

BURKINA FASO'S PROLONGED TRANSITION: FAILED PROMISES AND GOVERNANCE SHORTCOMINGS

Emmanuel Yeboah

Key points

Burkina Faso's military government has failed to deliver on its promises of security and governance, with escalating violence and a worsening humanitarian crisis under its rule.

Under Captain Ibrahim Traoré's regime, civic freedoms have been suppressed, with media outlets suspended, human rights violated, and critics targeted.

There's been a geopolitical realignment, as the country has pivoted away from traditional Western alliances, such as with France, and strengthened ties with Russia and other authoritarian regimes.

Citizens' trust in government and perception of national progress have significantly declined, with Afrobarometer data showing diminished confidence in the junta's ability to address security and economic challenges.

INTRODUCTION

July 2024 was expected to mark the end of Burkina Faso's transition back to civilian rule, with a presidential election intended to restore constitutional order after two years of political uncertainty. However, as many had anticipated, worsening security situation, coupled with other challenges would become a pretext for the junta to consolidate its hold on power. On September 29, 2023, Captain Ibrahim Traoré, the junta leader, declared that the scheduled elections in July 2024 were "not a priority," and that the constitution would be modified, casting doubt on the prospects for a timely democratic transition.

On May 25, 2024, the military government stunned many democracy watchers by announcing an extension of their rule until 2029, following what they termed a "national conference." This decision, however, was met with widespread skepticism, as the dialogue was largely boycotted by civil society, political parties, and other key stakeholders. The announcement dealt a severe blow to hopes for a democratic transition, reinforcing fears that the junta intended to hold onto power indefinitely. Adding to the sense of stagnation, the junta celebrates its two-year anniversary on September 29, 2024.

This study builds upon a previous report to provide a comprehensive update and evaluation of Burkina Faso's ongoing transition process. It offers a detailed analysis of the challenges faced by the transition, providing critical insights into the effectiveness of military governments in addressing governance issues and their impact on the country's stability and development. The study further contributes to the broader discourse on the path to restoring democratic order in Burkina Faso.

1 See: <https://information.tv5monde.com/afrique/video/burkina-faso-les-elections-pas-une-priorite-la-constitution-sera-modifiee-2669606>

2 See: <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/burkina-faso-extends-junta-rule-by-five-years-2024-05-25/>

3 <https://burkina24.com/2024/05/25/burkina-faso-voici-la-nouvelle-charte-modifiee-de-la-transition/>

4 <https://wademosnetwork.org/2024/02/burkina-faso-progress-and-problems-after-two-years-of-transition/>

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2.0 SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE TRANSITION PROCESS

The first coup occurred on January 24, 2022, when military officer Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba overthrew President Roch Marc Christian Kabore after political unrest in Ouagadougou. Damiba justified his takeover by citing the continuing deterioration of the security situation and the evident failure to unite the Burkinabe people. However, as interim President, Damiba also failed to manage the worsening security situation, with violence by armed groups increasing by 23%⁵ shortly after his takeover.

Captain Ibrahim Traore, who led the second coup on September 30, 2022, stated the following day, October 1st, that he had no interest in holding power⁶. He resolutely committed to combating terrorism while adhering to the initial ECOWAS transition timetable inherited from Damiba.

However, a year after assuming office, in September 2023, Traore indicated that his priority was addressing insecurity and safeguarding the nation – not holding elections⁷.

2.1 Status of the Transitional Government's Commitments: Worsening Security and Humanitarian Situation

The military government after assuming office in October 2022 made series of commitments to transition the country back to civilian rule within 21 months through the first transition charter⁸. However, progress on these commitments has been slow, with little evidence of meaningful advancement. Among the key promises was to restore and strengthen security throughout the territory. Despite Captain Ibrahim Traoré's efforts, including significant investments in military equipment, the recruitment of approximately 10,000 soldiers, the enlistment of 60,000 Volunteers for the Defense of the Fatherland (VDP)⁹, and the strengthening of the defense partnership with Russia, the security situation has deteriorated further.

In examining the recent history of Burkina Faso, one cannot ignore the persistent and alarming trend of escalating violence, particularly in the wake of successive military coups. A review of security-related events from the period of President Roch Marc Christian Kaboré's administration through the subsequent military regimes reveals a troubling pattern: rather than stabilizing the country, these regimes have presided over increasing instability and bloodshed.

5 <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/understanding-burkina-faso-latest-coup/>

6 See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jZw0QAJRkEO>

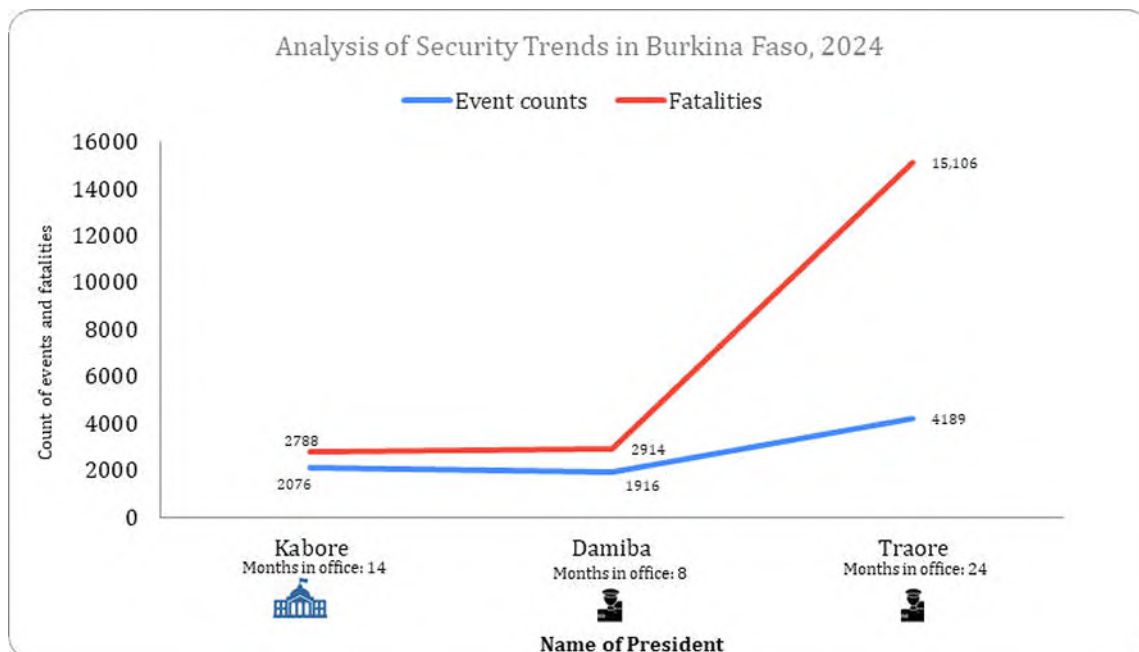
7 <https://information.tv5monde.com/afrique/video/burkina-faso-les-elections-pas-une-priorite-la-constitution-sera-modifiee-2669606>

8 <https://www.sidwaya.info/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/CHARTE-ET-ACTE-1.pdf>

9 See: <https://www.sidwaya.info/lieutenant-colonel-thomas-savadogo-commandant-de-la-brigade-des-volontaires-pour-la-defense-de-la-patrie-nous-sommes-satisfaits-de-the-patriotic-commitment-of-the-vdp/>

2.1.1 Analysis of Security Trends in Burkina Faso (2020-2024): A Stark Reminder of Military Government Failures

Fig 1.0 Analysis of Security Trends in Burkina Faso



Source: *Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED)*

The data above starkly illustrates the worsening security situation in Burkina Faso. During President Kaboré's legitimate tenure from November 22, 2020, to January 22, 2022 (14 months), there were 2,076 security-related incidents, resulting in 2,788 fatalities.

When Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba took power in January 2022, the promise was clear: the military would address the growing security crisis more effectively than the previous 'elected' government. From January 24, 2022, to September 2022 (a period of 8 months), the number of incidents barely decreased, with 1,916 events recorded. However, what is more concerning is that fatalities recorded rose during this period, with 2,914 lives lost – an increase despite fewer incidents.

The failure of Damiba's government to curtail violence led to another coup, bringing Captain Ibrahim Traoré to power. Yet, instead of improvement, the situation deteriorated drastically. Between September 2022 and August 2024, there were a staggering 4,189 security-related incidents, leading to an appalling 15,106 fatalities. The graph highlights a dramatic spike in violence under Traoré's rule, underscoring the regime's inability to deliver on its promises of security.

In 2023 alone, the death toll more than doubled compared to the previous year, with over 8,000 people killed. The situation worsened in June and August 2024, when Al-Qaeda affiliates carried out some of the deadliest attacks since 2015, killing over 100 soldiers in Mansila¹⁰ on June 11, 2024, and approximately 400 civilians in Barsalogho on August 24, 2024¹¹, while injuring 140 others¹².

10 <https://www.dw.com/fr/burkina-faso-mansila-massacre-jnim-arm%C3%A9e-burkinabe-vdp/a-69391743>

11 <https://information.tv5monde.com/afrique/au-burkina-limpower-de-la-junte-militaire-face-lascension-des-violences-jihadistes>

12 <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/8/26/nearly-200-people-dead-whats-behind-armed-attacks-in-burkina-faso>



The use of insecurity as a pretext for military intervention in political governance is a flawed rationale. The reality on the ground shows that military rule has led to greater instability, with devastating consequences for the people of Burkina Faso.



The data demonstrates that military governments in Burkina Faso have not only failed to solve the problems they cited as justifications for their coups but have, in fact, exacerbated them (see the perception of citizens in next section). The continuous rise in security incidents and fatalities under military rule reveals a clear inability to manage the security crisis, casting doubt on the legitimacy and effectiveness of such regimes. Rather than providing stability, the successive military governments have plunged the country deeper into violence and insecurity, betraying the very citizens they claimed to protect. It becomes evident that the use of insecurity as a pretext for military intervention in political governance is a flawed rationale. The reality on the ground shows that military rule has led to greater instability, with devastating consequences for the people of Burkina Faso.

The escalating security crisis has also exacerbated the humanitarian situation, with over 2 million people now internally displaced, more than half of whom (53%) are women. More than 71% of displaced people between January and October 2023 were registered in urban areas. The country urgently needs approximately US\$877 million¹³ to address its growing humanitarian crisis.

The new 2024 humanitarian needs overview¹⁴ indicates a trend that remains alarming. However, no new statistics have been made public by the Permanent Secretariat of the National Council for Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation (CONASUR) on the situation of internally displaced persons (IDPs) since March 31, 2023.

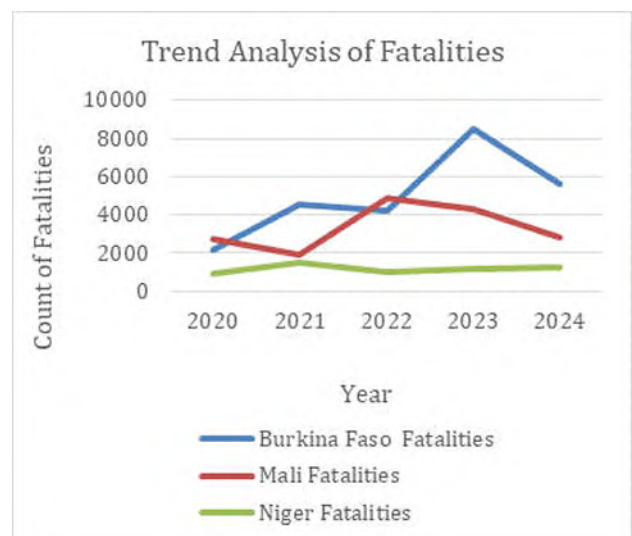
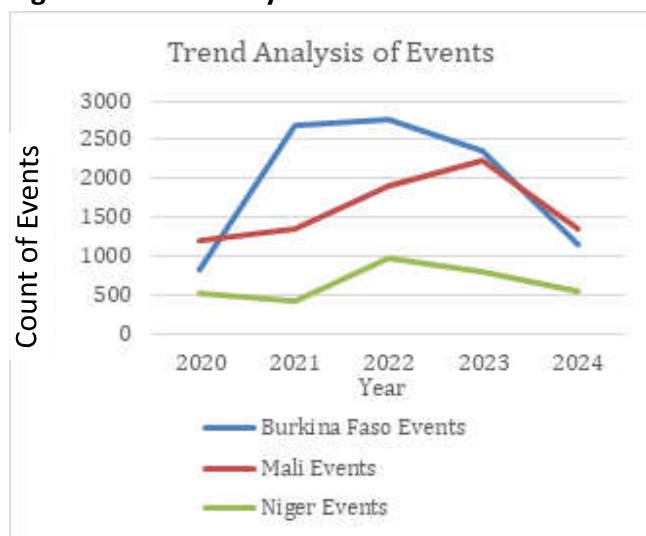
According to the Bertelsmann Transformation Index¹⁵ 2024, Burkina Faso has seen a continuous decline in the state's ability to maintain a monopoly on the use of force since 2006. Currently, about 69% of the country's territory is controlled by armed groups.



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2.1.2 Analysis of Violent Incidents and Casualties in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger (2020-2024)

Fig. 2&3 Trend Analysis of Events and Fatalities



Source: ACLED data

13 <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/burkina-faso-progress-and-problems-after-two-years-of-transition#:~:text=With%20nearly%20two%20million%20people,consequences%20for%20those%20in%20need>

14 <https://reliefweb.int/report/burkina-faso/burkina-faso-apercu-des-besoins-humanitaires-2024-mars-2024>

15 See: <https://bti-project.org/en/reports/country-report/BFA>

From the afore data, Burkina Faso since 2020 has experienced a dramatic surge in violent/crime incidents or events and fatalities, surpassing its neighbors, Mali and Niger, in both categories.

The number of violent/crime incidents or events in Burkina Faso rose sharply between 2020 and 2022, peaking at 2,754 incidents in 2022. While the number of incidents decreased slightly in 2023 and so far in 2024, the fatalities tell a different story. The country witnessed a staggering increase in fatalities in 2023, with 8,499 deaths – nearly double the number recorded in 2022. Even with three months to the end of 2024, the fatality rate remains alarmingly high at 5,649. This suggests that the conflict in Burkina Faso has become more intense and violent – becoming the epicenter of violence, highlighting the worsening security situation despite the military's efforts to combat terrorists and armed groups.

In contrast to Burkina Faso, both Mali and Niger have experienced lower levels of violence over the same period. Mali saw a steady increase in violent incidents between 2020 and 2023, but the number of fatalities remained lower than Burkina Faso's, even in 2023. So far in 2024, Mali's fatalities have declined to 2,808, reflecting either a reduction in conflict intensity or probably a shift in government's security strategy. Niger, despite facing security challenges, consistently reported fewer incidents and fatalities under President Bazzoum's administration prior to the coup on July 26, 2023, compared to its neighbors. However, since the military takeover, there has been a significant uptick in fatalities, indicating a rapidly deteriorating security situation.

2.2 Shrinking Civic Space and Human Rights Violations

Traore's military regime has demonstrated a blatant disregard for human rights and civic freedoms, often using counterterrorism and national security as justifications for its actions. In February 2024, Burkina's military forces, according to a report by Human Rights Watch¹⁶ executed at least 223 civilians, including 65 children, in two villages in Yatenga, the northern region of the country¹⁷. In early May, two columns of the Burkinabe army on a supply mission killed, with complete impunity, nearly 400 people as they passed through the east of the country¹⁸.

These mass killings were rationalized as part of a military campaign against civilians suspected of collaborating with Islamist armed groups. The transitional government has consistently used this justification to censor information of public interest, shielding its actions from independent scrutiny.

The government has severely undermined press freedom by suspending media outlets that reported on its crimes against humanity. At the end of April 2024, nine (9) news websites were suspended in 48 hours, bringing to 13 the number



TRAORÉ'S MILITARY REGIME HAS SHOWN A CLEAR NEGLECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND CIVIC FREEDOMS, FREQUENTLY CITING COUNTERTERRORISM AND NATIONAL SECURITY AS REASONS FOR ITS ACTIONS.

16 See: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/04/25/burkina-faso-army-massacres-223-villagers>

17 <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/06/20/burkina-faso-junta-again-suspends-tv-news-broadcasts>

18 https://www.liberation.fr/international/afrique/les-soldats-ont-tire-sur-tout-ce-qu'ils-ont-vu-au-burkina-faso-des-centaines-de-civils-executes-by-two-military-convoy-20240717_I4YZVCP4FHERO7IP6CS3D7FOM/

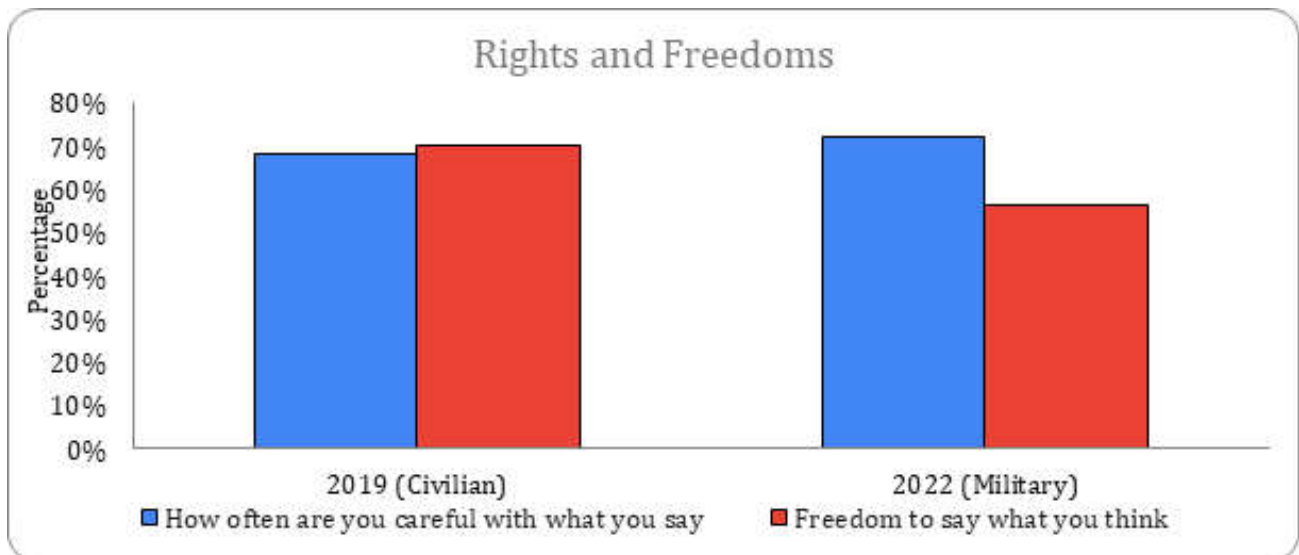
of media outlets no longer allowed to operate in the country. Reporters Without Borders (RSF) denounced these serious and abusive decisions¹⁹.

The military government has again taken aggressive steps to sever ties with France including the suspension of most of French international news outlets. In April 2024, the Burkinabe media regulatory body suspended the French international news station TV5 and other media outlets for six months, imposing a \$82,000 fine for what it called “disinformation” and “malicious influence.” Four French agents from the General Directorate for External Security (DGSE) accused of espionage²⁰, were arrested in early December 2023 in Ouagadougou and have since been held in custody. Politicians, activists, journalists, and human rights defenders who have criticized the government have either disappeared or been forced into military operations. The latest ones are magistrates who were requisitioned to serve on the frontlines of battlegrounds.

According to the Requisition Order, they will have to participate in operations to secure the territory with the Northern Security Forces Group based in Kaya, about a hundred kilometers from Ouagadougou²¹. Forced requisitions were denounced by ECOWAS in a press release published on December 30, 2023.

This leaden blanket is facilitated by the decree on general mobilization and warning extending by 12 months on March 27, 2024, as well as by the amendment of the constitution made on December 30, 2023, with the reorganization of the composition of the High Council of the Judiciary (CSM) as well as the reform, on November 21, 2023, of the organization of the Higher Council for Communication (CSC) which increased power's control over the country's media space.

Fig. 4 Citizen Perceptions on Rights and Freedoms



Source: Afrobarometer R7/R8/R9

19 <https://rsf.org/fr/la-libert%C3%A9-de-la-presse-en-berne-au-burkina-faso-suspension-de-9-sites-en-48h-portant-%C3%A0-13-the>

20 <https://www.aa.com.tr/fr/afrique/burkina-faso-suspect%C3%A9-d-espionage-un-ex-l%C3%A9gionnaire-fran%C3%A7ais-arr%C3%AAt%C3%A9-%C3%A0-ouagadougou/3314539>

21 <https://www.voafrique.com/a/burkina-faso-magistrats-r%C3%A9quisitionn%C3%A9s-une-d%C3%A9cision-judiciaire-contest%C3%A9e/7744331.html>

In terms of citizens' perceptions on rights and freedoms, the Afrobarometer data show a troubling trend. In the last round of 2022, 73% of citizens reported being careful with what they say, up from 68% in 2019, indicating a shrinking civic space under military rule. The freedom to express oneself freely also declined from 70% in 2019 to 57% in 2022. These numbers are likely even more troubling since the latest Afrobarometer (R9) survey was conducted just three months after Captain Traore assumed power.

2.2.1 Alleged Coup Plots and Crackdown on Opposition Figures

Following allegations of three failed coup attempts, Traoré has intensified measures against perceived adversaries, leading to the arrest of several individuals and the deployment of officers to foreign internships, especially in Russia. The latest attempted coup occurred on September 23, 2024. The Minister of Security addressed the nation on television, indicating that the intelligence services had foiled the coup. According to him, "the attempt was orchestrated by individuals residing abroad, particularly in Côte d'Ivoire, and supported by certain Western intelligence services. These actors included civilians of various profiles as well as current and former military personnel who had left the country to participate in propaganda and destabilization operations."

The Minister linked these plotters to the murderous attack in Barsalogo that claimed the lives of 300 people in August 2024. He further identified that the conspirators were located in several countries besides Côte d'Ivoire, including Ghana, Nigeria, Togo, and Central Africa. Notable accomplices named were Aziz Diallo, former mayor and deputy of Dori; Djibril Bassolé and Alpha Barry, both former ministers; journalist Newton Ahmed Barry, former president of the independent electoral commission (CENI); and Paul Henri Sandaogo Damiba, former head of state.

2.3 Diplomatic Relations

Loss of French Influence and the Renewal of Partnerships with Authoritarian Regimes

Relations between France and the military governments in Burkina Faso, Niger, and Mali have significantly deteriorated. The rise of military leaders particularly in Burkina Faso has progressively led to a review of military cooperation, with a focus on diversifying partnerships beyond traditional alliances with France. It is important to note that while Russia and Turkey have historically had some form of relations with Burkina, the junta under Captain Traore has strengthened or reinforced its ties with these nations, along with China. Furthermore, the government has forged new



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partnerships with authoritarian regimes such as North Korea, Iran, North Korea, and Venezuela. The break with France which began with Mali in June 2022 extended to Burkina Faso with the withdrawal of about 300 French troops (Sabre Special Force) which were located on the outskirts of Ouagadougou at the request of the military authorities. The rejection is part of the broader context of deep public disapproval of French policy in Francophone Africa and which the military leaders rely to establish popular support and legitimize their power.

However, the Relations between Burkina Faso and institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF have not suffered at all from the new anti-imperialist. New conventions and agreements²² have rather strengthened existing partnerships.

2.3.1 The Geopolitical Shift: The Honeymoon with Russia

In contrast, Burkina Faso has opted to increasingly align itself with Russia as a key security partner. Military cooperation with Russia was formalized in January 2024 with the deployment of around 100 Russian instructors to Burkina Faso²³. The growing relationship with Russia coincides with broader support for authoritarianism, with Russia capitalizing on anti-French sentiments to conduct disinformation campaigns²⁴ that have fueled democratic backsliding.

While French cultural centers in Burkina remain closed, the announcement of the opening of a Russian cultural center, known as "The Russian House²⁵," within the municipal media library of Ouagadougou indicates an increasing Russian presence. The center will offer art and Russian language courses, highlighting Russia's efforts to promote its culture and influence in the country, potentially filling the gap left by the closure of French institutions.

2.3.2 The Alliance of Sahelian States (AES) and Strained Relations with Neighbors

On July 6, 2024, the Alliance of Sahelian States (AES), which was created on September 16, 2023, comprising Burkina Faso, Niger, and Mali, held its first summit in Niger's capital, Niamey. The summit, which took place just a day before the ECOWAS Heads of States Meeting in Abuja, Nigeria, resulted in the creation of a pact for collective defense and mutual assistance among the member states. The AES has adopted a structure similar to that of ECOWAS, with Burkina Faso designated to host the organization's parliamentary summits, while Mali will hold the rotating presidency of the AES for one year. The AES has reaffirmed its decision to exit ECOWAS with the government introducing a new biometric passport for its citizens, despite efforts by the ECOWAS and other international stakeholders to encourage dialogue and maintain unity within the West African bloc.

22 https://www.leconomistedufaso.com/2024/07/08/dbs-le-fmi-decasse-194-milliards-fcfa-pour-le-burkina/#google_vignette; <https://www.imf.org/fr/News/Articles/2024/03/06/pr-2471-burkina-faso-agreement-on-1st-review-of-ecf-and-concludes-art-4-consultation> ; <https://lefaso.net/spip.php?article125283> ; <https://fr.apanews.net/news/burkina-la-banque-mondiale-decasse-plus-de-200-millions-de-dollars-pour-ouagadougou/>

23 See: <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/russian-troops-deploy-burkina-faso-2024-01-25/>

24 <https://africacenter.org/fr/spotlight/cartographie-de-la-vague-de-desinformation-en-afrique/>

25 https://www.lobserveur.bf/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=7196

The move signifies a significant shift in the regional power dynamics, and has raised concerns about the future of regional cooperation and the potential for increased instability in the Sahel. The implications of Sahel exit are far-reaching, it will undermine the Protocol on Free Movement and Trade, collective security efforts, economic cooperation, and the overall integration goals of ECOWAS. On the other hand, diplomatic tensions have also escalated with neighboring countries. During a speech on July 11, 2024 Traoré accused Benin and Côte d'Ivoire of hosting French military personnel to train jihadist fighters. Both countries immediately denied the allegations, and on July 16, Benin summoned the Burkinabè ambassador for clarification²⁶.

“ The Sahel exit will undermine the Protocol on Free Movement and Trade, collective security efforts, economic cooperation, and the overall integration goals of ECOWAS. ”

2.3.3 Security or Strategy? The Junta's Justification for Postponing Elections

In a state TV interview²⁷ on September 29, 2023, Captain Traoré stated that his priority was addressing insecurity and safeguarding the nation – not holding elections. He argued that holding elections in such an environment would be dangerous and undemocratic, as voting would likely be concentrated in relatively safe urban centers like Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso, excluding vast rural areas plagued by jihadist attacks. While the security concerns are valid, they also conveniently serve as a pretext for postponing elections indefinitely, raising suspicions about the junta's true intentions. It equally sounds like a confession of failure after a previous recognition of having underestimated the situation.

3.0 CITIZEN PERCEPTION ON THE PERFORMANCE OF GOVERNMENTS PRE AND POST-COUP

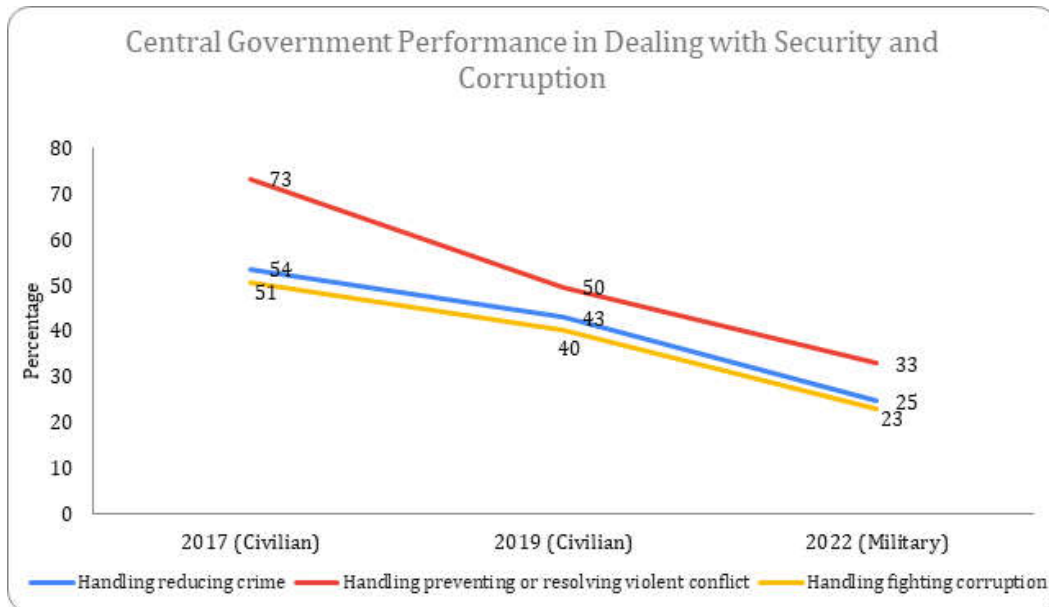
The recent coups in Burkina Faso, starting in January 2020, were justified on the grounds of successive governments' failure to address the rising security crisis, economic mismanagement, and corruption. To evaluate these claims from the citizens' perspectives, this section examines Afrobarometer trend data from 2017, 2019 (pre-coup), and 2022 (post-coup)²⁸. This trend analysis provides an assessment of citizen perceptions regarding the performance of various governments in tackling security and economic issues, as promised by the different regimes in Burkina Faso.

26 <https://www.agenzianova.com/fr/news/benin-accusato-dal-burkina-faso-di-ospitare-basi-francesi-per-addestrare-terroristi-il-paese-richiama-il-suo-ambasciatore/>

27 See: <https://www.france24.com/en/africa/20230930-burkina-junta-chief-says-elections-not-a-priority-eyes-constitutional-change>

28 This trend analysis does not include data from 2022 to 2024, as the most recent Afrobarometer survey in Burkina Faso was conducted in 2022. The emerging picture from this trend is likely to be even more concerning if a new Afrobarometer survey were conducted covering 2022-2024.

Fig. 5.0 Government Performance on Security and Corruption

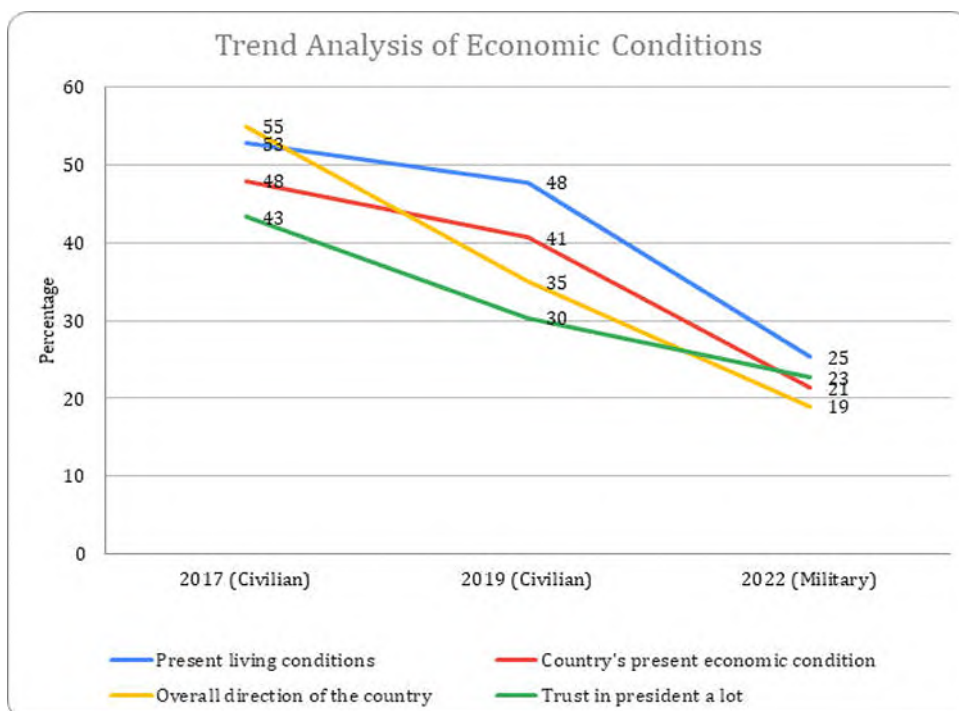


Source: Afrobarometer R7/R8/R9

From the data above, public perception of the government's ability to handle crime dropped from 54% in 2017 under Kaboré to 25% in 2022 under the military. Similarly, confidence in the government's ability to prevent or resolve violent conflict fell dramatically from 73% in 2017 to 33% in 2022. The handling of corruption shows a significant decline, dropping from 51% in 2017 to 23% in 2022, reflecting widespread disillusionment.

It is evident from the data that despite the military's promise to address these problems for which they toppled a legitimately elected government, the military governments have struggled even more than their civilian predecessor.

Fig. 6.0 Afrobarometer Findings on Economic Conditions



Source: Afrobarometer R7/R8/R9

The economic conditions have similarly worsened – although used as pretext for military interventions since 2022. The data above indicate that since 2017, 53% of citizens described their living conditions as good or fairly good, but this number dropped to 25% by 2022 under the military. Additionally, the perception that the country was moving in the right direction decreased from 55% in 2017 to a staggering 19% in 2022. In other words, the perception that the country is moving toward the wrong direction has increased from 43% in 2017 to 81% in 2022. Trust in the president also declined, from 43% in 2017 to just 23% in 2022.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The situation in Burkina Faso has significantly deteriorated under military rule, marked by declining government performance in economic management, security, and democratic values. Despite promises to address security and corruption, the military regime has worsened conditions, leading to increased public discontent as seen in the data depicted. The announcement to extend military rule until 2029 underscores the military's manifest will to confiscate power. Security incidents and fatalities have surged, with 2023 witnessing over 8,000 deaths, highlighting the regime's failure to deliver on its promises. Additionally, the shrinking civic space and human rights violations under Captain Ibrahim Traoré's regime demonstrate blatant disregard for freedoms, further consolidating their control.

Geopolitical shifts, including deteriorating relations with Western partners, particularly France, and aligning with Russia, coupled with the formation of the Alliance of Sahelian States (AES), have strained regional cooperation and stability. The international community must intensify efforts to hold the military government accountable and support a transition to civilian rule to restore stability and address Burkina Faso's deepening challenges. The road to 2029 appears uncertain, representing a betrayal of the democratic hopes ignited when the military first took power.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Despite diversifying partnerships and securing significant investments in defense and security equipment, violence-related deaths in Burkina Faso have doubled over the past year. It is important for the military government to reassess its approach to managing the security crisis by drawing lessons from a decade of countering violent extremism in the region, particularly in the Lake Chad Basin's fight against Boko Haram. In doing so, the government must prioritize the protection of civilians and recognize the importance of integrating non-military strategies alongside military efforts to achieve sustainable security and stability.

2. The military authorities must conduct an inclusive transition, respecting the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens. The international community,

“Despite promises to address security and corruption, the military regime has worsened conditions, leading to increased public discontent as seen in the data depicted”



through the United Nations and humanitarian organizations, should scale up assistance to address the growing humanitarian crisis in Burkina Faso. There should be strict monitoring to ensure aid reaches the most vulnerable populations.

3. The military authorities should change course immediately by lifting media suspensions and ending any efforts to silence media outlets that relay critical views. The security crisis must not be used as a pretext to restrict the fundamental right of the Burkinabe people to express themselves freely and to access information from independent sources.

4. The Burkinabe authorities must urgently conduct independent investigations into the massacres and massive human rights violations, with the support of the African Union and the UN.

5. The military authorities must urgently put an end to the practice of forcibly requisitioning civilians for operations to secure the national territory. They must seek free and consenting participation. The military authorities must also work as a priority to curb the kidnapping of citizens and the climate of high threats weighing on dissenting voices, whose families become privileged targets.

6. ECOWAS and the African Union should intensify diplomatic efforts to entreat military authorities to be accountable to the initial transition timeline. Pressure must be applied to ensure the government commits to a clear and verifiable timeline for a return to civilian rule.

7. While the formation of the Alliance of Sahelian States (AES) poses a number of challenges, it also provides an opportunity for regional dialogue. International stakeholders should explore avenues to engage with the AES to encourage a return to democratic governance and reduce regional tensions.

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