

BURKINA FASO

Short note – 24 March 2017

SUMMARY

Northern Burkina Faso has seen a rapid deterioration of the security situation since January 2017. Various attacks have been carried out in the area ranging from targeted killings, assassination attempts, village and school incursions to complex attacks against army or police position (ACLED 18/03/2017). The Ansarul Islam group, which has links to the Ansar Dine movement in Mali, is suspected to be behind most of the recent attacks (Associated Press 03/03/2017; ACLED 18/03/2017). The increase in threats and attacks has caused fear across the region and led to the closure of over 600 schools in Oudalan and Soum provinces (France 24 16/03/2017). Insecurity is also impacting access to other social services such as health, food security and protection.

Ansarul Islam is a new armed group, first known in December 2016 when it claimed responsibility for the attack of Nassoumbou military base in Burkina Faso, which resulted in 12 soldiers killed. Since then, it has claimed responsibility or being suspected for most of the recent attacks in the region (RFI 10/02/2017). Ibrahim Malam Dicko is allegedly the leader. He first joined the Macina Liberation Front, an armed group close to Ansar Dine based in Mali, and in 2016 established his militia around Djibo in Burkina Faso and Douna and Selba in Mali (Burkina24 12/02/2017). The aim of this group seems to re-establish a Fulani kingdom in the Sahel region (Jeune Afrique 09/01/2017).

Priority sectors

- **Education:** School closures have interrupted education for an estimated 72,000 children.
- **Health:** Various attacks have resulted in the disruption of health service provision, as health centres closed and people are scared to travel.
- **Food security** will worsen in the area. Households are expected to face Stressed outcomes (IPC Phase 2) between April and September.
- **WASH:** Scheduled repairs or constructions of wells and latrines are being delayed because of rising insecurity.

OPERATIONAL CONSTRAINTS

Overall the security situation remain tense in these provinces, limiting programmes and activities in the region. Delays are expected to occur as the security measures would adapt to the volatile context.

CRISIS IMPACT

Displacement in the area has been reported, although the scale remain unclear (UNICEF 17/03/2017). Some villages at the border with Mali, around Djibo in Soum province, notably Lassa, are reported to be deserted (Ndiaga Thiam 11/03/2017).

Severe acute malnutrition was reported as 3.6% in Burkina Faso's Sahel region in February, exceeding the emergency threshold (OCHA 17/02/2017). According to the 2010 Demographic Health Survey, infant mortality rate was 119 deaths per 1,000 live births, compared to 69.7 at national level in 2010 (DHS 2010;

World Bank 2010). 90% of Sahel inhabitants have faced at least one significant barrier to access health services in case of a disease, related to lack of financial means and distance of the nearest health centre (DHS 2010).

Health and nutrition

After an attack on a military base on 16 December, Nassoumbou health centre was closed for more than a week, obliging more than 6,700 people – including 1,300 children under 5 years old – to walk over 15km to reach medical assistance (Radio Omega 01/01/2017; UNICEF 17/03/2017).

In March 2017, Diguel, Tongomayel and Gasseltepaoua health centres in Soum province are closed, leaving about 39,000 people without access to basic health services, including 7,300 children under 5 and 2,200 pregnant women. In Gorgadji rural district, in Seno province, a health centre was closed due to its proximity to a police station, a usual target by the armed groups (UNICEF 17/03/2017).

Education

Teachers are being threatened and personally targeted by jihadists in the region, leading most of the educational facilities in the region to close. In January, armed individuals threatened teachers in Soum province, ordering them to teach Koranic education instead of using French (local media 06/03/2017). Early March, the Ansar-al-Islam group shot three people in Kourfayel, including a school director (BBC Africa 15/03/2017). Many teachers have temporarily fled to other regions or Ouagadougou (UNICEF 17/03/2017). Schools are increasingly being burned down or attacked (Koaci 15/03/2017).

As of 16 March, in Oudalan province 190 primary, seven middle, and 15 high schools are closed, representing about 70% of educational facilities in the area, affecting close to 55,000 children. In Soum province, almost all schools are closed, notably 380 primary, 17 middle, and 15 high schools – affecting close to 18,000 children (France 24 16/03/2017; UNICEF 17/03/2017). According to the last Demographic Health Survey, school enrolment rate was already very low in the Sahel region, 19% at primary level and only 4% for secondary (DHS 2010).

WASH

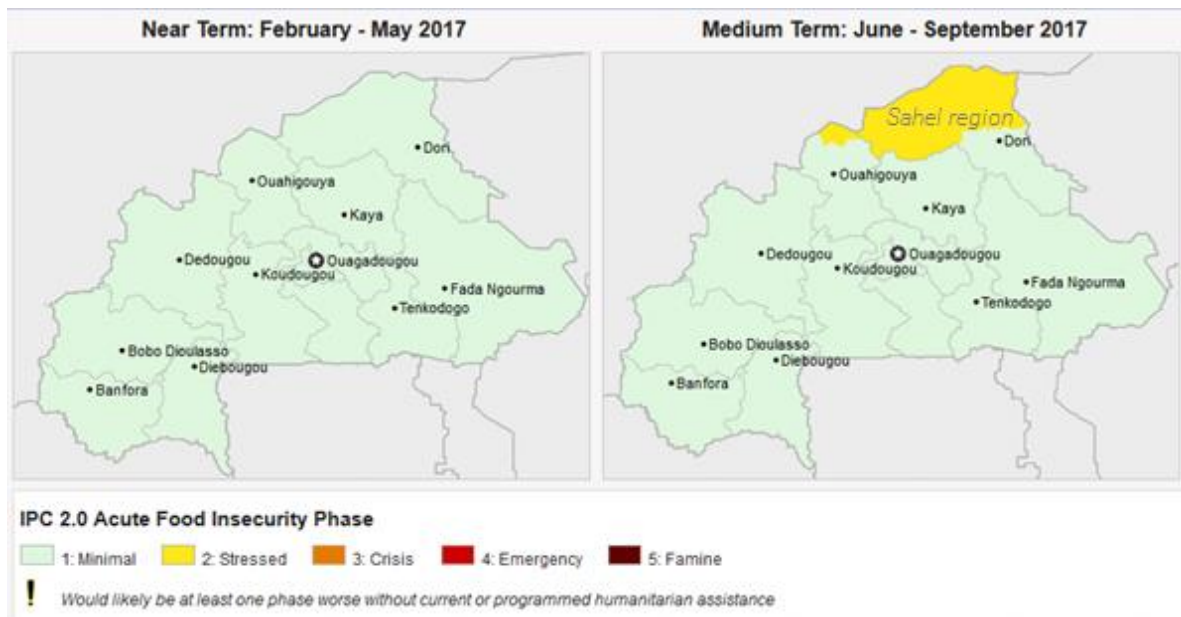
Insecurity is jeopardising constructions or repair of wells or latrines in schools, villages, and health centres, particularly in Soum province. In particular, constructions of wells for schools in Baraboule and Koutougou and school latrines in Nassoumbou and Baraboule are likely to be delayed (UNICEF 17/03/2017).

Food security

The recurrent attacks are driving down the prices of livestock on markets in the Sahel and reducing household purchasing power, particularly that of the poorest households (FEWSNET 28/02/2017). In January, white maize prices were about 10% higher than in the same period last year (FEWSNET 28/02/2017). In the coming months, households that are normally already highly market-dependent, as food stocks are usually depleted at this time of the year, will be even more so, but weak purchasing power will curtail their food access and reduce household food consumption. As a result, they will be facing Stressed food security outcomes (IPC Phase 2) between April and September, instead of current Minimal (IPC Phase 1) (FEWSNET 28/02/2017).

Most likely estimated food security outcomes for February-May and June-September 2017

FEWSNET 28/02/2017



Protection

Civilians have been targeted during attacks (RFI 03/03/2017). Civilians sharing information concerning attacks with authorities have reportedly been targeted and killed (Ndiaga Thiam 11/03/2017; Jeune Afrique 09/01/2017).

NATIONAL RESPONSE

Tighter security measures have been put in place such as increased border patrols (France 24 16/03/2017). A curfew has been established at the border, in Markoye-Oursi, Tin Akoff-Nassoumbou, Koutoubou-Baraboule areas, prohibiting motorcycles between 1700 and 0600, as these are the vehicles generally used by assailants (local media 07/03/2017).

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

A joint mission in Soum province is organising a rapid assessment this week (UNICEF 17/03/2017).

At the request of the Ministry of Education, UNICEF is preparing a rapid response in education (UNICEF 17/03/2017).

Areas affected by Ansarul Islam attacks in Sahel and Central-Nord regions, Burkina Faso, December 2016 - March 2017 ACLED 18/03/2017

