POLICY BRIEF

THE **LIMITS** AND **PITFALLS** OF MULTILATERAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL RESPONSES TO THE **PEACE** AND **SECURITY** CHALLENGES IN THE **SAHEL REGION** AND **COTE D'IVOIRE**.

THE LIMITS & PITFALLS

OF MULTILATERAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL RESPONSES TO THE PEACE & SECURITY CHALLENGES IN THE **SAHEL REGION** AND **COTE D'IVOIRE**

1.1. Introduction

The Sahel region has been in the global spotlight due to the many complex and multi-layered security challenges. [1]The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and its enervating effects has further added another layer to the pre-existing challenges. However, despite the various interventions by states, CSOs and other external actors, the threats continue to intensify and evolve, invoking critical questions about the effectiveness of existing responses.

Therefore, this policy brief assessed the limits and pitfalls of the existing multilateral, regional and national responses to the peace and security challenges in the Sahel and Cote D'Ivoire, especially as it affects women and young girls, and to proffer evidence-based policy recommendations to address the enduring threats.

It is instructive to note that the policy brief is an abridged version of a comprehensive research conducted from November 2020 to January 2021 as part of the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the UN Development Programme (UNDP Regional Bureau Africa) project on "Building an Inclusive Post COVID-19 Recovery, Crisis Transitions and Governance Reforms in the Sahel and Cote d'Ivoire." The research adopted a case study design focusing on three countries in the Sahel namely, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso and an additional country, Cote d'Ivoire, due to its proximity and strategic relevance to the region. The analysis in this policy brief is therefore based on the extensive in-depth interviews with the relevant stakeholders in the four selected countries.

The policy brief is divided into five sections. The first section provides a laconic overview of the multi-layered peace and security challenges in the Sahel including the specific challenges facing women and girls. The second section examines the multilateral, regional and national responses followed by the limits and pitfalls of the existing response strategies in the third section. The last section concludes with some relevant policy recommendations to address the gaps in the existing responses to inform appropriate and effective interventions.

1.2. Overview of the Multi-layered Peace and Security Challenges

The Sahel region is a 5,000-kilometer belt of land below the Sahara Desert and stretches from Africa's Atlantic coast to the Red Sea.[2] As shown in figure 1, the region marks the physical and cultural transition between the Sahara Desert to the north and tropical savannas to the south with a population of over 300 million. The Sahel is also one of the richest regions in Africa with abundant oil, natural gas, gold, phosphates, diamonds, copper, iron ore, bauxite, biological diversity and precious woods, among many other assets.[3]

However, there are deep-rooted challenges that affect the prosperity and peace of the region. For the purpose of this policy brief, the challenges are clustered using the human security lens into political insecurity, personal insecurity, community insecurity, health insecurity, environmental insecurity, food insecurity and economic insecurity.

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[1]WANEP. (2020). WANEP Monthly Bulletins. January-April, p.2
[2]UNDP. (2019). Sahel: A region of Opportunities. https://feature.undp.org/sahel/index.html, accessed 10 January 2021.
[3]United Nations. (2019). United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS): Progress Report 2018-2019. New York: Implementation Support Unit and Pillar Working Groups.

Figure 1. Map of the Sahel region

Source: https://theconversation.com
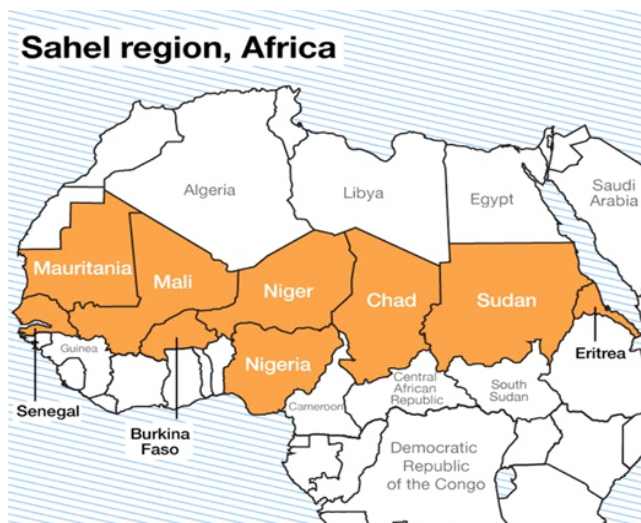
Political insecurity: this includes challenges such as poor governance, weak state institutions, endemic corruption, weak state presence, political repression, injustice, unlawful killings and human rights violations by members of the defense and security forces, armed groups and self-defence militias. The absence of state authorities in some regions in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso for instance, has limited service delivery and left communities with limited protection. These challenges have also caused widespread public discontent, lack of confidence and mistrust of state's authority and weakened state legitimacy.

Economic Insecurity: these include poverty, youth unemployment, shut down of large and small scale businesses as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and cut in foreign direct investments. According to the World Bank, "the COVID-19 crisis, coupled with the impact of conflicts and violence, the effects of climate change, and the many vulnerabilities in the region, is expected to push almost 1.3 million more people into extreme poverty."[4] Creating viable economic opportunities, jobs for the youth and meeting the basic needs of the population has been a very daunting task, partly due to the fallout from international lockdown measures, border closures and the global economic crisis.

Community and Personal insecurity: as shown on figure 2. the region has witnessed increase attacks, presence and capabilities of armed self-defence groups and terrorist/Jihadist groups, such as Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin (JNIM), Islamic State Group in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) and Ansarul Islam. Some of these groups have established lucrative criminal ventures such as the imposition of taxes on rural population, trafficking of drugs, weapons and people to raise funds to sustain their activities.
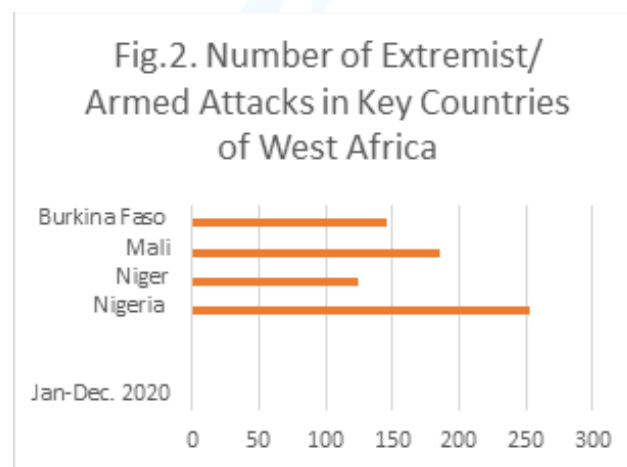
Source: WANEP NEWS; ACLED online News site

Pre-existing ethnic tensions and inter-communal violence have become mixed up with terrorism and insurgency, with the tri-border area between Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger being at the centre of violence.[5] This has led to human rights violations and civilian casualties with the worst victims being the Fulani, Bellah, Tuaregs, and Dogon ethic groups.

Health insecurity: the health challenges include malaria, meningitis, Lassa fever, poliomyelitis and HIV-AIDS, malnutrition, poor sanitation conditions, poor water and lack of access to healthcare[6]. According to the UN Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF), 15% of children in Niger were acutely malnourished as of 2018 (unchanged since 2006). The region is now facing the additional challenge of the

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[4]World Bank. (2020). The World Bank Boosts Support to the Sahel for a Resilient Recovery from the Security and Economic Crisis. https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-releases, accessed on 3 January 2021.
[5]International Crisis Group. (2020). The Sahel: Promoting Political alongside Military Action. https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/sahel/mali, accessed 30 November 2020.
[6]FES. (2020). Covid-19: In the Sahel region, a health crisis may hide other ones. https://www.fes.de/referat-accessed 20 December 2020.

COVID-19 pandemic which is putting pressure on the already fragile health systems and worsening humanitarian emergency. [7]As of 20 February 2020, the West African Health Organization (WAHO) had recorded 369,244 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in West Africa, out of which 321,154 have recovered and 4,676 have died[8]. Some of the COVID-19 details of countries in the region are captured in figure 3. It is quite clear from figure 3 that the rate of COVID-19 infection continues to increase.

intense rainfall are growing longer and more frequent, triggering new conflicts, disrupting livelihoods of the most vulnerable and leading to forced migration. The UN estimates that roughly 80% of the Sahel's farmland is degraded and temperatures are rising 1.5 times faster than the global average[11].

Food insecurity: food insecurity is a key humanitarian issue especially for subsistence farmers. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates that 29.2 million

Figure 3. Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 in West Africa
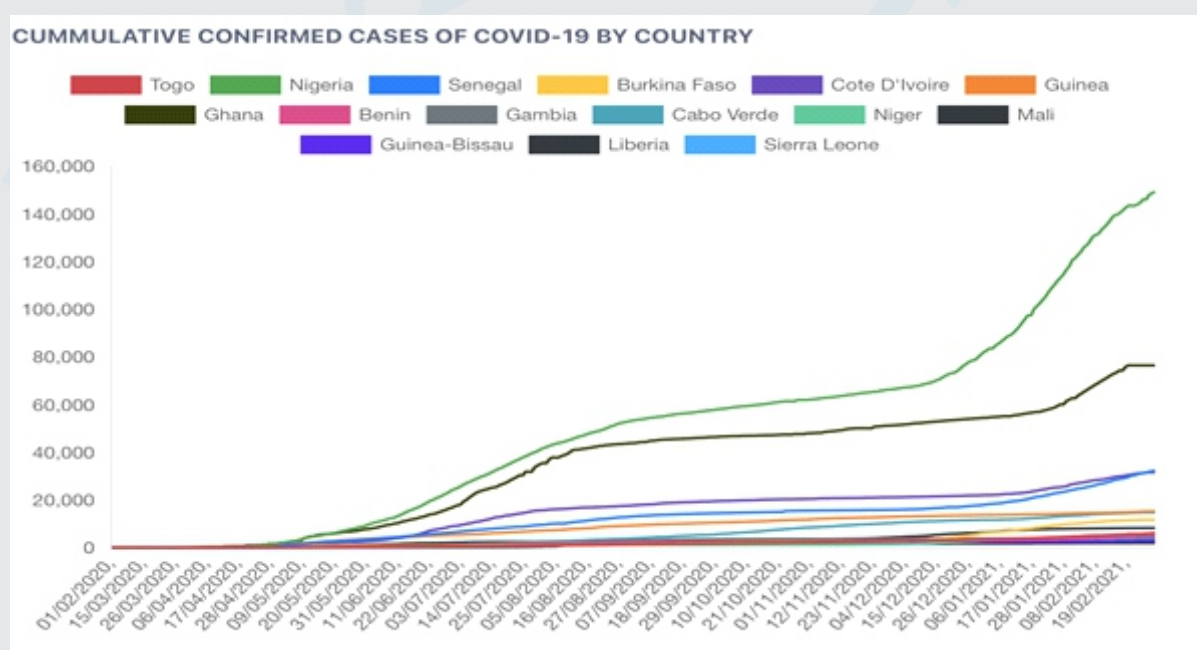
Source: WAHO.

Environmental insecurity: the Sahel is vulnerable to climate change due to extreme temperatures, fluctuating rainfall, and droughts, resulting in land degradation, changes in grazing patterns and reduction of water supply for both humans and animals. [9]Specifically, rainy seasons are becoming shorter, more intense, and less predictable as precipitation increases 7% for every degree Celsius in temperature rise. [10]Droughts and floods due to more

people in Sahel region are food insecure, including 9.4 million suffering from severe food insecurity who are likely to experience extreme food deficits. [12]Since the outbreak of COVID-19, the number of food-insecure people in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger has risen from 1 million to 4.8 million and this is expected to increase in 2021 as the virus continues to spread[13].

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[7]Brown, W. (2020). No Time for Complacency: The Covid-19 Pandemic in West Africa's Sahel Region. https://www.csis.org/analysis/no-time-, accessed 20 December 2020.

[8] For more information see https://data.wahooas.org/outbreaks/#/, accessed 20 February 2021.

[9]Penney, J. (2019). West Africa's Sahel region is especially vulnerable to climate change but also weak governance. https://qz.com/africa/1719442/west-africa , 1 December 2020.

[10]ibid

[11]FAO. (2020). The magnitude of the Problem. http://www.fao.org/3/X5318E/x5318e02.htm, Accessed 2 December 2020.; World Economic Forum. (2019). The Sahel is engulfed by violence. Climate change, food insecurity and extremists are largely to blame. https://www.weforum.org/agenda, accessed 1 December 2020.

[12]FAO. (2020). Sahel Crisis. http://www.fao.org/emergencies/crisis/sahel/intro/en/, accessed on 7 December 2020.

[13]Lamarche, A. (2020). Mounting Hunger in the Sahel: The Unintended Impact of COVID-19 Prevention. Refugee International Issue brief.

Specific Challenges facing Women and Girls: the main challenges include economic exclusion, poverty, limited access to education and healthcare, gender-based violence, limited participation in political and public life, harmful cultural practices, negative impacts of climate change, and exclusion from the peace tables.[14] For girls in particular, forced marriages, child pregnancy and child labour exacerbated by poverty are major concerns. The COVID-19 pandemic has also exacerbated pre-existing gender inequalities and led to profound economic, social, health and security challenges for girls and women. [15] Increased gender-based violence, due to confinement, curfew and job loss is also widespread.[16] Additionally, the pandemic is having a negative impact on girls' health and well-being. A report by UNOWAS indicated that school closures during the lockdown period have wiped out efforts to keep girls in school. [17] Repeated shocks, including droughts and floods, have led to disruption of livelihoods of women who account for about 80% of the Sahel's workforce in agriculture[18].

1.3.   Responses to Peace and Security Challenges

The responses are concisely discussed under three thematic areas namely, multilateral/international, regional and national responses.

Multilateral/International level:

At the heart of the multilateral responses is the implementation of the 2013 United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS), which was given a renewed impetus in 2017 with the operationalization of United Nations Support Plan for the Sahel (UNSP). The UNSP covers the period 2018-2030, with a focus on six priority areas: cross border cooperation, climate action, crisis prevention, women and youth empowerment, economic revitalization and renewable energy. [19] As part of the implementation, UNOWAS and the other UN entities like the UNDP Country

Offices in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger, are supporting the governments to promote community security and social cohesion in the Liptako-Gourma region with funding from the Peacebuilding Funds (PBF). [20] Additionally, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Mission for Stabilization in Mali (MINUSMA) is also contributing to the implementation of peace and development programmes in Mali.

The EU also provides support in the areas of development, good governance and internal conflict resolution; politics and diplomacy; security and the rule of law; the fight against extremist violence and radicalisation[21] as part of the 2011 European Strategy for security and development in the Sahel which was reviewed in 2015 as part of the Sahel Regional action plan (2015-2020). It is the biggest provider of development cooperation to the Sahel with €8 billion over the period 2014 to 2020[22]. Under its Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), the EU also has three missions namely, EU Capacity Building Mission in Niger (EUCAP Sahel Niger), EUCAP Sahel Mali and the EU training mission in Mali (EUTM), helping to strengthen the capacities of law enforcement agencies (Police, Gendarmerie, National Guard) to combat terrorism and organised crime through the provision of advice and training assistance[23].

Other external actors like France, US, Norway, China, Germany, and Denmark provide both development and security assistance to the four countries under study. France for example has Operation Barkhane Forces which is providing broader support to the countries in the Sahel to combat the jihadist threat in the Sahel. [24] Barkhane has undertaken counterterrorist activities in the border area around the Liptako-Gourma region which are strategic crossing point of terrorist groups. However, despite the increased French presence, military gains remain limited. Critics blame France as the cause of the problems in the Sahel and argue that its strategy is rather reinforcing its

[14] Interviews with stakeholders in Bamako, Mali, 23 November 2020.

[15] UNOWAS. (2020). Women, A Centerpiece In The Fight Against Covid-19 And Its Effects.Https://Unowas.Unmissions.Org/Women-Centerpiece-Fight-Against-Covid-19-And-Its-Effects

[16] Interviews with regional stakeholders in Bamako, Mali, 24 November 2020.

[17] UNOWAS. (2020), op.cit

[18] Alliance Sahel. (2020). Meeting the Challenge of Women's Empowerment In the Sahel. https://www.alliance-sahel.org/en/news/women-empowerment-sahel/, accessed on 24 December 2020.

[19] United Nations. (2018). UN Support Plan for The Sahel: Working Together for A Prosperous and Peaceful Sahel. New York: UN

[20] Ibid, p. 19.

[21] European Union. (2016). Factsheet- EU relations with Sahel countries - Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger. Brussels: EU

[22] European Union. (2019). The European Union with The G5 Sahel Countries. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/factsheet_eu_g5_sahel_july-2019.pdf, accessed 25 December 2020.

[23] European Union. (2020). Understanding the EU Strategy for the Sahel. Briefing EU Policies - Insight

[24] See "France's action in the Sahel". https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/security-, accessed 15 December 2020.

legitimacy in the region. [25]On 15 July 2020, France and its European partners launched a new counter-terrorism task force, called Takuba, composed of European special forces[26] to improve effectiveness in combating ISGS and other armed groups.

Regional Responses

The regional actors include the African Union (AU), ECOWAS, G5 Sahel Force, the Liptako-Gourma Authority (LGA), and the Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine (UEMOA). The AU through its Strategy for the Sahel is supporting countries in the Sahel in their stabilization and development efforts through the[27] African Union Mission for Mali and the Sahel (MISAHEL). [28]ECOWAS also implemented a Sahel Strategy (2016-2020) developed in collaboration with the West African Monetary Union (WAEMU), UEMOA, and the Permanent Interstates Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS). The strategy focused on major projects such as infrastructure, resilience & food security, education and peace and security support measures with the aim of consolidating regional responses to the long-term challenges in the Sahel-Saharan zone.[29] Furthermore, the G5 Sahel Joint Force (FC-G5S)[30] made up of forces from Mali, Niger, Chad, Mauritania, Burkina Faso is also engaged in counterterrorism operations in hard-to-access areas and border zones. [31]The FC-G5S focuses mainly on combating terrorism, cross-border organized crimes and human trafficking in the G5 Sahel zone.

National Responses

National responses are aimed at addressing insecurity and extending the presence of the state throughout the country to ensure the safety and security of citizens and the delivery of basic social services. This has mainly been done through counterterrorism operations, signing of peace agreements, development of strategies for economic development, security and governance reforms. In Mali, the Government has implemented diversity of actions, ranging from military operations to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) as well development initiatives to promote stability in the country. In 2015, stakeholders in Mali signed the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Algiers to promote development, peace and security. However, the implementation of the agreement has been fraught with many challenges. In a similar vein, the Government of Niger has strengthened the operational capabilities of the defense and security forces to combat violent extremism and terrorism. The Government developed a rural code to address the recurrent conflicts between farmers and pastoralists and established a National Financial Information Processing Unit to address terrorist financing.

In Burkina Faso, the Government has declared a State of Emergency in six regions and conducted major military operations such as Otapuanu (March 2019 in the eastern and central-eastern regions) and Doofu (May 2019 in the Sahel, North and North Central regions) to combat terrorism and insecurity. Some investments are also being made to promote development through economic empowerment projects (female entrepreneurship). In Cote d'Ivoire, the Government is implementing security sector reforms following the 2011/2012 crisis. It is also implementing initiatives at the economic and socio-political level to revive the country's economic growth to achieve peace and facilitate social cohesion and national reconciliation. Generally, in all the four countries studied, there was commitment to gender equality and women's participation in peace and decision-making processes. All the countries have national action plans to implement UN Security Council (UNSC) resolution 1325 and have gone far in implementing programmes to promote the welfare of women and girls.

Civil Society Organisations

Several initiatives for peace, social cohesion, development and stabilization have been implemented by CSOs such as WANEP, IMPRAP (Malian Institute for Research Action), ARGA (l'Alliance Malienne pour Refonder la Gouvernance

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[25] See "West Africa: Shifting strategies in the Sahel". https://www.theafricareport.com/17843/west-africa-shifting-strategies-in-the-sahel/, accessed 23 December 2020

[26]Schmauder, A., Gorman, Z., and Berger, F. (2020). Takuba: A New Coalition For The Sahel?. https://spectator.clingendael.org/en/publication/takuba-new-coalition-sahel, accessed 24 December 2020.

[27]ISS. (2019). AU summit 31: What is the African Union's role in the Sahel?
https://issafrica.org/iss-today/au-summit-31, accessed 13 December 2020.

[28]African Union. (2014). African Union Mission for Mali and the Sahel (MISAHEL) Press release. .
ECOWAS. (2015). ECOWAS Officials meet Over Sahel Strategy. https://www.ecowas.int/ecowas, accessed 10 December 2020
See "G5 Sahel Joint Force and the Sahel Alliance" https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign- , accessed 20 December 2020.
[31]Gorman, Z. (2019). Pursuing elusive stability in the Sahel. SIPRI. https://www.sipri.org/commentary/topical-backgrounder/2019/pursuing-elusive-stability-sahel, accessed 21 December 2020.

en Afrique), Humanitarian Dialogue Centre (HD), Think Peace-Mali, Association of Young Evangelical Leaders, Africa Youth Network, Association of youth development (ADYP) and Promediation. CSOs are mainly involved in awareness creation, sensitization programmes, and assistance to victims of crisis. WANEP and its national networks have for example over the years implemented different capacity building programmes on women and youth empowerment and increasing their participation in local governance. WANEP and its network organisations are promoting community dialogue involving women, youth and community leaders in areas affected by conflicts to promote peaceful coexistence. Additionally, it is building early warning capacity for conflict prevention and preventing violent extremism and other sources of insecurity. Other CSOs are engaged in development projects and providing support in the areas of food security, healthcare, agriculture, drinking water, sanitation, livestock, credit to small businesses (agricultural, commercial, artisanal, assistance to women's groups, etc.). Some CSOs also specialize in emergency operations of all kinds: epidemics, famines, floods, refugees.

1.4. Limits and Pitfalls of Responses to Peace and Security Challenges

Despite the existing responses to address the peace and security challenges, the problems still persist. The study identified some gaps that limits the potency of the existing responses. Some of the key gaps are outlined below:

a) The top-down (state centric) peacebuilding approaches with the limited involvement of citizens. The respondents noted that most of the internationally supported peacebuilding programmes continue to ignore the local context, the informal actors and initiatives that could contribute toward sustainable peace. This has contributed to the non-alignment of international and nation strategies with the realities on the ground. In most of the countries, the provision of peace, security and justice does not rest exclusively with the institutions of central government, which in most cases have not penetrated local communities and are perceived as an imposition. It is rather

the complex and interdependent relationships between the state and local authorities (both traditional and religious), women and youth groups, characterized by a mix of conflict and cooperation that explains the resilience of states. It is therefore important that the interventions by states and international partners focus on new ways of generating mutual accommodation of the State and indigenous systems through a bottom-up approach to generate new forms of hybrid governance that better serve the needs of the people.

b) The difficulty of sustaining short-term gains or key achievements for greater impact. This is mainly due to weak, corrupt and absent state institutions in the conflict affected areas, protracted inter communal conflicts, terrorism and the discontinuity of donor funded projects with short-term funding packages by state actors and CSOs. These factors have contributed to the inability of states to sustain short-term peace gains for lasting peace.

c) Weak or limited functional coordination among the different stakeholders in the Sahel. Indeed, no single entity has the capacity to address the challenges in the Sahel alone due to the large geographical area and cross border nature of the threats. This makes coordination and cooperation among both local and external stakeholder very necessary. However, many of the stakeholders continue to operate in silos without effective functional coordination. For example, internal rivalries, regional frictions, limited resources and leadership adjustments have affected the ability of the G5 countries to effectively coordinate among themselves and international stakeholders like MINUSMA and the French Operation Barkhane. [32]Moreover, competing visions and interests of international partners has also hindered effective coordination and stabilization efforts from taking a decisive direction. [33]The lack of functional synergies has led to the duplication of activities due to the multiplicity of different Sahel strategies and initiatives[34]. A mapping that was done in 2017 by the UN for instance identified around 19 strategies and strategic frameworks in the Sahel.[35]

[32]ibid
[33]Helly, D., Theroux-Benoni, L.A., Galeazzi, G., Maiga, I., Ouedraogo, F. (2015). Sahel Strategies: Why Coordination is Imperative. ISS Policy Brief 76
[34]ECOWAS. (2019). ECOWAS to develop new Sahel strategy
https://www.ecowas.int/ecowas-to-develop-new-sahel-strategy/, accessed 11 December 2020.
[35]United Nations. (2019). United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS): Progress Report 2018-2019. New York: Implementation Support Unit and Pillar Working

d) Lack of effective feedback mechanisms to assess whether interventions are yielding positive results or not to inform subsequent policies and programmes. This has often led to the design and implementation of programmes that do not meet the needs and expectations of the people especially women and girls affected by conflicts.

e) Wide gap between policy and the practical implementation of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. While countries in the Sahel and Cote d'Ivoire have shown commitment to the WPS agenda through the adoption of policies and programmes, the delivery of such commitments on ground has been inadequate. There is still a wide gap between the array of policies and the implementation of WPS commitments to strengthen the role and leadership of women in peace and political processes. Additionally, there are concerns that COVID-19 may erode the gains made over the years and affect the achievement of the SDG Goal 5 by 2030.

f) Weak leadership and crisis management skills among political and security actors in the Sahel. Leadership in normal situation involves routine decisions made in an environment where the consequences of actions may be well understood. However, this is not the case in crisis situations like the Sahel which often involves complex decisions made with limited time and information, with wide ranging implications, under the pressures of increased scrutiny. Being unprepared as a leaders and failure to take the right decisions could ultimately make the situation even worse. For many respondents, this is the situation in the Sahel where most of the political leaders and heads of security institutions lack strong leadership and crisis management skills to deal with the evolving threats. For the military leadership in particular, it was noted that they still apply the traditional state centric notion of security which makes the state, the referent object of security instead of the human security approach that is people centered.

g) Lack of peace budget for peacebuilding by states and weak resource mobilization capacity. Most respondents questioned why there is always a budget allocation for counterterrorism operations but not for peacebuilding activities. The lack of specific budgetary allocation for peace together with the weak financial resources mobilization capacity has impacted negatively on the implementation of policies. Moreover, it has led to the diversion of the greater share of resources towards counterterrorism instead of democratic governance, sustainable development and improving the livelihoods and security of vulnerable people especially women and girls.

1.5. Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

The research has shed light on the different peace and security challenges in the Sahel and Cote d'Ivoire, the responses to those challenges at the national, regional and multilateral level and the limits and pitfalls in the existing responses. Finding lasting solutions to the evolving challenges in the region requires a multi-faceted approach, strong political commitment and perseverance from both national and external actors. More significantly, it would require addressing the identified gaps in the existing responses. Accordingly, the following recommendations are provided for the consideration of national, regional and international actors:

Governments
- Strengthen the utility of the State by improving governance, access to basic welfare services, guaranteeing citizens' safety and security and extending state authority to every part of the country.
- Budget for peacebuilding and develop a robust, innovative, and resilient resource mobilization strategy to support the sustainable implementation of initiatives for lasting impacts.
- Consolidate the gains made in the implementation of the WPS commitments to address the peculiar challenges of women and girls
- Establish a comprehensive integrated framework of initiatives to ensure coherence and targeted responses to the threats among local and international partners
- Design and implement capacity building/orientation

programmes on Leadership, Peacebuilding and Crisis Management for the highest level political and security actors to adequately prepare them to respond effectively to the evolving conflict situation in the Sahel.

International and Regional Partners
- Align strategies to national development policies and action plans to ensure context and culturally specific interventions to address the actual needs of the people
- Promote a bottom-up approach to peacebuilding by investing more in the indigenous actors and initiatives to promote the active participation of local authorities and structures in the governance process.
- The UN as the lead multilateral actors in the region should consider creating a knowledge management platform to improve synergy or coordination among international partners
- Increase support for CSOs especially women and youth groups through long-term project funding to play their meaningful roles in peacebuilding, particularly in the implementation of the WPS agenda.

Civil Society organisations
- Increase education, advocacy and create awareness at the community level on the need to empower women in all sectors of society to promote the implementation of the WPS agenda for sustainable peace and development.
- Develop robust feedback mechanisms to assess the gaps and outcomes of peacebuilding programmes to inform future strategies to address the needs and expectations of the people.
- Strengthen existing coordination mechanisms among CSOs to prevent the duplication of initiatives to ensure coherence and targeted responses.
- Explore the possibilities of cross-border CSOs joint initiatives to expand the scope of peacebuilding activities beyond national borders to address the transnational dimensions of threats.

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