THE SAHEL AFRICAN CRISIS: CAUSES, IMPACTS, AND SOLUTIONS



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Abstract:*This study examines the root causes of the crisis, including colonial legacies, weak governance, climate change, and jihadist insurgencies, while assessing its devastating humanitarian impacts—food insecurity, displacement, and migration. The paper evaluates current regional and international responses, such as military interventions and development aid, highlighting their limitations due to coordination issues and funding shortages. Finally, the study proposes sustainable solutions centered on governance reforms, climate adaptation, and long-term economic development, emphasizing the need for local ownership and regional cooperation. By integrating historical, political, and environmental analyses, this research provides a holistic understanding of the Sahel crisis and actionable policy recommendations.*

key words*: Sahel Crisis; Political Instability; Climate Change; Humanitarian Crisis; Conflict Resolution.*

JEL classification: *H56;Q55;D74;*

ملخص:*تبحث هذه الدراسة في الأسباب الجذرية للأزمة، بما في ذلك إرث الاستعمار، وضعف الحوكمة، وتغير المناخ، وانتشار الجماعات الجهادية المسلحة، مع تقييم آثارها الإنسانية المدمرة مثل انعدام الأمن الغذائي، والنزوح القسري، والهجرة. كما يناقش البحث الاستجابات الإقليمية والدولية الحالية، بما في ذلك التدخلات العسكرية والمساعدات التنموية، مع تسليط الضوء على القيود المفروضة عليها بسبب نقص التنسيق وعدم كفاية التمويل. أخيراً، تقترح الدراسة حلولاً مستدامة تركز على إصلاح الحوكمة، والتكيف مع تغير المناخ، والتنمية الاقتصادية طويلة الأجل، مع التأكيد على ضرورة تملك الحلول محلياً وتعزيز التعاون الإقليمي. ومن خلال دمج التحليلات التاريخية والسياسية والبيئية، يقدم هذا البحث فهماً شاملاً لأزمة الساحل وتوصيات قابلة للتطبيق.*

الكلمات المفتاحية: *أزمة الساحل؛ عدم الاستقرار السياسي؛تغير المناخ؛ الأزمة الإنسانية؛ حل النزاعات.*

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Introduction

The Sahel region, a semi-arid belt stretching across Africa south of the Sahara, is facing a multi-dimensional crisis characterized by political instability, economic marginalization, environmental degradation, and escalating violence. This crisis has led to severe humanitarian consequences, including food insecurity, mass displacement, and increased terrorist activity. The Sahel's vulnerability is exacerbated by climate change, weak governance, and historical colonial legacies.

Reasons and Motives for Choosing the Topic

- **Global Significance:** The crisis has transnational implications, including migration flows to Europe and the spread of extremist groups.
- **Humanitarian Urgency:** Millions face famine, displacement, and violence, necessitating immediate and long-term solutions.
- **Academic Gap:** While existing research addresses individual aspects (climate, conflict, governance), a holistic analysis is needed to connect these factors.

Problem Statement

The Sahel crisis is a complex interplay of:

- **Environmental Stressors** (desertification, droughts, and resource scarcity)
- **Political Instability** (weak governance, coups, and jihadist insurgencies)
- **Economic Marginalization** (lack of development, unemployment, and dependence on foreign aid)
- **External Interventions** (military missions and humanitarian aid that sometimes exacerbate tensions)

Research Question:

What are the root causes of the Sahel crisis, and what sustainable solutions can be implemented to address it?

Approach of the Analysis

This study adopts a **multi-disciplinary approach**, combining:

- **Historical Analysis** (colonial legacies, post-independence governance failures)
- **Political Economy** (role of corruption, foreign interventions, and armed groups)
- **Environmental Studies** (climate change impacts on livelihoods)

- **Conflict and Security Studies** (jihadist movements, ethnic tensions, and military responses)

Hypotheses of the Study

1. The Sahel crisis is not solely a result of climate change but is deeply rooted in political and economic mismanagement.
2. Current international interventions (military and humanitarian) are insufficient without addressing governance and development deficits.
3. Sustainable solutions require local ownership, regional cooperation, and long-term economic investment.

Objectives

1. **Analyze the root causes** (historical, environmental, political, and economic).
2. **Assess the impacts** (humanitarian crisis, migration, and regional instability).
3. **Evaluate existing responses** (military interventions, aid programs, and peacebuilding efforts).
4. **Propose sustainable solutions** (governance reforms, climate adaptation, and economic development).

Broad Outlines of the Study

1. Introduction to the Sahel Region
2. Historical Context of the Crisis
3. Root Causes of the Crisis
4. Impacts on the Population
5. Regional and International Responses
6. Challenges and Limitations of Current Efforts

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE SAHEL REGION

The Sahel is facing an unprecedented crisis, and many have been quick to highlight the grim statistics that frame and define this massive multi-dimensional disaster. This volume is a timely and urgently needed response to the crisis. It establishes clearly and concretely why the Sahel problem is global in scope by looking at the enormous regional and transnational dimensions, based on a global framework designed and implemented collectively. The Sahel region lies at the southern edge of the Sahara Desert and covers sections of twelve countries from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean. The Sahel has a fragile natural resource base that is subject to ever-increasing pressures. Rainfall, water, land, and vegetation are all in short supply, and quality is declining.

Throughout the Sahel, these resources are being pushed beyond their limits. Their degradation is easily exacerbated by climatic variability that affects natural resource renewal rates, as well as by human activities that focus on immediate mitigating effects. The impact of regional climatic conditions on individual sectors, such as agriculture, livestock, natural resources, infrastructure, environment, and human population patterns, makes it difficult to promote coordinated sectoral development and sustainability. While many of these conditions may respond over time to development interventions and human management, the roots of degradation and desertification are deep and broad, involving a wide variety of factors within the local, national, and global realms.(Bereketeab, 2021)

1.1. Geographical and Climatic Features

The Sahel is, in the broadest sense, the semi-arid region of Africa between the tropical rainforests of equatorial Africa to the south and the true deserts which are subtended by the Tropic of Cancer in the north. The Sahel includes 7 (or potentially 9-10) countries, as shown on the map. The name Sahel comes from the Arabic word meaning a desert shore, and consequently the Sahelian Desert Boundary, upon which almost all of our attention will be focused in this course, is the distance from the Atlantic Coast of Senegal and Mauritania to the big bend of the Niger River in northern Mali. The Sahel includes two very different sets of ecologies and societies. First, beginning at the westernmost end of the region, there are three riparian zones which are relatively well-endowed with water. These are the Senegambian wetlands, which include the ecologies of Casamance, the country of Senegal itself, and the Lower Senegal Valley in Mauritania, the Lake Chad wetlands surrounding that body of water, and the Niger River Delta and Inner Niger River Delta regions of Mali.

The three great river valleys are almost the only localized source of agricultural productivity in the Sahel. Each of the various valley ecologies is created by the flooding action of the river in question, which sends a river "lacustre," usually around 25-40 km across, to last for a "long" period each year in between the desert edge to the north and the Sahelian savannah, which is protected from silting and terraced by levees that were built up by the annual flood. In the case of the Niger River, the flood occurs at the end of the rainy season, and the River Niger rises and floods not the Sahel, but comes across and inundates the already abundant Inner Niger River Delta, creating a very productive fishery ecology, before flowing through Timbuktu and Gao and out to the desert sands of the northeastern Sahel.(Brandt, 2020)

1.2. Cultural and Ethnic Diversity

One of the characteristics of the region is cultural diversity. This region was the meeting place of several great civilizations that have given it its diversity and wealth. Even though the Sahel is a melting pot of all of these cultural elements,

traditional elements are still very strong. It is a rich area with regard to its material and immaterial heritage. The traditional way of life is, therefore, very important. In fact, Islam plays an important role, although there are also traditional extremists who conserve their old rituals and traditions. Religious leaders are generally considered to be intermediaries between the people and the supernatural. The misfortunes that the populations of the Sahelian countries have known have lowered confidence in modern states, which are generally considered to be extremely corrupt, and have strengthened belief in ancestral powers. The solution to many problems arises, therefore, from turning to traditional means rather than going through public institutions that, in spite of everything, have retained their role as arbitrators and as aid agencies in situations of crisis. In addition, according to hunter-gatherer traditions, the resources accumulated are there to be redistributed according to the rules of hospitality. In hard times, solidarity is, therefore, of great importance.(Alexis Licht, 2024)

2. HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE CRISIS

The period 1898 to 1960 was marked by colonialism throughout Africa. The French claimed much of West Africa, including Senegal, Sudan, Guinea, Niger, Mali, Upper Volta, and Chad. They referred to this area as French West Africa. In this region, colonialism was even more severe in terms of its brutality, exploitation, and social dislocations. Similar to the English and other colonial powers, the impetus for colonization and appropriation of foreign lands was due to increased demand for raw materials of industrial society in Europe. By 1956, the French had decided to give independence to African colonies and allowed the election of local governing bodies in approved areas. In the French West African countries of Niger and Sudan, this is when considerable political changes began to take place. Political institutions evolved only slowly, with rural Africans retaining only limited influence over policy.

In 1960, French Sudan became the independent state of Mali, as did Niger, with some social problems persisting from the colonial period. Reasons for the legislative political instability pattern in French Sudan have been numerous and complex. Within the political context, an admitted criticism of government has been that indigenous political institutions or their derivatives have been management tools of the elite, foreign interests, or other groups. There was a feeling in French Sudan after the success of the plebiscite for the French Sudan Assembly that, except for Mali, French Sudan was not ready for independence due to just two girls' senior secondary schools in Bamako, the city hospital in dire need of funds, and a primitive communications system. After touring France to mobilize resources, French Sudanese deputies questioned about French policy toward Sudan.(André Vicente Liz, 2021)

2.1. Colonial Legacy

The current poverty and dependence in the Sahel region have their roots in the colonization of Africa by European powers. Although the experiences of individual countries vary, few African states were left with adequate infrastructure, political systems, or knowledge to convert themselves into modern societies. These institutions are necessary for a country to have any hope of opposing or slowing the major transnational economic and political forces of the present day. Sahelian people are heavily dependent upon the Earth's natural productivity and are severely stressed by a decline in traditional levels of productivity. Despite current realities, few European policies, domestic or foreign, place natural products, indigenous rights, or the welfare of Sahelian societies at the forefront. Consideration of the social and ecological costs of Sahelian transformation should be viewed as a long-term investment. Several simple steps to support African development, such as redirecting agricultural aid to food-deficit areas, do not require a long-term investment of a large sum of money. They do require refinements in policy and a general level of consideration for the fate of Africa and the Sahelian people.(Katharina Löhr, 2022)

2.2. Post-Independence Challenges

Soon after achieving post-colonial independence, many of the Sahelian African states faced significant challenges as they sought to consolidate their political power. Stable domestic and regional conditions were essential for these new governments to address the problem of mass poverty and manage the economic development process effectively. Achieving economic growth required rapid increases in government revenue and the efficiency of public resource allocation. However, it was not an easy task for the Sahelian states. The growth of the public sector created several problems such as the increase in government expenditure, the large public sector, the inefficient public administration, and the excessive role of the state in economic activities. In addition, these post-independence governments in the Sahel had no proper time to prepare effective and efficient strategies to undertake development planning, establish domestic policies, and determine institutional arrangements for the new nation-state.(Raffaele Marchetti, 2022)

Frequent droughts during the 1960s and early 1970s created further problems and weakened the governments' capacity to administer state institutions and implement the functioning of the new sector organizations efficiently. It is also quite clear that certain post-independence administrations pursued the partitioning of power and patronage along patrimonial principles. Indeed, these patrimonial institutions became the source of major administrative weaknesses, conflicts, social injustices, and corruption, leading to frequent futile resistance from local power brokers and some regional ethnic groups. The legacies of the patrimonialism applied in part to traditional ethnic, religious, and kinship loyalties, which made the state leaders unable to effectively extend social and

political control to the communities. These inherent management deficiencies have led some political, military, and revolutionary elites to act unscrupulously and thus crippled the region's economic development within the constraints of their narrow objectives.(Bethany Walker, 2020)

3. ROOT CAUSES OF THE CRISIS

The Sahelian flood was caused by Severe Tropical Storm Bilma in 2009 and affected more than 200,000 people in a few days. The Sahel region of Africa has been suffering chronic food shortages for many years, a situation that has been exacerbated by recent major droughts and successive poor harvests in countries where agriculture is highly vulnerable. These signs are associated with a vicious circle perpetuated by structural problems, such as an anarchic use of natural resources, poor basic health services, public action that is disconnected from problems, low levels of externally sponsored investment, and the regional food crisis. This paper aims to analyze how the present crisis and the situation of chronic malnutrition are related to the economies and societies of these countries. The population is composed of nomadic or semi-nomadic pastoralists, as well as agricultural groups predominantly settled in the Sahel.

The Sahel crisis reflects the limitations of supply-driven agricultural sectors, with the Malian government playing a very marginal part in subsistence agriculture, the sector on which the vast majority of the population depends. In Mali, the structural nature of food vulnerability is related to a number of factors. In recent years, the Malian sectors have had to address the consequences of global phenomena, including the fuel price shock in 2008, volatile and increasing world market prices for agricultural commodities in 2007–2008, the consequences of the financial crisis for foreign investment in Mali, and the impacts of climate change. The most important lesson in terms of development to be drawn from the global food crisis is that it affects the world populace, and particularly the poorest countries. Many have a specific profile of dependency on the world market, and the crisis, therefore, places their food security at major risk.(OKORO, 2020)

3.1. Political Instability

3. The Actual Context of the Sahel African Crisis The difficult context of the Sahel is widely known. The first hint comes from the political instability in the region. Countries such as Mali, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, and Niger have experienced coups d'état or assassination attempts in the recent past. Insecurity, in general, is an instigator of this. People do not feel secure, in the fullest sense of the word, and they often hide their views, political opinions, or sense of security for long periods. Those countries, especially Mali, faced political problems that led part of their populations to rise against the government and, as a result, to the fall of the previous regime. The revolution in Mali was the best example, but other forms of political instability are evident when political parties are weakened, often by conflicts of interest or religious disputes among them. Political instability is

not the only problem in social and political life in Africa, though, and large groups of individuals can rebel against the government in a fierce and violent manner. That is one of the largest and principal findings of our work. Most of them joined violent or armed groups or organizations that, little by little, became the movement. The movement was a mere idea at the beginning. But the idea was the same in the past, with the first PAC, or today, with the other Islamic groups.(Guido Pastore, 2021)

3.2. Economic Marginalization

The Sahel countries have remained locked into peripheral status in the global system of dominant states, capital, and agencies. The internal dynamics of marginalization are grounded in the inability to achieve a growth goal that would need to be too fast and sustained over too long. The stagnation experienced by the Sahelian class of states since the 1950s has accentuated their inability to gain political consent from their populations and the ruling coalition that reigns over a territory that remains hegemonized. In this respect, indebtedness has acted as a channel towards economic contraction, distributional conflict, and social stratification.(Francesco S.R. Pausata, 2020)

War economies, annexed to the Sahelian economies, are parasitic economies. This duality of agrarian structures and economic underdevelopment has important social correlates. First, the land is concentrated, and expropriation keeps expanding at a rate greater than that of elite accumulation. Second, human irrelevance is the lot of the millions of peasants whose conditions of existence under extreme ecological constraints have become even more hazardous and deprived than before. Third, wage income is precarious, and the status of labor forces is extensive in the cattle economy and crafts. Towns have seen the impoverishment of their social fabric, alienation, and plight. Urban society has become proletarianized; its resources are regularly sapped by either the cordon "barriere" or the cordon "d'argent", which Muslim cities have erected and maintained since the first redeemer.(Terepyshchyi, 2021)

3.3. Environmental Degradation

Unfavorable policies of local governments have led to serious environmental degradation in the Sahel. Since colonial times, the Sahel has depended on the export of a very small number of primary commodities to finance food and consumer imports. Today, over 70 percent of government revenues depend on a few commodities; the enclave economy allocates very few resources to development. Whatever development has taken place has been in and around capital cities. Because government bureaucracies are located in the capitals, and government co-subsidizes transport costs, manufacturing and marketing enterprises of the ruling classes are oriented towards importing food and goods needed by the ruling elite. They trade resources earning foreign exchange to finance their expensive imports.(Vogel, 2022)

For various reasons, this 'transfer orientation' has resulted in increasing pressures on the environment. Factors include: heavily subsidized transport costs; high import tariffs; low export prices; support prices for large-scale mechanized exporters; water development for large-scale irrigation; attacks on communal land ownership and commons through land redistributive policies; direct displacement of people to favor new land uses; the closure of the common destinations of transhumant herders and forest-dependent populations; policy and state intervention. After profligate import dependency, these are the two major common causes of environmental crisis.

4. IMPACTS ON THE POPULATION

The impacts of the crisis on the populations are multiple. The most known and important are the loss of jobs and income, deteriorated terms of trade, increased state inactivity or failure, which created a lack of services, the undoing of the rule of law, an increase in criminality, a decline in livelihoods, a decrease in nutrition and food status, and temporary or definitive settlement in the metropolitan areas or outside. Among the numerous consequences of this crisis, some are general and common to all the countries in the area. Others, more diversified and strongly connected with the presence of the economic spheres, are specific to each city. In several of these cities, the economic decline ejected a rapidly growing number of people from the productive and exchange process and changed their living conditions. Faced with this situation, several people had hoped that support could be organized on an international level and, if necessary, given to these cities. But instead, the cities lived through a fight between partisan interests.

The continued economic decline of Sahelian cities secured and regularized their experience of instability. In other words, they left behind the traits of their former resistance that could still conjure up an image of them as active actors or their history as such. The socio-economic and political crisis damaged the definition, organizing abilities, and the mastery of the means of communication of cities. The first consequence of this decline was the swindling of identification, change, offer, and potential attractiveness of cities. Innocuous phrases no longer dissimulate these new and terrifying traits, which have become commonplace.(Olivier J. Walther, 2021)

4.1. Humanitarian Crisis

The instability within the Sahel countries has led to widespread displacement of entire communities. In the recent past, there hadn't been such a high level of displacement as we are witnessing currently. Just to be more specific, it has been estimated more than 1 million new displacements in Burkina Faso, numerous more in Nigeria and Mali, claiming that more than 80 countries in the world have experienced internal displacements from violent conflict and sudden disasters.

From these findings, it becomes clear that the humanitarian crisis has indeed increased in the Sahel over the last few years.(Wu, 2020)

In order to avoid human suffering, the government and other actors need to act fast to offer assistance and protection to those in dire need. Armed groups active within the region are continually looting humanitarian organizations, thereby degrading essential services that these organizations could have otherwise offered. The recurring financial, logistical, and access challenges further fuel escalations in the humanitarian crisis witnessed every year. Sahelians are mostly exposed to food insecurity. It is further noted that over 6 million are at risk of short-term hunger and in need of food assistance, with millions of them facing real threats of death in the event they do not receive help from stakeholders. The extreme weather patterns found within the Sahel also play a key role in the increasing humanitarian situation because they negatively impact agricultural output, livestock, and animals, further reducing household incomes while raising food prices within the region.(Yang, 2021)

4.2. Food Insecurity

Food insecurity reflects the condition that distinguishes individuals who have an insufficient quantity of food from those who have an insufficient diet in terms of quantity and quality. In simple terms, when household members cannot access enough food to provide the necessary number of kilocalories or minimum grams of protein and essential nutrients, their health deteriorates, leading to malnutrition. Generally, food insecurity worsens when food is removed from the economy by the elites, exported to the wealthy outside world, stockpiled, or destroyed by means of conflicts, wars, speculation, or inequitable development systems. In the case of the Sahel countries, both internal and external factors that take place at the national and regional levels cause the intensification of food insecurity in the Sahel countries. These factors include the lack of investment in agriculture and inequitable agricultural systems, limited access to credit, drought, unfair trade policies, overreliance on food aid, population growth, armed conflicts, inadequate revenues to purchase food, and limited infrastructure. The Sahel countries also have similarities in terms of population and consumption levels, food imports, grain supply sources, and the effects of climate change. If these countries do not coordinate their food policies, it is inevitable that they will experience food crises, as no individual country will be able to cope with the food needs.(Young, 2020)

4.3. Displacement and Migration

This paper briefly discusses the human outcome of these crises by exploring demographic dynamics and human migrations inside and out of the region, as well as to Europe. A distinction between the terms "displacement" and "migration" has been made throughout the paper. Other concomitant outcomes, such as effects on humanitarian assistance, human welfare, and general impact upon human capital,

are poor because their effects cannot be solely reduced to demographic indicators. The last section addresses potential contributing factors in generating a specific Sahelian security crisis. The long-standing economic and environmental difficulties, together with repeated and severe political crises, have lasting human consequences. Peasant revolts during the colonial period did not resolve the structural causes of hunger and poverty. In many border or frontier areas, borders drawn by colonial powers with little understanding of local traditional patterns have isolated various minority groups from the major ethnicity to which they are linked on the other side of the frontier. Since the 1980s, significant declines in agriculture and related employment have led to rural impoverishment. Since the mid-1990s, repeated and serious political crises have resulted in significantly increased displacement and migration.(Alexis Licht, 2024)

5. REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES

Regional and international responses to the Sahel crisis have been diverse. Immediate humanitarian assistance when the crisis erupted was thus mostly provided by non-governmental organizations and multilaterals. Other vital support included the civilian aspect of missions intended to support the Niger and Mali borderland, and political, military, and humanitarian assistance accorded to Mauritania, along with offerings of funds by donors for emergency assistance and the construction of peace and development initiatives, or for the delivery of structural food assistance programs.

Bilateral interventions and multilateral financial and economic assistance were not ignored. Various countries and organizations provided responses to help the Sahel countries exit the crisis. Initiatives aimed at helping Malian and Nigerien pastoralists were launched. A program intended to oversee the development of infrastructure in Sahel countries was initiated. Funding was offered for activities to help the people in the Sahel. During a climate change conference, a panel discussion raised awareness about food security in the Sahel. A network of think tanks and organizations also provided ideas and suggestions for international action and for policy toward Sahel countries. An event cemented the efforts to coordinate and reinforce assistance to the G5 Sahel countries. A regional action plan was launched, which put a much stronger emphasis on cooperation and the external action dimension. In terms of military operations, the G5 Sahel has since been formed and has been coordinating military activity with several other countries. The economic aspects of the response to the Sahel crisis have included an emergency plan for the Sahel region and an agricultural project funded by a development bank.(Vogel, 2022)

5.1. Military Interventions

It is a bad idea to use military means to fight the sort of poverty and social injustice that are the root causes of war. What military operations can achieve in the Sahelian context is only the containment of the crisis and the creation of a

military cordon against the infiltration and spreading of armed groups. This strategy has been described as 'whack-a-mole' because it is about knocking down the symptoms of an underlying or more deeply seated problem rather than dealing with the problem itself. Arguably, there is a real risk that heavy-handed military intervention could end up strengthening the armed groups. Indeed, the more their members are subjected to abuses or the more their weapons inventories are filled with booty, the more the groups' leaders will be able to recruit replacements and moralize the group.(Olivier J. Walther, 2021)

Joint operations lacking relevant legal authorization would reinforce the idea that foreign military intervention in the Sahel aims not to help the regions at war, but to support the presence of a military force being positioned throughout the eastern Sahel as a capability in support of action. This strategic choice risks being perceived as a propagation of a shadow empire in the Sahel. It would, in turn, favor the attraction exercise of the various groups targeting France, which have a story to tell and a desire for action against the assimilationist project of a France that would divide according to sectarian lines and against its ambition to control from an African angle the route for the greatest possible share of African migrations. The operation of deterrence and rescues in the Sahel should be accompanied by humanitarian actions in the Sahel. Their success requires the sharing of political objectives, strategic analysis capabilities, and forces from the member states of the G5 Sahel, the EU, and the UN, as well as by the publication of exit scenarios seen not as a defeat, but rather as a flexible horizon.(André Vicente Liz, 2021)

5.2. Development Aid and Assistance

While official development assistance (ODA) to Africa is not negligible, the main concern here is the volume and effectiveness of ODA targeting the Sahel region and providing development assistance to it (not including humanitarian assistance). ODA to Africa has been increasing in value during the 1980-2006 study period, relatively slowly at an annual rate of slightly over 4%, whereas the average annual growth rate in real terms for ODA to the Sahel is less than 2% compared to 6.68% average annual increase during 1980-2006 for Afghanistan and Pakistan.(Young, 2020)

Assistance to Sub-Saharan Africa is composed of diverse forms. First, a large proportion of food aid each year goes to African countries. Second, in-kind grants or concessional loans have been used to finance technical assistance in agricultural development. Third, given the importance of export earnings from raw materials and the rising international trade barriers, numerous African countries are provided with recent balance-of-payments support. Fourth, in order to facilitate tourism and in some cases to enhance political or strategic influence, Sub-Saharan Africa has been allocated funds for transportation projects, particularly for the construction of airports, roads, harbors, and telecommunications facilities. Fifth, financial support under the International

Development Association and African Development Fund covering a wide range of development projects is provided in order to reduce poverty. The ADF community aims to support IDA's objectives through its loan mechanism but does not have independent decision-making powers; policy conditionality applies to its assistance.(Katharina Löhr, 2022)

6. CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS OF CURRENT EFFORTS

Because of the regional character of the multidisciplinary strategic documents to combat the long-term drought, the major applications are to design "emergency" measures to handle short-term crises. The main limitation is related to the agro-economical aspects of projects by which farmers' efforts to solve snowmelt drought by intensifying farm work under a "full" rainfall. The projects may promote the decline of soil moisture at the end of the season, and quite likely, the early failure of the harvest. At the same time, projects to foster better drought conditions could no doubt lead to substantial ecological and economic improvements. Some such projects to control phreatic zones could contribute to safeguarding water resources, rare varieties of tree species, or wild or migratory animals. Until reaching this "green revolution," what will these people eat? In the absence of public or private storage facilities, food aid will thus remain the only solution to the food crisis.

6.1. Coordination Issues

It is an obvious and growing problem that several institutions are offering bits and pieces of what is to be done to solve the Sahel problem. According to their objectives, biases, capacities, and negotiating skills, the measures they advocate do not easily fit as a coherent and feasible ensemble. The general problem is typical of the lack of efficient coordination among the huge number of private and public entities involved in international cooperation, both at national and international levels. It is particularly intense in the Sahel, not only because of the large number of Sahelian countries whose problems are concerned, but also because they have deep customary rights and traditional practices that are vital in order to obtain the hoped-for results.(OKORO, 2020)

The malaise concerns problems related to three crucial dimensions of cooperation in the Sahel: the representation of several Sahelian countries by the Niger Basin Authority; confusion concerning what is done, proposed, and being programmed by bilateral aid agencies, international or regional cooperation organizations; and advice provided, with little coordination, by the United Nations agencies considered to be experts in matters closely related to this paper. All three dimensions are embedded in the tortuous process that led to the adoption of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought. The same difficulty is also found in the very different opinions that were expressed about the desirability and feasibility of the Action Program proposed by African experts

and the World Bank for the same countries considered in this contribution.(Francesco S.R. Pausata, 2020)

6.2. Funding Shortages

As donors have rethought their aid strategies following the end of the Cold War, new donors are less well attuned to the Sahel. Most assistance has been in the form of short-term emergency assistance and not the long-term development assistance of the pre-1990 period. In Burkina Faso, for example, 43% of its agricultural requirement gap has gone unfilled. The crisis of 2004 saw a shortfall of 91 kg/ha in fertilizable soil, equivalent to 182 million metric tons across the region. A regional irrigation program has been starved of funds, due in part to a lack of perceived political importance; donors see urgent situations while ignoring the equally pressing need for regional solutions. Furthermore, the pilot program failed due to a perceived lack of responsibility for it among the pilot governments, donors slower than expected in creating a donor pool, and political instability among some of the donor countries. This situation reflects the fact that the Sahel cannot compete with global geopolitical dramas or with other localized crises, due to the smaller fractured forces of conflict in comparison with the larger coalitions that develop for crises over global access to energy. A lack of diplomatic or lobbying resources on behalf of the Sahelian countries also means less priority given to the Sahel than to other trouble spots around the world.(Brandt, 2020)

Conclusion with future prospects and recommendations

The Sahel crisis requires a comprehensive, locally-driven approach that goes beyond military solutions. Strengthening governance, investing in climate resilience, and fostering regional cooperation are key to breaking the cycle of instability. This study aims to contribute to policy discussions by providing an integrated analysis of the crisis and actionable recommendations.

The conflict within and between the Sahel's nine states is resilient and complex, and it benefits transnational criminal and extremist networks. Levels of violence remain dangerously high, driven by the unpredictability of the jihadist threat, tensions between disparate communities, marginalized youth, and the serial failure of governance by leaders across the Sahel who appear unable to articulate any sort of positive vision for the future. There is little sign yet of local violence diminishing, let alone a peace to keep. No single factor will stop the Sahel crisis from poisoning the world. But this does not mean that the Sahel is lost. Imaginations on how to address the causes that fuel violent conflict are too scarce. And so are ideas on how to provide local solutions to local needs, including through institutions, good governance, and more. The international community can and should be doing more – and better – to prevent conflicts before they break out. Against this depressing backdrop, there are common ingredients that will be central to any attempt to prevent a conflict in the Sahel. First, and most obviously, international actors need to step up their engagement. The countries that bore the

biggest scars of the wars have to be the most proactive in standing up for peace. Second, the international community must engage and communicate with a broad cross-section of society in the states where they are active – and not in an ad hoc manner but as a matter of routine. Ethnicity and local politics cannot become the yardstick by which the international community formulates any planned project or mission in the Sahel. Third, international actors should bolster processes, support local and national institutions, and prevent as best they can water from the Sahara conflict from overflowing the banks of the region. Fourth, before launching interventions, ask a simple question: what does success look like for these particular interventions? And how will our actions impact young people in this country or this region in 15 years' time? Quest for firm answers before indulging in vain assumptions of future benign developments.

Long-Term Sustainable Solutions

The root causes of poverty, hunger, and malnutrition in the Sahel are multifaceted and complex. As such, the solutions to these problems also require multifaceted and complex solutions. The resources and support from the international and regional African communities are essential for the implementation of these solutions. Some long-term sustainable solutions include, but are not limited to: population stabilization and family planning, natural resource management and agricultural policies, improved access to education, health services, safe water, and sanitation, building rural infrastructure, promotion of responsible use of democracy for social change, good governance, and accountability. Population stabilization is an essential prerequisite for long-term sustainable production of food as well as for regional peace and security. The governments of the Sahel were urged to reinforce family planning policies and programs, as well as take measures to improve the status of women. The Sahelian governments were also urged to promote regional cooperation for better management of natural resources, specifically the use of water resources, with a view to contributing to the long-term sustainable production of food. This includes the transfer, on a sub-regional basis, of technologies for making better use of these resources.

Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution

Peacebuilding and conflict resolution aim to construct normative and institutional structures that would encourage different groups in society to work together on the basis of consensus rather than confrontation and to rely on the state and the institutionalized political sphere for the resolution of their conflicts. The purpose of peacebuilding is to repair the social, economic, and political fabric of societies that have been torn apart by armed conflict, while conflict resolution efforts aim more specifically at immediate conflict management. The chief aim is to promote an active and unified political community that may protect individuals from violence, oppression, and discrimination. The construction of norms, political institutions, and legal frameworks that make possible agreement on the

organization and management of territorial disputes between territorial groups should encourage parity between territorial groups, thus avoiding hegemonic impositions. Some of the most important initiatives that have addressed the collective security challenges in Africa have been peace-related and have contributed to the prevention and resolution of conflict on the continent. Efforts to help Africa help itself have followed models and concepts that have been tried out in different regions of the world. Peacekeeping missions have implemented specific conflict management functions such as peace enforcement, peace observing, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding. Accompanied by or incorporated into peacekeeping operations are peacemaking, peace negotiation, and conflict resolution initiatives. Peacemaking has been pursued not only through diplomatic initiatives carried out by such actors as the UN and the African Union, poضlitical actors, and regional and sub-regional organizations but also by NGOs and religious institutions. Peacebuilding activities have involved long-term social, economic, and political reconstruction activities that aim to contribute to the effective prevention of the likelihood of the resumption of armed conflict.

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