

The challenges of local development in a context of climate change and security crisis in the rural commune of Bani, sahel region (Burkina Faso)

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Summary

Following their accession to independence, the countries of the South, and particularly those of Africa, have been quick to dwell on land-use planning. As a result, these countries are faced with enormous difficulties in the development and land-use planning process. These include soil degradation, atmospheric pollution, climate change, food insecurity, population migration and growing insecurity. Burkina Faso, located at the heart of West Africa in the loop of the River Niger, is not immune to these adversities. A number of strategic, spatial, environmental, social, economic and security-related issues hinge on regional planning. With the advent of decentralization, some communes are experiencing difficulties related to land use planning and security, and the commune of Bani is no exception. This study was carried out with a view to analyzing the territorial, administrative and security-related issues involved in the development of the commune of Bani. The methodological approach is based on a systems approach that includes all the biophysical and human components of the environment. Work carried out through documentary research, field observation, surveys and diachronic analysis highlighted the various dimensions in the context of sustainable land development. The research results showed that the commune of Bani is dysfunctional for a number

of reasons. The physical aspect of the commune shows little potential for development, despite the presence of projects. There is also a large number of beggars, which undoubtedly encourages banditry.

Key words: Security, Administration, Territory, Bani, Burkina Faso.

Résumé

Les pays du Sud et singulièrement ceux de l'Afrique, suite à leur accession à l'indépendance se sont vite appesantis sur l'aménagement de leur territoire. Ainsi, dans le processus de développement et d'aménagement du territoire, ces pays sont confrontés à d'énormes difficultés. Ce sont entre autres la dégradation des sols, la pollution atmosphérique, le changement climatique, l'insécurité alimentaire, la migration de population et de surcroît l'insécurité grandissante. Le Burkina Faso qui est situé au cœur de l'Afrique occidentale dans la boucle du fleuve Niger n'est pas en marge de ces adversités. Plusieurs composantes d'ordre stratégique, spatial, environnemental, social, économique et sécuritaire s'articulent autour de la problématique de l'aménagement du territoire. Avec l'avènement de la décentralisation, certaines communes rencontrent des difficultés liées à l'aménagement de leur territoire et à la sécurité ; la commune de Bani n'est pas en reste.

La présente étude a été réalisée dans l'optique d'analyser les enjeux qui s'inscrivent dans le cadre territorial, administratif et sécuritaire dans le processus de l'aménagement de la commune de Bani. La démarche méthodologique est axée sur l'approche systémique qui inclue toutes les composantes biophysiques et humaines de l'environnement. Des travaux faits à travers la recherche documentaire, l'observation sur le terrain, les enquêtes et l'analyse diachronique ont permis de mettre en relief les différentes dimensions dans le contexte d'un aménagement durable du territoire.

Les résultats de recherche ont prouvé que la commune de Bani dispose un certain nombre de disfonctionnements pour diverses raisons. L'aspect physique de la commune laisse apparaître peu de potentialités de développement malgré la présence des projets. Il existe également un nombre important de mendiants qui favoriserait sans doute le grand banditisme.

Mots clés : Sécurité, Administration, Territoire, Bani, Burkina Faso.

Introduction

Political, economic and security crises are problems encountered on a daily basis in many countries of the South in general, and African countries in particular. In response, a number of politico-institutional strategies, such as decentralization and urbanization, have been undertaken to open up prospects for development. Administering,

planning and securing the territory are fundamental challenges that African states are trying to meet. Territorial development is not a recent phenomenon, in the sense that the reality to which it refers has almost always existed (J. M. DEMBA. 2010, p.15). In Burkina Faso, contemporary authors have taken an interest in the issues of regional planning, territorial administration and security. Territorial planning is influenced by two phenomena : decentralization and security. As a result, the June 1991 constitution made decentralization one of its priorities. Article 2 of law no. 055-2004/AN of December 21, 2004, amended by law no. 012-2018/AN, on the general code for local authorities in Burkina Faso, stipulates that "decentralization enshrines the right of local authorities to administer themselves freely and manage their own affairs, with a view to promoting grassroots development and strengthening local governance". The tripartite history of decentralization is thus rooted in different socio-political contexts. The first was a colonial context, marked by the creation of the first two "mixed" communes, Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso. The second began in 1960 with the establishment of the first rural local authorities and ended in 1980. The third began in the 1990s with the advent of decentralization (A. KY. 2010, p.44). The provision of technical assistance to local authorities by decentralized technical services and the exercise of guardianship raise concerns about State support. As such, it must enable deconcentrated technical services to provide effective support to local authorities without infringing on its action (Vision Prospective de la Décentralisation. 2019, p.50; T. P. ZOUNGRANA. *et al.* 2010, pp.96-107). The local economic development strategy and territorial coherence aim to meet the challenges of territorial economic development through a good articulation between local governance and the economies of "economic catchment areas : aggregation of rural and urban territories" (Stratégie Décennale de la Décentralisation. 2019, p.34; A. A. SODORE. *et al.* 2016, pp.20-36). It should also be mentioned that Burkina Faso has been facing a security crisis since 2015. The Sahel region is feared by analysts due to the lack of quietude it has inspired since the 1990s, particularly as a result of Tuareg rebellions in neighboring countries (Mali and Niger) and the Malian crisis since 2012. Insecurity is therefore linked to survival. 52% of respondents feel that they do not live in security in their region, and

for 88% of them, current or potential insecurity weakens local economic activity (R. E. ZIDA. et al. 2016, p.16). This has led to internal displacement. Indeed, the number of internally displaced people has risen by 50% to 1.5 million in Burkina Faso. This makes Burkina Faso one of the largest displaced populations in Africa (B. CHESHIRKOV. 2022, Palais des Nations, Geneva). Furthermore, the work of authors such as N. E. DAH et al. in V. ROUAMBA/OUEDRAOGO, 2021 do not seem to have exhausted the whole issue. The aim of this study is to analyze the experiences of the Bani local authority between 2015 and 2020, and to measure the extent to which local populations perceive decentralization, climate change and security in the commune of Bani. In the same vein, the question of "how to develop and secure a territory" is a fundamental one for local authorities. The presentation of the work includes three points : presentation of the study environment and methodological approach, research results, and discussion of the results.

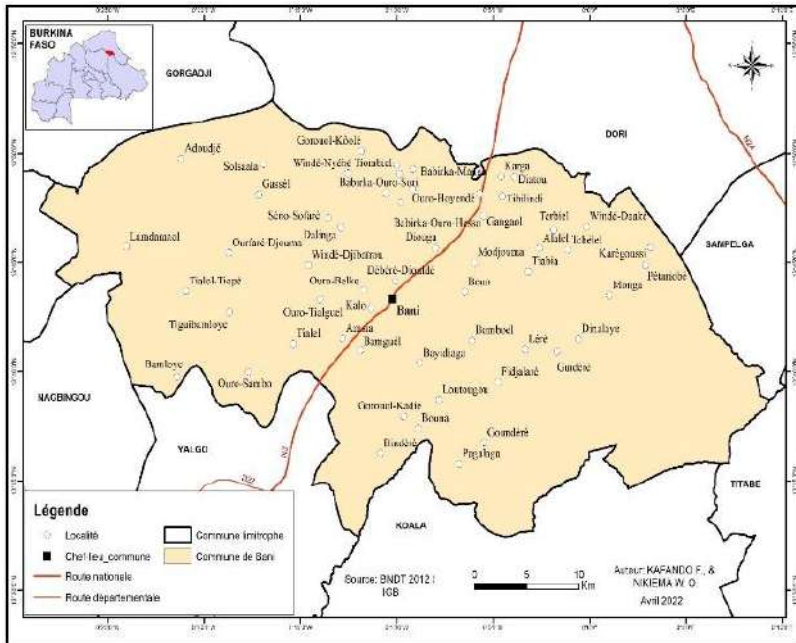
1. Study environment and methodology

1.1. The study environment

The study area, located in the Sahel region of Burkina Faso, has a hot, dry, semi-arid Sahelian climate and highly degraded tree and shrub steppe vegetation. Its geographical coordinates are 13°07'1" and 13°04'3" north latitude and -0°18' and 0°59' west longitude. The commune of Bani is inhabited by several socio-cultural groups, including the Peuls, considered to be the first inhabitants (circa 1800). The Gourmantché came from Dori around 1810, seeking refuge from the war between the Peul and Gourmantché. The Monssés came from Boulsa around 1910 to trade cattle. Bissas settled in Bani around 1950 in search of Islamic knowledge (Koranic reading). It was they who later became involved in agriculture and market gardening. The Bellas came from Niger around 1970, following the drought, in search of better living conditions (field survey, 2022). According to the Recensement Général de la Population et de l'Habitat (RGPH, 2022), its population is estimated at 88,913, including 43,986 men and 44,927 women, with 56 administrative villages. Islam is the dominant religion in the area. Livestock breeding is the main economic activity. In addition, agriculture, trade and, above all, gold mining influence the socio-

economic framework of the population. One of the Sahel region's cultural and tourist heritages is to be found in the commune of Bani. These include seven mythical mosques built since 1979.

Map 1 : Geographical location of the study area



1.2. The methodological approach

The methodological approach involved image processing, documentary research, field surveys and direct observation. It consisted in examining information with a direct or indirect link to spatial planning, territorial administration and security via the Internet, reports, books, theses, dissertations, articles, etc. This made it possible to quantify and qualify the survey data. This made it possible to quantify and qualify the survey data. The field survey was based on the stability of certain villages and their proximity to the commune of Bani. It took place in January 2022 in six villages plus the commune of Bani. Households were selected on the basis of criteria such as being resident in the commune of Bani and being head of household.

The number of people surveyed varied from village to village (Table I).

Table I : Proportion of population surveyed by household, by locality

Localities	Population size	Nombre of households	Populations surveyed	Survey sample(%)
Amsi	1 015	501	37	7,38
Bamguel	1 322	291	41	14,08
Bani	9 015	2 046	70	3,42
Debéré Dioulbe	821	210	10	4,76
Gangaol	2 953	761	65	8,54
Kalo	988	249	50	20,08
Ouro Noma	1 329	281	66	23,48
Echttotal/Total average	17 443	4 339	339	7,81

Source :INSD-RGPH5, 2022

Surveys were carried out with department heads from the prefecture, the Circonscription d'Education de Base (CEB), the Centre de Santé et de la Promotion Sociale (CSPS), the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Livestock, the Department of the Environment, mayoral officials, the local population of Bani and surrounding villages (6 villages). In all, 339 people in 4,339 households, a ratio of 7.81%.

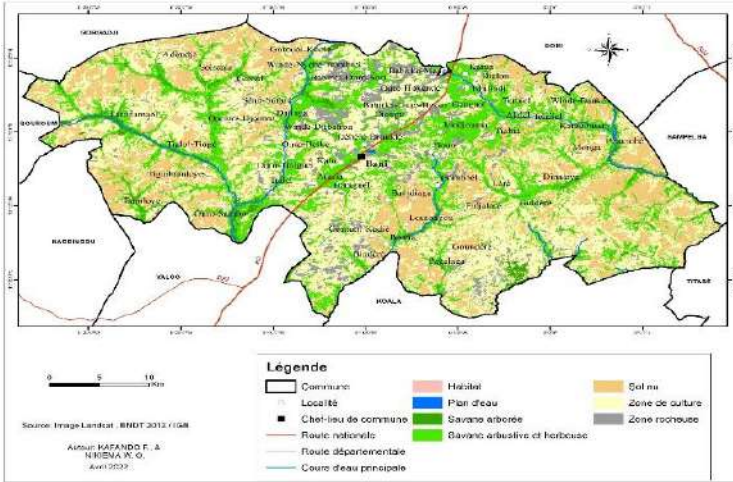
2.Results

2.1. Diachronic analysis of land use in Bani commune

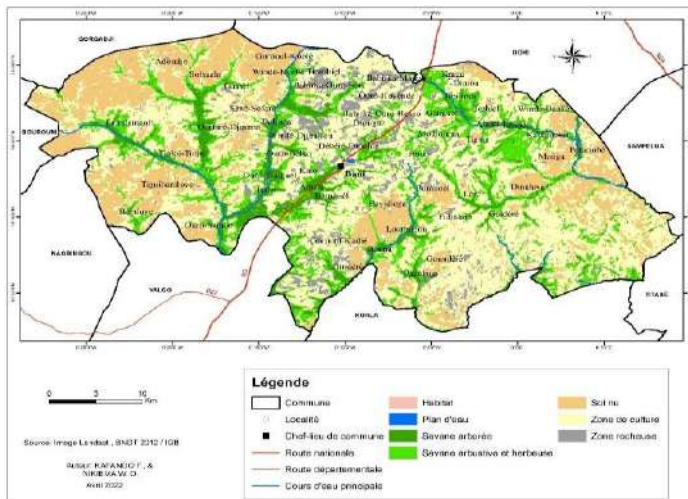
This dynamic has taken place over time, with a greater or lesser reduction or increase in vegetation cover. Tree-covered savannah and cultivated areas declined in area by between 4.17% and 6.66% between 1990 and 2020. By contrast, bare soil and shrub and grass savannah increased in area (2.89% and 7.97%) over the same period. The number of habitats increased (from 58 in 1990 to 113 in 2020). Similarly, the number of water bodies has decreased by seven (35 in 1990 vs. 28 in 2020). The disappearance of water bodies in the Bani

commune is due to silting. As for rocky areas, they have hardly been affected at all. Maps 2 and 3 show the land-use dynamics of the Bani commune from 1990 to 2020.

Map 2 : Land-use dynamics in Bani commune in 2020



Map 3 : Land-use dynamics in Bani commune in 1990



2.2. The current panorama of the Bani local authority

The survey revealed that the crisis began in May 2017. Indeed, a crowd made up of old people (7%), adults (78%), teenagers (10%) and children (5%) surrounded the town hall. It took the intervention of the forces of law and order to free the mayoral staff, including the mayor. The mayor, accused of misappropriating public funds, was rejected by the local population. This led to the closure of the Bani town hall in January 2018, followed by a walkout by agents in February 2019. This crisis has had a negative impact in various areas. On the economic front, the town hall was no longer able to collect money or hold council meetings. However, if collections were carried out properly, the town hall's annual revenue would have amounted to 7,000,000 F CFA. As a result, the town council lost 21,000,000 F CFA in three years. In addition, projects for eleven boreholes, two elementary school and market infrastructures are pending (field survey, 2022). The dysfunction of the local authority has caused damage to both CEBs. The CEBs have not received any office supplies. Requests for leave of absence, certificates of commencement of service and maternity leave could no longer be drawn up at local level. In October 2018, under the leadership of the Minister of Territorial Administration, Decentralization and Social Cohesion, a meeting between the protagonists was organized in Dori to resolve the crisis. As a result, the town hall reopened. Once again, local authority officials were denied access to the premises to carry out their duties. As a result, the town hall was closed for the second time. As a result, people were no longer able to register their civil status documents on the premises. To put an end to this inconvenience, the Bani town hall was moved to the premises of the Dori town hall in 2020. Since then, the various departments of the town hall have been operating smoothly.

Photo 1: View of the Bani local authority



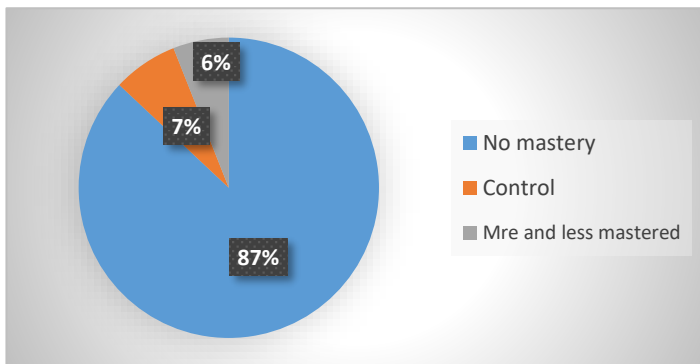
Shot : NIKIEMA W O., April 2022

This shot shows the premises of the Bani town hall. The presence of these motorcycles is explained by the fact that users from neighboring villages were passing through to obtain birth certificates for their children. They are obliged to travel to Dori to obtain them.

2.3. The population's level of apprehension regarding decentralization

According to the interviews, 87% of those questioned claimed not to have mastered the notion of decentralization. A few, i.e. 20 people or 6%, have a more or less thorough understanding of decentralization. It is important to understand that the proportion of people surveyed who have no notion of decentralization are illiterate (87%). Those who have a grasp of the concept of decentralization are educated and have a level of study equal to or higher than the baccalaureate (7%). Of those surveyed, 6% have a post-primary level of education (grades 6 to 3), and claim to have a more or less thorough understanding of the concept of decentralization (graph 1).

Graph 1 : Degree of understanding of the concept of decentralization in the commune of Bani



Source :field survey, 2022

The survey also revealed that there are no housing estates in Bani. Housing is built haphazardly, without following a cadastral plan, with the exception of administrative premises, which comply with the standards laid down by the town planning department. In such circumstances, it is advisable to carry out in-depth work upstream to raise the awareness of the population, especially the rural population, the majority of whom (87%) are illiterate. In addition, work must be done to make the local population understand that they may not agree with the administrative management, but this does not give them the right to physically or verbally attack the commune's authorities, outside of regulatory procedures, as Burkina Faso is a country governed by the rule of law. This can be done through awareness-raising, via forum theaters, focus group activities, etc.

2.4. The population's perception of the deterioration of the security fabric

Everyone's main concern is to know that they are safe, and that they can carry out their duties in a safe environment. Unfortunately, the commune of Bani is no longer a safe environment. Firstly, the emergence of the crisis has given rise to the risk of confrontation between the populations of Bani and Gangaol, as the mayor is a national of this locality, a village located ten kilometers from Bani on

the way to Dori. Secondly, the attacks on Gorgadji, Lamdamol and recently Solhan (in the Yagha region) by unidentified armed groups have led to a large influx of people into the commune of Bani. As a result, Bani has registered internally displaced persons (IDPs) spread over three sites (Table II). The presence of national and international structures supporting IDPs is to be commended. These include Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), l'Action Sociale, Médecin sans Frontières, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, etc. These structures intervene in the fields of housing, psychosocial and emotional care, health, food, clothing and social reintegration by creating income-generating activities (trade) for IDPs. Finally, at the time of the survey, seven elementary school were operational, while 44 elementary school in Bani villages had closed due to insecurity. These are the elementary school in the villages of Lamdamoal, Tiabia, Gassèl, Solsaala, Adoudjé, Bamloye, Tiadol-Tiopé, Tiguibamloye, Terbiel, and recently the villages of Gangaol, Tibilindi, Djatou, Loutougou and Bouna.

Table II : Distribution of IDPs in the commune of Bani

Identities	Men	Women	Children	Total
Workforce	719	1 347	2 267	4 333
Frequency (%)	16, 59	31, 09	52, 32	100

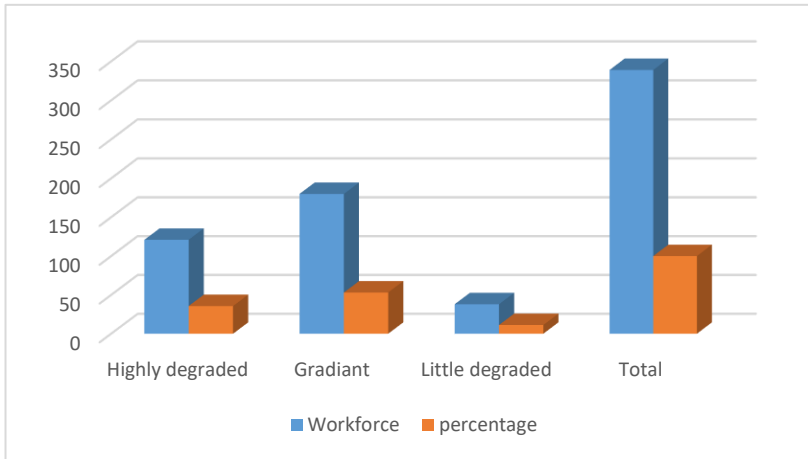
Source :field survey, 2022

This table shows the different proportions of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the commune of Bani. The highest ratio of IDPs are children (2,267), i.e. 52.32% ; followed by women (1,347) with a percentage of 31.09%; and men (719) occupy the last place, i.e. 16.59%. As an interpretation of these results, children and women are the most exposed in this tragedy.

Of the 339 people surveyed, 11.20% (38 people) said the security situation had deteriorated slightly, 53.09% (180 people) said it had deteriorated, and 35.69% (121 people) said it had deteriorated significantly (graph 2). These results suggest that drastic measures are urgently needed to secure the Bani area and avoid the worst. Reinforce the presence of the defense and security forces by installing a pandora post (gendarmerie). Strengthen the intelligence service among the

population.

Graph 2 :Bani population's perception of security

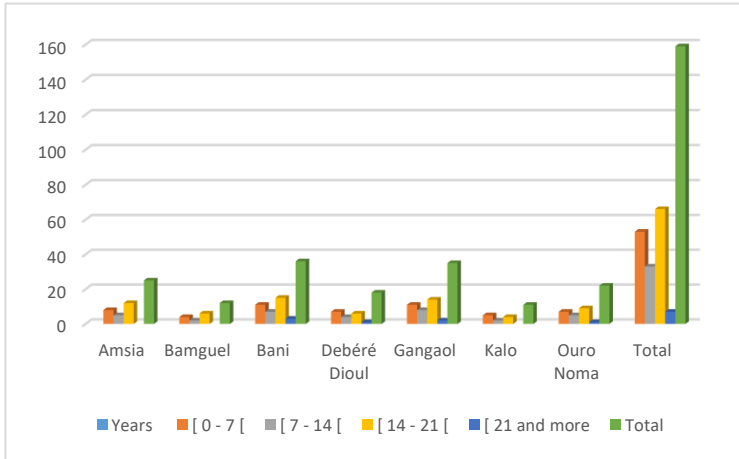


Source :field survey,2022

2.5. The situation of beggars in the commune of Bani

This section covers both monetary and in-kind begging. Beggars carry a begging bowl, a metal or plastic container, and use words, gestures or other signs to ask. Begging is an ongoing problem in the commune of Bani. The number of beggars in the study area is staggering. In the commune of Bani and six villages, the number of beggars counted is 159, with the following age brackets : 0 to 7 years; 7 to 14 years; 14 to 21 years and 21 years and over (graph 3). Begging can be seen as a form of individual or collective demand for charity. Beggars generally circulate in groups of two, five, seven or more people, wearing ragged clothing.

Graph 3 : Proportion of begging in the villages surveyed in Bani



Source : field survey, 2022

The graph shows that the number of beggars aged between 14 and 21 is highest (66), followed by those aged between 0 and 7 (53). Those counting 33 beggars and 7 beggars are aged between 7 and 14 and 21 and over respectively. It should also be mentioned that Bani has the highest number of beggars (36), followed by Gangaol (35), Amsia (25), Ouro Noma (22), Debéré Dioul (18) and the villages of Banguel and Kalo each have twelve and eleven beggars respectively. The pertinent question is what happens to these young beggars when they reach adulthood, having learned no trade ? Two hypotheses have been put forward in response to this question. The beggars could be a source of organized crime through armed robberies on the Bani-Dori axis and the attacks (04) at the Gangaol market. Given their economic vulnerability, they could also join unidentified armed groups. It is more than urgent that the authorities address this concern in their management of the local authority. The number of beggars in the study area is high (159), hence the need to work to minimize their numbers by creating socio-professional activities to keep them busy and effectively combat poverty.

Photo 2 : Shot of young beggars in Bani



Shot : NIKIEMA W O., April 2022

Photo 2 shows two beggars walking from door to door, begging. Their ages range from 7 to 14. We can easily see their attire, i.e. they have worn tattered clothes and rubber begging bags, which they use to receive donations in cash or kind. The black bag containing cooked and dried rice is an offering from a person of good will.

3. Discussion

An analysis of these results reveals several components. Firstly, the diachronic analysis of land use in the commune of Bani showed a reduction in the surface area of wooded savannah, cultivated areas and water bodies due to deforestation, uncontrolled land use and silting. On the other hand, bare soil, shrub and grass savannah and habitats have increased in area. This could be explained by soil poverty, reforestation, fallowing, natural population growth and rural exodus. These conclusions are supported by the work of R. N. GANSAONRE. *et al.* (2018, p.9), according to whom land-use dynamics in Parc W show a regressive trend in vegetation formations. S. SOULAMA. *et al.* (2015, p.8 053) also proved that the reduction concerns dense

vegetation (forests, galleries, clear forests and wooded savannah) that are converted into shrub or tree savannahs in the Pama area of Burkina Faso. M. C. GUEDE. & *al.* (2016, p.189) proved that in twelve (12) years, the Diassioko dense forest lost 1,911 ha of its extent, going from 5,560 ha in 2001 to 3,649 ha in 2003. Over the same period, secondary forest and forest-crop mosaic units gained 983 and 1,620 ha respectively at Dassioko (Côte d'Ivoire). K. D. KPEDENOU. *et al.* (2015, p.217) found an increase in area between 1958 and 1986 (fallow fields). An annual decrease of 5.4%; 1.2%; 0.7% and 0.1% respectively in forest areas, plantations, agroforests and wetlands in south-east Togo. Secondly, the results of the survey on the current panorama of the Bani local authority and the population's degree of apprehension regarding decentralization are in line with the findings of the GIZ Togo Report (2021, p.35) and R. A. ADIKO. (2003, p.12), on decentralization in Côte d'Ivoire. These results showed that the dysfunction of the management bodies of decentralized cooperation relations, the low technical capacity and the weakness of the human and financial resources of the management bodies are elements that are detrimental to the smooth running of the territorial administration. The crisis at Bani town hall stems from a lack of communication and understanding between the two protagonists. As for the investigations carried out in the field, they prove that the security fabric has become very fragile in Bani, and this deserves urgent attention in order to avoid chaos. What happened to the local authority was due to the fact that there were no security guards to ensure the town hall's security at all times. Also, this insecurity is due to chronic unemployment, easy money, juvenile delinquency, misinterpretation of religious practices, etc. This research is confirmed by the press release (United Nations, 2020) on Mali, which is going through a profound protection crisis due to insecurity. Similarly, the work of M. SAMUEL. (2020, p.2) showed that thousands of people had been killed or wounded in the states of Kaduna, Katsina, Sokoto and Zamfara in northwest Nigeria. In addition, the UNHCR report. (2021, p.18) proved that in 2021, the number of IDPs hosted in Mansila (center-east) is 5,965 people from 676 households. Finally, studies by J. CHEHAMI. (2013, p.258); H. COULIBALY.*et al.* (2019, p.68); H. P. SAWADOGO. (2018, p.2); O. DOUBVILLE. (2006, p.10); INSD. (2011, p31); V. ROUAMBA/OUEDRAOGO. (2021) have proven that the origins of

beggars date back to the 19th century in Macina in the Peulh kingdom, Senegal and Burkina Faso. Bands of two or five young people often use metal or plastic begging bowls to beg for alms. The results of the study confirmed that there are beggars in the commune of Bani. This could be explained by a lack of responsibility on the part of some parents, the fact that children do not go to school or have dropped out, and certain Koranic masters who use children for profit.

Conclusion

The rural commune of Bani, like the other communes, is in a process of development through regional planning. However, administration and security face numerous difficulties. The results of our research share the point made by some authors. Firstly, these results highlighted the diachronic analysis of land use. Secondly, it was a question of agreeing on the current panorama of local government and the population's degree of apprehension regarding decentralization. Thirdly, the population's perception of the evolution of the security fabric and the begging situation were also discussed. After analyzing these facts, it is clear that the people of the commune of Bani and surrounding villages are in greater need of awareness-raising and even education on decentralization, with all the accompanying parameters. The fragility of the security fabric also calls for the adoption of appropriate strategies to contain this crisis, including the fight against poverty and begging. To achieve this, it would be more than necessary to increase the number of security agents and Volunteers for the Defense of the Homeland (VDP). In addition, finding income-generating activities and implementing socio-professional training courses would be an advantage in the fight against poverty and begging. Raising people's awareness of the workings of the local authority, through training sessions, would also help to enlighten them. To paraphrase G. BERGER, quoted by L. FAUCHARD et al. (2009): "the future is not only what can happen or what is most likely to happen. It is also, to an ever-increasing extent, what we want it to be". The authorities, in concert with the local population, must draw inspiration from these words to take appropriate and sometimes drastic measures to make local authorities a heritage of sustainable development. Other fields of investigation also deserve meticulous

examination. These include the origins of begging and insecurity, and how to deal with them in the rural commune of Bani, in the Sahel region.

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