

Draft executive summary of report of explorative visit Mali, March 2014

Project: Civil Society for a Human Security Strategy in Mali

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1. Introduction

This report shares the main reflections and analysis of the outcomes of an explorative visit of the program assistant of Human Security Collective to Mali. This visit was done in the frame of the Civil Society for a Human Security Strategy project, a joint project of WANEP (West-African Network for Peacebuilding); GPPAC (Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict) and Human Security Collective (HSC).

Background of the Civil Society for a Human Security Strategy in Mali project and the role of Human Security Collective

This project is set up from the belief that in the current context of Mali, local civil society organisations (CSOs) are key to prepare, support and inform an inclusive and people-centered dialogue process. Local CSOs can play an important mediating role and present a capacity to counter violent extremism, in particular within the scope of a regional framework. With the overall goal to contribute to human security and sustainable peacebuilding efforts in Mali, the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) and Human Security Collective (HSC) currently work towards the following objectives:

- To support a strong, vibrant Malian civil society network that mobilizes a critical mass around the issues of human security and peacebuilding;
- To enable network members to formulate and upscale a human security strategy for Mali that is gender-sensitive, feasible, and pays attention to the structural causes of the conflict;
- To strengthen good practices on countering violent extremism through human security approaches

- To ensure the international community, including regional bodies, engages with civil society for the development of security policies

The project involves a multi-level process, in which WANEP convenes regular civil society dialogue and support national consultations to identify and strategize human security priorities including strategies to counter violent-extremism. Together the three organizations have both a local, regional and international network, which is made use of to incorporate an international advocacy component.

Human Security Collective supports the project in two interconnected manners. It seeks to connect both local and international security agenda's playing a role in Mali and the Sahel region and stimulates and facilitates interaction between key players in both areas. To prepare such interaction, several steps are involved, including the identification of and conversations with relevant local civil society players that are involved in human security issues and are willing to feedback to international players. The visit to Mali was organized to discuss human security with local civil society. Conversations focused on several issues, including the root causes of the crisis, CS's objectives and work and how this work relates to security and countering violent extremism people's thoughts on the different security agenda's and interventions playing a role in Mali.

This trip contributed to the identification of those individuals and CSO's that are relevant to human security in Mali and can formulate crucial contributions and feedback towards security related interventions from national, regional and international stakeholders. Next to engagement with local civil society, Human Security Collective also ensures engagement with international decision makers in policy arenas of the EU, UN (including the UN Counter Terrorism Task Force), the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and key donor countries.

Report of three weeks visit of program assistant Human Security Collective in March 2014

The visit to Mali was planned to gather information and network, for the project in general and specifically for international engagement, in this case specifically the [panel discussion on Mali](#), which Human Security Collective, in collaboration with GPPAC and WANEP, prepared as part of a side-event in New York. The side-event took place in the margins of the Global Counter Terrorism Strategy Review. The panel focussed on 'A Human Security approach to Countering Violent Extremism in Mali'. Both civil society and government shared their experiences with and perspectives on security, development and CVE in relation to the first pillar of the GCTS on the prevention of conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism.

The visit was planned to coincide with a two day multi-stakeholder forum (Forum Multi-Acteurs) on Security Governance. This forum focused on the governance of security, including the following topics: the contribution of civil society to the democratic governance of security; which military and strategy to counter terrorism; the problem of the proliferation of arms and good practices with regard to the prevention of conflict. Participation in this forum helped to meet relevant players from Mopti and the Northern regions of Mali and hear their stories and analyses. In the report will be referred to his meeting.

In this reflective document civil society perspectives on (human) security, their engagement, direct or more indirect, with security and CVE and their perspectives on security and the international interventions are discussed¹.

2. Civil Society in Mali

The visit to Mali included meetings with various actors among civil society in Mali; NGO's and INGO's working on human rights, justice, development, peace and governance, religious leaders, representatives of specific ethnic groups organizing themselves in civil society and several individuals. CS activities, motivations, perspectives on the root causes for the crisis in Mali and causes for violent extremism were discussed. Civil society in Mali is very broad and difficult to grasp as a whole. NGO's themselves sometimes referred to the classification² which is used by the EU. The EU distinguishes four levels of NGO's in Mali: 1. Grassroots organizations ('organisation de base'); 2. Intermediary types of NGO's ; 3. Thematic networks and collectives and 4. Broad umbrella organizations and platforms.

Next to more institutionalized civil society, also individuals, such as traditional leaders, religious leaders and individuals in the private sector are important players for human security in Mali. Such players, sometimes more informal, can involve both traditional and new actors and structures in society. Often traditional leaders are quite well integrated among civil society in Mali, but might only be partly visible for the international community. Also with regard to countering violent extremism, informal initiatives might play a very important role. Among communities there might well exist initiatives to discuss, warn and raise awareness on recruitment by extremist and criminal groups, however these might not be organized by institutionalized NGO's. There have been quite public initiatives, such as marches of youth in Gao and warnings in the media by NGO's and religious leaders, but smaller local initiatives might be invisible. A representative of a CSO from the North explained that on a local, informal and individual level, discouragement of recruitment to groups engaged in organized crime or violent extremism takes place. For example by explaining drug trafficking: What are drugs actually? Who are these groups? What could be alternative ways to get an income and be active citizens? The organization also organized a conference on terrorism already in 2009, which proves that there are CS actors that are concerned on this topic and not only since the recent crisis. Traditional mechanisms to prevent or mediate conflicts could also be interesting to look into. The role of traditional mediation mechanisms to prevent conflict is important for CS in Mali, but according to some, has weakened with the influence of modernization. For example, the role of 'Griots' could be looked into. These are musicians / storytellers specialized in history of family relations; every family has a Griot. They can be powerful on the political level as their feedback is taken very serious. Such players should be recognized and engaged with, but not 'institutionalized' by external actors.

¹ Names of people and organizations are mostly taken out, but if one looks to be introduced to a representative of CS in a specific area which is discussed, one can e-mail human security collective to see whether we can connect you, e-mail: siebrich@hscollective.org.

²For more information of the classification of both 'non-state' actors and civil society organizations in Mali, see: http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/mali/eu_mali/civil_society_dialogue/index_fr.htm

As everywhere, civil society in Mali is also experiencing challenges in their work and collaboration. Among civil society several networks exist and not everyone agrees to be member of one or the other. As in other countries, politics, representation and competition come in as a problem for collaboration and coherence between different civil society actors. One person referred to the competition on aid money among civil society as one of the major conflicts currently going on in Mali. Another mentioned the problem of lack of space within CSO's in Mali for young and new leaders. This might have to do with people remaining in their positions, the importance of relations and the respect for hierarchy and older people. However, young people are represented among civil society, both as interns and employees of organizations and youth has also formed their own networks and groups.

With regard to security, some persons mentioned the lack of competence and experience civil society has with issues of peace and security. Civil society themselves mentioned the crisis as a warning and turning point for them to give more attention to security issues in the country. However, there are certainly CSO's that work in the field of human security. Although security might be a new topic for many civil society actors in Mali, in conversations with CS people spoke quite naturally about 'human security', whether they used the term or not. Security was often addressed in relation to poverty, a sense of injustice, the lack of social services and other governance issues. With regard to traditional security, civil society often emphasized the importance of citizens being involved in the construction of security policies. Both views reflect a human security; an agenda which is open for multiple dimensions of security, democratic and people-centred. It should be noted that the human security concept is not new in Mali, as the Malian state has been involved in Human Security during the last decennia, for example by their membership to the 'Human Security Network'³ (Mali is one of the 13 members of this network created in 1998) and the state's work in recent years on 'shared security governance'⁴.

The link between their own work and countering violent extremism was not at all obvious for many of the CSO's. It might have been the first time for some to discuss countering violent extremism in relation to their work. It should be noted that for many CSO's, especially those not based in the North, violent extremism is not something they necessarily understand as being a problem or being relevant in their work. When thinking about violence and conflict, some CSO's would rather discuss structural and older conflicts in the country, for example the problem of cohabitation of pastoralists and agriculturalists. Although old and structural conflicts combined with a lack of access to justice might very well be contributing to an environment supportive of violent extremism, not everyone would link the two. Whether they relate or not, it is important to give sufficient attention to such structural conflicts and ways to address such conflicts as they are impacting people's human security.

³ This is a network which was initiated by Canada and Norway in 1998 with the Lysøen Declaration to promoting a Human Security approach at the international agenda

⁴ For more information, read the publication by FES: 'Shared Security and Peace Governance, the Malian experience' English: <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/nigeria/08993.pdf> French: <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/nigeria/08952.pdf>

In the following paragraphs the ways civil society sees security and human security in Mali, what they view as the root causes to the (multi-dimensional) crisis and how their work relates to these causes will be discussed.

2.1 Poverty and Development

A representative of a CSO working on the inclusion of a specific ethnic group in the peace dialogues with government perceives the conflicts and violence in the North as a 'coping mechanism' to deal with the very harsh circumstances in the North, where basic needs are not secured and employment possibilities for youth are lacking. For peace and stability to come, he emphasized the need of a coherent and intelligent program including basic services, an accessible market and economic structures. Development and possibilities for youth are needed to replace what he called a 'narcotic and terrorist economy'. Many CSO's perceive poverty, lack of basic services and a lack of employment possibilities for youth as a main cause for Jihadist groups getting settled in certain regions and their ability to recruit local youth. Naturally this brings up questions on development aid that has been invested so far in Mali. What have been the effects of aid and what went wrong? Off course it is not only the failed aid that is to blame, as many, both internal and external factors play a role, but these questions should be addressed to be used as lessons for future policy and practice. One should note that priorities and challenges in development in Mali have been signaled before. The Malian government for example published a study on development perspectives in 1999 called 'Mali 2025'⁵, which as well already signaled the problem of extremism (see for example p. 42).

CS often confirmed that development issues are more severe in the North than in the South. Corruption was one of the issues coming up when discussing the challenges in development. Some argued that invested money got into the wrong hands and projects that this money was aimed for were not being implemented. Others also raised the difficult circumstances in the North to create development, which raises the need for a strong political will to improve development efficiently. Difficult circumstances include the insecurities and lack of infrastructure in the North. For several CSO's insecurities in the North were one of the reasons not being active there. These insecurities are more structural than the recent crisis; regular attacks by bandits on cars and a lack of state presence contribute to the insecurities.

Activities of CS related to development

- Many organizations work on development work, such as Water, Sanitation, Food-Security, (professional) education. The efficiency and circumstances of this work is something that should be further explored.
- Civil society advocates and informs development policies of government and donors. For example, CS actively organizes dialogues and consultations in which they identify priorities for development. Some organizations do consultations among the population; others organize community debates or dialogues in which priorities for development are being

⁵ http://213.154.74.164/invenio//record/18825/files/mali_ENP2025.pdf

identified. A strategy is to include authorities in such dialogues so they can directly take them into account.

- Although people sometimes noted CS's role to check on aid money and its use, CSO's with concrete activities to address corruption were not identified during this visit. This might be something to look into.

2.2 Injustice and inter and intra community conflicts

Injustice was a second cause often mentioned in relation to conflict and violent extremism. This includes problems such as economic injustice and poverty, but also has to do with corruption and inter and intra community relations. In the North hierarchical relations are quite strong and communal diversity is complex. Not only are there different ethnic groups, different classes are also present within these ethnic groups (this is the case in Mali as a whole). Slavery and being a descendent of slaves still impacts chances in society. A CSO active in this field was very critical to the state's lack of recognizing this problem and perceived the state and society to have 'a complex' in relation to the issue of slavery and class. Injustice in a broader sense, including hierarchical relations, lack of equal citizenship, unfair distribution of resources and corruption, has been mentioned as a major cause for the recent crisis. This includes violent extremism. Someone explained that for extremist groups, it is very easy to show youth how unjust the Malian society is. They offer a religious, 'divine' alternative. Joining jihadist and criminal groups can mean the transformation from someone without future possibilities to someone with a position and an income, it seems. A four wheel drive is a nice offer for young, frustrated youth without future perspectives.

Many conflicts and injustices in Mali take place over land. A structural problem is the cohabitation of pastoralists and agriculturalists . Many CS noticed the lack of state institutions where people can go to address these land conflicts and find justice. CS emphasized the importance of people's access to ways of expressing themselves on the conflicts and injustices they experience. The absence of such mechanisms causes frustrations. The parallel existence of both administrative and traditional authorities who might make clashing decisions over the possession of land forms another complexity. A further problem is corruption, people said that it is possible to actually 'buy' land rights.

As is known, MUJAO has provided for mediation for inter community conflicts in the region Gao, which has, among other 'good actions', increased appreciation of this group among the population. Inter and intra community conflicts, social injustice and corruption cause frustrations and seem to contribute to a supportive environment for violent extremism in Mali. Lack of state presence and access to justice create a gap, that needs to be filled. Civil society plays an important role in this field.

Examples of CS activities to do with access to justice, conflict prevention, mediation:

- Trainings on citizenship;
- Dialogues on diverse governance issues, there are special dialogues being organized with youth.

- Some organizations organize conflict mediation with the help of traditional leaders as mediators and collaboration with local authorities. Justice is the basis, but not necessarily in a formal way; use of symbolic reparations and traditional justice play an important role.
- Training the population with modules on issues such as basic rights and land rights, by working together with volunteers called 'parajurists' in several regions.
- Providing legal assistance close to the tribunals of Ségou and Bamako
- Raising awareness through trainings, conferences and advocacy on the fact that slavery still affects many people's life's in Mali and their chances in society. Advocating for recognition of the problem and criminalization of slavery.

2.3 Religious diversity and inter and intra faith dialogue

Mali is a strongly religious society. Many people are proud of their tolerant Islam and of their religious and ethnic tolerance more generally. Relations between the Muslim majority (more than 90 %) and Christian minority (less than 5%) are traditionally good. Traditionally, Muslims and Christians are in good contact, visit each other's celebrations and bring good wishes to families of the other faith when a new baby is born.

According to many people met during this visit, it is not religion and conviction, but rather economic necessity or a search for revenge / justice, that leads people to join 'jihadist' groups. With regard to 'jihadist' groups, many perceive religion to be a cover for criminal activities. Others explain the use of religion as an orthodox, pure and divine alternative to the injustice in Malian society. They felt that in that way it can play a role in the recruitment of people to Jihadist groups.

A minority in Mali is animist. Animism continues to be of importance for people of other religions, although this might not be directly visible. Animism is quite strongly represented among the Dogon country. Someone from the Dogon noted the religious tensions caused by the Mosques being built with foreign money. The state started to control this recently. This person described the following observation: During the 80's, before tourism flourished, Wahhabism and Salafism arrived in the Dogon and traditional masks and local museums were being abandoned. This change was enabled by increased mobility among people who migrated for economic reasons to Bamako and abroad. With the increasing tourism in the nineties and 21st century, the popularity of this 'strong religion' declined. Tourism was being pointed at as an economic and cultural alternative for religious extremism: it offers an income and appreciation of Dogon's traditional culture. It should be noted that Wahhabis and Salafists should not and are not necessarily framed 'extremist' and certainly not 'violent extremist'. In this case, 'extremism in people's heads' was being mentioned.

When discussing the role of religion, most people viewed bad education and wrong interpretations as the main problem with regard to (violent) extremism. Not all Malian religious leaders are well educated which according to some, makes them and their followers more sensitive to outside influence and 'extremist' interpretations of Islam. In that regard, the initiative of Morocco to offer training of Malian religious leaders is being welcomed. Some noticed that in opposition to Sufi Islam in Mali, Salafists and Wahhabis are better organized and educated. It is however important to note that many people did not necessarily see them as 'extremists' and certainly not 'violent extremist'. Few noted and thought that links exist between representatives of these religious groups and Jihadist groups. A certain tension between different denominations can however exist also without such

links. One Imam met during the visit was concerned that Salafists dominate all religious radio stations and have 29 of the 33 seats of the High Islamic Council, where as they represent a minority among the Muslims in society. He explained that the Wahhabi and Salafist groups became so dominant through financial support from abroad and grants that help them study abroad.

With regard to religion and education, sometimes CS noted the Quran schools (Daaras) and the Talibé (students of the Koran). Many of these schools function as boarding schools for young boys, often from poor backgrounds. The schools are led by a Marabout (religious teacher). Many talibé combine their religious education (recitation of the Quran) with begging for food, and sometimes money. These Quran schools are mentioned because recruitment by Jihadist groups took place among the Talibé of some Quran schools, however this is a relatively small phenomenon. Some noted drugs was used to brainwash them. It is an issue of concern both for the High Islamic Council and amongst the people in Mali. Concrete activities with regard to the Talibé amongst the institutionalized CS were not identified, but might well exist.

Religious leaders are important players among civil society in Mali. Some organize activities such as inter faith dialogue. They are also often amongst the people invited during meetings and dialogues organized by other CSO's. Also some Christian organizations organize interfaith dialogue.

CS activities to do with inter and intra faith dialogue by Civil Society:

- Inter and intra faith dialogue. Exchange of religious understandings and interpretations and raising awareness on tolerant interpretation of the Quran can be part of such dialogue.
- Some religious leaders organized themselves with others and were active in denouncing and warning in the media against violent extremism. The recent crisis has increased urgency to engage in such activities for some religious leaders.
- Cooperation of CSO's and religious leaders to raise awareness on certain issues, for example issues as women's rights or development issues such as waste and hygiene.

2.4 Transitional Justice and other post-conflict activities

The post-conflict phase that Mali is in today poses many complex issues both from a humanitarian, peace, development and human rights perspective. CS in Mali has played and is playing a crucial role in this. It is a new situation for CS and things like 'transitional justice' are new topics. However, I found CS very willing to learn. During the Mopti meeting CS expressed their willingness to learn from each other in their activities to prevent conflicts. Furthermore, they showed interest in revitalizing traditional mediation techniques.

Some of the current complexities and questions Mali's CS, politics and the broader population dealt with and discussed during the visit:

- A major debate currently going on in Mali is how to deal with ex-combatants returning to their communities.
- CS worries that 'popular justice' will take place if the state will not provide security and justice.

- Several CS representatives have mentioned the importance of taking the victims who experienced violence during the crisis into account. They discussed the concern that there was a lot of talk of the necessity of supporting the victims of the crisis, but that no action had been taken. They were not being identified and provided a way to express themselves and find justice.
- Humanitarian aid is coordinated by OCHA. However; this doesn't mean that all villages can be reached. Furthermore, many people remain displaced. Certain communities who fled their village are afraid to come back as they fear to be stigmatized and become victims of revenge by the Malian army.
- The problem of psychological trauma because of the experience with extreme violence. This was for example mentioned as a consequence of the destruction of cultural and religious buildings (Mausoleum, Mosque) in Timbouctou, which had a strong spiritual and cultural meaning for many people. Someone mentioned the importance of awareness on what had happened and not directly renovating the damage to these buildings.
- The political dialogue for reconciliation. During the visit, this process was in the phase of preparatory talks. MINUSMA has a role in facilitating an inclusive dialogue in which not only armed groups, but also civil society can participate. Since the crisis, several ethnic groups have formed civil society organizations to represent themselves and advocate their inclusion in these dialogues. Not only different social and ethnic groups, also women groups are advocating their role in the dialogues.
- Although people from the North and the South are both internally quite diverse and mixed, a North-South tension was being observed. When discussing the lack of employment possibilities and development in the North some people mentioned that they felt that ethnic groups from the North had been positively discriminated with regard to government jobs and that they felt discriminated against themselves. Groups (originally) from the North, for example with a clearer skin, felt in the fall of the crisis they had been stigmatized as members of rebel groups. A problem some refugees are still struggling with in their fear to return to their village of origin.

CS mentioned the importance of an open public debate in which people dare to speak out about these complex issues coming up now relevant stability has returned to the country, but as many issues remain unaddressed and many questions unanswered. Some emphasized the problem that people do not dare to speak out on injustice and violence being experienced during the crisis as they fear the consequences. As mentioned, some fear that when justice will not be provided 'popular justice' will take place. Therefore to provide access to justice is important, which can include symbolic and restorative justice.

Examples of CS activities with regard to the post-conflict context:

- Ethnic and social groups organize themselves and advocate their inclusion within the political dialogues for reconciliation.
- Women groups also advocate their role in such dialogues. Furthermore, women are being trained on reconciliation.
- Transitional Justice activities. For example the documentation of human rights violations, which will be of great help also to the work of the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation

Commission which needs to be installed. Reports will be published, so victims can be identified and assisted.

- Humanitarian help to and dialogue with displaced people. Many CS spoke about the importance of the IDP's return to their villages, as with the health living in the bush will be extremely tough. Some IDP's do not dare to come back because they are afraid to be stigmatized. Some are ex-combatants and fear reprisals.
- Reintegration activities with victims, for example with psychological support and vocational trainings.
- Several (international) organizations work on reconciliation and dialogue

2.5 Security and the Security Sector in Mali

The feeling that the state is not willing or capable to provide security for everyone in all regions of Mali is another very important cause for frustration amongst the population.

Insecurities in Mali, especially in Northern Mali, remain. This includes economic insecurity caused by loss of businesses during the crisis and food insecurity. Insecurities are also caused by attacks on cars, rocket attacks, rebels still controlling certain parts of the country, inter and intra community conflicts, the proliferation of arms and the presence of armed /self-defense groups.

According to some the lack of a functioning security sector (and related to this, mechanisms to address injustice and conflict) is a cause for joining armed groups and the creation of self-defence groups. Many mentioned the vulnerability of the security forces (both the police forces, the military police and the military). They are weak in numbers, not motivated, badly spread out over the country, badly trained and equipped, badly functioning and with little trust from the population.

The trust in the Malian army is lacking generally, but for several Northern communities this feeling is even stronger as they fear stigmatization by the Malian army. Frustration over the weakness and corruption within the Malian army is present both in the North and the South of Mali. While there is a group in the North that might not at all want the Malian army there, people met during the visit to Bamako and Mopti, of which some came from the Northern regions, were rather concerned on the lack of security experienced in their regions.

Role of CS and CS activities in relation to security (freedom from fear) and the security sector

- Several CS actors met during this visit mentioned the need for the inclusion of CS and the population more generally in security governance. Some organizations play an important role by organizing dialogue on security governance and human security with multiple stakeholders. This is important to create an open dialogue on the topic, which enables democratic security governance and will inform and help the establishment of better policy and practice.
- Initiatives working on community policing, in collaboration with authorities.
- Studies on security governance, FES was involved with and studied the initiative of the Malian government for 'shared governance of peace and security'. This initiative started in 2005 and the study was done in 2008 and 2010, a publication came out in 2012. See:

3. Political and Operational space for Civil Society

Political space

During this visit the political and operational space was also discussed with several CSO's. No limits of political space / freedom of speech / freedom of press were expressed by CS met during this visit. Most often good work relations with the government were emphasized. Some incidents of insecurity of CS because they spoke out critically were mentioned, but the source of the threat was in both cases unclear. Relation CS-Government and openness for critical activism and dialogue remains something to be looked into more.

Operational space

There was a big difference between CS in terms of their funding. Some raised money locally with members of their organizations. Some were really working in quite poor conditions (very old buildings, no cars, old computers). Others were better related to international funding and had fewer problems in this regard.

Security issues, especially in the North, remain an issue of concern for NGO's based in Bamako who want to go there for projects. Logistics are more complicated, because routes in the North aren't well developed.

Other circumstances which are not easy to deal with for many programs are the fact that many people cannot read and write, people speak different languages and awareness of things such as human rights and the democratic system in the rural areas are quite low.

4. International interventions

CS met during this trip expressed various views on the international interventions. In general, people were relatively positive about what SERVAL had done and really thought that the mission was necessary and quite successful. The appreciation of this mission goes hand in hand with doubts about the intentions of the French.

A part of CS is convinced of the need of both interventions. They are not asking questions about the missions being there, but mostly on the fact that they should not be there to stay.

However, many people had a more 'wait and see' attitude towards MINUSMA. Some didn't quite understand what they were doing, and whether they were helping the country.

Several critical issues CS mentioned with regard to MINUSMA:

- What is MINUSMA's position in relation to the armed groups (MAA, MNLA) that are still in control of certain parts of the country? The population is not seeing this changing, and meanwhile, their freedom of movement is being restricted by this situation. According to many, MINUSMA should be on the side of the Malian authorities in assisting their return of authority in all parts of Mali. People don't understand nothing is being done (this is how they perceive it) against the armed groups still in control of part of the territory. This is perceived as interposition instead of assistance to the Malian authorities. This of course is only one perspective, but it was the perspective of most people met during this visit.

- Lack of a more regional approach. Why is there no border control: armed groups partly come from neighbouring countries. In this regard the fact that MINUSMA is restricted to Mali is also criticized.
- The problem of prostitution. Quite some people were concerned about the (illegal) prostitution that is stimulated by the presence of MINUSMA camps. Prostitutes can be Malian but also come from neighbouring countries. It is not accepted in society and causes disruption of families and communities. There have been initiatives to warn and inform people about this problem.
- How do we make sure MINUSMA is not staying too long? How do we assure an assisting role?