega Chad, which started to dry out with the desiccation of the Sahara in 5000 BC. The Mega Chad explains the extensive reach of the drainage basin relative to the size of the lake today. The conventional basin comprises parts of Nigeria,

5. “Nigeria’s Boko Haram Pledges Allegiance to Islamic State”, in *BBC*, 7 March 2015, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-31784538>.

6. Mariama Sow, “Figure of The Week: The Shrinking Lake Chad”, in *Africa in Focus*, 9 February 2017, <http://brook.gs/2k7ohax>.

Chad, Niger and Cameroon, all of which are the member nations of the LCBC.⁷

About 90 per cent of the water in the lake comes from the Chari River and its tributary, the Logone. The Chari is the principal waterway of Chad, and most of the country's population is concentrated along its banks. Lake Chad covers parts of northeastern Nigeria, northern Cameroon and the southern parts of the republics of Niger and Chad. Despite the continued drying up of the lake, its abundant fish stocks form the economic lifeline of the region.

The basin contains an estimated 37 million people distributed between the conventional Chad Basin and Algeria, the Central African Republic, Libya and Sudan outside the immediate basin. Several ethnic groups live within the basin and have had historical interactions, including conflict and state formation, making the region highly connected and complex. The major ethnic groups are the Kanuri, Fulani, Maba, Buduma, Hausa, Kanembu, Kotoko, Bagger, Haddad, Kuri and Manga.

Only Nigeria, which is the largest of the component countries of the basin, is Anglophone. Chad, Niger, Cameroon, Algeria and the Central African Republic are Francophone. This complex composition of sovereign nations within such expansive territory – containing different colonial histories, ethnicities, languages and cultures – presents difficult governance chal-

7. The LCBC is the regional commission established by the four states of the Lake Chad Basin (Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon and Niger) in 1964. The Central Africa Republic joined in 1994 and Libya in 2008. Egypt, Sudan, the Republic of Congo and the Democratic Republic of Congo hold observer status. The commission is charged with coordination of the use of the lake's water, aquatic resources and recently its territorial security, consequent upon the Boko Haram insurgency, with the strengthening and expansion in 2012 of the mandate of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) to include counter-terrorism tasks. The MNJTF comprises military and law enforcement forces from Nigeria, Chad, Niger, Cameroon and the Republic of Benin. The MNJTF had however been in operation since 1994, but with a narrower anti-banditry mandate and with only Nigeria, Chad and Niger contributing forces.

enges for the administration of the basin. Within this composition, for example, Nigeria, Cameroon and Chad have had border conflicts between themselves. The colonial problematic of lack of a common lingua franca and governance culture remained a serious check on cooperation between these countries for the security and development of the basin, in spite of the long-established LCBC, until the pressure of the recent Boko Haram insurgency.

The Sahel has become a region of interest to scholars and policymakers as a result of terror-related insurgent activities and violent extremism – particularly, the activity of a shifting set of Islamist insurgencies. The area was described as an “arc of tension” in a 2012 study.⁸ Remarkably, local governance issues have also played a part in this arc of tension. Chad, for example, has experienced three civil wars since independence⁹ – all closely related to control of the fertile south of the country. In Niger, several coups have occurred, as well as a Tuareg rebellion closely related to that of Mali, all bordering on issues of ethnicity and resource control involving uranium deposits¹⁰ and oil. Cameroon’s untidy unification in 1961¹¹ and the abrogation of its original federal structure, alongside the longevity of the Biya regime, have ensured political unrest and unequal development in that country.¹²

8. Michael Werz and Laura Conley, “Climate Change, Migration, and Conflict in Northwest Africa. Rising Dangers and Policy Options Across the Arc of Tension”, in *Center for American Progress Reports*, April 2012, <https://ampr.gs/ImPBDO>.

9. “Chad Profile – Timeline”, in *BBC*, 8 May 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13164690>.

10. Jeremy Keenan, “Uranium Goes Critical in Niger: Tuareg Rebellions Threaten Sahelian Conflagration”, in *Review of African Political Economy*, Vol. 35, No. 117 (September 2008), p. 449-466.

11. Nicodemus Fru Awasom, “The Reunification Question in Cameroon History: Was the Bride an Enthusiastic or a Reluctant One?”, in *Africa Today*, Vol. 47, No. 2 (Spring 2000), p. 91-119.

12. Verkijika G. Fanso, “History Explains Why Cameroon Is at War with Itself over Language and Culture”, in *The Conversation*, 15 October 2017, <http://theconversation.com/history-explains-why-cameroon-is-at-war-with-itself-over-language-and-culture-85401>.

It is noteworthy that the states in the Sahel region are amongst the poorest and the most heavily indebted countries in the world.¹³ This, added to weak state structure and decades of corruption, has ensured the inability of national security forces to contain the Islamist insurgencies. All the nations in the Lake Chad Basin are developing countries displaying varying levels of stability and typical socio-economic issues, including decades of guerrilla activity in Chad, Tuareg rebellions and several coups in Niger and ongoing conflict in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon. Violent armed groups such as AQIM and Boko Haram have, using their cell-like structures, proven difficult to suppress by conventional national defence and security forces. The increasingly violent armed threats necessitated the formation of the G5 Sahel multinational military alliance involving Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Chad and Burkina Faso in 2014,¹⁴ which is headquartered in Nouakchott, Mauritania. It is important to note the dual membership of the republics of Chad and Niger in the LCBC/MNJTF and the G5, which speaks to an understanding of the common threat pervading the region.

Additionally, about 63 per cent of the population in the Lake Chad Basin is under 25 years of age.¹⁵ This signifies a youth “bulge”, with attendant out-of-school children and unemployed active young persons. This youth bulge in these ungoverned spaces, where citizens have felt little government impact and where development indices are even lower than the average, has fed both main insurgent groups with fighters – a situation that they have leveraged using terror attacks.¹⁶

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13. Will Martin, “Ranked: The 28 Poorest Countries in the World”, in *Business Insider Nordic*, 1 June 2018, <https://nordic.businessinsider.com/poorest-countries-in-the-world-2018-5>; International Monetary Fund (IMF), *Debt Relief Under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative*, 19 March 2019, <https://www.imf.org/-/media/Files/Factsheets/English/hipc.ashx>.
 14. “African Nations Form G5 to Work on Sahel Security, Development”, in *Reuters*, 16 February 2014, <http://reut.rs/1gritOx>.
 15. United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), *Demographic Dynamics and the Crisis of Countries around Lake Chad*, Dakar, West and Central Africa Regional Office, July 2017, p. 32, <https://wcaro.unfpa.org/en/node/25634>.
 16. Lori-Anne Thérroux-Bénoni, “PSC Interview”, in *Peace and Security Council*

The importance of education and relevant preventing/countering violent extremism (P/CVE) programmes to address the “push and pull” factors that drive youths into violent armed groups cannot be overemphasised. But a question remains about the viability and effectiveness of such programmes in a region where the educational infrastructure has been destroyed over the years through government neglect and, more recently, insurgency. The Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) of the Federal Government of Nigeria has included a P/CVE policy and an offshoot of Nigeria’s National Counter-Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST) among the pillars of its Soft Approach to Counter-Terrorism policy.¹⁷ While the reality of a lack of formal schools is recognised, the strategy seeks to exploit the opportunity represented by informal education institutions in the relevant communities in order to deliver these programmes.

While a counterterrorism strategy is essential in addressing the recruitment of fighters into the insurgent groups, it also fundamentally important to transform the land-resource exploitation culture of the people in the region. This is because current farming, grazing, fishing and usage of the lake’s water is unsustainable due to overuse of the continually shrinking lake by the increasing population along its major tributaries who depend on its water and land resources. Sustained strategic communication programmes and campaigns will need to be reinforced and reinvigorated in order to change the behaviour of the people and enlighten them as to the advantages of adopting sustainable environmental-protection and conservation and consumption behaviours.¹⁸

Reports, No. 93 (July 2017), p. 14-16, <https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/psc93.pdf>.

17. ONSA is the agency of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in-charge of coordinating the Counter-Terrorism Strategy of Nigeria. Both the NACTEST and the Soft Approach to Counter-Terrorism policy are available at the ONSA Counter Terrorism portal: <http://ctc.gov.ng>.
18. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), *Sustainable Consumption and Production. A Handbook for Policymakers. Global Edition*, 2015, <http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11822/9660>.

2. Migration and transhumance as exacerbating factors in the Chad Basin crisis

Human movement and settlement have been recorded in the Chad Basin for about 8,000 years. As the Mega Chad receded as a result of long-term climate change, human settlement spread into the formerly flooded areas and agro-pastoralist villages emerged by 2000 BC.¹⁹ The Kanem–Bornu Empire was established by the Saifuwa dynasty over already sophisticated cultures in 900 AD.

The Chad Basin is a trans-boundary zone and, despite the existence of post-colonial international borders, the people of region maintain a complex relationship of movements and experience of displacements. They are integrated into long-established traditional governance,²⁰ and social/trading ties. The western part of the lake has been in the total control of the Kanuri ethnic elite since the fourteenth century. The search for pasture brought the Shuwa Arab and the Fulani pastoralists from the east and west respectively. Migration, transhumance and political control are intricately linked in the region.

While seasonal migration has always existed in the Chad Basin, resource access and use were balanced over the centuries between migrant pastoralist herdsman and sedentary groups. In the 1950s and 60s, however, this balance was upset when pastoralists started settling around wells and agricultural activity began expanding northwards into traditional cattle-grazing lands closer to the lake.²¹ Overgrazing and the intensive culti-

19. Peter Breunig, Katharina Neumann and Wim Van Neer, "New Research on the Holocene Settlement and Environment of the Chad Basin in Nigeria", in *The African Archaeological Review*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (June 1996), p. 111-145.

20. The Sahel region in precolonial history was dominated by the empires of Ghana, Mali, Songhai, Kanem-Bornu and to a lesser extent the Fulani jihadi states. All these polities sought to participate and tax the trans-Saharan trade routes. The ethno-linguistic and religious affinities resulting from these historical dynasties exist till today in the affairs of people of the region.

21. A.R.E. Sinclair and J.M. Fryxell, "The Sahel of Africa: Ecology of a Disaster", in *Canadian Journal of Zoology*, Vol. 63, No. 5 (1985), p. 987-994.

vation of crops subsequently triggered a loss of soil productivity. Regular droughts in the larger Sahel region, which have affected the Chad Basin as well, started in 1968 as a result of this imbalance. Poor management of the Chad Basin, despite the creation of the LCBC, has also led to a worsening of the socio-economic situation in the region.

Research conducted by Felix Watang Zieba, Genesis Tambang Yengoh and Abdouraman Tom from 2012 to 2014 showed that fishing constitutes a significant but declining “pull factor” to the lake area, as international migrants from as far afield as Mali and Senegal have, since the 1970s, joined local seasonal fisherfolk such as the Kotoko and the Hausa.²² However, since 2007, fishing as an economic activity has declined. Even before the outbreak of the Boko Haram insurgency, this migratory population pressure had led to increased tensions between the collective communities sharing the lake. The emergence of Boko Haram has further complicated this situation with both displacement as a result of military activity and a loss in economic activity due to security concerns. Loss of livelihood, especially when the high youth demographic is factored in, significantly affects the security situation in the region. As has been noted, while radicalisation is an important factor in the insurgency, economic opportunism in a geographical area with dwindling options is also a strong “push factor”.²³

22. Felix Watang Zieba, Genesis Tambang Yengoh and Abdouraman Tom, “Seasonal Migration and Settlement around Lake Chad: Strategies for Control of Resources in an Increasingly Drying Lake”, in *Resources*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (2017), Article 41, <https://doi.org/10.3390/resources6030041>.

23. The relationship between society and environment was extensively measured using the DPSIR framework (Driving-Force-Pressure-State-Impact-Response). Using semi-structured questionnaires over a three-year period starting in 2012, they identified subjects based on location and primary livelihood (crop cultivation, pastoralism, or fishing). This was followed by contextual information on migrations, settlement, resource management, and relationships with other land resource users. While this research was limited geographically to the Cameroonian section of the lake (Hille Alifa, Darak and Blangoua subdivisions in the Far North State), it is representative of the Nigerian and to a lesser extent the Chadian and Nigerien sides.

Consequent upon the shrinking of the lake, particularly from the 1950s onwards, there has also been a change in the migratory patterns of both herdsmen and farmers as both chase the receding waters to access pasture and farmlands. Off-season agriculture has increased cultivation in areas left behind by the shrinking lake, which tend to be extremely fertile. There has been a resultant increase in population pressure from farming communities. This, hand in hand with the arrival of new fishing groups, has led to a loss of livelihoods in traditional fishing communities. Across the Sahel, desertification has caused migrations as a survival strategy by people who abandon their ancestral homes and, as a result, put pressure on southern towns and settlements as the Sahara Desert creeps further south. Projects like the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI), which is meant to develop resilient desert communities, have achieved appreciable successes in their aim to “restore Africa’s degraded landscapes and in the process transform millions of lives in one of the world’s poorest regions, the Sahel”.²⁴ The GGWSSI – with its declared successes in Nigeria, Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso, among others – is an encouraging model to adopt for the Lake Chad Basin, as it would help to consolidate projects to halt the surge of desertification and improve the land and aquatic agricultural potential of the region. Furthermore, if technology could be adopted to harness the abundant sunshine and wind resources for the generation of renewable energy, agro-based industrial hubs could be established that should provide jobs for local people as well as enhancing their livelihood.

The Lake Chad region also has a history of forced displacement, beginning with the effects of the Chadian Civil War (2005–10) and the present Boko Haram conflict. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), an estimated 2.5 million people have been displaced in the Chad Basin²⁵ as a result of the Boko Haram insurgen-

24. See the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) website: *The Great Green Wall Initiative*, <https://www.unccd.int/node/116>.

25. See UNHCR Refugee Situations Operational Portal, *Nigeria Situation: IDPs in the Lake Chad Basin*, <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/nigeriasituation>.

cy. Nigeria has the highest number, with more than 2 million displaced people, followed by Cameroon with approximately 250,000.²⁶ This displacement is caused by a combination of Boko Haram overrunning communities and kinetic counterinsurgency military operations. Side by side with these military operations, national and international efforts are under way to securitise and rebuild communities destroyed by the crisis so that these internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees can return home.

3. Governance structures and practices in the Lake Chad Basin

Several levels of governance exist in the Lake Chad Basin, and the effectiveness of these governance structures at their various levels has a direct relationship with the instability or development of the region. This is primarily due to how these structures have dealt with the threat and consequences of climate change as it affects the Sahel region as a whole and the conventional Lake Chad Basin in particular. There are two primary structures: the national and the LCBC.

At the primary level, the conventional Lake Chad Basin is controlled by the countries that share it. Thus, a matrix of the international borders of Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon and Niger exercises *de jure* sovereignty over portions of the lake that fall within these countries' national territories. The bulk of the lake is located in Chad and is subject to its laws and control. This is followed in size by the Nigerian portion. As the sovereign administration of the territories of the Lake Chad Basin is exercised independently by these four individual states, the countries have created ministries and laws at their respective national and subnational levels to govern their own portions of the lake.

26. Chad and Niger have 165,313 and 104,288 respectively.

In Nigeria, the lake falls under the remit of the federal ministries of Water Resources and of the Environment. These line ministries are headquartered in Abuja and have several departments under them, such as various river basin development agencies, as well as offices in each of the states of the federation. For example, a Chad Basin Development Authority, based in Maiduguri, comes under the Federal Ministry of Water Resources.²⁷ At the second tier of government are federating units, these are state ministries of agriculture and those in charge of water at the federating unit level. Especially pertinent is the case of Borno State in Nigeria, which directly borders Chad. A third-tier, the local governments, is tasked with the grassroots development of agriculture and natural resources in Nigeria. In the Republic of Chad, its portion of the lake is overseen by the ministries of the Environment and Agriculture, and of Hydraulics and Animal Husbandry. A third body, the National High Committee for the Environment, ensures environmental sustainability of development projects, including those pertaining to Lake Chad. In Niger, no less than six government ministries and agencies oversee its portion of Lake Chad. Meanwhile, Cameroon has the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources; the Ministry of the Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development and the National Water Committee. The administrative maze of laws, power and oversight between these four countries can now be appreciated, in the context of governance, as service delivery to the millions of people living in the basin.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the LCBC was established to provide a multinational political structure for the coordination of common policy on the use and development of the lake and its territory – including the exploitation of the water and aquatic resources within it. Its Executive Secretariat carries out the day-to-day functions of the Commission; however, this body has very limited decision-making powers. The two real decision-making bodies in the LCBC are, in fact, the Summit of

27. See Chad Basin Development Authority official website: <http://www.cbda-ng.com>.

Heads of State and Government and the Council of Ministers – both of which meet only once a year. The sovereign authority exercised by the various governments of the basin, when considered against the lack of executive authority of the LCBC, calls into question the level of coordinatory functions that the Executive Secretariat and the LCBC as a whole can bring both to the environmental and the security aspects of the Chad Basin. The LCBC, in spite of its Executive Secretariat, has no powers to enforce national laws and regulations over the implementation of projects and exploitation of resources, and must defer to the decision-making organs of the Commission, which does not sit regularly, to facilitate speedy decision-making.

In the immediate proximity of the lake, a combination of traditional institutions and self-imposed chiefs – some of them being holdovers from pre-colonial states – have long exercised authority over land acquisition and the exploitation of resources. In the general absence of direct governance, these provided a measure of authority through the plethora of *de jure* state power, expressed through numerous ministries and agencies that did not trickle down to the ordinary citizens of the Lake Chad region. Observation shows a common gap in the exercise of national authority in the areas around the lake by the countries of the conventional Chad Basin. This is perhaps attributable to the long distances from the respective capitals of the nations concerned – excepting N'djamena, the Chadian capital, which is just a few hours' drive from the lake. This lacuna – in the context of the complicated geography, acute poverty and the youth bulge already highlighted – proved adequate for the nurturing and growth of the violent extremism of Boko Haram, which now threatens regional stability.

Funding is a major impediment to programmes and project implementation in the region, with a dire lack of basic infrastructure for the sustenance of livelihoods – such as that for health-care, education, potable water and electricity services. To deal with the humanitarian crises resulting from the insurgency affecting the region alone, the health sector is estimated by the World Health Organisation (WHO) to require by 2017 a total of

more than 125 million US dollars.²⁸ The danger adducing from these figures can better be understood when appreciated from its rabid growth over the years, and being without deserving attention by the regional governments, at both collective and individual governance platforms, as earlier stated in the chapter. The enormity of the problems in the basin, which has been exacerbated by the ongoing Boko Haram crisis, is also placing a great deal of pressure on the financial resources of the states concerned – particularly at the level of the critical military-combat operations and the necessary concurrent peace-building projects in the region. Take-off funding for the MNJTF alone was provided by the European Union to the tune of 50 million euro in 2016,²⁹ while the Nigerian Government provided 21 million US dollars for the task force’s establishment.³⁰ Aside from funding and capacity challenges to contain and defeat the insurgency, even for Nigeria alone – being the richest nation in the LCBC union – the subsequent requirements to address directly the drying up of the lake, enhance the livelihood of the people and combat the environmental problems require huge levels of funding.³¹ The long-mooted project to recharge Lake Chad alone is set to cost 50 billion US dollars by recent estimates, as was announced by Nigerian Minister for Foreign Affairs Geoffrey Onyeama while making an appeal to the AU and international donors to help in raising the amount.³²

Several international interventions through the various agencies of the UN – as well as the EU and nations like France;

28. WHO website: *Lake Chad Basin Humanitarian Response Plan 2017*, <https://www.who.int/emergencies/response-plans/2017/lake-chad-basin/en>.

29. Anna Louise Strachan, “Donor Funded Alliances Promoting Regional Cooperation”, in *K4D Helpdesk Reports*, 16 March 2018, p. 4, <https://gsdrc.org/?p=68516>.

30. “Buhari Orders Release of \$21m to MNJTF on Boko Haram”, in *Vanguard News Nigeria*, 14 June 2015, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2015/06/buhari-orders-release-of-21m-to-mnjtf-on-boko-haram>.

31. The Nigerian government alone budgeted 6.3 billion US dollars over a five-year peace building plan for the Northeast, known as the Buhari Plan for the North East.

32. “Nigeria, Chad Shop for \$50bn to Refill Lake Chad”, in *The Tide*, 30 January 2017, <http://www.thetidenewsonline.com/?p=143669>.

the UK; the US; Germany; Japan; and, recently, China – have been investing in stability and development efforts in the region. The major focus has been on programmes that improve the livelihood of the people. These are especially targeted towards the huge youth numbers to guarantee them better lives and more gainful employment, which will mitigate the push to migrate to urban areas or join the insurgency as fighters for the sake of the economic benefits. A number of international conferences have been held over the past three years to raise awareness of the debilitating security and humanitarian challenges in the lake’s region, particularly as caused by the Boko Haram insurgency, to which various amounts of funding were pledged or redeemed – the major ones being those of 2018 in Berlin (2.52 billion US dollars)³³ and, earlier, 2017 in Oslo (672 billion).³⁴ While all these funding amounts are being donated, the technical capacity and governance gap within the nations and the LCBC structure itself to absorb and administer the funds to their specific needs also have to be addressed. The decision-making weakness of the regional coordinating LCBC has already been mentioned. The distinct competencies and capacities of the public services within the individual LCBC states is also a major problem, coupled with the endemic corruption factor. A major push towards effective implementation of projects and programmes is dependent on expatriates working either as consultants or staff of the various UN agencies and other international humanitarian and development organisations. A substantial proportion of the donations is applied annually to developing local capacity in the areas of training up experts in both the government and non-government indigenous sectors and even transport, office accommodation and technical equipment – all in order to address the technical gap.

33. Daniel Pelz, “Germany Hosts High-level Conference on Humanitarian Crisis in the Lake Chad Region”, in *Deutsche Welle*, 3 September 2018, <https://p.dw.com/p/34Dfz>.

34. UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Oslo Humanitarian Conference on Nigeria and the Lake Chad Region Raises \$672 Million to Help People in Need*, 24 February 2017, <https://reliefweb.int/node/1917023>.

When it comes to corruption, a study sponsored by the French Development Agency describes the high level of corruption prevalent in the nations of the Lake Chad region as being a typical endemic problem of sub-Saharan nations.³⁵ The report points to the complicity of politicians and military commanders in the prolongation of counterinsurgency operations against Boko Haram because they “benefited handsomely from the increase in arms expenditure, with overcharged contracts”.³⁶ The document further analyses the siphoning-off of funds meant for the development of schools in northern Cameroon and the diversion of humanitarian efforts, as well as funds for development under Nigeria’s peacebuilding intervention in the northeast – alongside a long experience of diversion of foreign funding for agricultural and ecological projects.³⁷

While all the good initiatives and support to stabilise the Lake Chad region and its climate-change-instigated challenges are evident, the disruptive effect of corruption at various levels of intervention cannot be wished away. The nations around Lake Chad are among the lowest-rated in several categories of the Human Development Index.³⁸ Worse still, government presence and infrastructure are very light or even non-existent in the area. Due to this lack of adequate government presence, local authorities and/or criminal establishments combine with corrupt government military, border control and custom officials to extort money and allow easy passage for the smuggling of contraband across the region as well as dangerous illicit goods such as drugs, SALWs and even trafficked humans.³⁹ The strong influence and connection of criminal gangs, es-

35. Géraud Magrin and Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos (eds), “Crisis and Development. The Lake Chad Region and Boko Haram”, in *Études de l’AFD*, August 2018, p. 99, <https://www.afd.fr/en/node/8858>. On corruption in the Sahel, see also chapter 1 in this volume.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 144.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 188-192.

38. See UNDP website: *Human Development Index and its Components*, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/HDI>.

39. Géraud Magrin and Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos (eds), “Crisis and Development”, *cit.*, p. 173-174.

pecially smuggler-merchants with the political, military and law-enforcement authorities through “clientelism and political support”⁴⁰ – based on either one or a combination of clan, tribal and religious ties – is also a major issue with a debilitating effect on security and development in the region.

Several research publications also allude to the involvement of members of the defence and security organisations of nations around the lake, who benefit from the insurgency by directly involving themselves in the exploitation and trading in fish and agricultural resources and the extortion of tolls from traders at the various checkpoints around the region. Corruption through the spectrum of governmental and traditional authorities, and extortion by criminal and insurgent groups in the region, constitutes a major impediment to the security and development of that region. Consequently, ongoing initiatives to combat underdevelopment with aid must be emphasised. Priority should be given to initiatives to combat corruption by curtailing government practices that allow direct contact between persons and strengthening investigation and judicial process to deal decisively with corrupt practices among public officials. An example of one such, following the inauguration of the Buhari Administration in 2015, had been the ongoing arrests, investigation, prosecution and recovery of huge amounts of stolen funds from corrupt Nigerian officers and public servants – particularly, military officers⁴¹ – led by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). It is yielding positive results for the counterinsurgency and peace-building efforts of the Nigerian Government.

Conclusion

While environmental degradation caused by climate change is fundamentally at the heart of the hydra-headed problems of instability influencing various types of migration across the

40. Ibid., p. 59.

41. “N540bn Recovered Through Whistle Blower Policy –FG”, in *Blueprint*, 28 November 2018, <https://www.blueprint.ng/?p=196037>.

Lake Chad Basin, violence – perpetrated by insurgent terrorist groups and criminal gangs with historical roots – has taken full advantage of bad governance or even a total lack of it in the region. It is thus a priority to deal comprehensively with the entrenched violence that has erupted across the region if the necessary development measures are to be successfully implemented to secure the region and enhance the livelihood of its inhabitants. A combined military, police, border-control and political strategy is required in this light. While this strategy is being implemented, the region's festering environmental problems could then be addressed, thereby strengthening the peace-development nexus. To achieve this end, it will be necessary to revisit the long history of thoughts and projects initiated to address the physical surge of the Sahara Desert southwards. While doing so, it will also be necessary to re-evaluate strategies like the GGWSSI, which are meant to promote resilience among the peoples of the Sahel to enable them to live and thrive within their ancestral sociocultural ecosystem without the threats that lead to forced migration.

Ultimately, the problem of the depletion of the Lake Chad waters will have to be addressed, but based on a scientific and technologically informed strategy factoring in all existing and future projects that affect near and distant human activities leading to the current situation of the lake's receding. The multilateral platform of ECOWAS and LCBC structures should be strengthened and appropriately funded in order to address the problems of the region in general. It will also be necessary to inform and shape the minds of current and future generations of people in the region towards the importance of environmental protection and sustainable consumption. Multilevel national and international comprehensive strategies to address the physical security and environmental challenges of the Lake Chad Basin, to ensure a secured livelihood for the people of the basin fashioned around development principles is vital. To deliver on these strategies, it will be important to ensure that government presence within the immediate region of Lake Chad is improved by all the four nations around it. The LCBC multinational structure established for the coordination of pol-

icy and usage of the lake and its resources will need to be adequately funded and its absorption capacity improved, while its Executive Committee needs to have greater prominence in ensuring discipline among the nations and facilitating policy for enforcing common agreements for the sustainable shared use of the lake's and the region's resources. Corruption – which has been identified at various levels, militating against the judicious application of financial and even the lawful exploitation of resources – needs to be dealt with through appropriate government institutions. It must be targeted with a zero-tolerance posture by both the constituent governments and international organisations.

Recommendations

- The states of the LCBC must deal comprehensively with the raging insurgencies, terrorist organisations and criminal enterprise in the region by strengthening the military and law-enforcement strategies against the Boko Haram insurgency and trans-border crimes so as to ensure the stability of the region and allow development to take place.
- The combination of national efforts and donor nations and their agencies will need to step up efforts to check the southward surge of the Sahara Desert. This would include reviewing and scaling-up the GGWSSI, among similar strategic projects and programmes.
- The LCBC states will need to prioritise the funding and technical-capacity development required, while addressing the institutional corruption that militates against the judicious application of such financial resources.
- The LCBC states should develop and implement policies advocating education and public enlightenment regarding environmental protection and sustainable consumption.

5

AN EU INTEGRATED APPROACH IN THE SAHEL: THE ROLE FOR GOVERNANCE

BERNARDO VENTURI

The Sahel has become synonymous with instability, and the governments of the five Sahelian countries – Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger – struggle to control wide expanses of territory characterised by large, remote areas and historical routes connecting sub-Saharan Africa to the Maghreb.

Non-governmental stakeholders play a crucial role in the Sahel. For this reason, analysing the EU’s commitment to governance can be even more important than focusing merely on state-building. Poor state governance fosters an environment suitable for extremist groups, and strengthens their recruitment, planning and operational capacities.¹

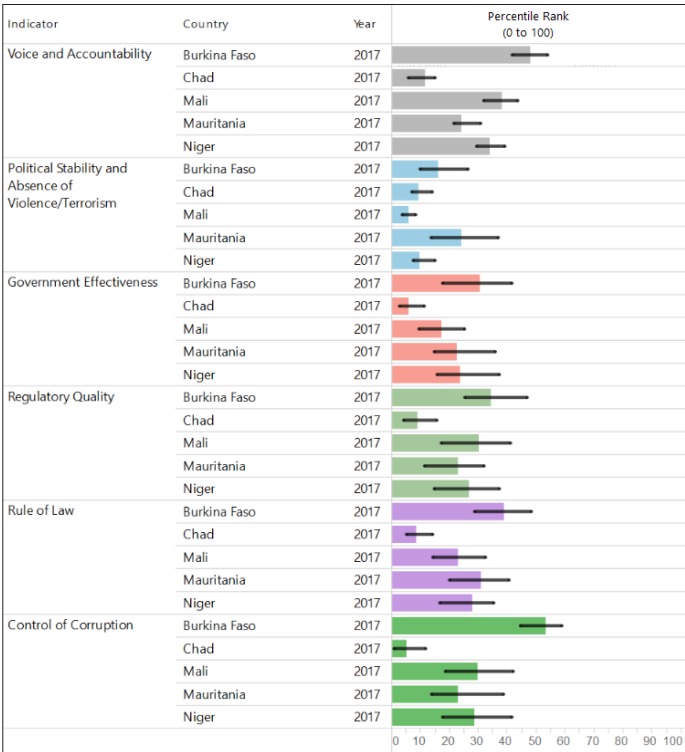
The EU has always claimed to project a normative power in the Sahel and other regions. Such power brings with it an array of liberal normative values: democracy; human rights; the rule of law; and, certainly, good governance. Since 2016 and the introduction of the EU Global Strategy (EUGS),² Brussels has tried to integrate its external projection through two approaches – firstly, by enhancing the integrated approach, including more spheres of intervention and improving field coordination and policy consistency; secondly, by applying the “principled-prag-

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1. Ibrahim Maïga and Nadia Adam, “What Exactly Are Foreign Troops Protecting in the Sahel?”, in *ISS Today*, 27 April 2018, <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/what-exactly-are-foreign-troops-protecting-in-the-sahel>.
 2. European External Action Service (EEAS), *Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe. A Global Strategy for the European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy*, June 2016, <https://europa.eu/globalstrategy/en/node/339>.

matism” approach whereby European interests and values co-exist with one another.

Analysing EU normative and functional instruments and their impacts in terms of governance in the Sahel, pragmatism emerges over principles and norms. This paper argues that while the EU appears a relevant partner on some components

Figure 1 | Elaboration from Worldwide Governance Indicators



Source: Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI), <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx#reports>.

of the rule of law, safety and security dimensions, it seems less engaged and consistent on issues such as long-term planning, trust in local ownership and local power dynamics, inclusivity, and in applying good-governance principles to its own actions – for instance, through regular monitoring and evaluation of its Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions.

Self-evidently, the Sahel is a complex area – and the EU does not possess a “magic wand”. One only has to think, for instance, of the rising discontent among young people in Chad,³ or the growing instability in the north-central region of Burkina Faso. In fact, the World Bank’s governance indicators collocate all five countries of the West African Sahel in the lower third for government effectiveness (see Figure 1): a situation of fragility that should be carefully considered in terms of the internal differences and similarities that it covers.

Considering all the main EU strains of work in the Sahel, from CSDP missions to development funds, a picture emerges of how curbing migration and fighting terrorist groups has affected all the other spheres of activities – with corresponding repercussions on regional governance. Then, the analysis focuses specifically on the EU’s approach and involvement in governance in the Sahel. It shows strengths and weaknesses across four key components of governance performance: safety and the rule of law, participation and human rights, sustainable economic opportunity, and human development. Finally, the paper provides some recommendations to improve and give consistency to the EU’s approach to governance in the region.

1. The EU in the Sahel

Taking stock of the EU’s presence in the Sahel is a necessary first step in order to understand the role of governance in the

3. International Crisis Group (ICG), “Chad: Defusing Tensions in the Sahel”, in *ICG Africa Reports*, No. 266 (5 December 2018), <https://www.crisisgroup.org/node/8903>.

Union's integrated approach. The Sahel is a pivotal region, where the EU gives priority to the EUGS's "principled-pragmatism" doctrine.⁴ The Sahelian test of this approach already shows some contradictions, also related to governance. In fact, some analyses show that EU foreign policy has been more functional than normative-driven.⁵

In its relations with Africa, it seems that the Union has been overwhelmed by some of its member states that view curbing migration not only as a security priority and a means to support African governance but also as an instrument to protect the European (neo)liberal order. The EU's external projection of domestic fears (fuelled by populism) risks, however, foregrounding foreign-policy priorities and practices that have limited effectiveness or a distorted impact.

Recent studies⁶ have discussed how the Sahel has become for the EU an area of experimentation for the implementation of its integrated approach.⁷ The Union's integrated approach in the region is based on the idea that security, development and governance are essentially intertwined. Consequently, its Sahel Strategy includes four lines of action – development, security, political and military – under the aegis of the same framework. This section pays particular attention to coordination between EU bodies and the various local and international actors in the region.

4. The EU, as stated in the EUGS, is combining interests and values ("principled interests").

5. Shyamika Jayasundara-Smits, "Bracing the Wind and Riding the Norm Life Cycle: Inclusive Peacebuilding in the European Capacity Building Mission in Sahel-Mali (EUCAP Sahel-Mali)", in *Peacebuilding*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (2018), p. 233-247, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21647259.2018.1491683>.

6. Bernardo Venturi (ed.), *The Security-Migration-Development Nexus Revised: A Perspective from the Sahel*, Brussels/Rome, FEPS and IAI, December 2017, <https://www.iai.it/en/node/8764>.

7. Elisa Lopez Lucia, "Performing EU Agency by Experimenting the 'Comprehensive Approach': The European Union Sahel Strategy", in *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 4 (2017), p. 451-468. The comprehensive approach is considered an integrated and coordinated response to address sustainable development, peace and security, especially in complex fragile situations.

EU documents on the Sahel are well articulated. In April 2015, the Union's Foreign Affairs Council adopted the Sahel Regional Action Plan (RAP) 2015–2020,⁸ which was reviewed and updated at the beginning of June 2016.⁹ RAP's four key priorities are: (1) preventing and countering radicalisation; (2) creating appropriate conditions for youth; (3) migration and mobility; and (4) border management, and the fight against illicit trafficking and transnational organised crime. RAP mentions governance a couple of times as a challenging area, and as part of an overall comprehensive approach for Lake Chad.¹⁰

Concretely, EU day-to-day work in the region is implemented by its delegations, the EU Special Representative (EUSR), the CSDP missions and the Regional Coordination Cell (RCC). This work is also channelled through the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP),¹¹ the “galaxy” of development funds and other ad hoc partnerships.

EU delegations in the Sahel are present in Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and Chad. Characterised by middle-ranking leadership, these delegations operate as liaison offices between Brussels, CSDP missions and external local and international actors. The EUSR, Ángel Losada, plays a part in reaching out to the region and guiding EU action there. He is also mandated with helping to coordinate the Union's overall approach to crises, using the EU Sahel Strategy as a basis. Additionally,

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8. Previously, in March 2011, the EU adopted the two-page Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel for Mali, Mauritania and Niger. Three years later, it extended the strategy's scope to Burkina Faso and Chad. The strategy foresees four strands of action: (1) development, good governance and internal-conflict resolution; (2) politics and diplomacy; (3) security and the rule of law; and 4) countering violent extremism. The Sahel Strategy of 2011 is still the framework document for EU action in the area. Yet, after reading the current priorities and lines of action, it appears to be out of date.
 9. Council of the European Union, *Council Conclusions on the Sahel*, 3477th Foreign Affairs Council Meeting, Luxembourg, 20 June 2016, <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-10393-2016-INIT/en/pdf>.
 10. *Ibid.*
 11. A map and description of the projects is regularly updated by Peace Direct: *EU IcSP Map*, <https://icspmap.eu>.

to ensure coherent implementation, the EU has appointed a coordinator for its Sahel Strategy and a task force, based in Brussels, which meets informally every month and which is mandated with the evaluation and implementation of the Strategy.

The three CSDP missions in the area have adapted to the EU's new priorities,¹² and have done so in the framework of a broader transformation of such missions.¹³ The EU launched the civilian mission EUCAP Sahel Niger in 2012 with the objective of helping that country to fight terrorism and organised crime. The mission provides advice and training in order to support Nigerien security institutions in strengthening their capacities, in line with the EU Strategy for Security and Development. In early 2015, the EU Council launched a second civilian mission: EUCAP Sahel Mali. Its task is to support the Malian internal security forces in ensuring constitutional and democratic order. The Union also launched an EU (military) Training Mission in Mali (EUTM Mali) in 2013. Then, as the EU Commission declared, "the three CSDP missions in the Sahel have been adapted to the political priorities of the EU, notably following the EU mobilisation against irregular migration and related trafficking".¹⁴ They have also led to the establishment of a strategic sub-office in Agadez, in central Niger.

The new phase of EUCAP Sahel missions has already introduced the objectives of strengthening the internal security forces' capacity to fight against terrorism and organised crime and supporting the Malian and Nigerien governments in managing migration flows and border security. These new activities reveal a prominent focus on pragmatism and a functional ap-

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12. European Commission and EEAS, *Annual Report on the Sahel Regional Action Plan* (SWD/2016/482), 23 December 2016, <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-5009-2017-INIT/en/pdf>.
 13. Tobias Pietz, "The Civilian CSDP Compact: Strengthening or Repurposing EU Civilian Crisis Management?", in *IAI Commentaries*, No. 18|47 (October 2018), <https://www.iai.it/en/node/9588>.
 14. European Commission and EEAS, *Annual Report on the Sahel Regional Action Plan*, cit., p. 3.

proach, with their normative commitments related to human rights, good governance, inclusiveness and gender equality relegated to the background.¹⁵

Notably, the budgets for the missions (managed by the Commission) have increased. For instance, EUCAP Sahel Niger's budget has grown from 18.4 million euro to 26.3 million euro since it began.¹⁶ Also, it is likely that the EU will establish new CSDP missions in the Sahel in the medium term.

The report on CSDP missions in the Sahel released by the European Court of Auditors in September 2018 assesses some relevant aspects of the missions.¹⁷ They should contribute to strengthening the capacity of the security forces in Niger and Mali, and also in supporting other activities by the EU and its member states. However, some shortfalls have limited the impact of the missions. Firstly, recruitment procedures were said to be time-consuming and often unsuccessful. At the same time, the mission staff did not receive adequate practical guidance or, in the case of EUCAP Sahel Niger, pre-deployment training. Concerning sustainability, the Sahel missions had limited medium- or long-term planning because they received two-year mandates and annual budgets. Finally, the missions had weak performance indicators and, during the period audited, they did not adequately monitor and evaluate the achievement of tasks.¹⁸ These shortfalls, in particular short-term planning and monitoring, do not provide an adequate backdrop for long-term actions on governance.

15. Sven Biscop, "The EU Global Strategy: Realpolitik with European Characteristics", in Egmont Security Policy Briefs, No. 75 (June 2016), <http://www.egmontinstitute.be/?p=19958>.

16. Council of the European Union, *EUCAP Sahel Niger: Council Extends the Mission for Two Years*, 18 September 2018, <http://europa.eu/!dR44XN>.

17. European Court of Auditors, "Strengthening the Capacity of the Internal Security Forces in Niger and Mali: Only Limited and Slow Progress", in *ECA Special Reports*, No. 15/2018 (14 June 2018), <https://www.eca.europa.eu/en/Pages/DocItem.aspx?did=46030>.

18. Ibid.

The EU's promotion of regionalisation is oriented towards coordinating the main international actors in the region. To facilitate this task, on 20 June 2017, the European Council established the RCC within EUCAP Sahel Mali. This cell coordinates the EU's operational efforts, and identifies needs and gaps within those efforts – in particular, the CSDP missions. It also facilitates the organisation of training courses by the EU CSDP missions in the Sahel for G5 Sahel countries' security and defence trainees¹⁹ (the G5 is the Group of five Sahel nations: Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger).

The RCC is the agency that really embodies the EU idea of an integrated approach and regionalisation. It consists of 15 experts embedded in the mission or attached to EU delegations in the region. Its headquarters is in Bamako, Mali's capital, at the same premises as those of Sahel Mali, and it defers to the European External Action Service (EEAS) civilian chain of command in Brussels. The RCC's work mirrors the G5 Sahel's work, it is strictly focused on security and defence, and it does not include governance or development within its remit. Migration is part of RCC work, but only in relation to fighting traffickings.²⁰

The first part of the RCC's mandate ended in early 2019. During the final phase of this mandate, a "gaps and needs" analysis on the regional implementation plan was redacted. From that analysis, a concept of operations (CONOPS) was produced that will become operational in March 2019. The CONOPS is based on two operational strains – firstly, an internal governance system for the G5 coordinated by the RCC; secondly, a process of coordination on different levels: within the missions, among EU bodies on security and defence, and with other international actors and member states. The RCC will additionally work on a database on all the projects in the region, which will also be

19. EUTM Mali, *Regional Coordination Cell (RCC) of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) to the Missions in the Sahel Region Visits EUTM Mali*, 9 August 2017, <http://eutmmali.eu/en/?p=18100>.

20. Interview with RCC member, 11 January 2019.

made available to other organisations. The RCC will change its name to Regional Advising and Coordination Cell, and will have seven additional experts (up from 15 to a total of 22),²¹ some of them working on legal issues.

The EU also supports two key regional initiatives: the G5 Sahel itself and the Alliance for the Sahel. The support for the G5 Sahel is strictly in the fields of security and defence, and is tied to the work of the RCC. Established in February 2014 and originally presented as a vehicle for strengthening the bond between economic development and security, the G5 soon became heavily focused on security concerns. The G5 initiative – involving all five Sahel nations – sees a 5,000-strong battalion of troops operating in the region. Additionally, in the context of the Africa-EU partnership, the European Commission adopted in April 2016 a financing decision setting aside 50 million euro from the African Peace Facility (APF) in support of the Lake Chad Basin Commission’s Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) in its fight against Boko Haram, the Islamist separatist movement in northern Nigeria, as mandated by the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU).²²

Some analysts regard the G5 as mainly following a Western-led agenda with other global players, such as China, also involved. Crucially, the G5 is not made up of Europeans but is a multi-national force “owned” by Africans themselves.²³ The EU supports ad hoc initiatives like the G5 because AU member states commit their own resources and because this approach also generates greater local ownership.

Another relevant regional framework is the Alliance for the Sahel, launched in July 2017 by the EU, France (the main do-

21. Ibid.

22. Joint Communiqué by Federica Mogherini, EU High Representative/Vice-President of the Commission; Neven Mimica, EU Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development; and Smail Chergui, AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Brussels, 1 August 2016, <http://europa.eu/NF97Fx>.

23. The military aspect is coordinated by the respective countries’ Chiefs of Staff.

nor) and Germany, as well as the United Nations Development Programme, the African Development Bank and the World Bank. The Alliance, which could be considered a counterpart to the security focus of the G5 Sahel will finance nearly 500 projects in five key sectors from its budget of 10.9 billion euro (2018–22):²⁴ youth education, training and employment; food security and agriculture in rural areas; climate and energy; the provision of basic services; and decentralisation and governance. By February 2018, the Alliance had enlarged to the UK, Italy and Spain²⁵ – and in April 2018, Saudi Arabia joined the programme with a contribution of 200 million euro.²⁶ The broad support received by the Alliance for the Sahel constitutes a valuable platform for discussion between international actors and for the coordination and targeting of different initiatives.

Concerning humanitarian aid and development cooperation, as part of its work in western and central Sahel, the EU already enjoys close and substantial cooperation with each of the five regional countries. EU cooperation is mainly financed through the European Development Fund, the EU Trust Fund for Africa and other humanitarian-aid vehicles. The IcSP can be considered a “bridge” between peace and development programmes. More specifically, ad hoc economic agreements such as the EU–Mauritania Fisheries Protocol and investments through the African Investment Facility are also in place.

In addition to the above, since 2016 the 86 programmes in the Sahel/Lake Chad region received 1,549 million euro from the Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF),²⁷ while the resources

24. Sahel Alliance website: *The Sahel Alliance*, <https://www.alliance-sahel.org/en/?p=193>.

25. World Bank, *The Sahel Alliance Officially Announces the Implementation of Over 500 Projects for a Total Amount of EUR 6bn to be Disbursed Between 2018 and 2022*, 23 February 2018, <https://goo.gl/LGVrf3>.

26. Ecofin Agency, *AFD and Saudi Fund to Invest €200 Million to Develop Projects in Sahel*, 12 April 2018, <https://www.ecofinagency.com/public-management/1204-38335-afd-and-saudi-fund-to-invest-200-million-to-develop-projects-in-sahel>.

27. European Commission, *A European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa*, 12 November 2015, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-15-6056_

allocated amount to 4.2 billion euro, including 3.7 billion euro from the European Development Fund (EDF) and other EU financial instruments.²⁸ Direct EU member-state contributions are still rather limited (492 million euro).²⁹ The most recent programmes, approved in late 2018, are aimed at increasing people's access to social services in border areas and contributing to integrating youth organisations into the processes of designing and implementing development and social policies. The programmes are designed under the Alliance for the Sahel,³⁰ based on the needs presented by the G5 Sahel countries under the Priority Investment Programme.³¹ Since 2016, the EUTF has been analysed critically by non-governmental organisations (NGOs)³² and some research centres because the programme had the potential to divert development aid towards migration and border control. The resources devoted to these last policies show that these criticalities are in place in the Sahel. Fortunately, the EUTF has built a regular system of monitoring and evaluation that will be helpful in analysing the overall relevance and impact of the programme.

en.htm. The EU Trust Funds are *ad hoc* pool funds covering unexpected or emergency situations, managed by the European Commission. Two types of trust funds have been established in the 11th EDF Financial Regulation (Article 42): Emergency and Post-Emergency Trust Funds and Thematic Trust Funds. The EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (running until 31 December 2020) is the largest trust fund in place. The EUTF for Africa pools together funding from the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) and the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI), other financial instruments such as the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) as well as EU Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG ECHO) and DG Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME).

28. European Commission website: *EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa - State of Play and Financial Resources*, https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/content/trust-fund-financials_en.
29. *Ibid.* Data refer to 5 February 2019.
30. EEAS, *Alliance for the Sahel Will Reinforce EU Work for Stability and Development of Key Region*, 14 July 2017, <https://europa.eu/!qu78gM>.
31. European Commission, *International High-level Conference on the Sahel - Communiqué by the co-chairs*, Brussels, 23 February 2018, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-18-1166_en.htm.
32. See, for instance, Olivia De Guerry et al., *Partnership or Conditionality? Monitoring the Migration Compacts and EU Trust Fund for Africa*, Brussels, CONCORD Europe, 2018, <https://library.concordeurope.org/record/1914/files>.

Overall, different stakeholders in Niger and Mali highlighted the fact that, despite some initial difficulties, both EUCAP Sahel missions improved coordination with national authorities and donors – for instance, through donor mapping, including proposed, planned and in-place projects.³³ The EU’s coordination effort is also projected towards the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) trading bloc, and the Sahel is often discussed at the ECOWAS–EU Political Dialogue Meeting. The integrated approach seems to be applied in the fields of defence and security, with a significant effort from the RCC that is punctually monitored. However, the integrated approach is not applied with the same resources and political willingness to other sectors – including that of governance. The limitation of this regionalisation process can be also related to the EU tendency to adopt ad hoc solutions³⁴ and short-term planning,³⁵ and the difficulties encountered in adopting an integrated approach. Members of the EU and UN missions in Mali, as well as senior EEAS officials responsible for West Africa, have indicated that they rarely coordinate with the EUCAP mission in the country concerned.³⁶

2. Diagnosis of EU involvement on governance in the Sahel

For the EU, as well as for some other foreign powers, governance is a crucial component in order to address peace and development in the Sahel, as shown by the “governance” component in the main Sahel strategies, from CSDP missions to development-cooperation initiatives.³⁷

33. European Court of Auditors, “Strengthening the Capacity of the Internal Security Forces...”, cit., p. 37-38.

34. Andrew Lebovich, “Halting Ambition: EU Migration and Security Policy in the Sahel”, in *ECFR Policy Briefs*, September 2018, https://www.ecfr.eu/publications/summary/halting_ambition_eu_migration_and_security_policy_in_the_sahel.

35. European Court of Auditors, “Strengthening the Capacity of the Internal Security Forces...”, cit., p. 39.

36. Andrew Lebovich, “Halting Ambition”, cit., p. 10.

37. Laurent Bossard, “Building Peace in the Sahel: A Regional Perspective”,

The EU's approach to and involvement in governance in the Sahel, however, is not always clear in all respects, and a diagnosis is necessary in order to highlight its strengths and weaknesses. The criteria and categories of the Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) are particularly helpful to this effort.³⁸ In the IIAG, country performance in delivering governance is measured across four key components that effectively provide indicators of overall governance performance: safety and the rule of law, participation and human rights, sustainable economic opportunity, and human development. This section focusses on the first two components only (safety and the rule of law, and participation and human rights) because they are the most relevant for this research.

An overall IIAG analysis of the five Sahelian countries shows mixed results (see Figure 2). Over the last ten years (2008–17), Mali leads concerning governance improvements followed by Burkina Faso and Chad. In an opposite trend, Mali shows a significant deterioration related to the 2012 conflict, with slow

Figure 2 | Elaboration from IIAG analysis of the five Sahelian countries

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	AT '08-'17
Burkina Faso	52.3	53.1	53.1	52.4	53.4	53.5	52.9	53.0	55.5	57.1	+4.8
Chad	30.8	30.8	32.7	33.7	34.0	33.7	34.5	35.0	34.6	35.4	+4.6
Mali	54.1	54.5	54.8	55.7	51.2	49.8	50.3	50.9	51.1	50.1	-4.0
Mauritania	42.2	43.0	44.1	44.3	45.6	44.1	43.8	43.9	43.8	43.4	+1.2
Niger	45.6	45.0	47.0	50.7	50.4	50.3	50.8	51.1	50.8	51.2	+5.6

Source: IIAG data, <http://iiag.online>.

in *GREAT Insights*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (December 2014-January 2015), p. 44-47, <https://ecdpm.org/?p=14912>.

38. IIAG, redacted by the African foundation Mo Ibrahim, provides a reliable source of information based on a wide range of indicators to measure and monitor governance performance in African countries. See Mo Ibrahim Foundation, *2018 Ibrahim Index of African Governance: Index Report*, October 2018, <http://mif.media/2018-iiag-report>.

improvements over the last four years. Burkina Faso shows the most significant improvements in a five-year perspective, while Mauritania had a small deterioration.

Within this framework, Table 1 (below) outlines, in a nutshell, the relevance of EU contributions to the first two governance components and their subcategories³⁹ in the Sahel according to qualitative analysis. Relevance is assessed through the qualitative analysis presented below and via the framework of the EU commitment in the Sahel, provided in the previous part.

Table 1 | Relevance of EU contributions to governance components

Governance components	Relevance of EU contribution
<i>1. Safety and rule of law</i>	<i>Relevant</i>
Rule of law	Relevant
Transparency and accountability	Not much relevant
Personal safety (including absence of human trafficking)	Relevant
National security (including absence of IDP refugees)	Relevant
<i>2. Participation and human rights</i>	<i>Not much relevant</i>
Participation	Not much relevant
Rights	Somewhat
Gender	Somewhat

Looking in more detail at the first governance component – Safety and rule of law – one of the main focuses of governance support has been decentralisation, which has been included in the EU cooperation programme since the introduction of EDF funds in the late 1990s.⁴⁰ This choice is probably due to

39. The details on indicators and sources are available in the Mo Ibrahim Foundation website: *Methodology*, <http://mo.ibrahim.foundation/?p=222>.

40. Moussa Djiré et al., “Assessing the EU’s Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Interventions in Mali”, in *WOSCAP Deliverables*, No. 3.3 (24 March 2017),

the necessity to control remote areas, an extremely complex objective without the close collaboration of local actors. EU interventions on governance related to indicators in the first governance component include some specific programmes: administrative reform, the Decentralisation and Regional Economic Development Support Programme (PARADDER), the State Building Contract (SBC) and the Support Programme for Civil Society Organisations (PAOSC) I and II. PARADDER and its predecessor, the Administrative Reform and Decentralisation Support Programme (PARAD), were financed within the EDF framework and were usually implemented by international consultancy companies based in Europe.⁴¹ The main focus of these programmes was support for the effective implementation of state-reform policies; the rule of law; decentralisation; service sectors; and more isolated projects, including conflict resolution and reconciliation.⁴² PARADDER works on decentralisation and is mainly based on specific technical assistance; overall, it seems to be based on interests pre-identified by the EU.⁴³ The SBC in Mali has thus far comprised general budgetary support rather than sectoral support. Governance and basic social services are part of the SBC's objectives – as is the implementation of the Route Map for the Transition since 2013. The main significant shortfalls of this programme remain related to the role of civil society organisations (CSOs), assistance for which is perceived as a “support to the State”.⁴⁴

<https://www.woscap.eu/documents/131298403/131299900/Mali+-+USJPB.pdf/Mali%20-%20USJPB/index.pdf>.

41. See, for instance, PROMAN website: *Projects: Technical Assistance to the Decentralisation within the framework of the “Support Programme for Administrative Reform and Decentralisation (PARAD)”*..., <http://proman.lu/project/technical-assistance-to-the-decentralisation-within-the-framework-of-the-support-programme-for-administrative-reform-and-decentralisation-parad-technical-assistance-to-the-support-programme-in-the-northern-region-of-mali-adere-nord>.
42. A list of the projects implemented in Mali is available here: https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/presentation_projets_site_web.pdf.
43. Moussa Djiré et al., “Assessing the EU's Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Interventions in Mali”, cit., p. 48.
44. Ibid., p. 53.

Another challenging issue is the degree to which decentralisation is shared by national governments and local authorities. This aspect remains unclear and deserves more investigation in all of the five countries. Traditional chiefs in the region are the representatives of their communities and mediate between them and the national authorities. At the local level, they also are key actors for the implementation of customary laws or reconciliation processes. Despite their crucial role in society, traditional chiefs do not have an official status that organises and protects their position.⁴⁵ In Mali, some of them involve themselves in local politics in order to secure their position. This “politicisation of chieftaincy” carries risks – in some cases, undermining their legitimacy.⁴⁶ Such a system deserves more attention, however, and should be connected to the decentralisation process. Traditional approaches – such as, for instance, the *Diina* system of governance established in the nineteenth century to manage the use of natural resources in Mali’s Inner Delta between communities of herders, farmers, and fishers⁴⁷ – can be very useful to local governance.

A key challenge in the rule-of-law framework is related to impartial judicial services and equal access to justice. However, the gulf between the “laboratory of experimentations”⁴⁸ and their actual capacity to improve judicial services remains as wide as ever. Additionally, the disconnection between technical capacity and expertise in local politics is significant – as is that between short-term actions and long-term plans. Tied to this factor, EU approaches sometimes fail to adapt to conditions on the ground, with local consequences regarding conflict sensitivity and good governance. Overall, EU interventions risk creating rigid and unsustainable bureaucracies that can slow down the establishment of good-governance principles.⁴⁹

45. Ibrahim Yahaya Ibrahim and Mollie Zapata, “Regions at Risk. Preventing Mass Atrocities in Mali”, in *Early Warning Country Reports*, April 2018, p. 30, <https://www.ushmm.org/confront-genocide/cases/mali>.

46. *Ibid.*

47. *Ibid.*, p. 36.

48. Elisa Lopez Lucia, “Performing EU Agency by Experimenting the ‘Comprehensive Approach’...”, *cit.*, p. 451.

49. Andrew Lebovich, “Halting Ambition”, *cit.*, p. 2.

A paramount test for the EU is represented by the relationship between security and good governance. As the World Bank governance indicators show (Figure 1), political stability and the absence of violence is the critical governance component in the Sahel. In particular, as discussed previously, the EU has been criticised for using the EUTF to control borders and halt migration.⁵⁰

The strong attention to border control and to fighting irregular migration has not been balanced by support from local populations, who depend on migration for their livelihoods – especially in Niger.⁵¹ This approach has created discontent at the local level and posed risks to efforts related to good governance, such as decentralisation or the strengthening of local authorities.

A “securitarian” approach creates significant constraints on regional movements, limiting labour opportunities, fuelling local conflicts and various kinds of trafficking, and threatening the future of the same EU regional programmes.⁵² The fact that the largest proportion of migrants and refugees remains in the Sahel and western Africa⁵³ does not seem to inform the EU’s analysis. Mobile societies call for mobile solutions to overcome mobile threats: mobility and operating modes and the expertise of nomads should be part of the strategy rather than being addressed only as a challenge. The Saharan area is connected, and the historical heritage of the trans-Saharan route should be preserved and encouraged despite its challenging nature.⁵⁴

50. Bernardo Venturi (ed.), *The Security-Migration-Development Nexus Revised*, cit.

51. Luca Raineri and Alessandro Rossi, “The Security-Migration-Development Nexus in the Sahel: A Reality Check”, in Bernardo Venturi (ed.), *The Security-Migration-Development Nexus Revised: A Perspective from the Sahel*, Brussels/Rome, FEPS and IAI, December 2017, p. 21, <https://www.iai.it/en/node/8764>.

52. *Ibid.*, p. 27-28.

53. UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on the Activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (S/2017/563)*, 30 June 2017, p. 6, <https://undocs.org/S/2017/563>.

54. Laurent Bossard, “Building Peace in the Sahel: A Regional Perspective”, cit., p. 45.

Overall, securitisation seems to fuel bad governance instead of supporting reforms and healthy relations between citizens and political institutions.

The EU should not forget that it is acting on peace and security in the framework of foreign military interventions in the Sahel, and this dimension has an impact on how the Union's actions are perceived by the local population. Foreign military interventions encounter increasingly hostile popular dissatisfaction – mainly due to their ineffectiveness, short-term planning and lack of well-defined objectives. The G5 Sahel Joint Force does not even have a clear idea of what its enemy is in the Sahel, or which of the militias it opposes.⁵⁵ While the G5 was formerly fully committed to promoting democracy and good governance, the G5 Sahel Joint Force focuses extensively on military strategies – and this security approach fails to address the root causes of the issue.

Security measures are necessary, but to have any political impact they should be part of a long-term plan and not simply based on crisis response; otherwise, they risk being counter-productive. As Ibrahim Maïga and other prominent analysts⁵⁶ have pointed out, “This can only be done through a new social contract between communities and the state. Governments must restore their relevance by providing basic services adapted to the diversity of this region, which is populated by both nomads and pastoralists”.⁵⁷

Overall, the EU has progressively included governance components in the CSDP missions, especially after 2015 and the Mali

55. Mohammed Ahmed Gain, paper presented at the Carnegie conference on “Governance and Security in North Africa and the Sahel”, Washington, 8 March 2018.

56. International Crisis Group (ICG), “The Sahel: Promoting Political alongside Military Action”, in *ICG Commentaries*, 31 January 2018, <https://www.crisis-group.org/node/5959>.

57. Ibrahim Maïga, “The G5 Sahel Must Do More Than Fight Terror”, in *ISS Today*, 5 July 2017, <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/the-g5-sahel-must-do-more-than-fight-terror>.

crisis. However, this recognition of the importance of governance reform to peace and stabilisation is still in its early stages. Meanwhile, the missions have been equipped with a strong security component. EUCAP Sahel Mali, for instance, supports the government's security-sector reform (SSR) – despite the fact that Mali has yet to undertake comprehensive SSR – by offering training to judicial police and in intelligence gathering and counterterrorism.⁵⁸ Interestingly, in August 2017 the EU launched a specific programme aimed at supporting the Malian government to implement its *Plan de Sécurisation Intégrée des Régions du Centre* (PSIRC),⁵⁹ an initiative that also focused on governance reform in the region. The plan is based on a concrete analysis of local problems related to weak institutions but, once again, it is widely centred on security actions.⁶⁰

The second key component of governance includes human rights – a topic not without challenges for the EU in the Sahel. Human rights are prioritised in EU documents, but some national armies continue to commit violations – for instance, Malian troops and EUTM participants have both failed to avoid infringements.⁶¹ As assessed in Niger and Mali, “These deficiencies stem from the fact that the EUTM focused on questions of technical support and capacity building rather than real reform, governance, and strategic planning.”⁶²

Additionally, conditions of women in the Sahel had been deteriorating for decades even before the rise of violent extremist groups, and neither religious authorities nor secular state institutions have protected women sufficiently. In the Lake Chad region, women are directly targeted by Boko Haram, which

58. Andrew Lebovich, “Halting Ambition”, cit.

59. Council of the European Union, *Council Decision (CFSP) 2017/1425 of 4 August 2017 on a European Union Stabilisation Action in Mopti and Segou*, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dec/2017/1425/oj>.

60. Andrew Lebovich, “Halting Ambition”, cit., p. 21.

61. On Malian troops, see: Amnesty International, *Report 2017/18: The State of the World's Human Rights*, February 2018, p. 252, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/pol10/6700/2018/en>.

62. Andrew Lebovich, “Halting Ambition”, cit., p. 13.

uses them as negotiating chips.⁶³ The EU has some projects with specific attention to women,⁶⁴ but their level of ambition should be increased. As a cross-cutting issue, the Union applies gender sensitivity to different actions – for instance, supporting the recruitment of men and women for police training and recruitment. Yet, difficulties emerge in work on cultural, social or familial barriers,⁶⁵ and a broader approach lies well outside the scope of CSDP capabilities.

Finally, social and political activism and participation as a topic receives limited attention from the EU. It is included in some small-scale projects (especially in the IcSP framework), but is not connected to security concerns.

As a cross-cutting issue tied to governance, a lack of monitoring and evaluation characterises CSDP missions. Monitoring and evaluation forms an essential component not only in identifying how to improve the actions of such missions but also in delivering good governance.⁶⁶

Climate change is another indicator spanning across different components. It is closely related to food security because drought or other large-scale natural disasters can cause multi-dimensional crises. Climate change itself does not automatically lead to conflicts, but if not addressed with a long-term outlook and good governance it can contribute to terrorism and to supporting recruitment efforts by violent extremists.⁶⁷ Further-

63. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Conference on "Governance and Security in North Africa and the Sahel"*, Washington, 8 March 2018, <https://www.ssrc.org/events/view/conference-on-governance-and-security-in-north-africa-and-the-sahel>.

64. See, for instance, the European Commission website: *Socio-economic Integration Project for Youth and Women in the Sahel*, https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/projects/socio-economic-integration-project-youth-and-women-sahel_en.

65. Interview with RCC member, 11 January 2019.

66. European Court of Auditors, "Strengthening the Capacity of the Internal Security Forces in Niger and Mali", cit.

67. Katharina Nett and Lukas Rüttinger, *Insurgency, Terrorism and Organised Crime in a Warming Climate. Analysing the Links Between Climate Change*

more, in Burkina Faso a study conducted by PRISE (Pathways to resilience in semi-arid economies) stated that that a lack of access to water for irrigation was rated as a “very important” reason for migration by 98 per cent of persons interviewed, alongside poor/degraded soils at 90 per cent and drought and irregular rainfall at 85 and 83 per cent respectively.⁶⁸ Another major factor influencing decisions to emigrate was noted as being the lack of work opportunities in the villages (97 per cent) – for example, in agriculture. Regarding the lack of water for irrigation, in six villages (out of the eight villages surveyed) all the respondents said that this was a “very important” factor influencing departures, with poor and degraded soils “very important” for all the respondents in five villages (out of the eight).⁶⁹

Conclusion

The EU’s contribution to good governance in the Sahel emerges as multi-layered, but without a coherent long-term strategy. Brussels applies an integrated approach, and the Sahel is probably the region where its use is most evident. However, its application is at the experimental level and is significantly conditioned by short-term needs, such as curbing migration, that risk trumping reforms in local governance. The Alliance for the Sahel could provide a useful platform for the EU to interact with other international actors and to frame its short-term concerns in a long-term shared vision beyond the Union’s self-portrayal as “generously selfish”.⁷⁰

and Non-State Armed Groups, Berlin, Adelphi, October 2016, <https://www.adelphi.de/en/node/50363>.

68. Peter Newborne and Noël R. Gansaonré, *Agriculture, Water, Climate and Migration in Semi-arid Lands in Burkina Faso*, London, PRISE, November 2017, p. 25, <http://prise.odi.org/?p=2159>.

69. Ibid.

70. Mark Leonard, “Shaping Europe’s Present and Future. An Interview with Federica Mogherini”, in *ECFR Commentaries*, 11 January 2019, https://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_shaping_europes_present_and_future; EEAS, *Innovation in Development: The Future of EU International Cooperation*, Speech by HR/VP Mogherini at the public debate with Bill Gates in the European Parliament, Brussels, 17 October 2018, <https://europa.eu/!GB98bf>.

A paramount challenge remains the relationship between security and good governance. The EU has contributed to ushering the Sahel region into what might be considered the fourth phase of its recent history, the “securitisation era”, after playing a key role in the previous three (colonisation, post-colonialism and the era of development-cooperation partnerships).⁷¹ Within this framework, governance has been overwhelmed by security pragmatism – and the EU needs to get out of the corner into which it has boxed itself on this issue.

Partnering on governance also means avoiding imposing EU models that can jeopardise the situation on the ground, as in the case of decentralisation. The Sahel governments need to rule their territories and to involve local stakeholders and authorities in the process, but this can be done in different ways – for instance, ignoring or involving traditional chiefs in the region. Tied to this, impartial judicial services and equal access to justice could be considered priorities to support good governance in the G5 countries.

Overall, alternative strategies that leverage the resilience capacities of local communities in the region remain understudied and undervalued.⁷² Mohamed Ibn Chambas, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General and Head of the UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), adds that “the more we listen to local communities, the better we become at shaping targeted solutions and shaping partnerships, rather than imposing externally defined solutions”.⁷³

71. Bernardo Venturi, “The EU and the Sahel: A Laboratory of Experimentation for the Security–Migration–Development Nexus”, in Bernardo Venturi (ed.), *The Security–Migration–Development Nexus Revised: A Perspective from the Sahel*, Brussels/Rome, FEPS and IAI, December 2017, p. 115, <https://www.iai.it/en/node/8764>.

72. International Peace Institute, *Investing in Peace and the Prevention of Violence in the Sahel-Sahara: Voices from Africa*, 28 September 2018, <https://www.ipinst.org/?p=20100>.

73. Ibid.

Recommendations

On the basis of the analysis conducted above on EU influence on governance in the Sahel, it is possible to set out some recommendations for the Union:

- *EU programmes should emphasise good governance.* The EU cannot achieve its long-term objectives on stability, security and migration without prioritising good governance in all its components – from inclusivity to social services, from access to justice to gender equality.
- *Avoid top-down approaches to governance.* Governance can be considered “good” if it incorporates local capabilities and good traditional practices. The EU should interact with these dynamics, avoiding proposing *tout court* its models of decentralisation or other policies.
- *Maintain security controls but ensure that they do not curtail people’s freedom of movement.* Security is a governance component, and it should be harmonised with other components – from human rights to freedom of movement.
- *Support alternative strategies that leverage the resilience capacities of local communities.* Local groups in the region have capabilities that remain understudied and undervalued; they deserve more attention, from assessments to institution building.
- *Design long-term visions based on local ownership.* Short-term programming and emergency approaches should be avoided in order to build sustainable and locally grounded plans.
- *Encourage bottom-up reconciliation and local processes of mediation and dialogue.* The EU has improved its capacities on mediation and peacebuilding in the Sahel, and should support the full implementation of the Mali Peace Agreement as well as local and historical capabilities for reconciliation, mediation and dialogue.

- *Improve long-term planning and internal management of CSDP missions.* CSDP efficiency and effectiveness should be improved through regular monitoring and evaluation, the application of long-term vision and budgeting, and attention to local ownership and related sustainability.

6

FROM CHINA TO THE GULF COUNTRIES: THE IMPACT OF FOREIGN POWERS ON GOVERNANCE IN THE SAHEL

ANCA-ELENA URSU

In recent years, the Sahel has become an attractive region for international actors interested in preventing further destabilisation and addressing the root causes of conflict, migration and poverty. In addition to traditional Western donors, China and the Gulf states have increased their stakes in the region with both development and investment projects.

On the one hand, China – already known for its impressive footprint in Africa – has renewed its commitment to, and interest in, supporting the development of the continent. In his opening speech at the 2018 Forum on Africa–China Cooperation (FOCAC), President Xi Jinping highlighted areas of cooperation in trade, development, capacity building, infrastructure and security, reasserting China’s role as a “benevolent” partner.¹ However, in a break with previous practice, China’s pledge for the next three years did not increase – thus effectively halting the exponential growth in Chinese investment to which Africa has been accustomed.² On the other hand, the Gulf states’ presence on the continent has also evolved, with a strengthening of economic and political relations.³

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1. Full text of Chinese President Xi Jinping’s speech at opening ceremony of 2018 FOCAC Beijing Summit, 3 September 2018, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-09/03/c_129946189.htm.
 2. Linda Calabrese et al., “FOCAC 2018: Top Takeaways from the China-Africa Summit”, in *ODI Comments*, 6 September 2018, <https://www.odi.org/node/33289>.
 3. For the purpose of this chapter, Gulf states are defined as the members of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, including Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Yet, quite differently from China, the Gulf is not a monolithic partner for the continent. Its aid and investment follow the varying ideological lines of single states, further accentuated by the current Qatar diplomatic crisis.⁴ Moreover, the Gulf group as a whole, and even its single-state constituents, do not traditionally have an “Africa policy”. Instead, their engagement has been primarily guided by momentary needs and impulses rather than by any coherent vision or strategy. However, the recent support for regional counterterrorism mechanisms in the Sahel, as well as the more robust foreign policy of individual states, show that the Gulf states do see this region as strategically important for their positioning in the global arena.

In the light of the posturing of China and the Gulf states in the Sahel, this chapter seeks to analyse to what extent new foreign powers could influence the economic and security governance of the Sahel through the prism of their activities in the region.⁵ Firstly - by using the case studies of Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso - it will analyse Beijing’s multi-pronged foreign policy as articulated through its economic, ideological/political and security interests and its influence on national governments’ leverage in international negotiations, as well as its impact on the governance of specific sectors. Secondly, the analysis will unpack the coexistence of different agendas in the Sahelian space with an eye to the arrival of the Gulf states and their commitment to the region’s stability.

The chapter will conclude with pragmatic recommendations for foreign powers that have stakes in the sub-Saharan region by arguing for a better coordination of aid and investment instruments, and for a more cohesive response from Sahelian states that benefit from the support of international actors.

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4. The 2017-19 Qatar diplomatic crisis began in June 2017, when Saudi Arabia, UAE and a number of other governments severed diplomatic relations with Qatar.
 5. For the purpose of this chapter, the Sahel consists of: Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger.

1. China in the Sahel

China's contemporary interest in the Sahel was initially driven – as it was elsewhere – by the quest for natural resources and energy to satisfy its domestic needs.⁶ The five Sahel countries – Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger – have historically represented both a challenge and an opportunity for China. After independence, all these countries except Mali, recognised Taiwan rather than the People's Republic of China (PRC). However, after a relatively long diplomatic dialogue, all of them now acknowledge Beijing's sovereignty – with Burkina Faso being the last to join the PRC's diplomatic allies in May 2018. Even in the light of the small adjustments to its Africa policy announced at FOCAC, China's engagement with the region remains driven by its classical approach based on economic, ideological/political and security interests.⁷ Most recently, in addition to its traditional agenda China has also stepped up its advocacy in the international arena for a more integrated and better-coordinated security response to the attacks that have plagued the Sahel in the past few years.⁸ This section uses three case studies to assess the impact of Chinese activities on specific areas of governance in the fields of the economy, security and politics.

Nigerien uranium: the new gold?

The quest for natural resources and energy for its domestic market has pushed China to deepen its relations with the Sahel. For instance, in 2007 the China National Petroleum Cor-

6. Alex Thurston, "China's Influence in West Africa", in *Sahel Blog*, 14 October 2009, <https://wp.me/pwfOi-ah>; David H. Shinn and Joshua Eisenman, *China and Africa. A Century of Engagement*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012, p. 230.

7. Anca-Elena Ursu and Willem van den Berg, "China and the EU in the Horn of Africa: Competition and Cooperation?", in *Clingendael CRU Policy Briefs*, April 2008, <https://www.clingendael.org/node/9090>.

8. UN Security Council, *Success of Joint Sahel Counter-terrorism Force Hinges on Cooperation, Funding to Fill Capacity Gaps, Key Peacekeeping Official Tells Security Council*, 15 August 2017, <https://www.un.org/press/en/node/244678>.

poration (CNPC) started negotiations for the construction of a 300-kilometre-long oil pipeline in the Bongor Basin of Chad, as well as a refinery complex and an extraction facility.⁹ Shortly afterwards, CNPC took over the oil industry of Niger, while the China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC) became an important actor in uranium extraction.¹⁰

Like mining companies from Canada and South Korea, China received one of the 150 contracts that were offered to bidders by the Nigerien Government in 2007.¹¹ The CNNC gained access to the Azelik mine in 2007, and by 2009 it committed to investing approximately 300 million US dollars into the project, breaking the 40-year monopoly held by the French company Areva.¹² The investment instigated the Société des Mines d’Azelik (SOMINA), what appeared to be a successful joint venture between CNNC, the Nigerien Government and a number of smaller investors.¹³ Scheduled to start production in 2011, and to extract some 700 tonnes of uranium per year, the enterprise was, however, short-lived. In mid-2015, SOMINA closed indefinitely after extracting an estimated total of only 500 tonnes of the metal. The depreciation of uranium prices and the stagnating domestic Chinese economy were responsible for the loss of 300 million US dollars that SOMINA never recovered. This economic debacle was accompanied by environmental degradation around the mining sites that contaminated the groundwater. Finally, the sites were found to have

9. “Chad Pipeline Threatens Villages”, in *BBC News*, 9 October 2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/8298525.stm>.

10. World Nuclear Association, *Uranium in Niger*, updated October 2018, <http://www.world-nuclear.org/information-library/country-profiles/countries-g-n/niger.aspx>.

11. Julie Snorek, “Chinese Azelik Uranium Mine in Ingall, Niger”, in *EJAtlas*, November 2016, <https://ejatlas.org/conflict/chinese-uranium-mine-invades-nigers-traditional-pastoral-territory>.

12. Peter Volberding and Jason Warner, “China and Uranium: Comparative Possibilities for Agency in Statecraft in Niger and Namibia”, in *China Africa Research Initiative Working Papers*, No. 11 (March 2017), p. 10, <http://www.sais-cari.org/s/warner-v8.pdf>.

13. In addition, China Nuclear Engineering and Construction Corporation (CNEC) was scheduled to start operations at the Teguidan Tessoumt site but the 2008 prevented the operationalisation of the investment.

operated in breach of the rights of labourers, who worked and lived in substandard conditions.¹⁴

Yet, in spite of the failure of the project – a rare occurrence for a Chinese enterprise – it has arguably had an impact on Niger’s bargaining power with other stakeholders and investors. When announced, the Chinese investment initially shifted the power relations between Niamey and Areva. In 2016, radioactive materials (i.e. uranium) accounted for up to 27 per cent of Niger’s exports, for a total value of 329 million US dollars – constituting less than 4.5 per cent of the country’s GDP of 7.5 billion US dollars.¹⁵ The reasons for this scanty contribution of uranium to GDP are manifold and intricate, but are mainly attributable to the Nigerien Government’s inability to profit from its uranium-mining sector. Regulatory and financial exemptions that Niger still grants to Areva weigh heavily on its economy, and the lack of leverage in its relationship with the French company does not help to break the vicious economic circle. The lack of transparency in the negotiations – the current contract between the government and Areva has not been published, despite a constitutional obligation to do so – is symptomatic of the opaque nature of the deals between the two parties.

In sum, the brief Chinese-backed operation did not threaten Areva’s market control, as it still owns 63.4 per cent of Société des Mines de l’Air (SOMAIR) and 34 per cent of Compagnie Minière d’Akokan (COMINAK) – Niger’s main mining companies, both created as joint ventures between the Nigerien Government and its former colonial power.¹⁶ On the contrary, the realisation that the Chinese were neither credible investors nor a strong competitor gave Areva a stronger hand in the nego-

14. Ousmane Naomi Binta Stansly et al., *Étude de référence sur les entreprises et les droits de l’homme: cas des industries extractives au Niger*, Niamey, ROTAB-Niger, December 2014, <https://www.humanrights.dk/node/2056>.
15. Observatory of Economic Complexity, *What Does Niger Export? (2016)*, https://atlas.media.mit.edu/en/visualize/tree_map/hs92/export/ner/all/show/2016; World Bank Data: *GDP (current US\$) - Niger*, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?locations=NE>.
16. Peter Volberding and Jason Warner, “China and Uranium”, cit., p. 8.

tiations with Niger. Thus, the French company continues to benefit from regulatory and financial exemptions that hamper Niger's ability to profit from the exploitation of its natural resources. Moreover, the detrimental environmental impact and poor working conditions in Chinese-managed mines amplified tensions between civil society organisations, labour unions and the country's government over allegations of corruption and ignoring environmental- and labour-law violations.¹⁷

Ultimately, China's involvement in SOMINA had a generally negative impact on the governance of the mining sector. Instead of empowering the Nigerien Government by diversifying its sources of funding, the unreliability of the investor left the government vulnerable and led it to return to unfavourable deals with its old partners. The lack of reliability of the Chinese demonstrated to both the government and civil society that Areva was Niger's only viable partner, thereby reducing the country's bargaining power during future renegotiations over mining concessions.¹⁸ Likewise, it further highlighted the relative incapacity of the Nigerien Government to manage the country's mining industry. Subsequent deals and decisions taken by the government in relation to the exploitation of rights only confirmed the lack of capacity of Nigerien decision-makers and their dependence on any type of foreign investment as long as it materialised.¹⁹

In spite of this initial failure, Chinese investment in Niger continues – albeit in different areas and under questionable terms. Infrastructure projects built by Chinese companies are deemed

17. Ousmane Naomi Binta Stansly et al., *Étude de référence sur les entreprises et les droits de l'homme*, cit.

18. Ibid.

19. The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) which conducts regular assessments to promote the open and accountable management of oil, gas and mineral resources suspended Niger's membership in 2017 in light of a deteriorating space for civil society and lack of initiative to address natural resources governance issues. Decision available at: EITI, *Niger Progressing Slowly Against the EITI Standard*, 26 October 2017, <https://eiti.org/node/9325>.

to be of poor quality, following the French saying “*petit argent, petit travail*” (little money, little work).²⁰ Even if it is still too soon to verify the impact of this new wave of investment on the economy of the country and the government’s decision-making process in relation to China’s policy towards Niger, recent scholarship has argued that China is prone to invest in projects that are not necessarily profitable in the short run so as to consolidate its economic and diplomatic presence as well as supporting the internationalisation of its economy.²¹

Seeking stability in Mali and beyond

In a departure from its traditional policy of disengagement from military operations, which were formerly perceived as interference in national affairs, the PRC’s position has evolved in the past decade – in particular, when it comes to United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO). China has changed from being a low-profile country to a deeply involved one. Before 2010, the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) would only deploy non-combatant personnel to peacekeeping operations. However, in 2012, the country decided to engage more vigorously in UNPKO by sending troops first to South Sudan and then to Mali in 2013.²²

Peacekeeping missions can be an attractive theatre in which to project power without necessarily making use of the military for combat. China contributes 2,515 personnel to UNPKO – including staff officers, and army and police units²³ – and 403

20. Author’s interview with a local researcher in Niamey, July 2018.

21. Jean-Pierre Cabestan, “Beijing’s ‘Going Out’ Strategy and Belt and Road Initiative in the Sahel: The Case of China’s Growing Presence in Niger”, in *Journal of Contemporary China*, online 26 December 2018, DOI: 10.1080/10670564.2018.1557948

22. Frans Paul van der Putten, “China’s Evolving Role in Peacekeeping and African Security. The Deployment of Chinese Troops for UN Force Protection in Mali”, in *Clingendael Reports*, September 2015, <https://www.clingendael.org/node/5137>.

23. UN Peacekeeping, *Troop and Police Contributors Monthly Strength Report: Contributions by Country and Post*, December 2018, <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/troop-and-police-contributors>.

of them are deployed to Mali as part of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).²⁴ The Chinese troops are strategically positioned in the northern region of Gao, where they were initially tasked with the protection of MINUSMA's camp hosting both operations and personnel. Their tasks slowly expanded into the medical and engineering fields, as the Chinese contingent built a hospital and supported the reconstruction of the camp in the aftermath of the January 2017 attack against the Operational Coordination Mechanism.²⁵

Nonetheless, Chinese troops remain risk-averse, do not engage in military operations and tend not to be very visible – especially after two security incidents in which Chinese nationals were involved.²⁶ In November 2015, seven Chinese nationals were held hostages and three were killed during an attack on the Radisson Blu hotel in Mali's capital, Bamako.²⁷ In June 2016, one Chinese staff member of the UN's Mine Action Service (UNMAS) was killed and four were wounded when a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device detonated at the MINUSMA camp in Gao.²⁸

As China's interests cross national borders and as its citizens are increasingly exposed to security risks, the country's peacekeeping experience allows for the training of its troops and the

24. UN Peacekeeping, *Troop and Police Contributors Monthly Strength Report: Missions Detailed by Country*, December 2018, <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/troop-and-police-contributors>. The 403 peacekeepers include 395 contingent troops of which 16 female soldiers and 8 staff officers.

25. MINUSMA, *Dozens Killed in Suicide Attack Against MOC Military Camp in Gao*, 18 January 2017, <https://minusma.unmissions.org/en/node/100041322>.

26. Jean-Pierre Cabestan, "China's Evolving Role as a UN Peacekeeper in Mali", in *USIP Special Reports*, No. 432 (September 2018), p. 4, <https://www.usip.org/node/112701>.

27. Benjamin David Baker, "After Deadly Attack in Mali, How Will China Protect Its Citizens Abroad?", in *The Diplomat*, 29 November 2015, <https://thediplomat.com/?p=72098>.

28. China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying's Regular Press Conference on June 1, 2016*, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/2511_665403/t1368602.shtml; UN News, *Mali: Ban 'Outraged' by Latest Attack on UN Mission; Urges Authorities to Investigate*, 1 June 2016, <https://news.un.org/en/node/530942>.

improvement of their rapid-response capacity when it comes to the extraction of civilians from fragile settings. Politically, its wider support for military operations reflects the PRC's pursuit of power and its emergence as a global actor. UNPKOs provide China with a lawful basis from which to exert global influence without menacing other states or the international order.²⁹ Emboldened by its five-year deployment to Mali, China has expanded its role as a security actor advocating for integrated responses to instability at the regional level.

In the past, China was warmly and frequently invited to financially contribute to the G5 Sahel, the institutional framework for the coordination of regional cooperation in development policies and security matters in West Africa. Yet, while Beijing recognised the importance of the G5 as a peace and security enabler, it also shied away from committing to its mechanisms. Wu Haitao, China's deputy permanent representative to the UN, explained in 2017 that the country had already established its own fund for the region, avoiding the need to confront the international community with a negative answer.³⁰ However, most recently, China has yielded to France's diplomatic pressure and agreed to bolster the capacity of the G5 Sahel – although no figure or timeline has yet been announced.³¹

From its early stages, the G5 Sahel faced a number of hurdles – including insufficient financial means to operationalise its military component, the Joint Force.³² China's contribution will

29. Anca-Elena Ursu, "No Place to Hide: Why China Will Ratify the Rome Statute", in *FICHL Policy Brief Series*, No. 60 (2016), <http://www.toaep.org/pbs-pdf/60-ursu>.

30. Wang Jianguang, "Roundup: Security Council Meeting Discusses Support for G5 Sahel Joint Force", in *Xinhua*, 31 October 2017, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-10/31/c_136717506.htm.

31. Romain Brunet, "Macron Revives France's Partnership with China in Africa", in *France24*, 11 January 2018, <http://f24.my/2LH6.T>; "La Chine va poursuivre son soutien au G5 Sahel dans sa lutte contre le terrorisme (ambassadeur)" in *Xinhua*, 8 August 2018, http://french.xinhuanet.com/2018-08/18/c_137400607.htm.

32. UN Security Council, *Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel. Report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/432)*, 8 May 2018, <https://undocs.org/S/2018/432>.

most likely benefit the mechanism, although the amount and specific purpose of the funding remain unclear. Nonetheless, Xi's decision for China to become more involved in security matters suggests the depth of the stakes that China has invested in the Sahel. The Chinese communities in the Sahelian capitals are growing and increasingly visible, with hotels, restaurants and residences designed to meet their needs. While they are unlikely to become selected targets of terrorist attacks, specifically due to their lack of involvement in military actions, widespread instability and insecurity threaten their safety and their business activities. Indeed, China's military involvement does not amount to a full engagement, given its peacekeepers' limited scope of activity. The PLA's international track record is young, and its soldiers are still inexperienced but eager to learn and professionalise. During an informal conversation with one of the Gao-based peacekeepers, the young soldier expressed his enthusiasm for the mission, pointing out his eagerness to use the skills that he had learned in Mali in other missions.³³

All in all, China is not a significant security provider in Mali but rather a keen observer and modest donor. None of its activities presents a potential interference with national and international strategies, nor does it make an indispensable contribution to the stability of the country. Ultimately, the Sahel – and Mali, in particular – are “soft-paved” playgrounds for China's foreign policy in the field of security, which give it sufficient room for manoeuvre to advance its political interests.

Burkina Faso: the return of the prodigal son

In May 2018, Burkina Faso established diplomatic relations with China after 24 years of loyalty to Taiwan.³⁴ In a public statement, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso explained

33. Informal conversation with Chinese peacekeepers stationed in Gao, July 2018.

34. Burkina Faso recognised the government of Taipei immediately after gaining independence from France, between 1961-1973. Between 1974-1994, Burkina recognised the government of Beijing instead, until President Blaise Compaoré resumed ties with the PRC.

that “the evolution of the world and the socio-economic challenges of our country and region push us to reconsider our position”.³⁵ The PRC’s growing economic influence is pressuring more and more countries to embrace its One-China policy.³⁶ In the past two years, São Tomé and Príncipe, Panama and the Dominican Republic have severed ties with Taipei, leaving the island with just 18 diplomatic allies, of which only one is in Africa – the tiny kingdom of Swaziland. However, Swaziland is also undergoing pressure from Beijing, which urges the kingdom to join “the family of China-Africa friendship at an early date”.³⁷

Since the election of Taiwan’s president, Tsai Ing-wen, a strong defender of her island’s independence, Beijing has stepped up its campaign to persuade more countries to recognise the PRC as the only legitimate government of China. Tsai has strongly criticised China for its “dollar diplomacy”, which pushed her Minister of Foreign Affairs to offer his resignation over fears that Taiwan could not compete with the PRC’s resources.³⁸ Indeed, financial resources were the first instruments made available to Burkina Faso by Beijing. Just before opening its embassy in Ouagadougou, a Chinese diplomatic delegation arrived in the capital of Burkina Faso to sign a bilateral cooperation agreement between the two countries.³⁹ As expected, Beijing hit the ground running: a 188 million US dollars hospital is under construction, while the China Harbour Engineering

35. “After Snubbing Taiwan, Burkina Faso Establishes Diplomatic Ties with China”, in *The New York Times*, 26 May 2018, <https://nyti.ms/2JalZle>.

36. The “One China policy” is a state policy asserting that there is only one country of China, despite the fact that there are two governments that represent the People’s Republic of China (or mainland China) and the Republic of China (Taiwan).

37. Ben Blanchard, “China Wins Back Burkina Faso, Urges Taiwan’s Last African Ally to Follow”, in *Reuters*, 26 May 2018, <https://reut.rs/2Jb893h>.

38. “After Snubbing Taiwan, Burkina Faso Establishes Diplomatic Ties with China”, cit.; Taiwan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *The ROC Government Has Terminated Diplomatic Relations with Burkina Faso with Immediate Effect to Uphold National Dignity*, 24 May 2018, https://www.mofa.gov.tw/en/News_Content.aspx?n=1EADDCFD4C6EC567&s=97A280F693D2020A.

39. “Une forte délégation chinoise attendue à Ouagadougou (officiel)”, in *APA News*, 3 July 2018, <http://apanews.net/index.php/news/une-forte-delegation-chinoise-attendue-a-ouagadougou-officiel>.

company plans to build a new highway spanning more than 300 kilometres between the capital, Ouagadougou, and the country's second-biggest city, Bobo-Dioulasso. In the mid-term, Burkina would like to see the construction of a railway to connect the country with Ghana and also investments in its main production sectors, including mining, as well as in energy and education.⁴⁰

Attending the FOCAC for the first time, the president of Burkina emphatically declared that "Africa has chosen China",⁴¹ which begs the question of why Burkina Faso made its decision now and not earlier. Taiwan had generously supported Burkina with aid and technical services for the previous two and half decades. However, when, in 2016, the Burkinabé Minister of Foreign Affairs travelled to Taiwan to request 31 million US dollars to fund five projects, Taiwan refused the request.⁴² In 2016, Burkina Faso ranked as the 18th poorest country in the world out of 189 nations.⁴³ In the Sahel, only Niger ranked worse, in 5th-poorest position, while Mali, Chad and Mauritania found themselves between the 27th and 51st places. Burkina Faso's economic dependence on international donors and investors drove it into China's open arms, with a number of requests that the latter promptly accommodated. China capitalised on a weak moment in relations between Taipei and Ouagadougou to establish itself as an alternative. This fast-tracked severing of ties with Taiwan and the creation of new ones with China is an indicator of Beijing's leverage in the region and on the continent in general. According to China experts and schol-

40. Simon Gongo, "China Cements Fresh Burkina Faso Ties with Hospital and Highway", in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 8 August 2018, <https://www.smh.com.au/world/asia/china-cements-fresh-burkina-faso-ties-with-hospital-and-highway-20180808-p4zw4e.html>.

41. "Interview: 'Africa Has Chosen China,' Says Burkina Faso President", in *Xinhua*, 29 August 2018, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-08/29/c_137428208.htm.

42. Simon Gongo, "China Cements Fresh Burkina Faso Ties with Hospital, Highway", cit.

43. Jonathan Gregson, "Poorest Countries in the World", in *Global Finance Magazine*, 13 February 2017, <https://www.gfmag.com/global-data/economic-data/the-poorest-countries-in-the-world?page=12>.

ars interviewed, the power gap between Sahelian countries and the PRC is almost impossible to bridge.⁴⁴ While the African Union has a certain degree of leverage, the organisation is not always capable of harmonising and pursuing the common interests of its member states.⁴⁵ Practically, this means that individual states, often “holding the short end of the stick”, negotiate on a bilateral basis with China, a country whose economic and political might goes a long way when it comes to driving bargains.

2. En-Gulf-ed in the Sahel

Despite its extensive activity on the continent, as of late China has been met with strong competition. In an effort to expand their partnerships beyond the Maghreb, the Gulf states have also timidly started approaching the Sahel. Kuwait’s Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) oriented the Gulf monarchy towards what it classifies as “Arab Countries” (Mauritania, Chad) and “West African countries” (Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger), which benefit from generous loans – an average of 13 per country.⁴⁶ By way of comparison, central, eastern and southern African countries benefit from considerably less investment from KFAED, with most of its non-Sahelian African expenditure being registered in coastal states.

Similarly, in 2013, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) organised the first meeting of the Africa Global Business Forum to “explore the next phase of growth and development with the founders of Africa’s most innovative businesses”.⁴⁷ Finally, the

44. Interviews with two China experts between June–November 2018.

45. Yu-Shan Wu, Chris Alden and Cobus van Staden, “Ties between African Countries and China Are Complex. Understanding This Matters”, in *The Conversation*, 15 October 2018, <http://bit.ly/2HUiVvu>.

46. See KFAED website: *Loans Chart*, <https://www.kuwait-fund.org/en/web/kfund/chart>; and *Geographical Distribution of Loans*, <https://www.kuwait-fund.org/en/web/kfund/maps>.

47. See the website of the 2017 edition: <https://globalbusinessforum.com/africa/about>.

Qatar National Bank has expressed interest in the continent's financial infrastructure and is currently the largest shareholder in Ecobank Transnational Incorporated (ETI), one of Africa's most important banks with a significant footprint in the Sahel.⁴⁸

Initially, Gulf engagement in the Sahel was driven by a quest for business. Unlike China, the oil-rich Gulf states did not invest substantially in the extraction of raw materials. On the contrary, they contributed to the diversification of economies and invested in financial services, transportation and infrastructure. Besides their financial availability, the Gulf states are appealing to sub-Saharan Africa's populations, which are over 30 per cent Muslim.⁴⁹ To cater to the specific needs of these countries, the Gulf states have diversified their offer by including sharia-compliant government bonds, known as *sukuk*.⁵⁰ The shared religious background triggers the charitable spirit of wealthy businessmen in the Gulf who are devout Muslims and who want to share their wealth with less well-endowed Muslim populations. For instance, it is not infrequent to encounter private foundations operating throughout the Sahel in the humanitarian sector. However, most of their donations tend to be under-reported and it remains difficult to distinguish their streams of funding and the purpose of the donations themselves.⁵¹

Despite the Gulf states' interest in becoming more engaged in the Sahel, the region has long remained *terra incognita* for most of them. Firstly, Gulf countries' interests traditionally un-

48. See NedBank website: *Our African Footprint*, <https://www.nedbank.co.za/content/dam/nedbank/site-assets/Corporate/SupportingImages/Ecobank.png>.

49. Pew Research Center, *The Future of the Global Muslim Population. Region: Sub-Saharan Africa*, January 2011, <http://pewrsr.ch/14gqbbi>.

50. Michaël Cheylan and François-Aïssa Touazi, "Afrique-Pays du Golfe: le grand réveil?", in *Le Point Afrique*, 13 October 2014, <http://af.lpnt.fr/1871797t>.

51. Céline Billat, "The Funding of Humanitarian Action by Non-Western Donors. The Sustainability of Gulf States' Contribution", in *CERAH Working Papers*, No. 30 (2016), https://cerahgeneve.ch/index.php/download_file/view/1060/738.

folded in the Horn of Africa owing to its strategic position and the historical ties between the two regions.⁵² Secondly, unlike China and other international donors and investors, they do not have an “Africa policy”. Generally speaking, while individual Gulf states might pursue slightly diverging agendas, their foreign policy towards the continent tends to be “reactionary, personality-driven, and ad-hoc”,⁵³ which makes it significantly more difficult to coordinate with other actors in the region and also harder to anticipate. Moreover – this time, just like in the case of China – the decision to intervene in a specific region or field is driven not only by government policies but also by businessmen with interests in politics, often connected to the recipient countries’ national elites.⁵⁴ This blurs the line between what is private and what is public funding, and tends to mask the rationale and motivation behind specific projects – thus making it almost impossible for Sahelian governments to decipher what the vested interests of their donors actually are.⁵⁵

Recently, the Qatari crisis has divided the Gulf states into two camps – with the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain (along with Egypt) on one side, and Qatar allied with Turkey and Iran on the other. Both camps have engaged in proxy confrontations in West Africa, which have brought their engagement with the Sahel to the fore since this conflict between divergent beliefs, values and political agendas plays out in that region as well. The Qatari emir, Tamim Ben Hamad Al-Thani, traditionally close to East Africa like all his neighbours, visited West Africa for the first time at the end of 2017 and included Mali and Burkina Faso in his diplomatic tour. This visit should be read within the

52. Jos Meester, Willem van den Berg and Harry Verhoeven, “Riyal Politik. The Political Economy of Gulf Investments in the Horn of Africa”, in *Clingendael CRU Reports*, April 2018, <https://www.clingendael.org/pub/2018/riyal-politik>.

53. Author’s interview with a researcher working on Gulf-Africa relations, The Hague, October 2018.

54. Céline Billat, “The Funding of Humanitarian Action by Non-Western Donors”, cit.

55. Author’s interviews with a researcher working on Gulf-Africa relations. The Hague, October 2018; and with an expert on Gulf states foreign policy, Skype, October 2018.

context of the ongoing Gulf rivalry as Chad and Mauritania, strong supporters of the Saudi-UAE coalition, were excluded from it. The tour also signalled a strengthening of diplomatic relations between the two regions, and Qatar's interest in the Sahel. The Sahelian countries, in turn, made diplomatic overtures to persuade Qatar to become a more prominent investor in the region.⁵⁶ Consequently, Mali and Burkina, both of which recently opened embassies in Doha, did not take sides in the Gulf confrontation for fear of antagonising Qatar, a wealthy donor country.

As a "counteroffer" to Al-Thani's visit, Saudi Arabia pledged 100 million euro in support of the G5 Sahel, followed by a more modest 30 million euro from the UAE. Yet, the UAE also invested in the opening of a "war school" in Mauritania, where the G5 is headquartered, and in the creation of the Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition of 40 Islamic states. According to some Sahel observers, the UAE and Saudi Arabia are in the region to stay – and especially to rein in their rivals' influence there.⁵⁷ Arguably, the two Gulf states are (re)activating their Sahel diplomatic networks in the greater context of their rivalry with Qatar and Iran.⁵⁸ Moreover, both the UAE and Saudi Arabia have made efforts to position themselves as global leaders in counterterrorism and the eradication of political Islam.⁵⁹ The Sahel provides an ideal terrain for their strategy to

56. Benjamin Augé, "L'Afrique de l'Ouest courtisée par le Qatar et ses rivaux du Golfe", in *Le Monde*, 4 January 2018, https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2018/01/04/l-afrique-de-l-ouest-courtisee-par-le-qatar-et-ses-rivaux-du-golfe_5237567_3212.html.

57. Javad Heirannia and Somayeh Khomarbaghi, "Saudi Arabia, Iran Compete in Sahel", in *Modern Diplomacy*, 11 February 2018, <https://wp.me/p9uwHB-2of>; Marine Pennetier and John Irish, "'Sahel Coalition' Wants Victories Against Islamist Militants by Mid-2018", in *Reuters*, 13 December 2017, <https://reut.rs/2BiZV5f>.

58. Javad Heirannia, "Saudi-UAE Move in the Sahel Region Is for Rivalry with Iran: Prof. Entessar", in *Tehran Times*, 24 February 2018, <https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/421514>. Saudi Arabia is the only Gulf state under study that has a full diplomatic presence in the Sahel states, while Qatar entertains relations with Chad and Mauritania and UAE with Mauritania alone.

59. Author's interview with expert on Gulf states foreign policy, Skype, October 2018.

unfold – a volatile region deeply affected by extremist violence. “Fighting terrorism and extremism with zero tolerance is our priority”, Saudi Foreign Minister Adel Al-Jubeir declared in a public interview.⁶⁰

Overall, the Gulf states display a wide range of assets, both political and economic, which in combination with the Sahel’s constant need for capital offers a fertile ground for engagement in the region. Shared cultural elements as well as the abundance, flexibility and dynamism of their investment tools make the Gulf states very appealing to West African countries.⁶¹ While for the time being it remains unimpressive, the future scale of their economic engagement will depend heavily on the ability of public and private sectors to attract investments in the Sahel, and on the willingness of the Gulf states to work with their Western and Chinese counterparts whose regional expertise can facilitate their (the Gulf states’) operations.

From a strategic point of view, the Sahel will play an increasing role in the foreign policy of the Gulf region, especially in the light of the renewed rivalry between its various states. An engagement in counterterrorism operations, increasingly widespread in the region, is appealing to countries wishing to be seen as fighting violent extremism. The further these operations extend (in duration and geographical range), the more expensive they become – placing an increasingly heavy burden on Western donors. Thus, Paris, Brussels and Washington will arguably continue to encourage and welcome any contributions, and especially those from wealthy Gulf states, so as to ensure their participation and buy-in for large-scale counterterrorism operations aimed at achieving a greater level of stability.

60. Louis Imbert and H el ene Sallon, “Adel Al-Jubeir: ‘Les Etats-Unis restent un n gociateur honn te’”, in *Le Monde*, 14 December 2017, https://www.lemonde.fr/proche-orient/article/2017/12/14/adel-al-jubeir-les-etats-unis-restent-un-negociateur-honnete_5229603_3218.html.

61. Author’s interview with expert on Gulf states foreign policy, Skype, October 2018.

Recommendations

China's and the Gulf states' engagement in the Sahel joins an already crowded donor space, populated among others by the EU and its member states (accompanied by dozens of implementing agencies), the World Bank, the UN and the US. Consequently, donor coordination is one of the region's greatest challenges. The Sahel requires financial support, but it does not always manage to channel this where it is most needed.

Accordingly, this chapter makes the following three recommendations for foreign powers with stakes in the Sahel:

- Firstly, the promotion of stability and development are on every donor's agenda, but the motivation behind and definition of these aspects differ greatly. For instance, in the realm of security the EU fears the repercussions of further destabilisation of the Sahel on its own security. The US aims to globally dismantle terrorist networks, and so do Gulf states that want to be associated with it. China seeks a type of stability for economic benefit and a safe environment for its citizens abroad. Notwithstanding these divergent motivations, there are areas in which the interests of donors converge – such as regional security and economic development. The Sahel governments should capitalise on these common donor interests, and request that donors coordinate their efforts to achieve accrued complementarity rather than engaging in redundant or competitive programmes. However, organising national conferences and coordination mechanisms will not suffice. Central and decentralised authorities should trigger more high-level elite bargaining processes – internally and with donors – to obtain political deals that are truly beneficial to their populations and in line with their development plans.
- Secondly, in spite of the aforementioned abundance of financial and technical aid, the Sahel countries languish at the bottom of private-investment “league tables” – including those recording investment from China and the Gulf states.

Structural obstacles such as the lack of infrastructure and a business-enabling environment, weak governance and gaps in the rule of law – combined with insufficient technical capabilities – make it challenging for private investment to penetrate these frontier markets. Moreover, when large investment projects fail – as Niger’s SOMINA did – the consequences are long-felt and can impact on entire production sectors. The Sahel countries should be more assertive about their priorities at the national, regional and local levels in negotiations with private-sector investors and donors. They should also avoid the dispersion of funding into sectors that do not hold out the future promise of success in the light of feasibility studies and market assessments.

- Thirdly, bilateral donor countries that are deeply involved in the governance of the Sahel should open up to the process of finding overlaps between their interventions and those of newly arrived stakeholders like China and the Gulf states. Irrespective of the individual drivers of foreign policy that every country is entitled to, the Sahel can only stop and reverse its current spiral of violence if donors accept that their goals can be more easily and rapidly met if worked towards collectively rather than individually. In a different light, if not properly coordinated and channelled the co-existence of multiple foreign powers in the Sahel has the potential to undermine the very same goals for which these powers were present in the first place. Coordinated actions are often the most (cost-)effective ones, but also politically the most difficult to achieve. In the light of the different agendas of their donors, the Sahel countries should create regional interest-based coalitions that can engage in political bargaining at the highest level with donor countries and also on behalf of local communities, thereby strengthening regional-governance mechanisms.

7

NOTES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

LUCA BARANA

Scholars, practitioners and political representatives gathered in Rome on 12 February 2019 to discuss the most pressing issues related to governance in the Sahel region. The international conference “Governance and Security in the Sahel: Tackling Mobility, Demography and Climate Change” gave the opportunity for local perspectives to emerge. Furthermore, it constituted a first step in an insightful dialogue among the politicians and researchers from the Sahel, and international scholars – a dialogue that, as became evident as the conference progressed, is strongly needed in order to craft shared solutions to structural problems at a regional level. In this final chapter, the major findings of the conference are highlighted.

The need to analyse the dynamics “on the ground”, beyond the headlines of the international media, garnered support during the discussion. The Sahel has taken centre stage in public attention over the last decade because of growing migratory pressure towards Europe and instability brewing in many of the region’s countries. As a consequence, the European Union has stepped up its involvement while other external actors, such as China and the Gulf states, have been following their own agendas in the region. In the face of the growing presence of external stakeholders, local needs and social dynamics are in peril of being overlooked – a significant problem for policymakers wishing to meaningfully intervene in the governance realm.

As a matter of fact, it was recognised, “governance” is a complex process. As such, policy interventions aiming at softening risks linked to migration and instability – a method commonly referred to as “securitisation” – showed distorted impacts on local governance concerning mobility, demography and the ef-

fects of climate change. Many countries in the region are battling structural weaknesses; the distance between citizens and the state, for example, is one of the most pressing root causes of radicalisation and instability. A securitised approach ignores those internal causes of instability that lie in the governance sphere: corruption, unequal access to justice and absence of the state among them. Furthermore, the urgency displayed by Western donors has been poorly coordinated with the local normative environment, undermining the legitimacy and accountability of the states concerned.

The hybrid model of governance that characterizes the Sahel is based on the personalisation of politics and a strong connection with traditional powers. This solution has granted a certain degree of stability, but now it is beginning to show signs of strain: recent crises in the region have all been fuelled by a widespread call for better governance. In order to fully understand the nature of recent violent uprisings, a deeper knowledge of the role of hybrid governance is surely needed.

Land ownership was one of the most pressing issues discussed. Countries in the Sahel are facing a massive challenge in the form of climate change, and have been severely struck by desertification. The increasing shortage of arable lands generates new social tensions, fuelling conflicts between agricultural and herder populations. These tensions, in turn, play into the hands of radical groups, which exploit dissatisfaction with the state in order to broaden their appeal and recruit new members. Demography in the region, strongly affected by its huge population growth, further reinforces social tensions and thus increases the need for effective governance.

Against this background, women and children are disproportionately affected by migration and climate change. A widespread lack of access to education constitutes probably one of the most urgent issues yet to be addressed in the region. Alongside weak education standards, child labour and exploitation of forced labour also remain significant challenges to the resilience of local populations.

Nonetheless, one of the issues highlighted was how complex the position of regional states on the matter of mobility remains. On the one hand, many governance weaknesses – especially in Niger – could well be connected to irregular migration, a phenomenon intertwined with human trafficking and other illicit networks. In tackling such issues, more attention should be devoted to the role of border communities, whose participation in the smuggling of migrants is usually due to the absence of affordable economic alternatives. In order to counteract the dominant narratives on migration, the political representatives of Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso urged participants to remember that the states in the Sahel are not among the most prominent EU-bound emigration countries.

On the other hand, a securitised approach alone will not solve the issue of irregular migration. On the contrary, it risks raising fresh obstacles to effective governance by hindering the mobility that many local communities have traditionally elected as their own development strategy. Research and policy should also take into consideration how inequalities within a single country foster internal migration from rural areas towards the larger cities. Concerning international mobility, managing this is a crucial component of regional governance: as an example, it was reported how protests had emerged against a possible limitation of free circulation within ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) territory due to external interventions supporting more rigid checks at borders. This issue certainly deserves further research.

As far as the involvement of external actors is concerned, it emerged that the EU works to tackle challenges at a regional level by mirroring initiatives like those of the G5 Sahel. This had been the main reason for the launch of the Regional Co-ordination Cell, at present hosted within the EUCAP Sahel Mali mission in Bamako. A strong consensus was reached on the “problematic” nature of coordination between European agencies in the region and, even more challenging, with other international stakeholders. Streamlining European actions and coordinating international efforts should be a priority in order

to ease the burden on the overstretched capacities of states in the region.

Concerning the growing presence of China and the Gulf States in the Sahel, it was underlined that these international actors take quite different approaches to the Sahel than that of the EU. A common narrative pits European conditionality-based policy against a Chinese involvement that seemingly comes with “no strings attached”. Nonetheless, the reason Beijing is able to apparently offer a lighter “burden” to its partners lies in the fact that there is not yet a deep enough relationship between the parties that would justify more demanding requests. Meanwhile, the proxy competition unfolding in the Sahel between Gulf states in the light of the Qatar crisis is still too recent to be dispassionately addressed.

Notwithstanding these caveats, the presence of new stakeholders in the region is deepening. Thus, local governments should start exploring their new bargaining power with the multiple donors now involved in the Sahel. The level of agency that the region’s governments will be able to exercise will be a crucial factor in shaping future bottom-up response to governance crises driven by local needs, and it deserves further research. It is thus critical to stress that governance has to be defined according to local exigencies, and must take into consideration endogenous social patterns deriving from mobility, demography and climate change rather than simply being modelled to satisfy external interests.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AEC	Alternatives Espaces Citoyens
AEDD	Agence de l'Environnement et du Développement Durable (Mali)
AfDB	African Development Bank
ANDDH	Association Nigérienne de Défense des Droits de l'Homme
ANLC	Association Nigérienne de Lutte contre la Corruption
APF	African Peace Facility
AQIM	Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb
AU	African Union
BCEAO	Banque Centrale des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest
BCR	Bureau Central de Recensement (Niger)
CIPD	Conférence Internationale sur la Population et le Développement
CNEC	China Nuclear Engineering and Construction Corporation
CNNC	China National Nuclear Corporation
CNPC	China National Petroleum Corporation
COMINAK	Compagnie Minière d'Akokan
CONOPS	Concept of Operations
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy (EU)
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DCI	Development Cooperation Instrument
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DSF	Defence and Security Forces
ECA	European Court of Auditors
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EDF	European Development Fund

EEAS	European External Action Service
EFCC	Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (Nigeria)
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
ENAMI	Enquête nationale sur la migration au Niger
ETI	Ecobank Transnational Incorporated
EU	European Union
EUCAP	European Union Capacity Building Mission
EUGS	European Union Global Strategy
EUSR	European Union Special Representative
EUTF	European Union Emergency Trust Fund
EUTM	European Union Training Mission
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FOCAC	Forum on Africa-China Cooperation
G5 Sahel	Group of five Sahel nations (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger)
GAIPDS	Groupement des Associations Islamiques sur les questions de Population et de Développement
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GGWSSI	Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative
HACP	Haute Autorité à la Consolidation de la Paix (Niger)
HCNE	National High Committee for the Environment (Chad)
HDI	Human Development Index
ICG	International Crisis Group
IcSP	Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IAG	Ibrahim Index of African Governance
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INS	Institut National de la Statistique (Niger)

INSTAT	Institut National de la Statistique (Mali)
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPCC	United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ISWAP	Islamic State West African Province
KFAED	Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development
LCBC	Lake Chad Basin Commission
LDC	Less Developed Country
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
MLF	Macina Liberation Front
MNJTF	Multinational Joint Task Force
NACTEST	National Counter Terrorism Strategy (Nigeria)
NAPA	National Adaptation Programme of Action on climate change
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NPP	National Population Policy
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ONSA	Office of the National Security Adviser (Nigeria)
PAOSC	Programme d'Appui aux Organisations de la Société Civile (Mali)
PARAD	Programme d'Appui à la Réforme Administrative et à la Décentralisation
PARADDER	Programme d'Appui à la Réforme Administrative, à la Décentralisation et au Développement Économique et Régional
P/CVE	Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism
PDES	Programme for Economic and Social Development
PLA	People's Liberation Army (of the PRC)
PRC	People's Republic of China

PRISE	Pathways to Resilience in Semi-arid Economies
PSIRC	Plan de Sécurisation Intégrée des Régions du Centre (Mali)
RAP	Regional Action Plan
RCC	Regional Coordination Cell
RGPH	Recensement Général de la Population et de l'Habitat (Niger)
SALWs	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SBC	State Building Contract
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDDCI	Stratégie de Développement Durable et de Croissance Inclusive (Niger)
SDR	Stratégie de Développement Rural (Niger)
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
SOMAIR	Société des Mines de l'Air
SOMINA	Société des Mines d'Azelik
SSR	Security-Sector Reform
SWEDD	Sahel Women's Empowerment and Demographic Dividend Project
TFP	Technical and Financial Partner
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UEMOA	West African Economic and Monetary Union
UN	United Nations
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
UNOWAS	United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel
UNPKO	United Nations Peacekeeping Operations
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WGI	Worldwide Governance Indicators
WHO	World Health Organisation

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This edited volume analyses the factors related to good governance in the Sahel, and it explores how the quality of governance is influenced by and can affect the management of demographic changes, climate change and mobility. This research is structured around four main axes: first, analysing the factors underpinning good governance in the Sahel; second, focusing on the governance of mobility, demography and climate to explore the relationship between governance and these issues; third, examining specific case studies, namely Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger; and finally, addressing the role of key international actors in the region, including the EU. Each chapter also sets out some key progressive policy recommendations for local and international stakeholders.

FEPS is the progressive political foundation established at the European level. Created in 2007, it aims at establishing an intellectual crossroad between social democracy and the European project. As a platform for ideas and dialogue, FEPS works in close collaboration with social democratic organizations, and in particular national foundations and think tanks across and beyond Europe, to tackle the challenges that we are facing today. FEPS inputs fresh thinking at the core of its action and serves as an instrument for pan-European, intellectual political reflection.

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