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JASS EARLY WARNING SYSTEM MALI

‘The more time passes, the greater the probability of violence.’

JANUARY 2025

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Introduction

Mali and Niger, like other Sahelian countries, face significant climate change impacts, including desertification, drought, locust invasions, and floods. These shocks not only threaten ecosystems but also disrupt lives and livelihoods, driving displacement, exacerbating natural resource scarcity, and heightening the risk of conflict. Climate-related shocks are further intensified by political instability and insecurity. While the intersection of climate and conflict is widely discussed, the evidence base remains limited due to the complexity and indirect nature of causal chains, which are often context- and time-specific. Effectively addressing these challenges requires a deeper understanding of the dynamics linking climate change and conflict.

In response, various stakeholders – including state governments, NGOs, technical and financial partners, local authorities, and communities – are working to strengthen disaster response and resilience. Within this context, Mercy Corps's **Justice and Stability in the Sahel (JASS)** programme, funded by the FCDO, supports the establishment and revitalization of **community-based early warning and early response systems (EWERS)** to help prevent and manage shocks.[1]

In Mali, JASS activities focus on the **Système d'Alerte Précoce (SAP)** and **Conflict Resolution Committees (CRCs)**. In Niger, the expansion of conflict monitoring and peace initiatives requires further contextualization, as Niger already has a relatively established EWERS, including **Systèmes Communautaires d'Alerte Précoce et de Réponses aux Urgences (SCAP/RU)** and **Observatoires de Suivi de la Vulnérabilité (OSV)**. These systems primarily address climate and food security, reflecting Niger's history of famine and drought (Doc A; Dispositif National). In contrast, Mali's SAP monitors **community conflicts, violence, land disputes, and natural and man-made disasters**, aligning with its security challenges. Unlike Mali, Niger's JASS intervention zones do not experience the same level of armed group activity, and its EWERS thus reflects a stronger focus on food security, nutrition, and disaster risk reduction.[2]

The JASS team is exploring ways to enhance both systems, including integrating **meteorological event monitoring**, incorporating **conflict alerts into SCAP/RU**, and improving SAP's tracking of **shock effects and resilience capacities**.

Given the distinct priorities, incident categorization methods, and indicator frameworks of these two systems, a direct comparative analysis is not feasible. Therefore, this report focuses on SAP as an EWERS – its origins, establishment and implementation in JASS intervention, successes, and challenges. It also examines SAP data from May to December 2024, identifying trends and providing evidence-based recommendations. Where possible, it addresses the intersection of climate and conflict within the available data.

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[1] 'Internal Mercy Corps Mali JASS Document A', March 2024.

[2] Cabinet du Premier Ministre, 'Dispositif National de Prevention et de Gestion Des Crises Alimentaires: Cellule de Coordination Du Système d'Alerte Précoce' (République du Niger, August 2018).

Key Takeaways and Recommendations from SAP Data Analysis

Key Takeaways

- **Climate shocks and conflict are closely linked**, with **community conflicts and natural disasters following the same seasonal patterns** (peaking July–October), especially in **Koutiala, Bla, and San.**

- **Land conflicts have the lowest resolution rate (51%)**, with **San and Koutiala** most affected. **Women are heavily impacted** by land disputes **but remain underrepresented** in mediation roles.

- **Violence and armed violence peak in May–June**, particularly in **Niono**, where security concerns may overshadow other conflict types.

- **Farmers are most frequently involved in incidents (262 cases)**, followed by pastoralists (69) and traders (67), reinforcing the need for resource management interventions in **Koutiala, Banamba, and San.**

- **Disasters (especially floods) cause the most fatalities and property damage (July–September),** disproportionately affecting women as primary managers of household resources and food security.

- **SAP data** collection has gaps, including **unclear actor categorization**, **underreporting** in insecure zones (Niono), and insufficient gender-disaggregated data.

Key Recommendations

- **Pre-empt conflict escalation in peak periods (July–October)** by strengthening early mediation efforts, particularly in **San and Koutiala**, where land and resource disputes intensify.

- **Expand flood preparedness and response (July–September) in Bla, Koutiala, and San**, prioritizing women-led resilience strategies and emergency fund mobilization for CRCs.

- **Improve civil-security coordination in Niono before the May–June violence peak**, ensuring FDS engages in violence prevention alongside CRCs and local authorities.

- **Continue to increase women's representation in CRCs and COFOs**, focusing on land conflict mediation and community governance roles.

- **Enhance SAP data accuracy** by refining actor categorization, strengthening **gender-disaggregated reporting**, and ensuring conflicts beyond security threats are tracked in high-risk zones like Niono.

- **Continue to expand climate adaptation programs for farmers and pastoralists**, integrating conflict-sensitive land governance and resource-sharing agreements, especially in **Banamba and Koutiala.**

Key Recommendations for Strengthening SAP in JASS Intervention Zones

To enhance the effectiveness of SAP as a **community-based conflict prevention and response system**, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Strengthening Financial and Logistical Support for CRCs

- **Provide CRCs with operational funds** to facilitate regular mediation missions, monthly meetings, and rapid conflict response to prevent unresolved disputes from escalating.
- **Ensure timely payment of communication and travel expenses for CRC** members and monitors to maintain engagement and efficiency.

2. Refining Reporting and Data Management Protocols

- **Establish strict confidentiality protocols for reporting armed group activity** to mitigate security risks for reporters and monitors.
- **Improve data verification processes** to reduce false alarms and misclassification of incidents.
- **Increase digital literacy and reporting training for monitors** and programme assistants to improve data accuracy and timeliness.

3. Enhancing CRC and SAP Operational Capacity

- **Develop a mechanism for handling conflicts of interest within CRCs**, particularly where village chiefs or COFO members are directly involved in land disputes.
- **Ensure regular, structured training sessions for monitors and CRC members** on conflict resolution, data collection, and mediation techniques – based on CRC-identified needs and analyses of conflict trends using SAP data.
- **Facilitate peer-learning and experience-sharing forums** to improve cross-community learning and adaptation.

4. Increasing Community Trust and Awareness of SAP

- Expand **public awareness campaigns to reinforce SAP's confidentiality, neutrality, and benefits** in resolving disputes.
- **Continue to increase engagement with women, youth, and marginalized groups** to enhance inclusive participation in conflict resolution mechanisms.
- **Continue to strengthen SAP's legitimacy** by improving **collaboration with local governance** structures and community leaders.

5. Addressing Broader Conflict Dynamics and External Influences

- **Monitor and analyze the cross-border interconnections of armed groups**, in **coordination with Mercy Corps Security Advisors**, to better understand their influence on local conflicts and governance structures.

- **Enhance coordination between SAP, Mercy Corps Security Teams, and INSO** to improve trend analysis, strengthen data verification, and conduct scenario forecasting for more effective conflict response.

By **addressing these structural, operational, and community engagement challenges, SAP can be further strengthened** as a reliable conflict prevention and response mechanism in JASS intervention zones.

Objectives and Methods

To align this study with the programme's information needs, we first consulted component leads on the SAP-related insights that would support programming on conflict dynamics and climate shocks. We aimed to interview eight senior programme staff in Mali and six in Niger; however, due to availability, we conducted interviews with seven staff in Mali and four in Niger. Between August and December 2024, we carried out semi-structured informal interviews, including multiple follow-ups to address emerging questions. In December, we also held a sensemaking session with Mercy Corps Mali's security advisor to discuss SAP data analyses, identify trends, refine conclusions, and highlight outstanding questions. Semi-structured key informant interviews (KIIs) focused on SAP, SCAP/RU, and COFO; however, this report highlights only the relevant SAP contributions. Additionally, internal documents and evaluations of past and ongoing Mercy Corps programmes in Mali, where SAP plays a central role, informed this study.

JASS component leads emphasised the importance of understanding micro-level conflict dynamics and trends reflected in SCAP/RU and SAP data. These insights are crucial for:

- Tailoring awareness-raising activities to predominant conflict trends and determining their optimal timing.

- Informing community dialogues and CRC trainings to address emerging tensions effectively.

- Identifying weaknesses in collected data to refine training and refresher sessions for conflict incident monitors.

They also stressed the need to integrate gender and social inclusion into security trend analyses in JASS intervention zones. Specifically, the programme seeks to understand how insecurity and climate shocks affect income-generating activities and livelihoods, particularly for women, youth, and people living with disabilities (PLWD), to develop strategies that enhance the resilience of vulnerable groups.

These consultations structured our analysis of SAP data, focusing on:

- **Incident Patterns:** Identifying the most frequently reported incidents, their timing, and locations.

- **Actors' Involvement:** Examining which groups (e.g., community members, men, women, youth, professionals) are involved, where and when incidents occur, and their impacts (e.g., damages, injuries, deaths).

- **Incident Resolution:** Analyzing which incidents are most often resolved, challenges in resolving others, and geographical and temporal variations.

- **Actors in Resolution Efforts:** Investigating whether specific actors (e.g., local leaders, government representatives) respond to certain incidents and how their involvement affects resolution outcomes.

- **Climate-Conflict Intersection:** Identifying links between climate-related and conflict-related incidents.

Mali's SAP categorizes incidents into key groups: community conflict (15 subcategories, A1-A15), violence and armed violence (14 subcategories, B1-B14), land conflict (21 subcategories, C1-C21), and natural and man-made disasters (8 subcategories, D1-D8) (see Appendix B for details). Further analyses examine incident frequency throughout the year, gender involvement, professional backgrounds of involved groups, actor responses, and incident impacts on the population. Data is analysed at the JASS intervention zone level in Mali or disaggregated by cercle of intervention (Banamba, Bla, Koutiala, Koulikoro, and San). However, JASS does not operate in all communes or villages within these cercles, meaning findings apply only to JASS intervention zones rather than entire cercles or communes.

Between May and December 2024, 291 incidents were recorded, of which 284 were responded to, and 174 were resolved. As JASS continues to revitalize and establish SAP in its intervention zones, variations in the number of reported incidents and the quality of data are expected.

Data and Analytical Approach

The SAP data analysis supports adaptive programme management, offering updated insights into contextual instability and its potential effects on implementation. This study draws on SAP database extracts covering May-December 2024, following SAP's recategorization in April 2024, which renders earlier data incompatible.

To enhance reliability, SAP data was triangulated with INSO data from Mali. However, key differences between the datasets should be noted:

- **INSO data captures only security-related incidents affecting humanitarian access** and operations, whereas SAP provides community-based reporting.

- **Reporting categories differ** – for instance, INSO classifies natural disasters and catastrophes under 'accidents', alongside vehicular accidents.

- **Community reluctance to report sensitive topics** may contribute to discrepancies between datasets.

Future comparative analyses should refine data comparability by filtering and recoding incidents based on geographic coverage and incident type.

Origins of EWERS in the Sahel

The Système d'Alerte Précoce (SAP) implemented under JASS builds upon a long history of regional early warning and early response systems (EWERS) in the Sahel, predating its prominence in earlier Mercy Corps Mali programmes.

As early as 1993, a revised Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) treaty called for a regional peace and security observation system, a commitment reinforced in its 1999 security protocol.[3] However, ECOWAS struggled to convincingly link early warning, conflict prevention, and development, leading to limited member-state engagement and delaying the implementation of the ECOWAS Warning and Response Network (ECOWARN). Compounding these challenges, ECOWARN faced competition and coordination issues with parallel EWERS initiatives, including those developed by the African Union (AU) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in Addis Ababa.

ECOWARN divided ECOWAS member states into four reporting zones, with Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, overseeing Mali and Niger.[4] The West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), a coalition of 300 civil society organizations, played a central role in ECOWARN's establishment and remains an implementing partner. Initially, WANEP deployed 15 focal points per ECOWAS member state to work alongside ECOWAS representatives in gathering and analysing information.[5]

ECOWARN was designed to collect and analyse real-time data, requiring timely, accurate, and verifiable information reflecting developments across West Africa. Data sources included UN agencies, regional organizations (such as the AU), government agencies, NGOs, civil society, and media outlets. Grounded in a human security framework, ECOWARN monitored incidents across sectors such as agriculture, economy, governance, crime, health, social services, communications, natural disasters, mediation, security, culture, and vulnerable groups (including women, children, and refugees).[6] The system's computerised monitoring platform, built on 93 indicators, produced situation reports aimed at informing contingency planning and response recommendations for the ECOWAS Executive Secretary.[7] However, ECOWARN's effectiveness depended on the strength of the conflict management mechanisms it was designed to support.

Despite its comprehensive design, ECOWARN faced significant criticism. Civil society groups demanded more inclusive and participatory engagement, arguing that ECOWARN prioritised regional over national interests. Member states lacked ownership of the system and received no structured support for active engagement. Governments also expressed frustration over delays between early warnings and actual responses.

To address these shortcomings, ECOWARN was decentralised to the national level in 2015, aiming to facilitate rapid response, improve local information gathering, and enhance community resilience.[8] The first

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[3] Angela Ndinga-Muvumba and Abdul Lamin, 'West Africa's Evolving Security Architecture: Looking Back to the Future', The ECOWAS Early Warning System (Centre for Conflict Resolution, 2006), chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/resrep05185.9.pdf.

[4] Ndinga-Muvumba and Lamin.

[5] Ndinga-Muvumba and Lamin.

[6] WANEP, 'Alerte Précoce et Prévention Des Conflits – WANEP-TOGO', ND, https://waneptogo.org/site/warn-warning-response-network/.

[7] Ndinga-Muvumba and Lamin, 'West Africa's Evolving Security Architecture: Looking Back to the Future'.

[8] WANEP, 'Alerte Précoce et Prévention Des Conflits – WANEP-TOGO'.

National Early Warning System in the region was established in Bamako, Mali, in 2018. By 2024, 11 national centres were operating in the Sahel, staffed by 92 monitors who report on 42 event types and 52 predefined indicators to assess human security risks.[9]

WANEP remains a key ECOWARN implementing partner and operates within each national centre. WANEP-Mali was established in 2002, but its website (https://wanepmali.org/) is now inactive, with the last published analysis dating back to 2021, focusing on multi-stakeholder engagement for democratic transition. Similarly, WANEP-Niger's website (https://www.wanepniger.org/) is no longer accessible, and WANEP's most recent report on Niger was published during the 26 July 2023 coup d'état.

Despite these limitations, WANEP continues to analyse developments in Mali and Niger using data from UNICEF, UNHCR, BBC, The Guardian, VOA, ACLED, Aid Worker Security Data (AWSD), and other media sources.[10] However, with regional EWERS weakening in Mali and Niger, it is increasingly critical to support and establish community-based conflict monitoring and response mechanisms like Mercy Corps's SAP. Unlike regional systems, community-based approaches leverage existing local structures and knowledge while addressing many of the challenges that led to ECOWARN's decentralization in the first place.

> ***'Lessons of interventions in West Africa and beyond suggest that it is often political will – and not lack of information – that determines early responses to warnings.'*** — Angela Ndinga-Muvumba & Abdul Lamin, 2006

Evolution of Mercy Corps's Conflict Prevention and Mitigation in Mali

The prevention and management of local conflicts and the strengthening of social cohesion have been central to many of Mercy Corps's programmes in Mali, often incorporating an early warning and early response (EWER) component like SAP. However, unlike ECOWARN, SAP is not based on a human security framework. Instead, it is a localized system that focuses on a narrower set of incident categories, primarily inter- and intra-community conflicts, violence and armed violence, land disputes, and natural and man-made disasters.[11] Its simplified structure makes SAP easier to implement while still addressing the multidimensional nature of security.

SAP builds on the understanding that for centuries, Malian communities have relied on cultural values, foundational myths, and customary governance structures to manage conflicts. These traditional

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[9] ReliefWeb, 'ECOWAS Early Warning Directorate Exchange and Assessment Mission to Liberia National Early Warning Center - Liberia', 26 July 2024, https://reliefweb.int/report/liberia/ecowas-early-warning-directorate-exchange-and-assessment-mission-liberia-national-early-warning-center.

[10] WANEP, 'West Africa Early Warning Outlook 2024' (WANEP, February 2024), chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://wanep.org/wanep/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/WANEP-Annual-Peace-and-Security-Outlook-2024.pdf.

[11] JASS Staff 2, KII EWERS Koutiala, 4 September 2024, 2.

mechanisms coexisted with formal state institutions, playing a crucial role in maintaining stability. However, over a decade of crises—spanning security, governance, health, climate, and economic challenges—has weakened these systems. Insecurity and violent conflict have eroded community trust, making it harder for stakeholders to access reliable, timely information, which hampers conflict resolution efforts.

Traditional conflict management mechanisms vary, including village chiefs, councils, land committees, and conflict resolution committees. Regardless of their form, trust between these bodies and the community is essential for their legitimacy and effectiveness.[12] Revitalizing these mechanisms—making them more inclusive and participatory—can help communities resolve conflicts peacefully and prevent escalation. Effective early warning systems that integrate traditional structures are critical in Mali, where poor road conditions, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and armed attacks can delay security forces' response by half a day or more.[13]

SAP strengthens local actors and structures to increase community resilience to conflict.[14] This community-driven conflict prevention approach has been successfully applied across multiple Mercy Corps programmes in Mali:

- **Lafia (2019-2020)** in southern Mali focused on increasing resilience to conflict and violent extremism.[15]

- **Position Refine and Operate for Peace in Mali (PROP) (2019-2020**) developed an early warning and response (EWR) system, which significantly improved Niono's resilience to conflict.[16] The success of this system led funders to explore expanding SAP to include climate indicators, meteorological data, and traditional weather forecasting methods.[17] However, a planned workshop to integrate SAP with regional systems never materialized.

- **PASERREL (2019-2020)** in Mopti initially focused on rapid response mechanisms (RRM), providing food aid, non-food items (NFI), and shelter.[18] Its second iteration (2020-2022) prioritized conflict management and social cohesion, incorporating training on conflict prevention and peaceful resolution.[19] **PASERREL III (2020-2024)** continued this work, further strengthening and expanding SAP.

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[12] 'Internal Mercy Corps Mali BRiKS Document B', January 2023.

[13] Fété Impact Cabinet de Conseil et de Formation, 'Evaluation Qualitative et Apprentissage Du Projet "Building Resilience in Kayes and Sikasso (BRiKS)" Ou "Ben Ni Bassigui"' (Bamako: Mercy Corps, March 2023).

[14] 'Internal Mercy Corps Mali BRiKS Document B'; 'Internal Mercy Corps Mali JASS Document C', November 2023.

[15] Mercy Corps Mali, 'LAFIA, l'atout Par Excellence Face Aux Conflits Dans Le Sud Du Mali', Mercy Corps, 2025, https://mali.mercycorps.org/fr/research-resources/lafia-excellence-conflict-southern-mali.

[16] Mercy Corps Mali, 'Résultats Du Programme "Position Refine and Operate for Peace in Mali" (PROP)', Mercy Corps, 2025, https://mali.mercycorps.org/fr/blog/position-refine-and-operate-for-peace.

[17] JASS Staff 3, KII EWERS Ségou, 4 October 2024, 3.

[18] 'Internal Mercy Corps Mali PASERREL Document E', 2019.

[19] 'Internal Mercy Corps Mali PASERREL II Document D', September 2021.

- **Ben ni Baara (BnB) (2020-2024)** leveraged local peace committees (LPCs) to promote social cohesion and conflict resolution.[20]

- **Building Resilience in Kayes and Sikasso (BRiKS) (2021-2023)** established early warning systems (EWS) and conflict resolution committees (CRCs) to help local stakeholders contain conflicts before they escalate into violence.[21]

These programmes also **addressed key challenges in conflict prevention**:

- Lack of reliable and timely information on conflict incidents.

- Low stakeholder legitimacy and representativeness, which fosters community mistrust.

- Poor understanding of modern conflict dynamics among stakeholders.

To **tackle these issues**, BRiKS included:

- Conflict management training for stakeholders.

- SAP implementation to provide timely conflict alerts.

- Revitalization and establishment of CRCs to facilitate local conflict resolution.

This extensive track record of success demonstrates **SAP's effectiveness** in:

- Reducing community tensions.

- Enhancing women's participation in local governance.

- Building trust in governance structures by ensuring transparency and fairness.

- Facilitating inclusive dialogue, strengthening social cohesion by encouraging interaction between groups that may not have engaged previously.

- Encouraging community-driven problem-solving, reducing reliance on formal court interventions.

Given its proven impact, it is no surprise that a JASS programme manager concluded:

[20] Mercy Corps, 'Building Evidence for CLimate Adaptation and Peacebuilding: Insights from Mali' (Mercy Corps, January 2025).
[21] 'Internal Mercy Corps Mali BRiKS Document B'.

> *'Amongst the first of JASS activities, for peacebuilding, was imperatively to put in place SAP.'*
>
> — KII EWERS Ségou, 4 October 2024

Setting Up SAP

To revitalize or establish SAP in JASS intervention areas, programme field teams follow a community-driven process that leverages existing local structures and knowledge while ensuring inclusion, participation, and community ownership.

The process begins with an assessment workshop, introducing participants to early warning and early response (EWER) and identifying existing community-based conflict prevention mechanisms.[22] Attendees typically include the mayor, village chiefs, religious leaders, land committee (COFO) representatives, and youth and women representatives from all social strata. Commonly recognized mechanisms include:

- **Radio broadcasts**
- **Complaint boxes**
- **Self-defense groups** that support local police
- **WhatsApp groups**, though underutilized due to poor network coverage in some villages
- **Watch Committees**, composed of farmers, pastoralists, religious leaders, traditional chiefs, civil society, and local elected representatives to manage crises (e.g., food insecurity, drought, epidemics, armed incursions)
- **Comités Communaux de Réconciliation (CCR)**, Community Reconciliation Committees that mediate disputes

CCR structures closely resemble SAP's CRCs. In some JASS communes, the state had already established CCRs, but many were inactive and required revitalization, as was the case in Bla cercle.

> *'We built on existing community conflict resolution mechanisms and CCRs to ensure the inclusion of marginalized groups, embedding inclusivity from the start.'*
>
> — KII EWERS Koutiala, 4 September 2024

[22] 'Internal Mercy Corps Mali BRiKS Document B'; 'Internal Mercy Corps Mali JASS Document C'.

Establishing the CRC

Next, the composition of the Conflict Resolution Committee (CRC) is formalized. Typically, the mayor serves as president, with additional members including village chiefs, COFO representatives, internally displaced persons (IDPs), religious leaders, people living with disabilities (PLWD), women, youth, and members of the Réseau des Communicateurs Traditionnels (RETROCAD).[23]

CRC membership is capped at 30, with at least one representative from each village in a commune, ensuring diversity in gender, ethnicity, age, and disability status. However, inclusivity varies based on commune size.

Once the community ratifies the list of CRC members, the mayor signs it, formalizing the committee. CRC members then select three monitors per commune (two men, one woman) based on:

- **Permanent residence in the community**
- **Strong local networks to ensure communication reach**
- **Literacy to report incidents via smartphone**[24]

When needed, monitors receive support from programme assistants.

ISSUES WITH INCLUSIVITY

'Some communes have many villages, making full representation difficult. If a commune has 25 villages, each must be represented by its village chief and customary leaders, limiting space for women and other social groups. But in communes with only three villages, inclusivity is easier. As a result, CRCs vary widely in size and composition.'

— KII EWERS Ségou, 4 October 2024

Capacity Building and Incident Reporting

CRC members and monitors undergo a capacity-building workshop, covering incident reporting, information verification, and conflict prevention and mediation techniques. They are also provided with materials, equipment, and technical and financial support.[25]

Incident reports are recorded daily by monitors and submitted via phone calls, text messages, and hard copy reports (BRiKS Fété). Urgent alerts requiring immediate action follow the same reporting process. Before issuing alerts, SAP members triangulate data from multiple sources.

The CRC plays a key role in incident response, transmitting reports to state technical services and analysts when necessary. Response follows a tiered approach:

1. **Village councils** handle local disputes, escalating cases only when beyond their capacity.

[23] JASS Staff 2, KII EWERS Koutiala, 2; JASS Staff 3, KII EWERS Ségou, 3.
[24] 'Internal Mercy Corps Mali JASS Document C'.
[25] 'Internal Mercy Corps Mali JASS Document C'.

2. **Commune-level CRCs** intervene in more complex cases.

3. **Higher-level authorities or response committees** handle severe incidents.

Incident data is recorded in ODK software, later updated for monthly reports.[26] Mercy Corps generates SAP dashboards from CommCare, though current limitations include monthly data extraction and a lack of disaggregated incident categories, reducing its analytical depth.[27]

ODK AND COMMCARE

'There are issues with the switch to CommCare. With ODK, we could go directly to monitors and clarify inconsistencies, if the categorization of the event did not match up with its narration. CommCare, on the other hand, forces rigid categorization and is not easy to amend. We now have to first send back the report to SAP, revise, verify, then send it to MEL for amendment and analysis in CommCare.'

— KII EWERS Koutiala, 4 September 2024

Community Awareness and Follow-Up

Raising community awareness is essential for SAP's effectiveness. Educational materials explain SAP's purpose and emphasize confidentiality, encouraging people to report incidents without fear.[28]

Regular follow-ups and data collection help assess incident trends and response effectiveness. SAP forums are scheduled bi-monthly to:

- Evaluate and refine the system
- Clarify and correct incident descriptions
- Update incident statuses

Many CRCs lack the resources to meet monthly as intended. Distance and travel costs often limit their meetings to an as-needed basis. Due to resource constraints, community forums also serve as CRC

[26] JASS Staff 2, KII EWERS Koutiala, 2.

[27] JASS Staff 3, KII EWERS Ségou, 3.

[28] 'Internal Mercy Corps Mali JASS Document C'; Fété Impact Cabinet de Conseil et de Formation, 'Evaluation Qualitative et Apprentissage Du Projet "Building Resilience in Kayes and Sikasso (BRiKS)" Ou "Ben Ni Bassigui"'.

meetings. They help shape microprojects that address community challenges identified through SAP. Only the most engaged CRC members regularly attend even community forums due to the associated costs.

Summary of Key Challenges

Despite SAP's effectiveness in strengthening local conflict prevention and response, several challenges remain:

Structural and Operational Challenges

- **Inclusivity constraints:** In large communes, the 30-member CRC limit makes it difficult to balance representation across village chiefs, customary leaders, and marginalized social groups, particularly women. Smaller communes achieve greater inclusivity.

- **Lack of structured meeting spaces and resources:** CRCs often lack a regular meeting place and the financial means to hold monthly meetings, affecting continuity and coordination.

- **Limited financial support for CRCs:** Without funding, CRC members struggle to conduct rapid mediation missions to affected villages, increasing the likelihood of conflict escalation.[29] Many CRCs have requested a small operational fund to support their activities.

- **Delays in response times:** Limited resources, security risks, and logistical constraints slow down the response to SAP alerts, reducing effectiveness.[30]

- **Weak referral mechanisms for complex cases:** Some conflicts surpass CRC capacities (e.g., chieftaincy disputes, intercommunal violence, land conflicts) and require clear protocols for referral to state authorities, technical experts, or defense and security forces.[31]

- **Conflicts of interest within local governance structures:** In some cases, CRCs and COFO members may be involved in disputes themselves (e.g., village chiefs mediating land conflicts they are personally implicated in), requiring the establishment of independent mediation committees under state oversight.[32]

- **Interconnected conflict dynamics across borders:** Armed groups and their networks operate across Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso, complicating local conflict resolution efforts. These groups influence civil society structures, governance, and local power balances, impacting program effectiveness.[33]

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[29] JASS Staff 3, KII EWERS Ségou, 3.

[30] Fété Impact Cabinet de Conseil et de Formation, 'Evaluation Qualitative et Apprentissage Du Projet "Building Resilience in Kayes and Sikasso (BRiKS)" Ou "Ben Ni Bassigui"'.

[31] 'Internal Mercy Corps Mali JASS Document C'.

[32] JASS Staff 3, KII EWERS Ségou, 3.

[33] JASS Staff 5, KII EWERS Bamako, 10 September 2024, 5.

Reporting and Data Collection Challenges

- **Confidentiality concerns in reporting radical group activity:** Strict protocols are needed to ensure secure coding, storage, and handling of sensitive data related to radical groups, preventing leaks and security risks.[34]

- **Public reluctance to report sensitive issues:** Domestic violence, family conflicts, and chieftaincy disputes are often underreported due to stigma, fear of repercussions, or lack of trust in formal mechanisms.[35]

- **False alarms and misinformation:** Some alerts turn out to be unverified or exaggerated, requiring improved verification protocols before escalation.[36]

- **Network issues and communication delays:** Poor connectivity in some areas hinders the transmission of alerts, delaying responses.[37]

- **Monitors' literacy and technical capacity gaps:** Some monitors struggle with reading, writing, and using digital reporting tools, resulting in incomplete or low-quality data. Issues often go unnoticed until data is downloaded at the end of the month, making timely corrections difficult.[38]

- **Inflexibility in CommCare data management:** The switch from ODK to CommCare has complicated data verification and recategorization, requiring additional steps before analysis.[39]

Community Engagement and Trust-Building Challenges

- **Low awareness and trust in SAP:** Many community members remain unfamiliar with SAP's purpose, leading to hesitation in engaging with the system. Awareness-raising efforts are crucial to reinforcing confidentiality and the benefits of reporting.[40]

- **Competition with alternative justice systems:** In areas where state administration is weak, communities often prefer radical armed group-established justice mechanisms, which provide swift dispute resolution through Shari'a courts. This system, though discreet, is increasingly widespread in regions like Ségou, Sikasso, Kayes, and Mopti.[41]

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[34] 'Internal Mercy Corps Mali JASS Document C'.

[35] Fété Impact Cabinet de Conseil et de Formation, 'Evaluation Qualitative et Apprentissage Du Projet "Building Resilience in Kayes and Sikasso (BRiKS)" Ou "Ben Ni Bassigui"'.

[36] Fété Impact Cabinet de Conseil et de Formation.

[37] Fété Impact Cabinet de Conseil et de Formation.

[38] JASS Staff 3, KII EWERS Ségou.

[39] JASS Staff 3.

[40] 'Internal Mercy Corps Mali JASS Document C'.

[41] JASS Staff 5, KII EWERS Bamako.

- **Perceived corruption in state administration:** Many communities distrust formal state structures, viewing them as corrupt or biased in favor of elites, reinforcing reliance on non-state justice systems.[42]

Capacity and Resource Limitations

- **Limited training for monitors:** Many monitors lack adequate training, affecting their ability to accurately collect and verify data. Training sessions are also **infrequent**, reducing opportunities for skill reinforcement.[43]

- **Financial constraints for CRC operations:** CRCs struggle with late payments for communication and travel expenses**,** limiting their ability to monitor conflicts effectively.[44]

- **Lack of funding for conflict resolution missions:** Without dedicated resources, village leaders and mediators **cannot travel to affected areas**, leaving conflicts unresolved for extended periods.[45]

- **Limited opportunities for experience-sharing:** SAP forums for exchanging lessons learned and improving strategies are held too infrequently, limiting cross-community learning.[46]

Implications and Way Forward

These challenges underscore the need for:

1. **Stronger financial and logistical support** for CRCs to enhance their ability to conduct **timely mediation missions** and hold **regular coordination meetings**.

2. **Refined reporting protocols** to ensure **confidentiality, accuracy, and effective data verification**, particularly for sensitive information on **armed groups and social tensions**.

3. **Improved training and technical support** for monitors to enhance **data quality and responsiveness**.

4. **Strengthened awareness campaigns** to build **community trust in SAP** and **encourage participation in formal conflict resolution mechanisms**.

5. **Better integration of SAP with official referral pathways**, ensuring **complex cases are escalated appropriately** while maintaining **local ownership of conflict resolution**.

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[42] JASS Staff 5.

[43] Fété Impact Cabinet de Conseil et de Formation, 'Evaluation Qualitative et Apprentissage Du Projet "Building Resilience in Kayes and Sikasso (BRiKS)" Ou "Ben Ni Bassigui"'.

[44] Fété Impact Cabinet de Conseil et de Formation.

[45] JASS Staff 3, KII EWERS Ségou.

[46] Fété Impact Cabinet de Conseil et de Formation, 'Evaluation Qualitative et Apprentissage Du Projet "Building Resilience in Kayes and Sikasso (BRiKS)" Ou "Ben Ni Bassigui"'.

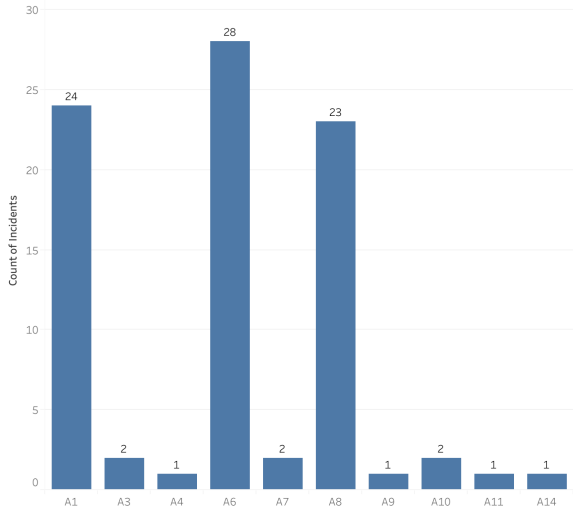
By addressing these structural, operational, and trust-related issues, SAP can become even more effective in preventing and mitigating conflicts at the community level.

Conflict Dynamics in JASS Zones: Insights from SAP Data

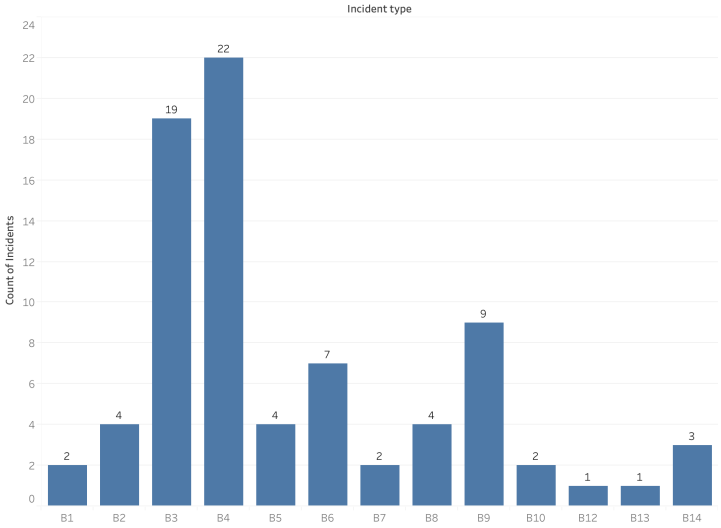
Building on the previous sections, which explored the origins of EWERS in the Sahel, the evolution of Mercy Corps's conflict prevention and mediation approaches, and the establishment and functionality of SAP, this section analyzes SAP data collected through the programme to identify key conflict trends in JASS intervention zones.

Community Conflict and Violence and Armed Violence

Community Conflict Incident Category (A)



Violence and Armed Violence Incident Category (B)



The figure above shows the frequency of different types of community conflict (Category A, left panel) and

Community Conflict Trends

Community conflict incidents varied significantly. The **three most reported conflict types** were:

1. **Latent interpersonal confrontations (A6)** – 28 cases
2. **Chieftaincy disputes and contests over customary or religious authority (A1)** – 24 cases
3. **Seizure, theft, or destruction of agricultural products, livestock, or fisheries (A8)** – 23 cases

Other conflict types were rare, occurring only once or twice over the eight-month period.

These findings highlight key programmatic priorities:

- **Addressing historical grievances and mediation techniques** is essential, given the frequency of latent interpersonal conflicts.
- **Providing alternative mechanisms for resolving chieftaincy disputes** is critical, as CRC members often belong to the disputing parties, creating a conflict of interest.
- **The active reporting of sensitive disputes** suggests that **JASS awareness campaigns on SAP confidentiality** are effectively building **community trust** in the system.
- **High rates of theft-related incidents** indicate the potential need to **reinforce local security measures**, such as **neighborhood patrols**.

Violence and Armed Violence Trends

Among **violence and armed violence incidents (Category B, right panel)**, the most frequently reported were:

1. **Assaults or threats with firearms or bladed weapons (B4)** – 24 cases
2. **Robberies or stabbings with firearms or bladed weapons (B3)** – 19 cases

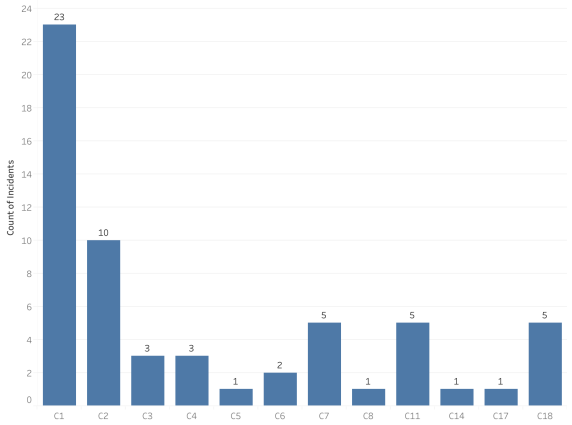
Other violent incidents were **less common**, with most occurring nine times or fewer over the reporting period. The **least frequent** were:

- **Interpersonal and professional defamation (B12)** – 1 case
- **Destruction of community property, religious, or cultural sites (B13)** – 1 case

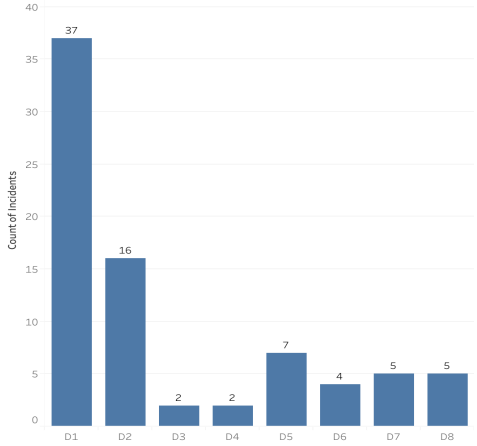
The low occurrence of these incidents suggests either an effective SAP intervention in JASS zones or a relative absence of such conflicts in these areas.

Land Conflict and Natural and Man-Made Disasters

Land Conflict Incident Category (C)



Natural and Man-made Disasters Category (D)



Land Conflict Trends

The **left panel of the figure** illustrates the prevalence of **land conflicts** in JASS intervention zones between **May and December 2024**. The most frequent disputes were:

1. **Border conflicts between neighbors (C1)** – 23 cases
2. **Ownership disputes due to inheritance (C2)** – 10 cases
3. **Border conflicts between ethnic groups or villages (C7)** – 5 cases
4. **Land use conflicts between farmers and livestock breeders (C11)** – 5 cases
5. **Disputes over public vs. private land use due to disregard for land regulations (C18)** – 5 cases

The **first two types of conflicts** are often linked to **latent interpersonal grievances**, the most common form of **community conflict**. JASS is actively addressing **land use and boundary disputes** through:

- **Supporting community delineation and publicizing transhumant routes**
- **Providing training and awareness-raising on land legislation**

Natural and Man-Made Disaster Trends

The **right panel of the figure** shows that the most reported **natural and man-made disasters** were:

1. **Large-scale flooding (D1)** – 37 cases
2. **Flooding with loss of life and major material damage (D2)** – 16 cases
3. **Locust invasions (D3) and avian invasions (D4)** – 2 cases each

Flooding presents a **significant** challenge, reinforcing the need to:

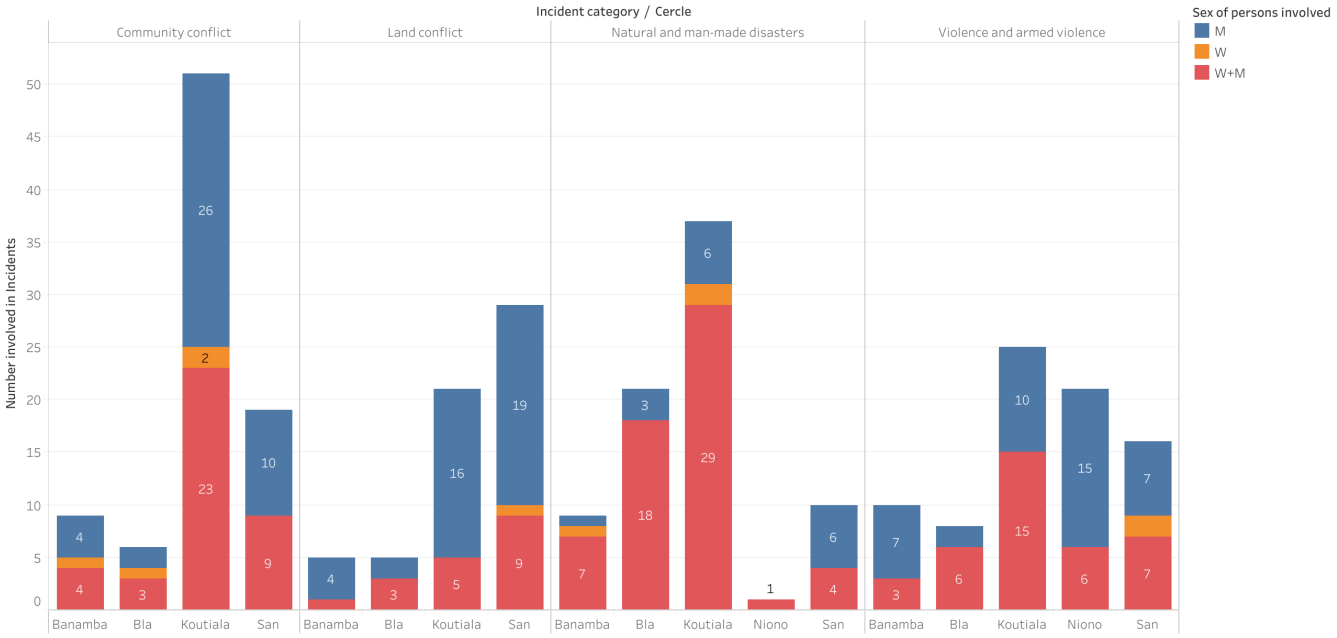
- **Increase community resilience** through **better storage of agricultural products and food stocks**
- **Strengthen physical barriers** to protect structures and redirect floodwaters

While **locust and avian invasions** are **less frequent**, their impact on **crops and livelihoods is severe**. JASS should:

- **Expand rapid response funding for pest infestations**
- **Replicate its successful September 2024 intervention in Bla**, where JASS worked with the **Service Régional de Protection des Végétaux (SRPV)** to equip and train **25 plant protection brigade members**, saving **up to 70% of the area's harvest**

By addressing climate-related disasters and threats to food security, these interventions directly contribute to JASS's broader goals of maintaining social stability and preventing resource-based conflicts.

Disaggregating SAP Incident Data: Geographic and Gender Analysis



The figure above presents **incident categories disaggregated by cercle and gender of actors involved** in JASS intervention areas between **May and December 2024**. It highlights both **geographic variations in incident frequency** and **gender dynamics** across different conflict types.

Geographic Trends in Incident Categories

Incident reports varied significantly across the five cercles:

- **Community conflict** was most frequently reported in **Koutiala (51 incidents)** and **San (19 incidents)**.
- **Land conflict** was highest in **San (29 incidents)** and **Koutiala (21 incidents)**.
- **Natural and man-made disasters** were most reported in **Koutiala (37 incidents)** and **Bla (21 incidents)**.
- **Violence and armed violence** occurred most often in **Koutiala (25 incidents)** and **Niono (21 incidents)**.

These findings suggest key programmatic priorities:

- **Koutiala requires increased training in all incident categories**, as it consistently records high levels of conflict and disaster incidents.

- **San should prioritize community and land conflict mediation efforts**, as these were the most frequently reported issues.

- **Niono reported no community or land conflicts and only one natural disaster, but high levels of violence and armed violence.** Given **the cercle's insecurity**, under-reporting of other incidents is likely. JASS should **reinforce security efforts in partnership with the Forces de Défense et de Sécurité du Mali (Malian Defense and Security Forces) and local self-defense groups**.

- **Bla and Koutiala, heavily impacted by flooding since July 2024, need enhanced disaster preparedness**, including **training and physical infrastructure improvements** to protect structures and redirect floodwaters.

- **Banamba recorded low incident levels across all categories**, suggesting **greater stability or exceptionally effective SAP performance** in the area.

Gender Dynamics in Incident Reports

The data categorizes actors in incidents as **all men, all women, or mixed-gender groups (men and women together)**. The analysis reveals:

- **Women were sole actors in very few incidents across all categories.** When they were, it was never in more than **two incidents per cercle per category**.

- **Community conflicts** involving only women were reported in **Banamba, Bla, and Koutiala**.

- **Land conflicts** involving only women were reported in just **one incident, in San**.

- **Natural and man-made disasters** solely affecting women were recorded **twice in Koutiala and once in Banamba**.

- **Women were sole actors in violence and armed violence incidents only in San (2 cases).**

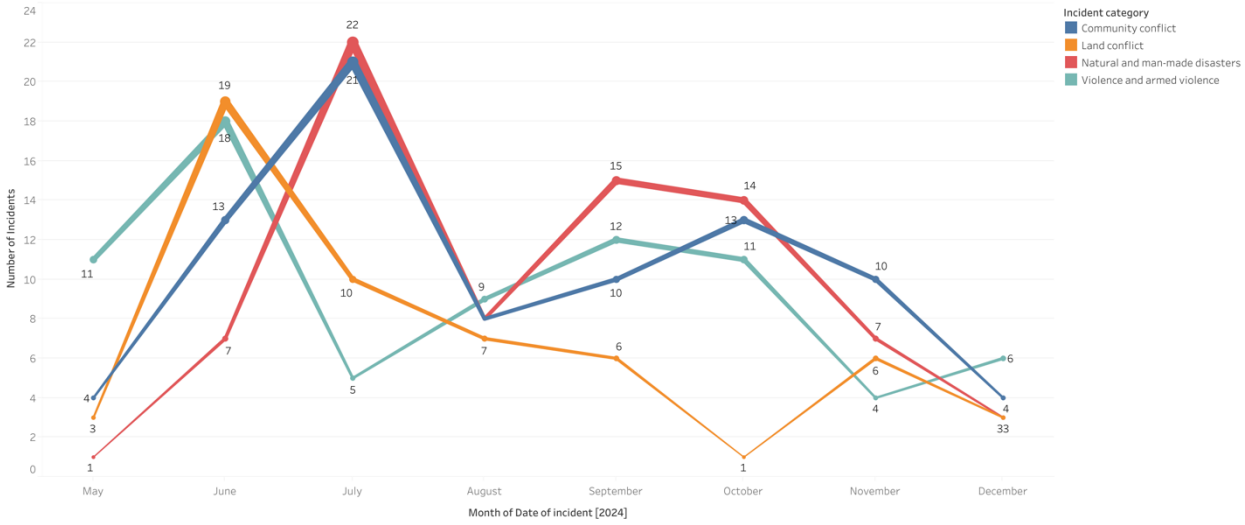
The data also shows **near parity between incidents involving only men and those involving both men and women**, except in **natural and man-made disasters**, where **mixed-gender involvement was significantly higher**.

Implications for Conflict Prevention and Mediation

- **Conflict prevention and mediation efforts should equally target men and women**, as they are **similarly involved in incidents across all categories**.

- **Women's limited role as sole actors in reported incidents** suggests **targeted outreach may be needed to better understand and address their involvement in conflicts and disasters**—or whether and if so why it is under-reported.

Incident Patterns and Temporal Trends



The figure above illustrates **changes in incident frequency** across the four incident categories in JASS intervention zones between **May and December 2024**.

Climate-Conflict Dynamics and Incident Trends

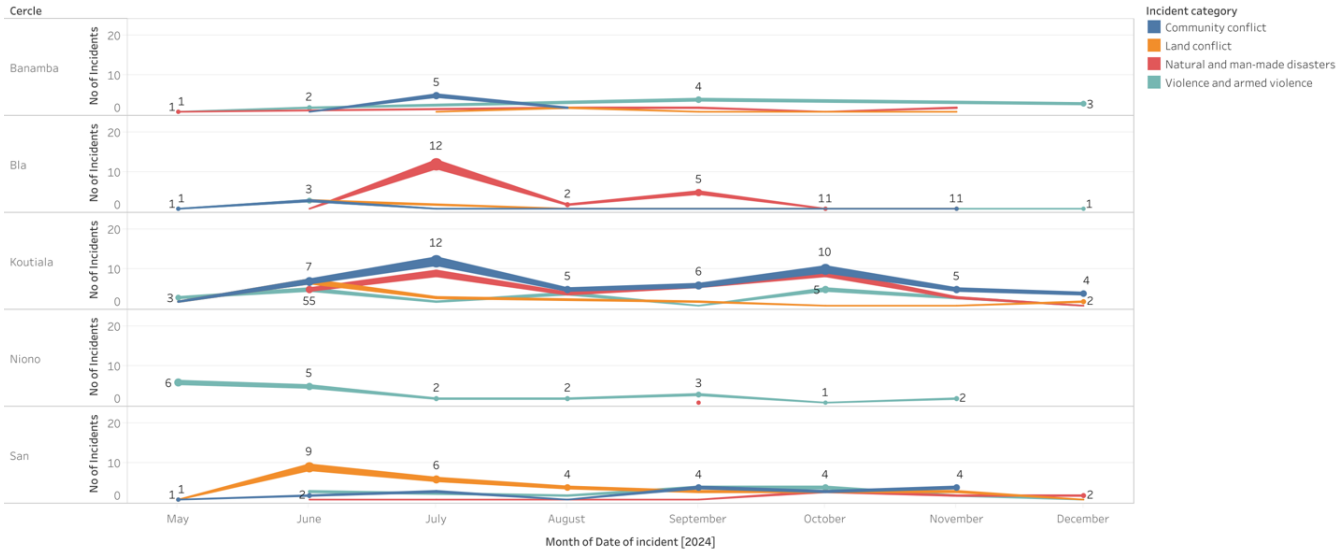
Incident reports **increased across all categories from May to June 2024**, after which **land conflicts and violence and armed violence began to decline**, while **community conflicts and natural and man-made disasters continued to rise**, peaking in **July** at **21 and 22 incidents**, respectively. **Both categories then declined through August but increased again in September/October before gradually decreasing through December**.

This trend strongly suggests a **correlation between climate and conflict dynamics**:

- **Community conflict and natural and man-made disasters follow nearly identical patterns**, indicating climate shocks may drive social tensions.
- **Violence and armed violence incidents mirror this trend but peak earlier (June)** before dropping sharply in July, when disasters and community conflicts peak. However, **from August onward, these incidents re-align with the overall pattern**.
- **Land conflicts do not follow the same trajectory**—they peak in **June (19 incidents)** but decline steadily through October, diverging from the other categories. A temporary **increase in land conflicts from October to November** contrasts with **declining trends in other categories** during the same period.

These findings **challenge assumptions** that **land conflicts are the primary driver of violence and armed violence**. Instead, **community conflicts are more prevalent, align closely with climate-related disasters, and exhibit a stronger correlation with violence and armed violence trends**. However, given the limited eight-month dataset and geographical coverage, these observations require further validation.

Tracking Incident Trends by Cercle Over Time



The figure above provides an **overview of incident trends across JASS intervention cercles from May to December 2024**. By disaggregating the data geographically, **regional variations in conflict patterns** become apparent, probing the **climate-conflict dynamics identified in the previous section**.

Banamba Cercle

Banamba recorded **31 incidents in total**, with **community conflict peaking in July (5 incidents)**. This spike coincides with **seasonal pastoralist movements**, as Banamba—home to the **Port du Sahel, the northern gateway to the Sahel**—serves as a **transhumance corridor** near the Mauritanian border.[47] The **availability of pasture in July** increases interactions between **farmers and herders**, heightening the risk of disputes.[48] The **second-highest incident spike occurred in September (4 cases), all linked to violence and armed conflict**.

Bla Cercle

Bla saw the **highest number of natural and man-made disaster incidents**, with **12 recorded in July, coinciding with the start of inundations.**[49] However, **community conflict was minimal**, **diverging from the overall climate-conflict trend** observed in the previous section. This **exception can be explained by Bla's socio-professional structure**, as its population consists primarily of farmers and pastoralists, who rely on strong traditional conflict management mechanisms which have made SAP even more effective in the cercle. Additionally, Bla has a lower population density, reducing competition over resources and the likelihood of disputes.[50]

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[47] JASS Staff 5, KII EWERS Bamako.
[48] JASS Staff 5.
[49] ReliefWeb, 'Mali: Floods - Jul 2024', July 2024, https://reliefweb.int/disaster/fl-2024-000144-mli.
[50] JASS Staff 5, KII EWERS Bamako.

Koutiala Cercle

Koutiala recorded **127 incidents**, the highest among all cercles. **Community conflict was the most frequent incident type**, with **spikes in July (12) and October (10)**, **mirroring the trend of natural and man-made disasters**. This alignment reinforces the **climate-conflict relationship**, as climate shocks appear to trigger social tensions in Koutiala more than in other zones. The high number of incidents is also attributed to Koutiala's diverse socio-professional groups and significantly higher population density, both of which increase the likelihood of disputes over land and resources.[51]

Niono Cercle

Niono recorded **21 incidents**, all categorized as **violence and armed violence**, peaking in **May (6 cases) and June (5 cases)**. The absence of reported community and land conflicts suggests under-reporting, likely due to the severity of security threats in the area. Given that **Niono serves as a transitional zone between northern and southern Mali**, it remains **highly accessible to armed groups**, with forested areas providing shelter for militants.[52] The intense **focus on armed violence incidents may have overshadowed the reporting of other conflict types**, as immediate security concerns took precedence.

San Cercle

San recorded **71 incidents**, with **land conflict being the most prevalent category** (peaking at **9 incidents in June**). Community conflict also followed **a seasonal pattern**, with **peaks in September and November (4 cases each)**, while **violence and armed violence peaked in September and October (4 cases each)**. The **high frequency of land conflicts** in San is linked to its **predominantly autochthonous agriculturalist population**, whose **historical land claims and contested ownership disputes** create **longstanding altercations.**[53] These findings further support the relationship between land tenure issues and localized tensions, reinforcing the importance of strengthening land governance mechanisms in San, which JASS is doing through awareness-raising concerning land legislation and various activities to reinforce land committees.

Key Takeaways

- **Climate shocks and conflict trends are closely linked in Koutiala and Banamba**, where seasonal factors drive community disputes.
- **Niono's high levels of armed violence suggest potential under-reporting of other conflict types**, as security concerns dominate local priorities.
- **San's high rate of land conflicts underscores the role of contested land rights in fueling tensions**, making JASS's vulgarization of land legislation and reinforcement of CRCs and COFOs critical for conflict mitigation.
- **Bla's low community conflict rates highlight the role of traditional dispute resolution mechanisms and effectiveness of SAP**, offering a potential model for other regions.

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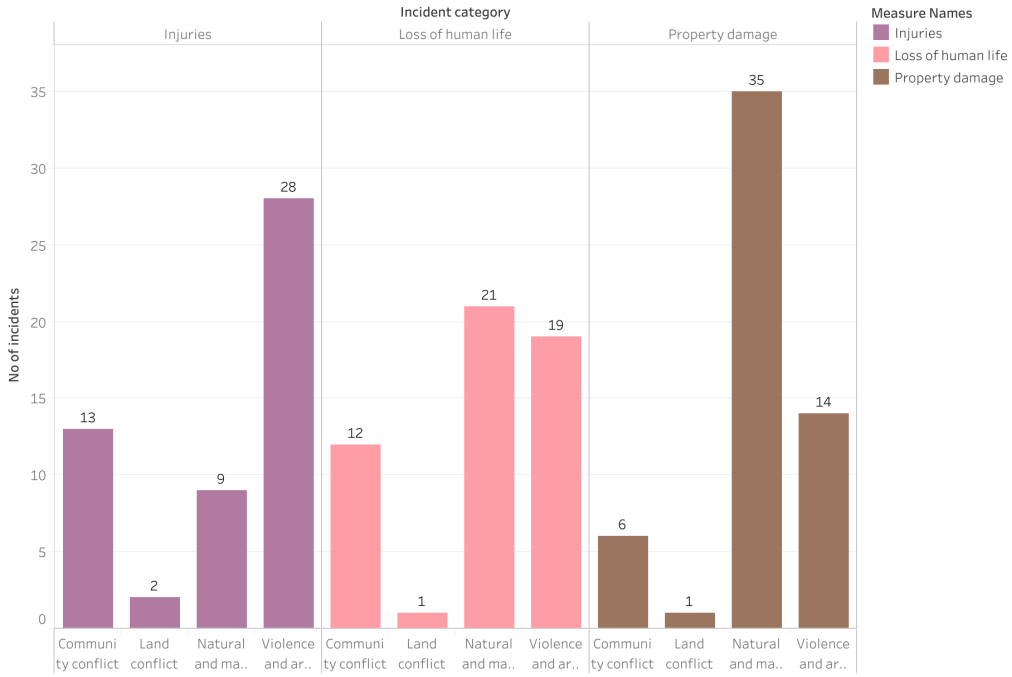
[51] JASS Staff 5.
[52] JASS Staff 5.
[53] JASS Staff 5.

These **regional variations** emphasize the **need for tailored conflict prevention strategies** in each cercle, **adapting interventions to local socio-political and environmental dynamics**.

Human and Material Impact of Reported Incidents



The figure above illustrates the **frequency of injuries, fatalities, and property damage** resulting from different categories of incidents in JASS intervention zones.

Key Findings

1. **Violence and armed violence are the primary cause of injuries (28 cases),** followed by **community conflict (13 cases)**. Natural and man-made disasters (9 cases) and land conflicts (2 cases) have a comparatively lower impact on physical harm.

2. **Natural and man-made disasters account for the highest number of fatalities (21 cases),** underscoring the severity of **climate-driven shocks**. **Violence and armed violence** follow closely **(19 cases),** demonstrating the deadly nature of insecurity in JASS zones.

3. **Community conflicts contribute significantly to both injuries (13 cases) and fatalities (12 cases),** reinforcing the social tensions linked to resource competition and governance disputes.

4. **Land conflicts result in the lowest number of fatalities (1 case)** and injuries (2 cases), suggesting that while they are frequent, they rarely escalate into direct violence.

5. **Property damage is overwhelmingly caused by natural and man-made disasters (35 cases),** emphasizing the **destructive nature of climate-related shocks**. Violence and armed violence (14 cases) also contribute significantly, while community (6 cases) and land conflicts (1 case) cause minimal material losses.

Key Takeaways

- **Climate shocks are the most destructive incidents**, causing the highest **fatalities and property damage**, reinforcing the **climate-conflict link** previously identified.
- **Violence and armed violence are the most injurious incidents**, highlighting the urgent need for security interventions in affected areas.
- **Community conflict plays a critical role in both injuries and deaths**, suggesting that **interpersonal and governance-related disputes escalate more frequently than land conflicts**.
- **Land conflicts, while prevalent, appear less likely to result in casualties or significant property damage**, indicating that they may be more contained through mediation, traditional resolution mechanisms, and other SAP mechanisms.

Who Responds to What? Incident Response Patterns by Cercle

Incident Response by Incident Type and Cercle

Incident category	Cercle	Admin. authority response	COFO response	CRC response	Comm. Leader response	FDS response	Infra. Manage. Comm. Resp..	NGO response
Community conflict	Banamba	1	5	5				
	Bla		1	2				
	Koutiala	18	5	7	12			1
	San	5	4	7	12			
	Total	24	15	21	24			1
Land conflict	Banamba		1	1				
	Bla	1	2	1	1			
	Koutiala	3	6	7	3			1
	San	7	9	4	8			
	Total	11	18	13	12			1
Natural and man-made disasters	Banamba	1			2			
	Bla	6	11	11	3		2	2
	Koutiala	17	2	9	7	1		
	Niono							
	San				1			
	Total	24	13	20	13	1	2	2
Violence and armed violence	Banamba	4			5			
	Bla	3		1	2			
	Koutiala	6		1	10		1	
	Niono	6		3	2	8		1
	San	4	1	4	7			
	Total	23	1	9	26	8	1	1
Grand Total		82	47	63	75	9	3	5

The figure above illustrates **which actors respond to different incident types across JASS intervention cercles**. The data highlights key responders, gaps in response, and areas where support is most needed.

Key Findings

1. **Most responsive actors across all incidents**:

- **Administrative authorities (82 cases)** responded the most, followed by **community leaders (75 cases)** and **CRC (63 cases)**.

- **NGOs (5 cases), Infrastructure Management Committees (3 cases), and FDS (9 cases) were the least responsive.**

2. **Community Conflict Response**:

   - **Administrative authorities (24 cases) and community leaders (24 cases) are the primary responders**, with CRC (21 cases) and COFO (15 cases) also playing key roles.

   - **By cercle:**

     - **Koutiala:** Administrative authorities (18/43 cases) were the most engaged.

     - **San:** Community leaders (12/28 cases) took the lead.

     - **Bla:** CRC (2/3 cases) responded most.

     - **Banamba:** COFO and CRC were the main responders (5/11 cases each).

3. **Land Conflict Response**:

   - **COFO (18 cases), CRC (13 cases), and community leaders (12 cases) led responses.**

   - **By cercle:**

     - **San:** COFO (9 cases) responded the most, followed by community leaders (8 cases).

     - **In other cercles, COFO and CRC were the dominant responders.**

4. **Natural and Man-Made Disaster Response**:

   - **Administrative authorities (24 cases) and CRC (20 cases) were the key responders across all cercles.**

5. **Violence and Armed Violence Response**:

   - **Community leaders (26 cases) and administrative authorities (23 cases) were the most frequent responders.**

   - **In Niono, FDS (8/20 cases) and administrative authorities (6/20 cases) led the response.**

Key Takeaways: Who Needs More Support?

- **CRC and COFO should be prioritized for support in land and community conflict mediation**, as they are the most active local responders.

- **Administrative authorities and community leaders play a key role in managing conflict across all categories** but may require **greater resources and coordination mechanisms** to ensure efficiency.

- **NGOs and Infrastructure Management Committees are largely inactive** in responding to incidents. Their role in disaster preparedness and mitigation could be strengthened through targeted capacity-building initiatives.

- **In Niono, FDS is a key actor in responding to violence and armed violence**, indicating the need for reinforced security coordination and engagement with local conflict-resolution structures.

- **Other organizations should follow JASS's example by equipping CRCs with additional training and resources for disaster response**, enhancing their technical capacity and logistical support to strengthen their role in crisis management.

- **COFOs play a critical role in land conflict resolution and should receive further** support through legal training, dispute mediation tools, and land governance mechanisms. **JASS's partners should strengthen and contribute to the ongoing initiatives** already underway in this area.

What Happens After Intervention? Incident Response Outcomes by Cercle

Response Actors and the Result of their Intervention

Result of response	Incident category	Admin. authority response	COFO response	CRC response	Comm. Leader response	FDS response	Infra. Manage. Comm. Response	NGO response
Being resolved	Community conflict	4	3	3	5			
	Land conflict	2	3	2	3			
	Natural and man-made di..	6	3	3	5		2	2
	Violence and armed violen..	4		3	6			
	Total	16	9	11	19		2	2
Not resolved	Community conflict	1	1	2	3			
	Land conflict	2	5	5	2			
	Natural and man-made di..	1	1	4	3			
	Violence and armed violen..	1			3			
	Total	5	7	11	11			
Referred	Community conflict	1						
	Land conflict	1	1		1			
	Natural and man-made di..	1				1		
	Violence and armed violen..	5		2	2		1	1
	Total	8	1	2	3	1	1	1
Resolved	Community conflict	18	11	16	16			1
	Land conflict	6	9	6	6			1
	Natural and man-made di..	16	9	13	5			
	Violence and armed violen..	13	1	4	15	8		
	Total	53	30	39	42	8		2

The figure above categorizes **incident response outcomes** by different actors, classifying responses as **Resolved, Not Resolved, Referred, or Ongoing**. Out of **284 recorded responses**, **174 incidents (61%) were fully resolved**, highlighting the **effectiveness of local response mechanisms and SAP as a whole**.

Key Findings

1. **Community conflicts had the highest resolution rate (73%, 62/85 cases)**, with **administrative authorities (18 cases),** CRCs (16 cases), and community leaders (16 cases) **leading successful interventions**.

2. **Land conflicts had the lowest resolution rate (51%, 28/55 cases)**, with **COFO playing the most effective role** (9 successful resolutions).

3. **Resolution rates for natural and man-made disasters (57%, 43/75 cases) and violence and armed violence (59%, 41/69 cases) were comparable**, with administrative authorities (16 cases) and community leaders (15 cases) being the primary responders.

Effectiveness of Response Actors

- **Administrative authorities recorded the highest number of resolved cases overall (53),** followed by community leaders (42).

- However, **community leaders and CRCs also had the highest number of unresolved cases (11 each)**, suggesting limitations in their authority or capacity to fully mediate certain disputes, and the sheer volume of cases to which they ar responding.

- **Community leaders had the highest number of ongoing cases (19),** followed by administrative authorities (16), indicating delays in resolution or continued engagement in complex disputes.

- **Administrative authorities referred the most cases (8),** implying that some incidents required higher-level intervention or additional resources.

Gaps in Response

- **FDS, Infrastructure Management Committees, and NGOs were largely absent from response efforts**, reinforcing previous findings that these **actors play a minimal role in direct incident resolution.**

- The **low percentage of unresolved cases (12%, 34/284 cases)** suggests a **strong commitment from COFOs, CRCs, community leaders, and administrative authorities** in following through on interventions and their active commitment to their roles in SAP.

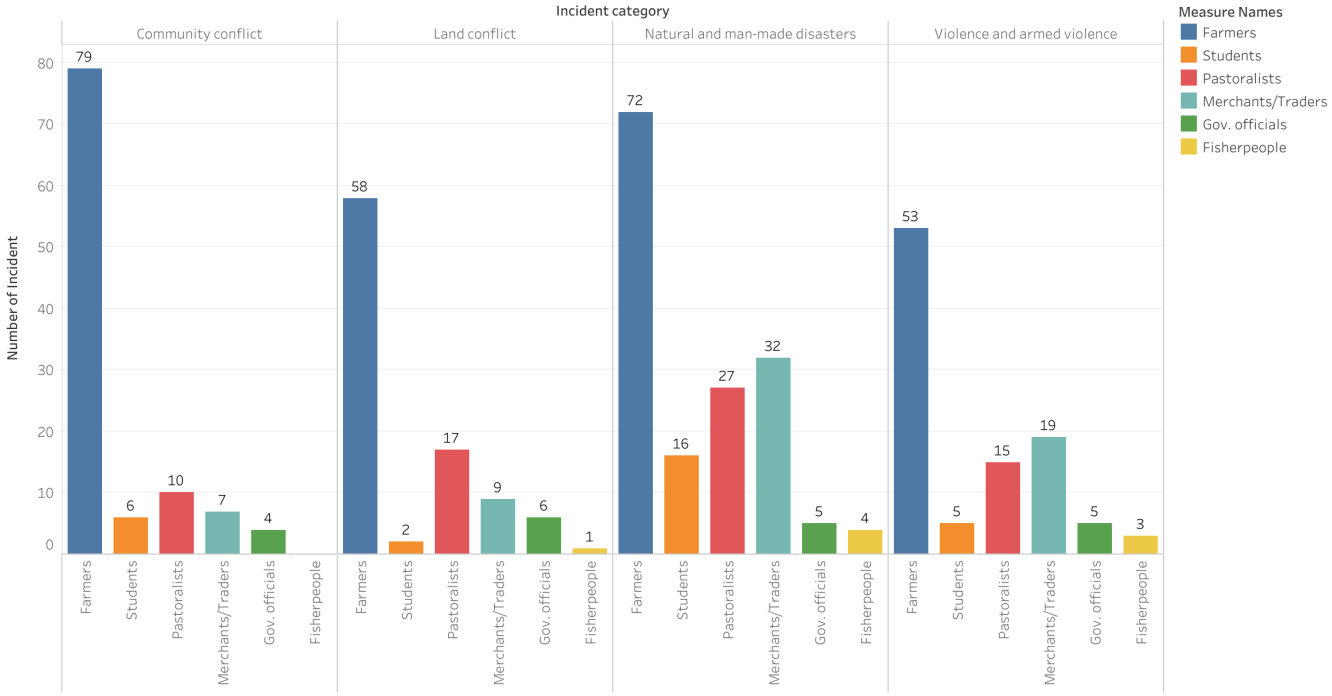
Challenges and Data Considerations

- **Ambiguity in actor categorization:** Many administrative authorities and community leaders may also be members of COFOs or CRCs, making it difficult to distinguish response roles clearly.

- **Future SAP assessments should refine actor classification**, ensuring mutually exclusive categories to improve data accuracy and reliability.

- **Understanding self-identification in reporting** will be crucial, as monitors may classify actors based on their most visible or known function, leading to potential overlaps in recorded response roles.

Trends in Incident Involvement by Professional Group



The figure above illustrates the **distribution of incident involvement across different professional groups** between **May and December 2024**. The data highlights **clear disparities in involvement,** with **farmers overwhelmingly appearing as the most frequently involved group** across all incident categories.

Key Findings

1. **Farmers are the most involved in all incident categories**, far exceeding other professional groups:

   - **Community conflict:** 79 cases (next highest: pastoralists, 10 cases).
   - **Land conflict:** 58 cases (next highest: pastoralists, 17 cases).
   - **Natural and man-made disasters:** 72 cases (next highest: merchants/traders, 32 cases; pastoralists, 27 cases).
   - **Violence and armed violence:** 63 cases (next highest: merchants/traders, 19 cases; pastoralists, 15 cases).

2. Even accounting for a potentially higher farmer population in JASS intervention zones, **their involvement in incidents is disproportionately high**, suggesting:

- **Increased exposure to resource-based disputes** (e.g., land and water access).
- **Greater vulnerability to climate-related shocks**, leading to heightened tensions.
- **Frequent interactions with other at-risk groups, particularly pastoralists and traders**, in contexts where competition over land, trade routes, or governance structures fuels conflict.

3. **Pastoralists and merchants/traders are the second most frequently involved groups**, with:
   - **Pastoralists** involved in **69 incidents** across all categories.
   - **Merchants/traders** involved in **67 incidents**.
4. **Students, government officials, and fisherpeople are the least involved in incidents, collectively appearing in only 57 cases.** The only category where their total involvement exceeds that of farmers is in violence and armed violence, where farmers were involved in 53 incidents.

Key Takeaways

- **Farmers are highly involved across incident categories, highlighting the importance of JASS's ongoing efforts** in resource management, land governance, and conflict mediation, while also suggesting a **need to expand targeted interventions for farmers.**
- **Pastoralists and traders also play significant roles in local disputes**, supporting **JASS's continued efforts** to engage them in community dialogues and economic stability initiatives.
- The **lower reported involvement of government officials and fisherpeople** suggests either a limited role in conflict-prone areas or underreporting, an area that may warrant further examination.

Data-Driven Findings and Recommendations from JASS SAP Analysis

The following recommendations are based on identified **SAP data trends, including gender considerations, climate-conflict dynamics, geographic variations, and seasonal patterns.** These recommendations align with **JASS's ongoing efforts** and suggest **areas for enhancement** to maximize impact.

Strengthening Conflict Prevention and Mediation

Key Findings

- **Community conflicts peak from July–October,** aligning with the **rainy season** and **resource scarcity.**
- **Land conflicts** have the **lowest resolution rate (51%),** concentrated in **San and Koutiala.**

- **Women are rarely sole actors in conflicts** but are significantly impacted, especially in land disputes.
- **CRCs, COFOs, and administrative authorities lead responses** but face challenges in complex disputes.

Recommendations

- **Expand land mediation support in San and Koutiala**, focusing on climate-driven disputes over land and water access by training COFO and CRCs in climate-sensitive dispute resolution.
- **Continue to increase women's roles in CRCs and COFOs**, ensuring they participate in land conflict resolution and community peacebuilding initiatives.
- **Pre-empt conflict escalation in high-risk months (July–October) by intensifying early mediation efforts**, particularly in **Koutiala,** where community disputes are most frequent.
- **Enhance administrative authority coordination with local mediators** to streamline resolution pathways for long-standing land disputes.

Enhancing Disaster Preparedness and Response

Key Findings

- **Flood-related disasters peak from July–September**, causing the **most fatalities (21 cases)** and highest **property damage (35 cases)**.
- **Disaster-induced displacement fuels community tensions**, increasing conflict risks.
- **Women are disproportionately affected**, as they manage food supplies and household resources.
- **CRC and administrative authorities lead disaster response** but lack technical capacity.

Recommendations

- **Reinforce flood preparedness in Bla, Koutiala, and San**, integrating climate adaptation strategies such as improved irrigation, early warning systems, and emergency shelter planning.
- **Support women-led disaster resilience efforts**, including household-level food storage, drought-resistant agriculture, and income diversification.
- **Develop rapid-response funding mechanisms for CRCs and administrative authorities**, enabling them to **mobilize quickly during peak disaster periods (July–September).**
- **Strengthen SAP reporting on climate shocks** to improve early warning for conflict risks associated with environmental stressors.

Improving SAP Data Collection, Verification, and Reporting

Key Findings

- Actor categorization in **SAP data is ambiguous**, **overlapping roles of actors** like CRCs, COFOs, and administrative authorities.
- **Climate-conflict interactions are evident** but not consistently tracked in SAP reporting.
- **Women's roles in conflict response remain underreported**, limiting gender-sensitive programming.
- **Underreporting is prevalent in Niono**, where insecurity may skew incident classification.

Recommendations

- **Clarify SAP response actor categories**, ensuring mutually exclusive classifications for CRCs, COFOs, and administrative authorities.
- **Integrate systematic tracking of climate-conflict interactions in SAP data**, distinguishing conflicts driven by environmental shocks.
- **Disaggregate gender in SAP reporting**, ensuring accurate representation of women's involvement in conflict response and resilience-building efforts.
- **Improve data collection in Niono** to reflect broader conflict trends beyond security-related incidents.

Strengthening Security and Violence Prevention Strategies

Key Findings

- **Violence and armed violence peak in May–June**, declining in July as rain-related mobility restrictions take effect.
- **Niono experiences persistent security threats**, limiting the reporting of other conflict types.
- **FDS** is active in responding to violence but **not engaged in broader conflict prevention efforts.**
- **Women** are **rarely reported as direct actors in violence** but often suffer secondary consequences.

Recommendations

- **Enhance civil-security coordination in Niono**, ensuring FDS engagement in community-based violence prevention alongside administrative authorities and CRCs.
- **Scale up conflict mitigation efforts before peak violence periods (May–June)** by strengthening early intervention mechanisms in **Niono, Koutiala, and San.**

- **Expand protection strategies for women affected by violence**, including safe reporting mechanisms and trauma-informed support services.

- **Encourage comprehensive conflict reporting in insecure areas**, ensuring non-violent disputes are not overshadowed by security concerns.

Targeted Engagement for High-Involvement Professional Groups

Key Findings

- **Farmers are the most involved in conflicts (262 cases)**, particularly in land and resource disputes.

- **Pastoralists (69 cases)** and **traders (67 cases)** are **also significantly involved**, often in disputes over mobility and market access.

- **Women** are heavily affected by resource conflicts but **underrepresented in conflict data**.

- Seasonal variations influence conflict patterns: **land and community conflicts rise in the rainy season** (June–October), while **economic disputes peak in the dry season** (November–March).

Recommendations

- **Continue to expand climate adaptation programs for farmers**, integrating land governance training, sustainable agriculture practices, and conflict-sensitive land tenure policies.
- **Continue to strengthen peacebuilding initiatives between pastoralists and farmers**, addressing resource-sharing conflicts and transhumance-related tensions, especially in **Banamba and Koutiala.**
- **Engage traders and merchants in economic stabilization initiatives**, particularly during high-tension months **(November–March), when trade-related disputes increase.**
- **Continue to increase women's representation in local governance and dispute resolution**, ensuring they have decision-making roles in resource management and conflict mitigation.

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Appendix A. SAP Incidents Disaggregated by Cercle and Date

		Month of Date of incident								
Cercle	Incident category	May 2024	June 2024	July 2024	August 2024	September 2024	October 2024	November 2024	December 2024	Grand Total
Banamba	Community conflict		1	5	2					8
	Land conflict			1	2	1		1		5
	Natural and man-made di..	1			2	2	1	2		8
	Violence and armed violen..	1	2			4			3	10
	Total	2	3	6	6	7	1	3	3	31
Bla	Community conflict	1	3	1				1		6
	Land conflict		3		1			1		5
	Natural and man-made di..		1	12	2	5	1			21
	Violence and armed violen..	1	3	1	1		1		1	8
	Total	2	10	14	4	5	2	2	1	40
Koutiala	Community conflict	2	7	12	5	6	10	5	4	51
	Land conflict	2	7	3		2	1	1	2	18
	Natural and man-made di..		5	9	4	6	9	3	1	37
	Violence and armed violen..	3	5	2	4	1	5		1	21
	Total	7	24	26	13	15	25	9	8	127
Niono	Natural and man-made di..					1				1
	Violence and armed violen..	6	5	2	2	3	1	2		21
	Total	6	5	2	2	4	1	2		22
San	Community conflict	1	2	3	1	4	3	4		18
	Land conflict	1	9	6	4	3		3	1	27
	Natural and man-made di..		1	1		1	3	2	2	10
	Violence and armed violen..		3		2	4	4	2	1	16
	Total	2	15	10	7	12	10	11	4	71

Appendix B. SAP Incident Categorization Scheme

A	INTRA- AND INTER-COMMUNITY CONFLICT/COMMUNITY CONFLICT	Codes
1	Conflict of chieftaincy (succession crisis) and contestation of customary and/or religious authority	A1
2	Denigration of a religion, desecration of a symbol or sacred site	A2
3	Spreading identity-based and hate messages	A3
4	Spreading persistent rumours	A4
5	Latent ethnic or community confrontation	A5
6	Latent interpersonal confrontation	A6
7	Tension over shared natural resources	A7
8	Seizure, theft or destruction of crops, agricultural products, livestock or fisheries	A8
9	Obstructing the free movement of people and goods	A9
10	Reduced interaction between communities, ethnic groups or groups, observed	A10
11	Tensions linked to opinions and/or political affiliations	A11
12	Exclusion or marginalisation of a group, community or ethnic group / Reduction in interactions between communities, ethnic groups or groups, observed	A12
13	Tensions linked to political/religious opinions and/or affiliations or to aspects of local governance	A13
14	Inter/intra-community tension over the management of public areas and spaces	A14
15	Inter/intra-community tension over wastewater and waste/sanitation management	A15
B	**ARMED VIOLENCE AND OTHER FORMS OF VIOLENCE/VIOLENCE AND ARMED VIOLENCE**	**Codes**
1	Ethnic or community confrontation involving the use of firearms or edged weapons	B1
2	Intra- and inter-professional confrontation involving the use of firearms or edged weapons	B2
3	Robberies/stabbings with firearms or edged/bladed weapons	B3
4	Assaults/threats with firearms or edged/bladed weapons	B4
5	Murders with firearms or edged/bladed weapons	B5
6	Incursion or attack by armed gangs/groups	B6
7	Seizure or abduction with or without firearms	B7
8	Rape/sexual assault/harassment with or without firearms or edged/bladed weapons	B8
9	Domestic violence with or without weapons	B9
10	Incitement to violence	B10
11	Acts of revenge or reprisal	B11
12	Interpersonal and professional defamation	B12
13	Destruction of community property and public, religious, and cultural buildings/sites	B13
14	Other unspecified cases of violence	B14
C	**LAND LAW DISPUTES/LAND CONFLICT**	**Codes**
1	Border disputes between neighbours	C1
2	Conflicts of ownership due to inheritance disputes	C2
3	Occasional multiple/duplicate sales of the same private property	C3
4	Individual occupation of private land	C4
5	Building extensions on someone else's private land	C5
6	Illegal rental/sale of someone else's private land	C6
7	Border conflicts between ethic groups or villages	C7
8	Illegal sale/lease of communal/tribal land	C8
9	Illegal allocation of state-owned land by a private individual	C9
10	Collective occupation of private land	C10
11	Land use conflicts between farmers and livestock breeders (e.g. animal corridors due to transhumance)	C11
12	Occasional illegal use of state land	C12
13	Property-related violent attacks	C13
14	Ownership disputes due to legal pluralism	C14
15	Illegal sale/lease of state-owned land	C15
16	Evictions (by force) by government authorities	C16
17	Wrongful land privatisation	C17
18	Land use conflicts between private and public use due to a general disregard for land use regulations by a majority of people	C18
19	Expropriation without compensation	C19
20	Illegal acquisition and sale of someone else's private property by private individuals, supported by corrupt public agencies or courts	C20
21	Multiple allocation of specific parcels by land registry agents	C21
D	**NATURAL OR MAN-MADE DISASTERS**	**Codes**
1	Large-scale flooding	D1
2	Flooding with loss of life and major material damage	D2
3	Locust invasion	D3
4	Avian invasion	D4
5	Large-scale fire	D5
6	Fire with loss of life and material damage	D6
7	Epizootic (major animal disease)	D7
8	Drought	D8

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