



Youth participation in the Central Sahel response

Key results

November 2023



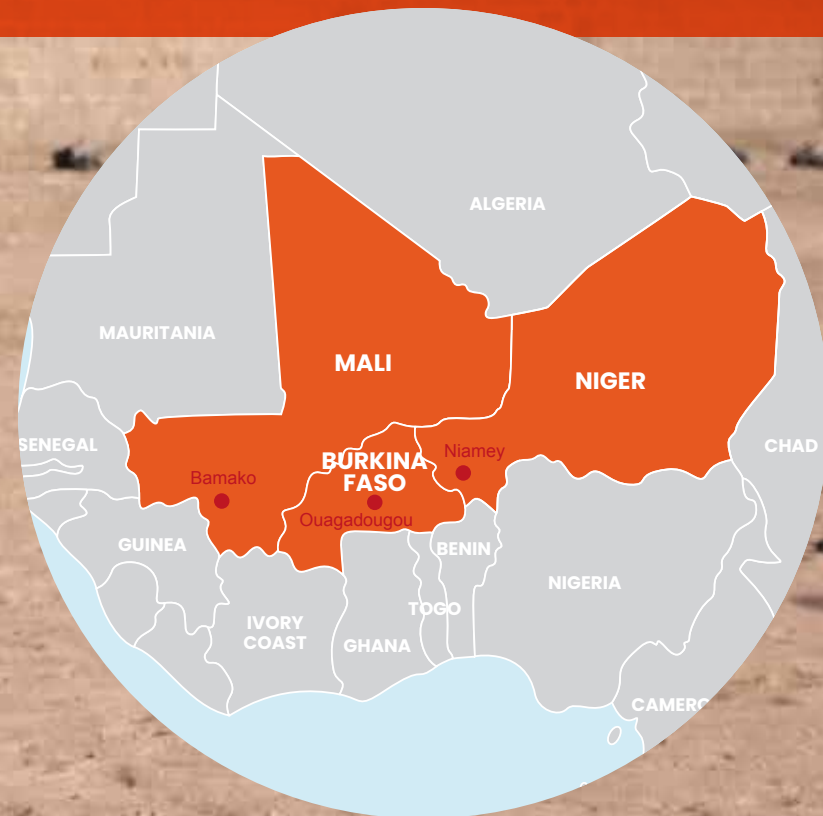


Summary

Introduction	p.3
Methodology	p.4
Limitations of the study	p.4
Profile of respondents	p.5
Key results	p.6
Analysis	p.7
Recommendations	p.12

Introduction

As part of Plan International's humanitarian response in the Central Sahel (Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger), which includes youth engagement activities, a survey was carried out to find out how much young people know about the crisis, how involved they are in the response, and to take their suggestions into account.



Methodology



An **online survey** was carried out in July and August 2023. The link to the survey was shared via sponsored publications on social media. Members of youth organisations with whom Plan International works were mobilised to participate in the survey and relay it to their peers.

Limitations of the study

The survey was conducted online among young people who follow Plan International's **social media** in the three countries and those of Plan International West and Central Africa, and **members of organisations working with Plan International**. It can be assumed that subscribers to these social media and members of youth organisations have a higher-than-average level of knowledge and involvement.

Furthermore, the majority of subscribers to these social media are male (respectively 66.10% for Plan International West and Central Africa and 73.20% for Plan International Burkina Faso). Finally, the survey only reached young people who were computer literate, could connect to the Internet, and spoke French.



Profile of respondents



255 adolescents and young people

responded to the survey including 173 males and 82 females.

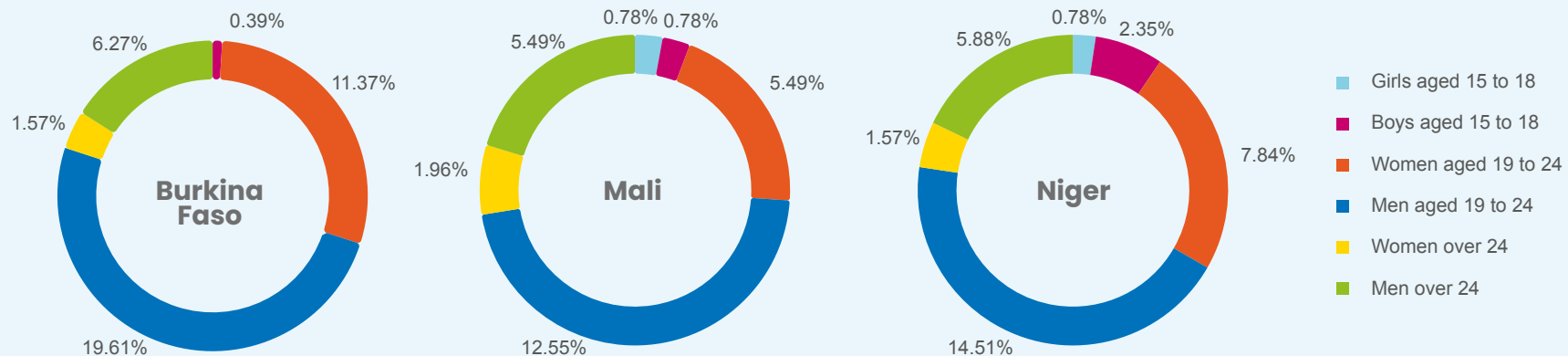
The majority of respondents in all three countries are male, and the 19-24 age group is the most represented.

55% of the respondents are members of youth organisations and networks, including 61% from Burkina Faso, 55% from Niger, and 46% from Mali.

78% have higher education, 15% have secondary education, 6% have technical or vocational training and 1% have attended koranic schools.

The majority of respondents therefore are students, with this trend being more marked among respondents from Burkina Faso.

Age and sex of respondents by country





Key results

- Young people in the Central Sahel are **overwhelmingly affected by the crisis**, whether they are related to people displaced/affected by attacks, displaced themselves, or suffering the effects of the crisis on their employment, purchasing power, or education.
- **Young people in Burkina Faso are more directly affected by the crisis and more involved** in the response than those in Mali and Niger.
- Young people in the Central Sahel are all aware that their country is going through a crisis but have a **moderate understanding** of it, and almost all of them **would like to be more/better informed**.
- **They would like to respond more actively to the crisis**, mainly through information and awareness-raising actions, forming associations, and organising collections and fund-raising campaigns.
- The majority of young people feel **they need training and capacity-building, better information on the crisis, as well as financial support and equipment to enable them** to play a greater part in the response.

Results and analysis



Level of vulnerability to the crisis

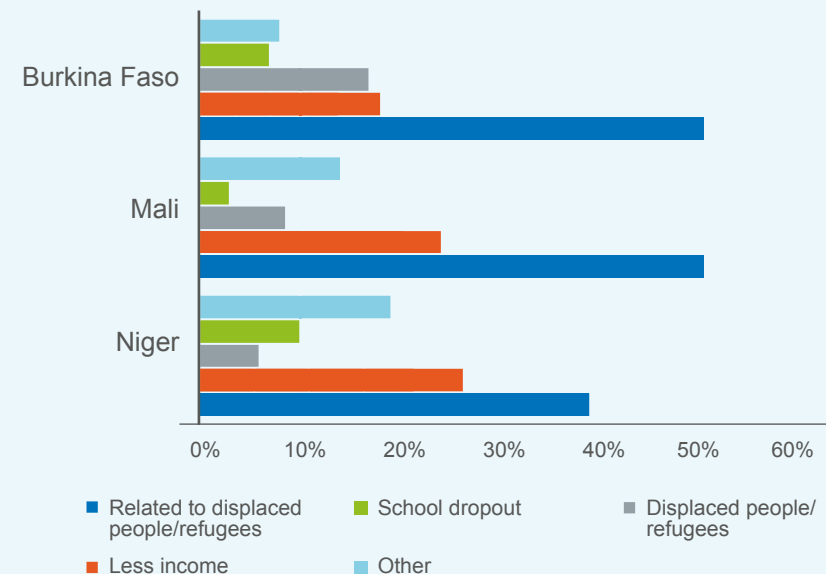
Young people in the Central Sahel are **overwhelmingly affected** by the crisis, either directly or indirectly.

46.3% of the respondents said that they have relatives who are affected by attacks or are displaced/refugees. This figure is particularly high in Burkina Faso and Mali at 50%, while Niger follows with 39%.

Other consequences or vulnerabilities affecting young people include: **rising prices of basic commodities, difficulties in finding employment, difficulties in traveling** within their country due to insecurity, and outside their country due to the suspension of visa issuance for certain destinations, among others. Some respondents also said that they are affected psychologically and emotionally.



Youth vulnerability to the crisis by country

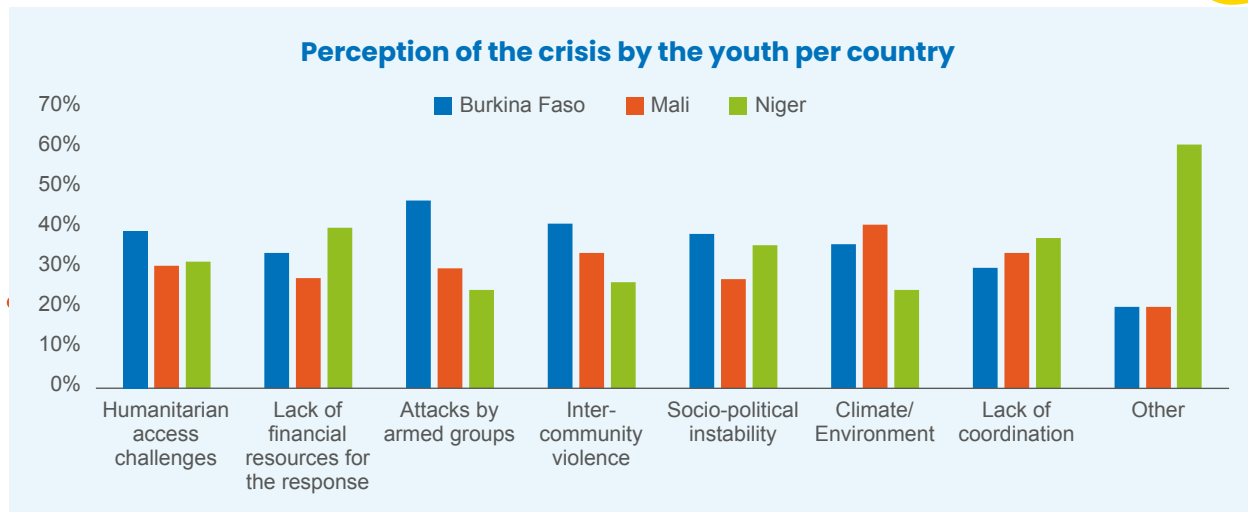


Perception of the crisis

Among the problems most affecting their country, **the majority of young burkinabe mention the attacks by armed groups and inter-community violence.**

Young people in Mali particularly highlighted climate change and environmental degradation (40%), while youth people in Niger emphasized the lack of resources (40%), as well as the lack of coordination between humanitarian actors (37%).

A number of respondents, particularly those from Niger, mentioned corruption, the lack of opportunities for young people and women, and the influence of Western states among the problems most affecting their country.



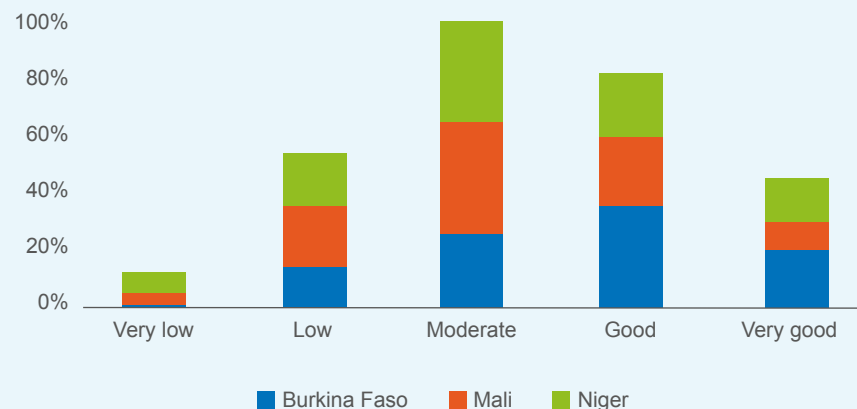
Understanding and knowledge of the crisis

Young people in the Central Sahel **are all aware of the crisis**, both in their own country and in neighbouring countries. However, their **level of understanding of the crisis remains moderate**. Young people in Burkina Faso have a better level of understanding than young people in Mali and Niger.

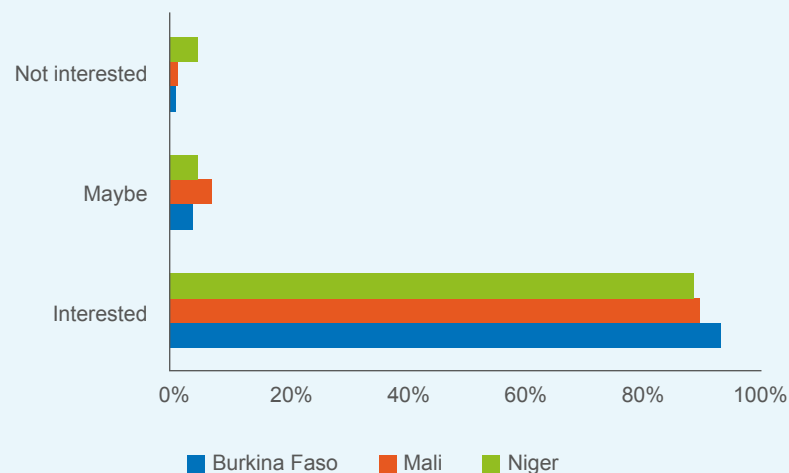
Almost all young people in the Sahel region would like more information on the crisis in their country, with **92.3% of the total respondents interested**.



Young people's understanding of the crisis by country

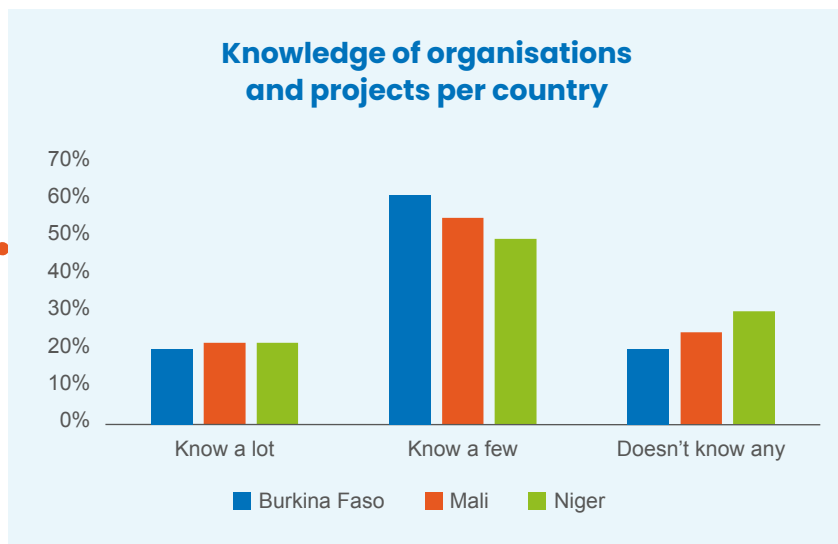


Wish to be informed per country



Knowledge of humanitarian organisations and projects

On average, **21.3% of respondents** said they knew a lot of humanitarian organisations and projects, with this rate being more or less the same in each country. However, young people in Burkina Faso stand out from those in Mali and Niger: more of them know a few organisations and projects, and fewer know none.



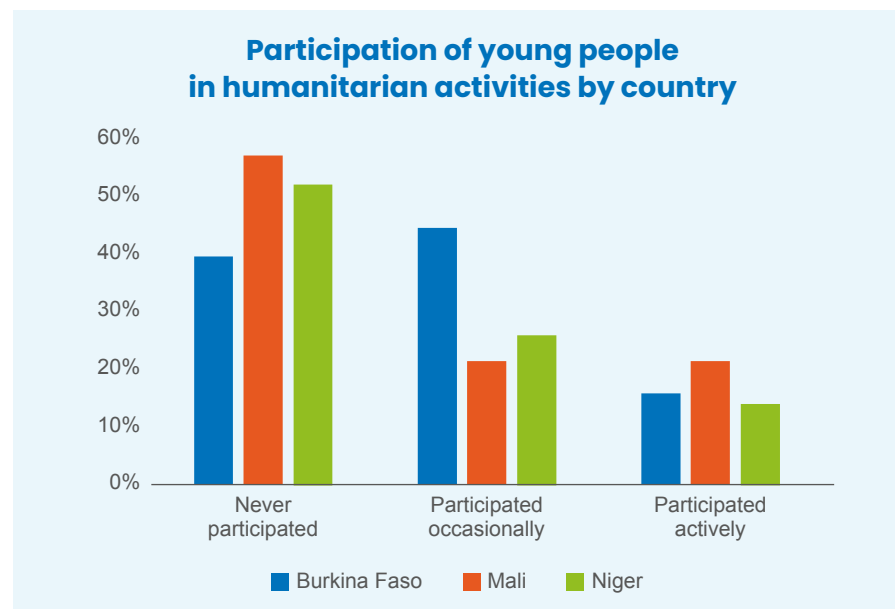
Involvement in humanitarian activities



Young people in the Central Sahel are only marginally involved in the response. The proportion of those who have never been involved is 50.6%.

On average, **only 17.6% of young people in the region claim to be actively involved.**

Young people in Burkina Faso are more involved, either actively or occasionally. This may be explained by the fact that more respondents are members of youth organisations in Burkina Faso than in the other two countries.

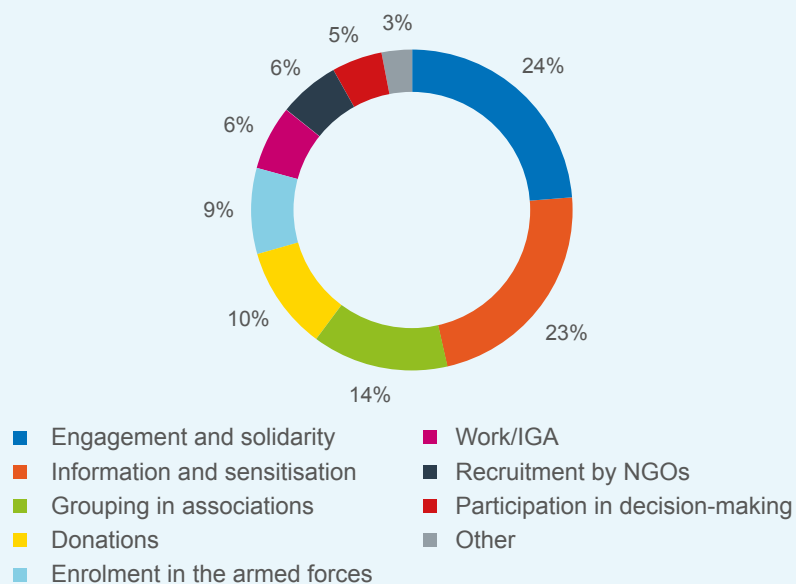


Types of contributions proposed by young people

We asked young people about the types of contributions they propose through an open question, and none of the respondents indicated that young people should not contribute to the humanitarian response.

They all felt that young people should contribute by showing solidarity with those affected by the crises, and more specifically by **carrying out awareness-raising activities** among their peers and those affected, and by fighting false information, **forming associations and collecting donations in money or kind.**

Contributions suggested by young people



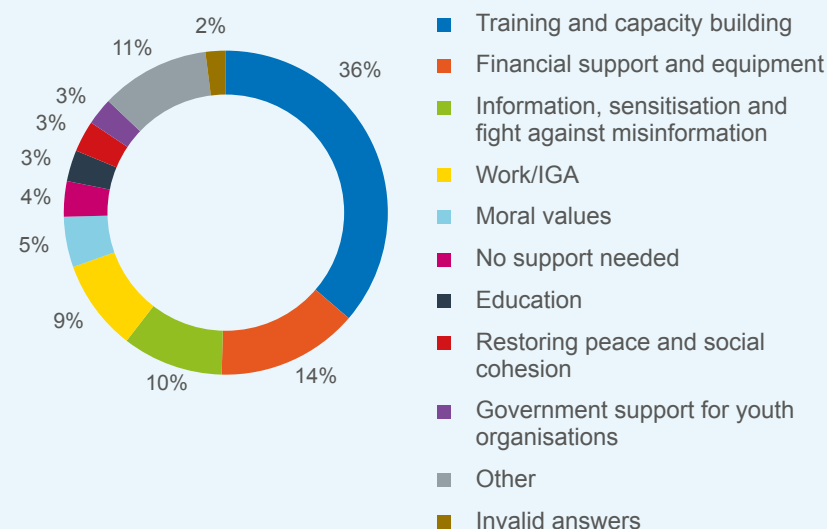
Suggestions from young people for greater involvement in the humanitarian response



In response to an open-ended question on their suggestions and needs to contribute more actively to the response, young people in the Central Sahel **mostly mentioned training, funding and material support for activities as well as access to reliable information** on the crisis.

Other suggestions include access to education and improvement of the education system, restoring peace and social cohesion, combating insecurity, and disarming armed groups.

Suggestions to contribute to the response





Recommendations

- Enable members of youth organisations to **better understand the crisis, the way humanitarian actors respond to it, by organising information sessions and producing information tools** adapted to their level of knowledge and needs while assessing the risks of such activities in sensitive socio-political contexts
- **Develop training and capacity-building initiatives for youth organisations**, including humanitarian principles, emergency project management, and risk management
- Strengthen the capacity of youth organisations to **gather and verify information and combat hate speech**, particularly online
- Involve young people affected by the crisis and **youth organisations in the design, implementation, and evaluation of response projects**, including through data collection, and strengthen feedback mechanisms tailored to the needs of younger people
- **Identify youth organisations** already active in the response/ areas affected by the crisis, and take stock of their areas of intervention, capacity-building needs, and financial and material support requirements
- Encourage the establishment of frameworks for the **exchange and sharing of best practices** between youth organisations in the three countries of the Central Sahel, particularly online
- Allocate substantial, **flexible funding** to youth organisations involved in the response, while strengthening their administrative and financial management capabilities.

Other publications

- [Project Presentation](#): Youth and Adolescent Girls in Crisis at the Center of the Central Sahel Response
- [Youth friendly fact sheet](#) about the Central Sahel crisis

.....

Contacts



- **Marie-Noël Maffon**, Central Sahel Response Programme Manager:
marienoel.maffon@plan-international.org
- **Elise Cannuel**, Information and Communication Coordinator for the Central Sahel Response:
elise.cannuel@plan-international.org
- **Adolphus Gblorso**, Youth in Emergency Programming and Influencing Specialist:
adolphus.gblorso@plan-international.org

Plan International is fully committed to providing a safe, protective, and supportive environment for all children, girls and boys alike. Their dignity, well-being, and development are at the heart of all the organisation's actions.

