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SAHEL ADAPTIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAM

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STRESS TESTING ADAPTIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS IN THE SAHEL

By Aline Coudouel, Silvia Fuselli and Mira Saidi

SAHEL ADAPTIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAM

ABOUT THE SAHEL ADAPTIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION TRUST FUND

The Sahel Adaptive Social Protection Program (SASPP) is funded by a multi-donor trust fund (MDTF) with contributions from the Denmark Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Agence Française de Développement (AFD); the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ); and the United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office (FCDO). Its objective is to support six Sahelian countries—Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Senegal in building ASP systems primarily to help vulnerable households adapt to the impacts of climate change but also to other covariate shocks. The SASPP is managed by the Social Protection and Jobs unit of the West-Central Africa regional department of the World Bank.

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FOREWORD

The Stress Testing Adaptive Social Protection Systems in the Sahel report examines the existing social protection systems in the Sahel and identifies elements that need strengthening to address the needs in the region. The work for this report began during the COVID-19 pandemic, which tested the capacity of the adaptive social protection systems in the Sahel countries. The economic consequences of the pandemic were extensive, particularly for vulnerable and poor households in the Sahel, and reversed years of poverty reduction efforts. While the Sahel countries are showing signs of economic recovery from the pandemic, they continue to face a multitude of ongoing crises, including global challenges, such as the inflation and economic fallout from the war in Ukraine, and localized shocks linked to insecurity and worsening climate — the Sahel recently experienced very severe droughts and food insecurity, alongside more frequent and severe flooding.

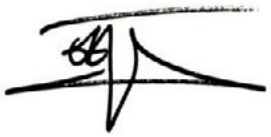
These increasingly challenging contexts call for effective adaptive social protection (ASP) tools and strategies. ASP is a critical tool to reach the World Bank's goal of a world free of poverty on a livable planet. Indeed, to face worsening climate change, increasingly frequent climate-related shocks, and economic shocks from an ever more globalized world, it is essential to have systems in place that can build the resilience of the poorest and most vulnerable households ahead of shocks, as well as protect them, their productive investments, and their human capital from the negative impacts of shocks.

In recent years, the Sahel countries, with the support of the World Bank and the Sahel Adaptive Social Protection Program (SASPP), have begun to invest in adaptive social protection systems. Governments have established national safety net programs, which offer regular support to some of the poorest segments of the population. ASP systems were designed for these programs to scale up, in coordination with humanitarian partners, to respond to shocks such as food insecurity and pandemics. While their reach and scale remain limited, their successes are not to be minimized, and some successful elements have inspired other countries in Africa and beyond.

This report draws lessons from the ASP trajectory in the Sahel. It uses the stress test methodology, designed by the World Bank, to assess the ability of social protection systems to respond to shocks. The report provides a rich overview of the existing systems in the Sahel along the four building blocks of ASP. First, it examines the institutional arrangements for ASP and shock response in the region, and explores linkages across government agencies and external partners, which play an important role in responding to shocks. Second, it provides an overview of the data and information systems in the Sahel countries, including a review of the achievements in building social registries, which can be leveraged by multiple actors for more efficient and effective interventions. Third, the report focuses on programs and delivery systems — highlighting innovations in each country along the delivery chain. Finally, it reviews the limited progress in developing ASP financing mechanisms. Building on the progress and limitations, the report concludes with a set of recommendations for governments, donors, and implementing partners to further invest in ASP.

We welcome the Stress Testing Adaptive Social Protection Systems in the Sahel report as an important milestone in the development of ASP systems in the region and beyond.

Ousmane Diagana,
Regional Vice President for Western and Central Africa, World Bank



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Stress Testing Adaptive Social Protection Systems in the Sahel Report builds on sustained dialogue with the governments of Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Senegal on the development of national Adaptive Social Protection systems. The authors are grateful to the participants in the workshops organized in the six countries between October 2021 and September 2022 to apply the Social Protection Stress Test Tool. The authors wish to extend particular thanks to the government officials in all six countries and colleagues from the World Food Programme (WFP) teams in Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Senegal and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) teams in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger.

The authors are most grateful to Edward Archibald for his role in distilling the insights from the six national reports. He masterfully identified the report's key findings from the region's experience to date and helped to shape the report's recommendations for governments, donors and implementing partners. The authors are also thankful to colleagues in the World Bank for their contributions to the report, including Luis Alberro Encinas, Moukenet Azoukalne, Christian Bodewig, Stephanie Brunelin, Geoffrey Baeumlin, Silvia Coni, Dieynaba Diallo, Sebastian Geschwind, Rebekka E. Grun, Anne Hilger, Djie Sita, Diane Antoinette Kiemde Traore, Julian Koschorke, Matthieu Lefebvre, Felix Lung, Mahamane Maliki Amadou, Franck Müller, Celine Mbaipeur Nenodji, Snjezana Plevko, Christophe Rockmore, Mahamane Mourtala Sani, Samanta Sarria Capape, Dame Seck Thiam, Kalilou Sylla, and Claudia Zambra Taibo. The authors are also grateful to Corinna Kreidler for reviewing the draft and providing detailed guidance. The study was edited by Sarah Patella and typeset by Rodolphe Müller.

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AUTHORS

Aline Coudouel is a Lead Economist in the West and Central Africa Unit of the Social Protection and Jobs Global Practice at the World Bank. She currently works as the Manager of the Sahel Adaptive Social Protection Program (SASPP). Her technical and operational expertise covers the different pillars of social protection – social assistance, social insurance, and labor markets — as well as human development, gender, and poverty reduction more broadly. Her experience spans multiple regions, with a particular focus on Latin America (Colombia, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Panama), Africa (Guinea, Malawi, Mauritania, Senegal, and the Sahel region), South Asia (Bangladesh and Nepal), and Europe and Central Asia (Uzbekistan). Earlier in her career, Aline worked at the UNICEF Innocenti Research Center, with a focus on women and children in Central Asia and Europe. Aline holds a PhD in economics from the European University Institute in Florence, Italy.

Silvia Fuselli is an Extended Term Consultant in the West and Central Africa Unit of the Social Protection and Jobs Global Practice at the World Bank. She has extensive experience on adaptations to the design, delivery, and implementation of social safety nets in contexts of fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV). Her operational experience extends to various countries in the Central African and Sahel region, particularly the Central African Republic, Senegal, and Somalia. Earlier in her career, Silvia worked at a nongovernmental organization that is dedicated to expanding access to education for Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Silvia is a Ph.D. Candidate at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). She holds an M.A. in International Relations and Economics from SAIS and an M.A. in International Relations and Diplomacy from the University of Bologna, Italy.

Mira Saidi is a Social Protection Specialist in the West and Central Africa Unit of the Social Protection and Jobs Global Practice at the World Bank. She has worked extensively on issues related to the design and implementation of Adaptive Social Protection systems and programs. Her operational experience extends across the Sahel and West Africa. Mira also leads work on social protection in the context of FCV countries and contributed to the development of the Adaptive Social Protection Stress Test Tool. Earlier in her career, Mira worked across the Middle East on issues pertaining to safety nets and jobs. Mira holds an MSc in Development Studies from the London School of Economics and an MPP from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

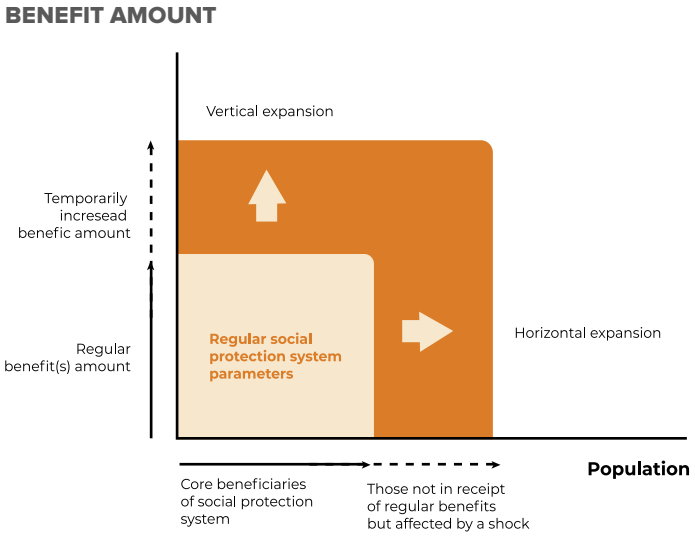
The Sahel region of Africa faces multiple crises, which further compound structural economic and human development challenges. The Sahel is one of the world's poorest regions and displays some of the lowest levels of human capital globally. Violence and insecurity in the Sahel have significantly increased in the past decade, with several countries experiencing active armed conflict and unrest. The impacts of climate change compound existing vulnerabilities and risks. Due to its high exposure and low coping capacity, the Sahel is among the world's most vulnerable regions to climate change and hazards, such as drought, floods, heatwaves, and crop pests. Finally, the external shocks of the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine have impacted the Sahel, eroding purchasing power and aggravating poverty. These multiple crises have resulted in a significant deterioration of food and nutrition security in the region, and more than 13 million people were estimated to have faced severe food insecurity during the 2022 lean season — one of the worst crises in the last decade.

Adaptive Social Protection (ASP) plays a critical role in preventing or mitigating the negative impacts of shocks and boosting resilience for long-term development. ASP has emerged as a flexible and dynamic approach to social protection during the past decade. It combines and exploits synergies between social protection, disaster risk management (DRM), and climate change adaptation. This enables social protection to be leveraged as an effective tool to reduce household vulnerability to covariate shocks, such as economic downturns, natural disasters, conflict and violence, forced displacement, and health emergencies, including the recent COVID-19 pandemic. By providing tailored, targeted, and timely support during, or in the aftermath of a crisis, ASP enables poor and vulnerable households to meet their basic needs in the short term, while strengthening their resilience in the medium and longer term by reducing negative coping strategies (such as lowering food consumption, selling productive assets, or taking children out of school, and by protecting their human capital and livelihoods). ASP also promotes livelihoods, by increasing productivity and promoting diversification, which are central to resilience to future shocks and sustained poverty reduction.

ASP comprises a suite of interventions that can be 'flexed' and layered before, during, and after a shock strikes. ASP interventions include — but are not limited to — cash transfer programs, public works and cash-for-work programs, livelihood support programs, and productive and economic inclusion programs. These programs are designed to provide poor and vulnerable households with targeted and direct support and access to socioeconomic opportunities to offer a way out of poverty. In doing so, they also protect individual well-being and human capital accumulation from the negative and long-lasting impacts of shocks. During times of need, different approaches can be adopted to ensure that poor and vulnerable shock-affected households are effectively reached. For example, small adjustments can be made to routine social protection programs to ensure the continuity of assistance during times of shocks; vertical expansions can be implemented, to temporarily increase the benefit value or duration of an existing program for some or all current beneficiaries (figure O.1); and horizontal expansions can be designed, to temporarily expand coverage to new households affected by a shock (either new or existing programs).

Photo credit: From WorldBank

FIGURE O.1: Social Safety Net Programs, Vertical and Horizontal Expansion



Source: Bowen et al. 2020

The Sahel's vulnerability and exposure to shocks and crises is set to increase with accelerating climate change, calling for a shift from often externally funded, ad hoc responses toward building sustainable, government-led systems. In the past, the response to shocks and crises predominantly relied on a humanitarian approach and with year-to-year ad hoc programs. For example, food insecurity resulting from the annual lean season was largely addressed through externally funded humanitarian aid. While humanitarian aid continues to play an important role in navigating food security shocks, countries in the Sahel are increasingly putting forward government-led ASP interventions and are beginning to invest in systems. Although ASP has been shown to be an effective tool in responding to the region's compounding challenges, leveraging its full potential requires government-led national systems that can operate at scale — with a suite of national programs at scale, mature information systems, readily budgeted and pre-positioned finance, and clear institutional arrangements. The principle of a systems approach permeates the four pillars of the ASP framework, and the latent–advanced framework of the Social Protection Stress Test Tool is framed around a gradual strengthening of national systems.

Over the past decade, ASP has been on a remarkable trajectory in the Sahel, and this is an appropriate time to take stock of the situation. This report provides an overview of the state of ASP across six Sahelian countries — Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Senegal — as well as a set of recommendations for actions to strengthen the adaptiveness and responsiveness of existing systems to shocks. This report leverages the application of the Social Protection Stress Test Tool in the six countries between October 2021 and September 2022. The Social Protection Stress Test Tool builds on the four pillars of the ASP framework to assess the adaptiveness and scalability of social protection systems in response to shocks, and to identify priority areas for improvement (Box O.1, figure BO.1.1, and figure BO1.2). This report seeks to capture the developments that took place since the test was applied, though some of these may not be fully reflected in this report.

BOX O.1: WHAT IS ADAPTIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION?

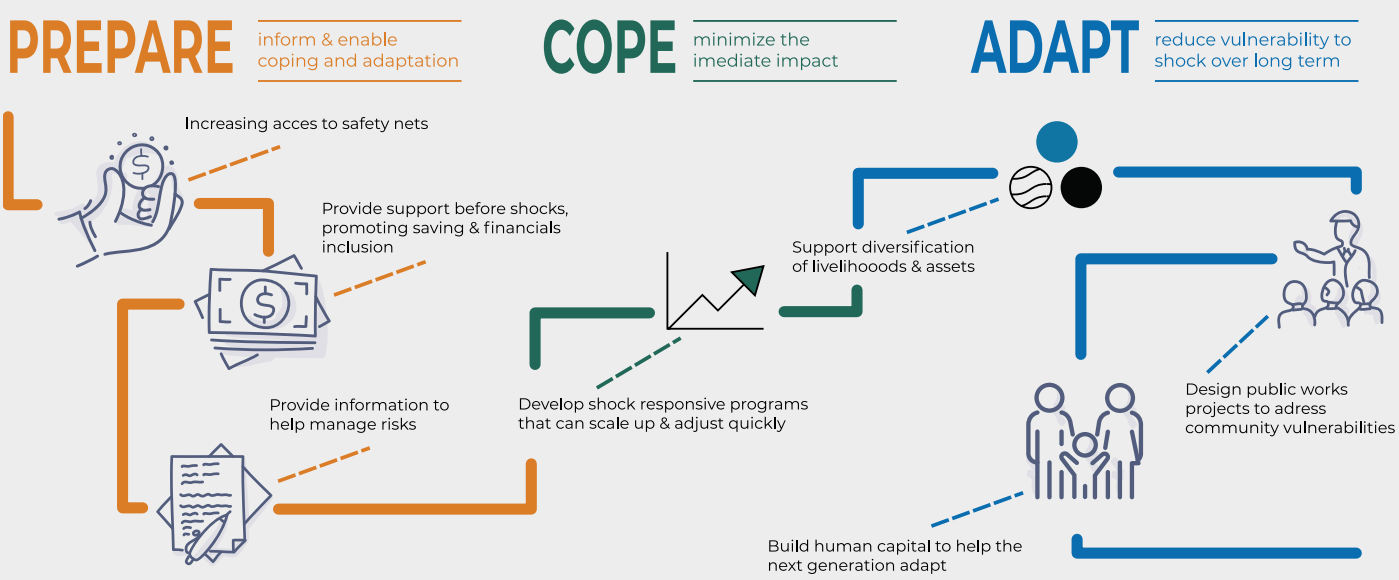
Adaptive Social Protection (ASP) helps to build the resilience of poor and vulnerable households by investing in their capacity to **prepare** for, **cope** with, and **adapt** to shocks, thus ensuring that they do not fall deeper into poverty. The ASP approach integrates basic social protection with disaster risk management (DRM) and adaptation to climate change.

Through its four building blocks — **Programs and Delivery Systems, Data and Information, Financing, and Institutional Arrangements and Partnerships** — ASP has emerged as a critical tool to help poor and vulnerable households and communities become more resilient to shocks and stresses, especially to the impacts of climate change. It achieves this by providing a combination of cash transfers and assistance to strengthen knowledge and behavioral change for the promotion of sustainable and diversified livelihood opportunities.

The four building blocks include a range of dimensions that are critical for ASP to successfully provide a basis for shock-response. They include the following technical, financial, and political dimensions :

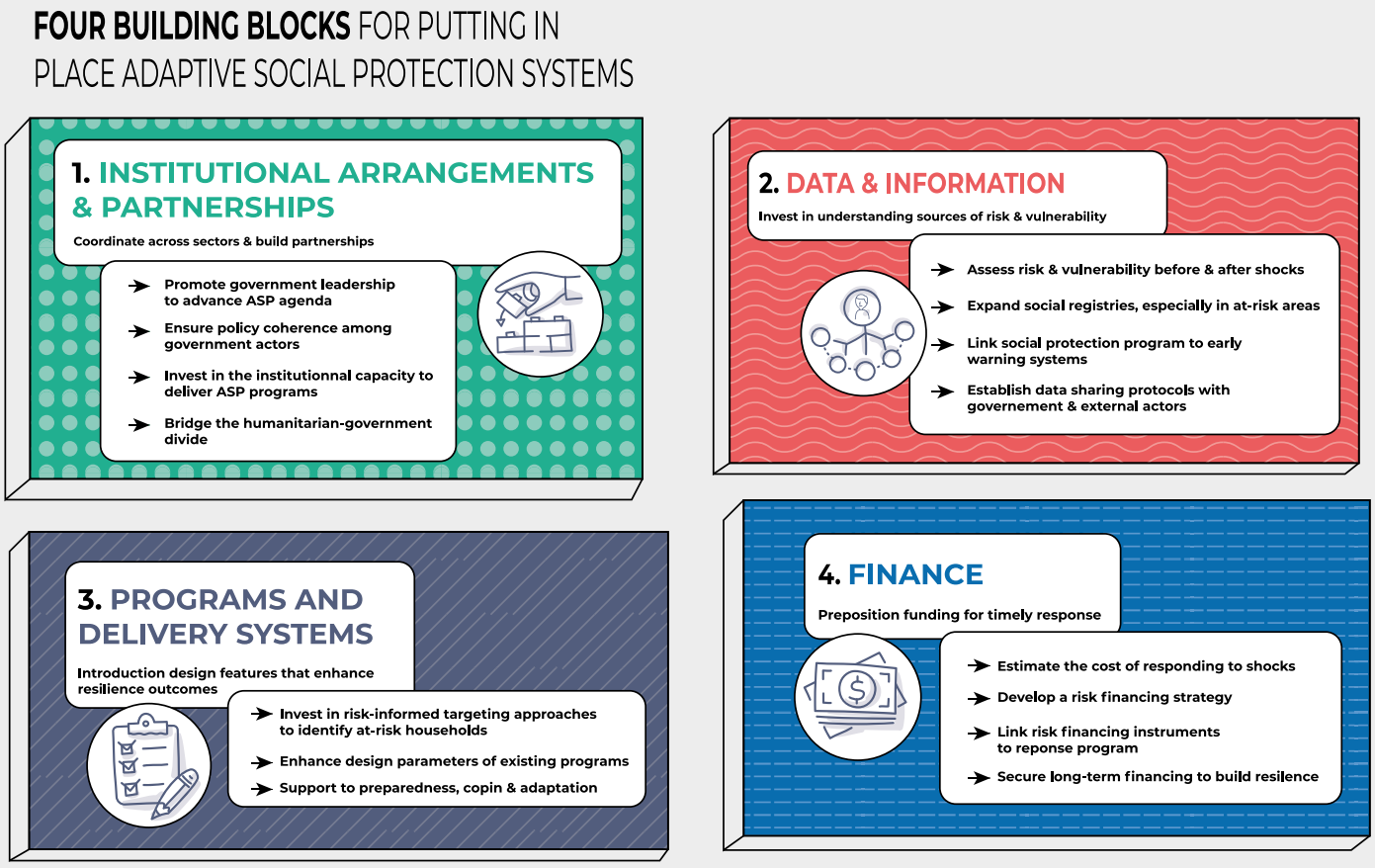
- *Institutional Arrangements and Partnerships.* To support government leadership in the coordination of actors, based on the clear articulation of roles and responsibilities.
- *Data and Information.* To ensure that the design and implementation of ASP programs are informed by information on household vulnerability to shocks and their capacity to cope and recover, including through dynamic social registries.
- *Programs and Delivery Systems.* To promote programs and delivery systems that are responsive to shocks, in that they have anticipated and planned for shocks.
- *Finance.* To establish risk financing strategies that promote proactive response planning, enable the availability of funding in case of a shock, and limit delays in response.

FIGURE BO.1.1: How Can ASP Help?



Source: Adapted from World Bank 2020a

FIGURE BO.1.2 : The Four Building Blocks for Putting ASP Systems in Place



Source: Adapted from World Bank 2020a

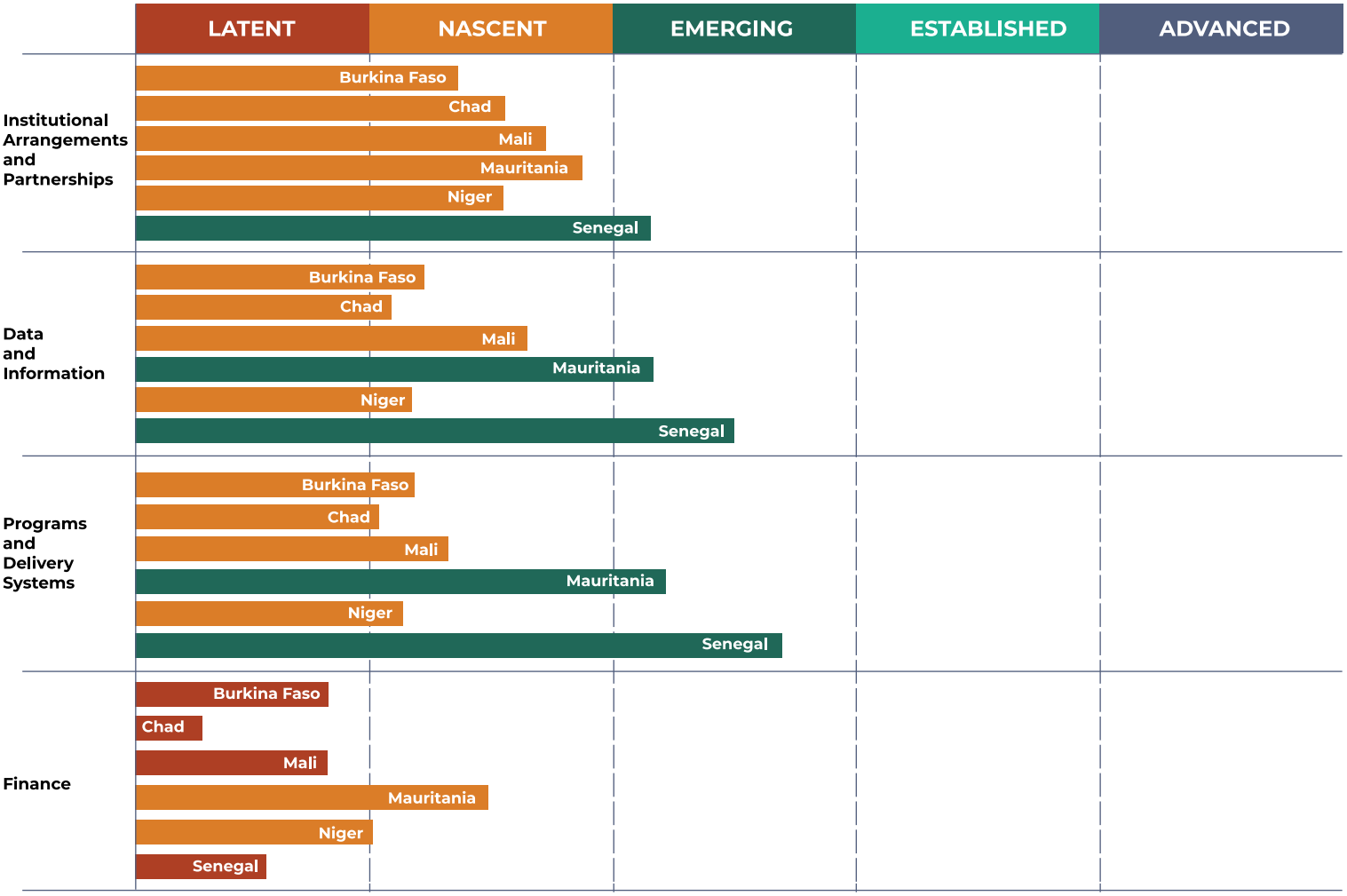
OVERALL ASSESSMENT

Overall, when considering their starting point nearly a decade ago, each of the Sahel countries has made significant progress toward establishing some of the key ASP building blocks. All countries have successfully laid the foundations for ASP systems and have the capacity to provide regular cash transfers to the poor and to respond to some shocks (especially in response to annual food insecurity), albeit with some delays and limited coverage. The Sahel countries are also piloting innovative approaches, related to Early Warning Systems (EWS), program design, program triggers, and payments. The greatest advances have been observed in Mauritania and Senegal — particularly on the Data and Information and Programs and Delivery Systems building blocks of the ASP framework. In this respect, Senegal is the only country whose system has achieved an "emerging" level of development. The coverage of routine social safety nets in these two countries is now nationwide and provides a strong foundation for the launch of shock-responses. This is illustrated by the response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Mauritania, which scaled up its safety net programs to 210,000 households (the routine safety net program had 80,000 beneficiary households at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic). In Niger, despite its lower foundational coverage, cash transfer programs were scaled up to reach 375,000 households in response to COVID-19 in 2021.

Progress is not uniform across all countries or building blocks (figure O.2). All countries have either established a social registry or the foundations of a social registry. However, the static (nondynamic) approach to data collection and the registries' limited coverage in some countries result in potentially obsolete or incomplete data and make it difficult for countries to identify poor and vulnerable households affected by shocks. The limited coverage of social safety nets remains a critical constraint to the adoption of a more mature approach to ASP in four of the assessed countries—Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, and Niger. Similarly, the low penetration of digital payment systems hinders the capacity of countries to adopt modern payment systems. Finally, the Finance building block has made the least progress across all countries. This is due in part to a strong reliance on international assistance. The low ratings in the Finance building block also point to a need for other components of the system to be in place, with sufficient coverage and delivery capacity, before countries can focus on the mobilization and coordination of financing.

Photo credit: From WorldBank

FIGURE O.2: Summary of Stress Test Assessment



Source: Original figure for this publication.

Overall, despite the existence of solid foundations and firm governmental commitment to ASP, significant progress needs to be made by all countries for the ASP agenda to be effectively advanced. In each country, a concerted and carefully sequenced plan of action needs to be applied across building blocks. Operationalization must be prioritized, because systems, policies, or delivery mechanisms have frequently been established but not yet fully implemented. The following sections of this Executive Summary present the findings and overarching recommendations that are emerging from the report for each of the four building blocks of ASP — Institutional Arrangements and Partnerships, Data and Information, Programs and Delivery Systems, and Finance. The main report provides additional details and overarching recommendations, as well as specific recommendations for governments and for donors and implementing partners.


Photo credit: From WorldBank

Note: Figure based on assessments completed in October 2021 in Burkina Faso; September 2022 in Chad; June 2022 in Mali; November 2021 in Mauritania; May 2022 in Niger; and January 2022 in Senegal. Progress realized since these assessments are reflected in the text.

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Countries in the Sahel are incorporating ASP principles in their national social protection policies and are periodically preparing contingency plans to guide their responses to food insecurity. All Sahel countries have national social protection policies, and most governments are taking steps to incorporate the core ASP principles into these frameworks. In the Sahel, the main instruments for ASP, and shock-responses more generally, are country-level response plans. In many instances, the realization of commitments to shock responsiveness in social protection policies and response plans have been hindered by financing challenges.

In most countries in the Sahel, the institutional landscape for ASP lacks strong anchoring, clear roles, and robust coordination mechanisms for government agencies and external partners involved in shock or disaster risk management. Coordination within the ASP sector remains complex, and coordination between the agencies that are responsible for routine safety nets, rapid-onset shocks and food insecurity remains weak. Some countries, such as Mauritania, are making progress toward creating institutional links between social protection and food security actors, but unclear roles and responsibilities among governmental actor's limit progress.

Government leadership and the capacity to align partners is essential but remains constrained. In the Sahel, nongovernmental partners will continue to play a central role in the ASP agenda for mobilizing financial resources and, in some fragile contexts, for implementing shock-response interventions. While there are emerging examples of partners aligning with national systems and priorities, as opposed to operating parallel systems, coordination remains limited. Strong collaboration between governments and nongovernmental partners is essential to avoid duplication, inefficiencies, and tensions, and is particularly critical in the Sahel, where fiscal spaces are constrained. Government leadership is essential to ensuring the alignment of humanitarian actors with national social protection systems and strengthening this leadership should be a key objective of nongovernmental partners and those financing their interventions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Incorporate shock-response functions and instruments into national social protection strategies and include ASP programs as response vehicles in national shock-response plans.
- Define roles and responsibilities and establish coordination mechanisms among a broader range of ASP actors and with other governmental and non-governmental DRM actors.
- Strengthen the government leadership and convening role on ASP and promote the alignment or integration of financial and operational partners' support within national systems.

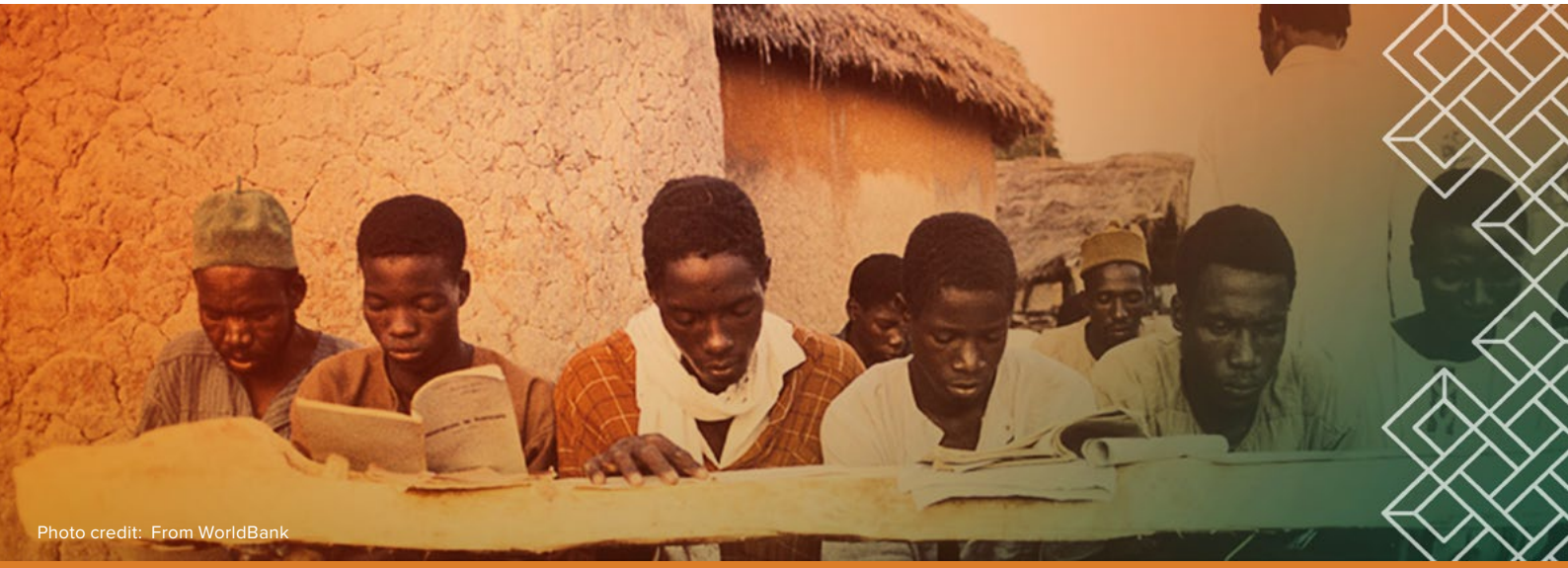


Photo credit: From WorldBank

DATA AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

A strong buy-in for social registries has translated to their progressive expansion across the region, though many countries are yet to cover all geographic areas and households vulnerable to shocks. One of the most active areas of progress on ASP in the region is the establishment of social registries. In Burkina Faso, Mali, Chad and Niger, the ability of social registries to inform shock-response is at times limited by incomplete geographic coverage and outdated information. Registries also typically focus on households that are chronically poor or food-insecure and are less able to identify households who are at risk but not in chronic poverty or food insecurity. Increasing the registration of at-risk populations in all regions is critical to preparing a system for shocks, however numerous operational challenges remain.

Maintaining updated social registries is a challenge in the Sahel, but this is essential for their use in shock-response. Currently, countries in the region collect information on households through waves of widescale data collection, which limits their ability to maintain current data. Adopting dynamic (or on-demand) inclusion methods, such as putting in place permanent local offices with strong local staff, or exploring modular data structures, could help ensure that data is adequately updated. While not all on-demand approaches are feasible in all Sahelian contexts, several options exist.

Social registries are not fully integrated or leveraged in the region, which limits the potential of their increased efficiency and timeliness during shock-response. In the Sahel, social registries are seldom integrated into the broader ecosystem of existing information systems of different sectors or actors, with the exception of Mauritania, whose system is interoperable with other government-held databases. In addition to coverage and quality issues, bottlenecks related to the lack of unique identifier, data privacy and data-sharing are key constraints to the broader leveraging of social registries by multiple actors. Harnessing the full potential of the social registry ecosystem requires political leadership, institutionalization, and coordination mechanisms.

While Sahel countries all have EWS for food security, their institutionalization and ability to provide timely and accurate predictions remain limited. EWS are critical inputs for the design and timeliness of shock-responses. Countries in the Sahel all have early warning tools that focus on food insecurity, though they face several technical financial and capacity challenges. Progress is being made toward improving data quality and integrating a wider range of outcomes and covariate shocks, in addition to the current focus on food insecurity. Some countries in the region are piloting the use of preagreed rules, based on information from early warning mechanisms, to trigger or guide the decision to launch responses.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Expand the coverage of social registries to all geographic areas and all households vulnerable to shocks, to ensure they can be leveraged for shock-response.
- Operationalize protocols to regularly update social registry data, assessing the feasibility of combining administrator-driven methods, on-demand intake modalities, and the use of administrative records through interoperability.
- Promote the use of social registry data among a range of actors by ensuring its quality and relevance, and establishing adequate data privacy and sharing protocols.
- Enhance government ownership, institutionalization, and functionality of EWS to ensure they inform the elaboration of national response plans and guide program design.

PROGRAMS AND DELIVERY SYSTEMS

In the Sahel, routine social safety net programs are boosting the resilience of households, and their capacity to cope with shocks and provide a foundation for ASP, though their coverage remains limited. All countries in the region have developed routine social protection programs, however their coverage greatly varies across contexts. In the Sahel, routine social safety net programs have shown their ability to build the resilience of households to shocks, increase their productivity, and diversify their livelihoods. Routine social safety net programs and their delivery systems have provided a platform on which shock-response interventions have been deployed.

Delivery systems are not yet ready to be harnessed for shock-response in all countries of the Sahel, which hinders the ability of governments in the region to respond in a timely and cost-effective manner. Prior planning and preparedness actions are critical for timely responses to shocks. Parts of the delivery systems do not have the capacity to fully support shock-responses, which often puts them under additional pressure, due to the surge in activities to identify beneficiaries, put in place the payment instruments, ensure grievance management, and so on. It is critical to establish mechanisms to scale up and pre-position the required resources for shock-responses.

Payments across the Sahel can be scaled up in times of shock, but face challenges to their timely delivery through cash and digital modalities. Cash in hand is still the main payment mechanism in most routine safety net programs in the Sahel, which limits the ability of programs to scale-up in a timely manner in response to shocks. In the region, there has been progress toward establishing or piloting digital payment systems, as in Burkina Faso, Chad, and Mauritania, which can help to promote timely shock-responses. However, switching to digital payments and leveraging them for shock-response is challenging in the Sahel, particularly outside of urban areas. Regardless of the technology that is adopted, the rigidity of contracts and procurement procedures can limit the ability of systems to respond to shocks.

Inclusion challenges persist in the Sahel and need to be addressed before shocks, so that solutions can be effectively implemented in the context of shock-responses. Most routine social safety net programs have deliberately included a large share of women among their beneficiaries, but gender responsiveness is harder to achieve during horizontal expansions. There are opportunities to develop stronger strategies to address the risks faced by women, which need to be capitalized during the early design phases. Similarly, the design of ASP programs must be more systematic to ensure the participation of other vulnerable groups. Finally, the inclusion of forcibly displaced population groups in the Sahel remains a challenge, though some countries have begun to address this issue.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- *Enhance the coverage of routine safety net programs* to include all chronically poor and vulnerable households and strengthen the resilience-building properties of programs.
- *Enhance government delivery systems* so they can perform their functions in times of shock and, as part of the national response plans, clarify ahead of shocks how they will be used.
- *Enhance payment mechanisms* to improve timeliness and accountability, and ensure inclusion.
- *Address the constraints faced by women*, forcibly displaced households, and other vulnerable groups to clarify institutional responsibilities and embed operational solutions in the design and procedures of regular and shock-response programs.

Photo credit: From WorldBank

FINANCE

In the Sahel, the mobilization of financing for shock-response is typically ad hoc and piecemeal, which can be costly and create significant delays. Except for Mauritania, countries in the region have not put in place ex ante, or prearranged, financing instruments for ASP. More generally, no countries in the region have shock-response financing strategies in place. Because of limited ex ante financing, shock-responses are typically financed with significant delays, mostly through ex post international financing or domestic budget reallocation. The development of prearranged financing for ASP is constrained by the nascent nature of ASP systems in most Sahelian countries.

When broadening the notion of financing to that of routine safety net programs, some countries display greater government contributions. The stress test results presented above only reflect financing for shock responses. When also considering routine safety net programs, which are a critical base for shock-responses, a different picture emerges. Specifically, in Senegal, transfers of the regular safety net program, which is national in coverage, are fully financed by the national budget. Similarly, in Mauritania, the share of government financing for the routine national program is significant, and in Burkina Faso, plans anticipate a notable national government contribution.

To date, most risk financing instruments adopted in the Sahel have been insurance-based, though reserve instruments may be more adapted to the region's risk profile. Some countries have adopted sovereign drought insurance policies, but these are not specifically earmarked for ASP. Given the climate vulnerability profile of the Sahel, policy makers should consider alternative disaster risk financing instruments to insurance, such as reserve funds. Some countries also have contingency instruments in place, but these frequently focus on food distribution rather than on cash transfers made through ASP programs.

Financing regular and shock-response ASP programs in the Sahel will require a mix of domestic and international funding for the foreseeable future. All Sahel countries, especially the four central Sahelian countries, are dependent on external support to respond to humanitarian needs, which is unlikely to change in the short to medium term. Disaster risk financing instruments and strategies in the Sahel should explicitly account for continued donor contributions. Some countries are developing instruments that receive contributions from government and donors, which could form the basis for broader donor-inclusive financing approaches.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Identify options to establish prearranged financing instruments for shock-response programs using social protection mechanisms.
- Focus on instruments that are commensurate with the risk profile of the Sahel and ensure that contingency instruments are set up to support social protection shock-response programs.
- Put in place financial instruments for shock-response using ASP mechanisms that enable government and donor contributions, thereby boosting the leadership of governments and coordination of partners.

Photo credit: From WorldBank

ABBREVIATIONS

ADRiFi
Africa Disaster Risk Financing Programme

AFD
Agence Française de Développement (French Development Agency)

AfDB
African Development Bank

ARC
African Risk Capacity

ASP
Adaptive Social Protection

BMZ
German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

DANIDA
Denmark Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs

DCAN
Dispositif National de Prévention d'Alerte Précoce et de Réponse aux Chocs d'Insécurité Alimentaire et Nutritionnelle (National Early Warning and Shock Response System)

DGPSN
Délégation Générale à la Protection Sociale et à la Solidarité Nationale (General Delegation to Social Protection and National Solidarity)

DRM
Disaster Risk Management

EWS
Early Warning Systems

FCDO
United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

FCV
Fragility, conflict, and violence

FIFI
Food Insecurity Forecast Interface

FSN
Fond de Solidarité Nationale (National Solidarity Fund)

FNRCAN
Fond National de Réponse aux Crises Alimentaires et Nutritionnelles (National Food and Nutrition Crises Response Fund)

GDP
Gross Domestic Product

IDA
International Development Association

IMF
International Monetary Fund

IPC
Integrated Food Security Phase Classification

ISAS
Integrated Social Assistance Service Information System

NGO
nongovernmental organization

PIP
Poverty and Inequality Platform

QR
Quick Response [code]

SAIS
School of Advanced International Studies [Johns Hopkins University]

SASPP
Sahel Adaptive Social Protection Program

UN
United Nations

UNDRR
United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

UNHCR
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNICEF
United Nations Children's Funds

WFP
World Food Programme

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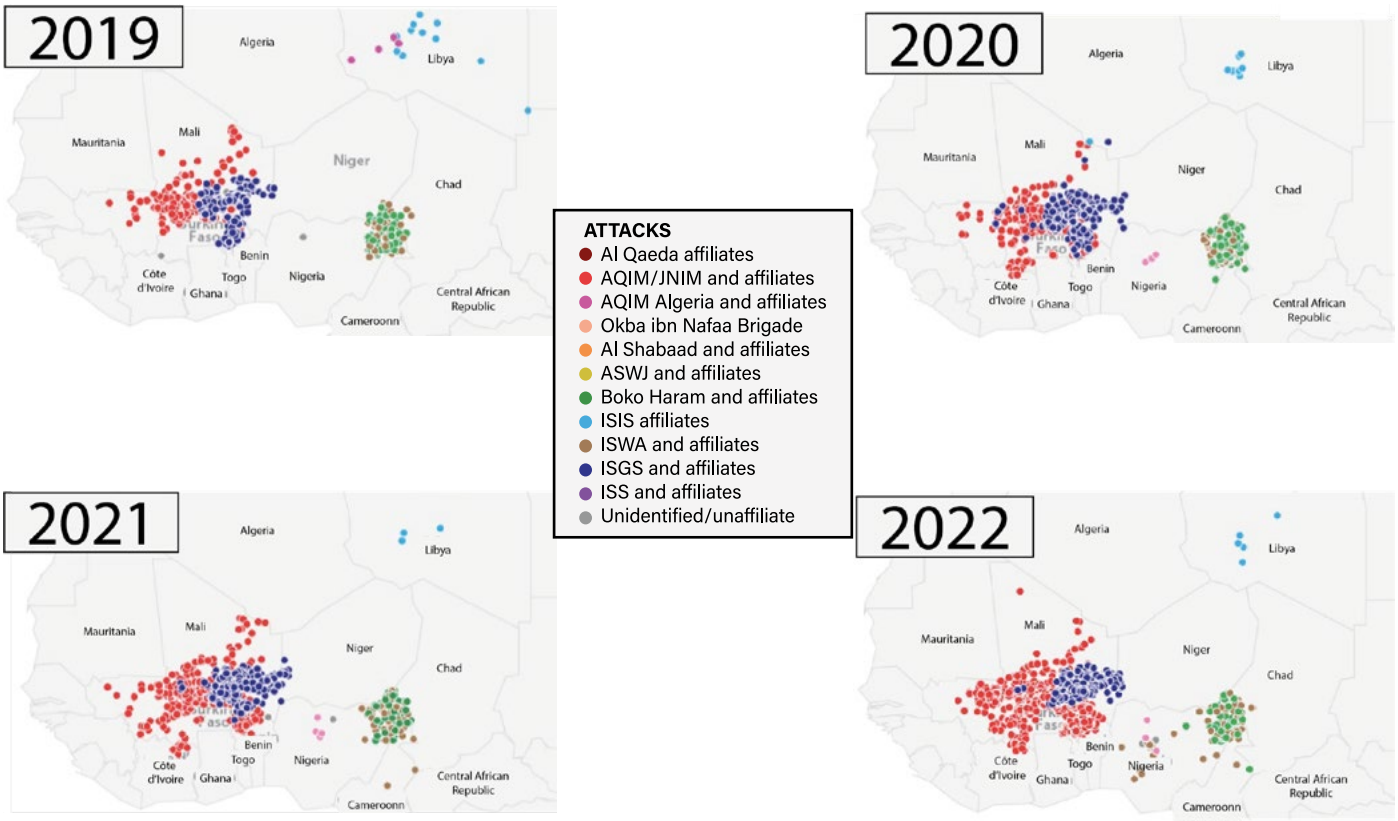
1. Introduction

1.1 The Sahel : Region at the Intersection of Overlapping Shocks

The Sahel region of Africa faces significant economic and human development challenges. The Sahel is one of the world's poorest regions. In addition, while in the past decade, the six countries covered by this study — Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Senegal — achieved improved macroeconomic performance, poverty reduction was not commensurate with economic gains[1]. Except for Mauritania, the total number of poor people either stagnated or increased between 2010–2019[2] in the Sahel, partly due to high population growth rates (ranging between 2.7 and 3.8 percent per year). Poverty is widespread, ranging from an estimated 28.2 percent in Mauritania to 42.5 percent in Chad in 2019. These estimates can be even higher when considering nonmonetary dimensions of poverty, such as education and access to basic infrastructure[3]. In terms of human capital, the region's challenges are such that on average, a child born in the region can expect to be only 35 percent as productive as she/he would have been if she/he enjoyed complete education and full health. This places Sahelian countries among the lowest-ranked countries in the world for human capital (World Bank 2020b).[4]

Violence and insecurity in the Sahel have significantly increased in the past decade, with several countries experiencing active armed conflict and unrest. Since the late 2000s, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, and the Lake Chad Basin have been the epicenter of a complex and deteriorating security crisis, which has involved a wide range of actors, including terrorist organizations, rebels, nonstate armed groups, and criminal networks, who disproportionally target civilian populations (figure 1.1) (Lay 2023). This political instability culminated in *a series of coups d'états* in Mali (August 2020 and May 2021), Burkina Faso (January 2022 and September 2022), and Niger (July 2023) (Barka 2012).[5] Violence drives large-scale displacement and isolates communities, eroding their livelihoods. As of July 2023, the region was home to over 3 million internally displaced persons and more than 1 million refugees and asylum seekers, representing a sharp rise from nearly 50,000 internally displaced persons and 231,000 refugees in 2015.[6]

FIGURE 1.1: Evolution of Africa's Militant Islamic Groups, 2019–2022



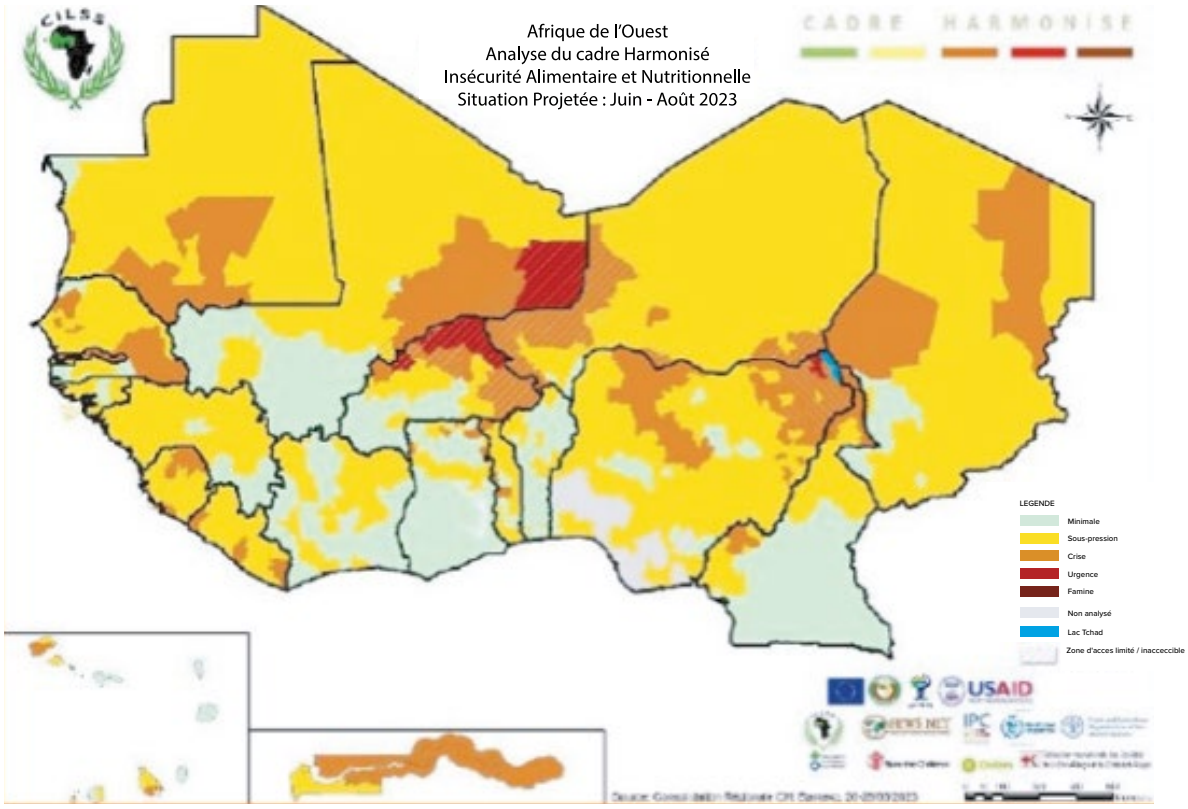
Source : Adapted from African Center for Strategic Studies 2022.

The impacts of climate change compound existing vulnerabilities and risks. The Sahel's high exposure and low coping capacity make the region one of the world's most vulnerable areas to climate change and hazards, such as drought, floods, heatwaves, and crop pests (the situation is particularly dire in Chad, Mali, and Niger) (World Bank Group 2022). Since 2000, flooding, arising from heavier and erratic rainfall patterns due to climate change has affected an estimated 248,000 people per year, with devastating impacts on crops, homes, services, and infrastructure. In 2022, heavy floods displaced 90,000 people and disrupted the livelihoods of over 1,000,000 people in Chad and affected more than 41,000 people in Mali.[7] Between 2016 and 2020, drought caused more than 20 million people to face food insecurity and economic hardship, and placed additional pressure on already strained urban infrastructure by driving rural migration (World Bank Group 2022). As a result of climate change, weather extremes across the Sahel and West Africa will likely intensify over the next decades, and temperatures in the Sahel are projected to increase by at least 2°C by 2040, an increase that is 1.5 times higher than the rest of the world (IPCC 2022).[8] Rising temperatures are expected to accelerate desertification and shorten the rainfall period, causing a reduction of arable land and crop failures and overall higher annual drought occurrences and frequency. Shorter but heavier rainfalls will also increase flood risks.

Finally, the external shocks of the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine have impacted the Sahel, eroding purchasing power and aggravating poverty. COVID-19 slowed or reversed the growth trajectory between 2010–2019 across all six countries, with real gross domestic product (GDP) per capita growth displaying negative values, pushing an additional 2.7 million people into extreme poverty (World Bank Group 2022). The war in Ukraine has contributed to rising food and fuel prices. In 2023, food inflation is still high in the region, at 30.7 percent in July 2022 in Burkina Faso and 11.8 percent in Mali.[9] Chad declared a food emergency in 2022, due to poor harvest, insecurity, and the war in Ukraine.

These multiple crises resulted in a significant deterioration of food and nutrition security in the Sahel (WFP 2023). The food security and nutrition situation remains alarming across the Sahel and West Africa. Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger are estimated to be among the world's hunger hotspots.[10] Across the six countries, more than 13 million people were estimated to have faced severe food insecurity in the 2022 lean season, one of the worst records in the last decade (76 percent of the total food-insecure people in the Sahel in June to August 2022 were concentrated across Burkina Faso, Chad, and Niger).[11] Data for March 2023 anticipated a slight reduction in the number of people in food insecurity for the 2023 lean season and was estimated to be 11.9 million people (figure 1.2).

FIGURE 1.2: Food and Nutrition Insecurity, Current and Projected



Source: Cadre Harmonisé 2023.

1.2 Adaptive Social Protection

Adaptive social protection (ASP) plays a critical role in preventing or mitigating the negative impacts of shocks and boosting resilience for long-term development. ASP has emerged as a flexible and dynamic approach to social protection in the past decade. It combines and exploits synergies between social protection, disaster risk management (DRM), and climate change adaptation, and enables social protection to be leveraged as an effective tool to reduce household vulnerability[12] to covariate shocks, such as economic downturns, natural disasters, conflict and violence, forced displacement, and health emergencies, including the recent COVID-19 pandemic (box 1.1, figure B1.1.1) (Bowen et al. 2020). By providing tailored, targeted, and timely support during or in the aftermath of a crisis, ASP enables poor and vulnerable households to meet their basic needs in the short term while strengthening their resilience in the medium and longer term by reducing negative coping strategies, such as lowering food consumption, selling productive assets, or taking children out of school, and by protecting their human capital and livelihoods. ASP also promotes livelihoods, by increasing productivity and promoting diversification, which are central to resilience to future shocks and sustained poverty reduction.

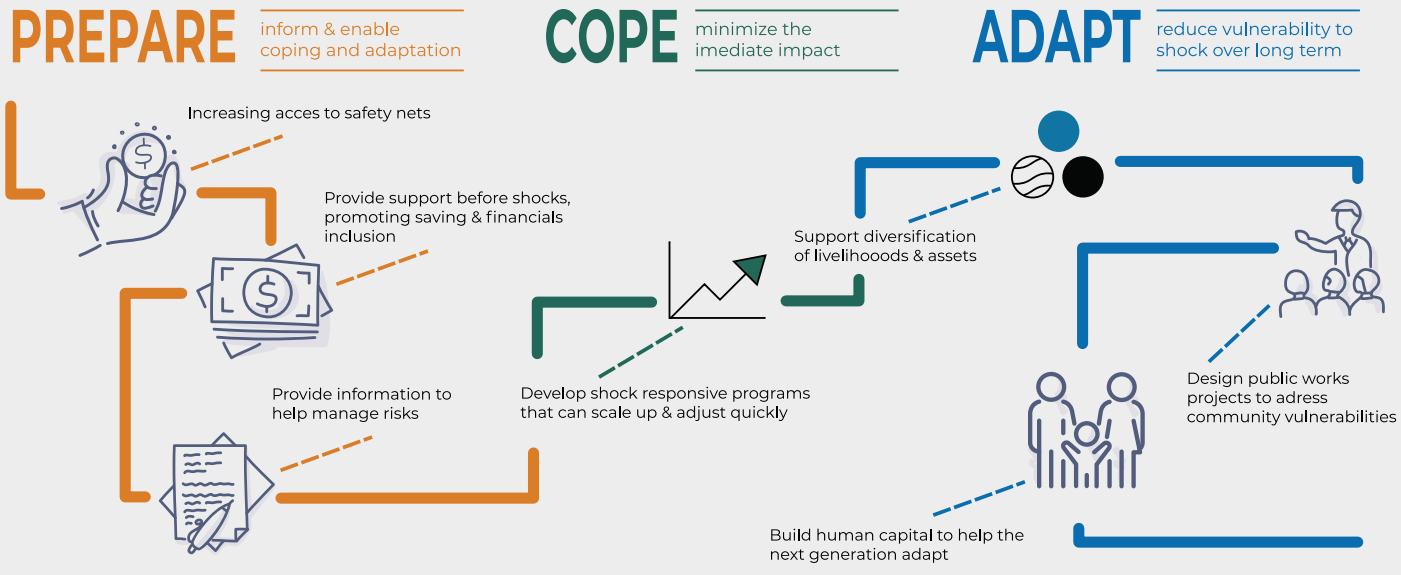
BOX 1.1 : WHAT IS ADAPTIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION?

Adaptive Social Protection (ASP) helps build the resilience of poor and vulnerable households by investing in their capacity to **prepare** for, **cope** with, and **adapt** to shocks, ensuring that they do not fall deeper into poverty. The ASP approach integrates basic social protection with disaster risk management (DRM) and adaptation to climate change.

ASP has emerged as a critical tool to help poor and vulnerable households and communities become more resilient to shocks and stresses, especially to the impacts of climate change, by providing a combination of cash transfers and assistance to strengthen knowledge and behavioral change to promote sustainable and diversified livelihood opportunities.


Photo credit: From WorldBank

FIGURE B1.1.1: How Can ASP Help?



Source: Adapted from World Bank 2020a

While shock-response or disaster systems in other parts of the world typically focus on specific hazards, systems in the Sahel are built around monitoring and responding to food insecurity. In such systems, the focus is on food insecurity, irrespective of the shock or hazard which caused it (from conflict to climate-related and economic shocks). Food insecurity is commonly associated with drought, and indeed droughts in the region are expected to intensify with climate change (UNHCR 2021). However, food insecurity can also be due to other shocks such as locusts, pandemics, or political or economic shocks. Sahelian countries generally develop one plan which seeks to address food insecurity, which is also typically complemented by a plan that focuses on addressing rapid-onset events, such as floods or fires. Unless specified otherwise, this report primarily focuses on food insecurity, which is the focus in most Sahelian countries.

ASP comprises a suite of interventions, which can be 'flexed' and layered before, during, and after a shock strikes. ASP interventions include (but are not limited to) cash transfers programs, public works and cash-for-work programs, livelihood support programs, and productive and economic inclusion programs. These programs are designed to provide poor and vulnerable households with targeted and direct support and access to livelihood and job opportunities to provide a path out of extreme poverty and help cushion the negative and long-lasting impacts of shocks on individual well-being and human capital formation. In times of need, different approaches can be adopted to ensure poor and vulnerable households affected by shocks can be reached (box 1.2, figure B1.2.1).

BOX 1.2 : OPTIONS TO REACH POOR AND VULNERABLE HOUSEHOLDS AFFECTED BY SHOCKS

Using existing programs, options to reach poor and vulnerable households affected by shocks include the following :

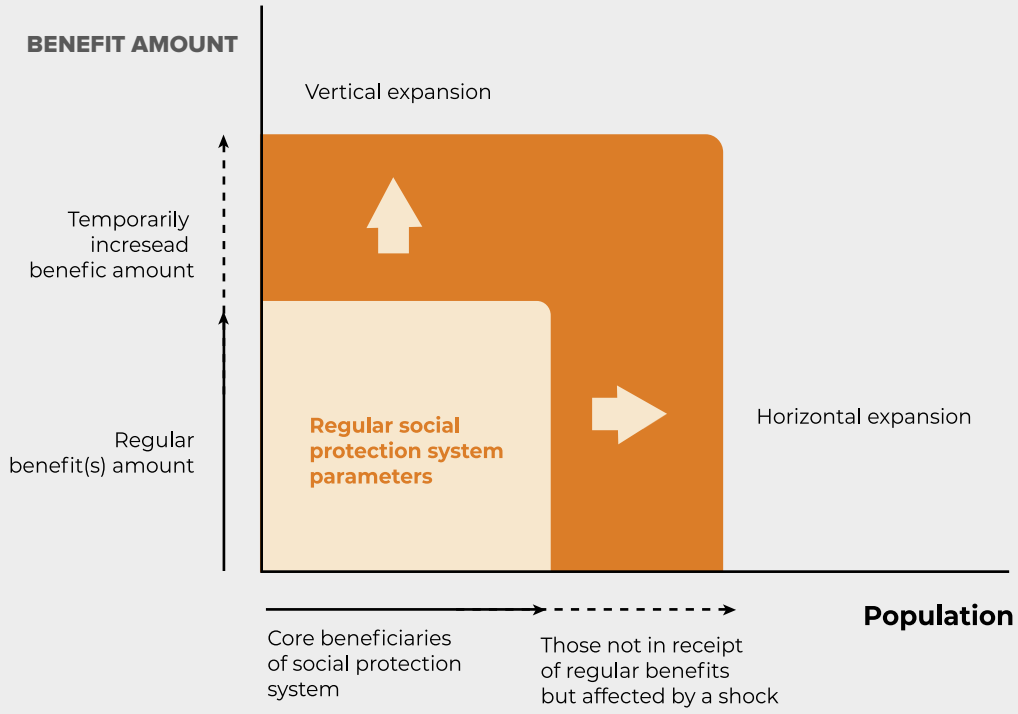
- *Design tweaks.* Making small adjustments to routine social protection programs that are geared toward increasing flexibility and ensuring continuity of provision in times of shocks. Examples of how existing programs can be adapted include the following: waiving cash transfer conditionality, changing payment delivery methods, or modifying the payment schedule.
- *Vertical expansion (or scale-up).* Temporarily increasing the benefit value or duration of an existing program for some or all current beneficiaries. New components may also be added (figure B1.2.1).
- *Horizontal expansion (or scale-out).* Temporarily expanding program coverage to new households affected by a shock (either new or existing programs).

When adopting temporary programs, options include the following :

- *Piggybacking.* Using one or more elements of existing social protection programs or systems (for example, social registry, beneficiary list, payment mechanism) to implement a separate response to a shock.
- *Alignment.* Aligning one or more elements of temporary response programs with national social protection programs or systems. Elements could include objectives, targeting method, transfer value, or delivery mechanism, among others.

Photo credit: From WorldBank

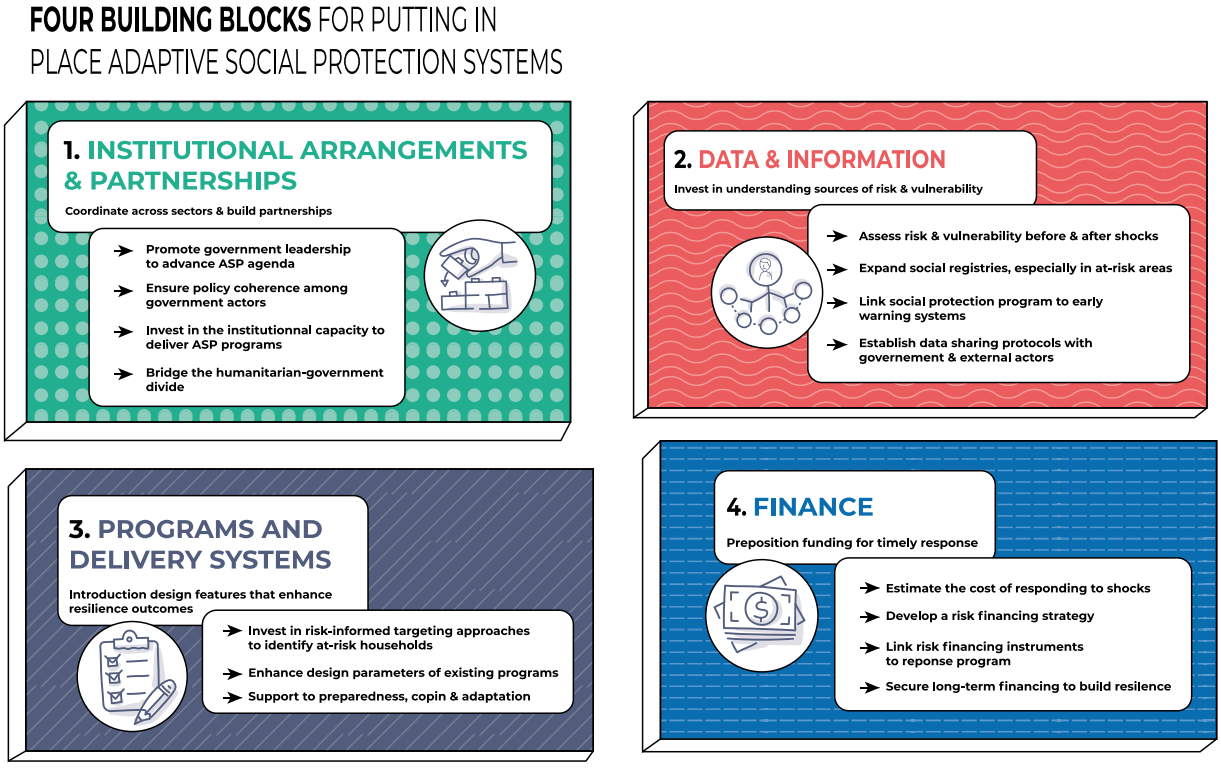
FIGURE B1.2.1: Social Safety Net Programs, Vertical and Horizontal Expansion



Source: Adapted from Bowen and O'Brien et al. 2018

The conceptual framework of ASP rests on four interlinked building blocks. The four building blocks are as follows: Institutional Arrangements and Partnerships, Data and Information, Programs and Delivery Systems, and Finance (figure 1.3 and table 1.1). The interplay of these building blocks underpins the conceptual and analytical framework of ASP. The framework provides a holistic view of the ASP ecosystem and can be used to build, assess, and strengthen national ASP systems.

FIGURE 1.3: The Four Building Blocks for Putting in Place ASP Systems



Source: Adapted From World Bank 2020a.

TABLE 1.1: Key ASP Building Blocks

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS • *Government leadership* • *Institutional arrangements*	This building block refers to the actors, structures, and mechanisms required to lead and coordinate the implementation of adaptive social protection (ASP). It focuses on national governments as the primary actors that provide the institutional anchor for ASP planning and implementation. Given its multisector nature, ASP often involves a wide spectrum of actors from different sectors — including social protection, disaster risk management (DRM), and climate change adaptation — as well as actors from outside government, such as development and humanitarian partners. It is critical to understand which actor carries out which action, how actors coordinate their work, and what their capacity is. The assessment focuses on institutional factors that contribute to effective ASP implementation, including government leadership, policy coherence, legal frameworks, the definition of roles and responsibilities, and the existence of institutional mechanisms for coordination across government and with partners.
DATA AND INFORMATION • *Early Warning Systems* • *Social registries*	This building block concerns the data requirements for an effective ASP system. It refers to data and information required to assess and understand a country's risk profile by looking at the types, frequency, and spatial distribution of hazards, as well as which assets and populations are most exposed and most at risk to the identified shocks. Access to information before shocks occur is vital for designing and implementing ASP programs. Early Warning Systems (EWS) are necessary to understand the spatial distribution and potential impacts of shocks, and to identify high-risk areas and the populations most likely to be affected.[13] Social registries also play a central role in ASP, because they contain information on poor and vulnerable households, which can be used to identify potential beneficiaries of ASP programs (for vertical and horizontal expansions).
PROGRAMS AND DELIVERY SYSTEMS • *Programs* • *Delivery systems* • *Payment systems*	This building block refers to the design and delivery of social safety net interventions to provide timely support to populations affected by shocks, as well as to promote more adaptive and resilient livelihoods before shocks. In well-established ASP systems, programs have high population coverage and cover both poverty reduction and livelihoods or productive inclusion elements. The effectiveness of ASP programs in scaling up or out in response to shocks critically depends on their underlying delivery systems, which can include outreach and communication, intake and registration of potential beneficiaries, assessment of needs and conditions, efficient payment systems, and grievance redress mechanisms to address complaints and improve delivery. These elements of the delivery chain typically require adaptations to support expansion during and after shocks.
FINANCE	This building block refers to the financing strategies and instruments required to finance shock response. Disaster risk financing reflects the shift from a reactive approach, which finances responses ex post, to a proactive approach, which puts in place instruments before shocks, to finance ASP response efficiently. Among others, financing instruments can include national funds, contingent credit lines, insurance risk pools (for example, African Risk Capacity; ARC), and private insurance schemes. Pre-positioning and linking financing instruments to ASP programs can promote quick, adequate, and reliable disbursement. Data analysis and cost modeling are essential to informing the financing requirements and instruments of the financing strategy.

Source: Based on World Bank 2021b.

The Sahel's vulnerability and exposure to shocks and crises is set to increase with accelerating climate change, calling for a shift from often externally funded, ad hoc responses toward building sustainable, government-led systems. In the past, the response to shocks and crises predominantly relied on a humanitarian approach and with year-to-year ad hoc programs. For example, food insecurity resulting from the annual lean season was largely addressed through externally funded humanitarian aid. While humanitarian aid continues to play an important role in navigating food security shocks, countries in the Sahel are increasingly putting forward government-led ASP interventions and are beginning to invest in systems. Although ASP has been shown to be an effective tool in responding to the region's compounding challenges, leveraging its full potential requires government-led national systems that can operate at scale — with a suite of programs at scale, mature information systems, readily budgeted and pre-positioned finance, and clear institutional arrangements. The principle of a systems approach permeates the four pillars of the ASP framework, and the latent–advanced framework of the Social Protection Stress Test Tool is framed around a gradual strengthening of national systems.

Over the past decade, ASP has been on a remarkable trajectory in the Sahel, and this is an appropriate time to take stock of the situation. Until the early 2010s, ASP in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Senegal mainly consisted of ad hoc and small emergency food-based programs that provided temporary relief in times of shocks or acute needs. Today, all six countries have elements of government-led ASP systems in place (for example, programs, targeting mechanisms, social registries, and payment systems) that provide income support to address chronic poverty and promote resilience, and protect livelihoods and human capital from the impacts of shocks. These improvements are the result of significant government commitment and investment, supported by the World Bank (SASPP 2022)[14] , the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the World Food Programme (WFP), among other partners. With climate change and compounding shocks expected to worsen, it is critical to accelerate efforts to strengthen ASP systems. An important step in this process is to understand existing capacities, assess limitations, and identify entry points for further action — and is what this report aims to provide.

1.3 Methodology

This report provides an overview of the state of ASP across six Sahel countries — Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Senegal — along with a set of recommendations for action to strengthen the adaptiveness and responsiveness of existing systems to shocks. The report assesses the prevailing ASP systems, identifies the gaps between required and actual capacities for shock response, and highlights opportunities for targeted investments to build more robust and sustainable ASP systems. The analysis and recommendations in this report can provide a basis for concerted efforts and collaboration between national policy makers, development actors, and humanitarian partners. As such, the assessment can represent a baseline, against which future assessments can be undertaken to measure progress.

The assessment presented in this report leverages the application of the Social Protection Stress Test Tool**.** The stress test provides a framework to assess the adaptiveness and scalability of social protection systems in response to shocks, and to identify priority areas for improvement. The stress test is a structured questionnaire, based around the four ASP building blocks. Each section of this report provides details on the questionnaire structure (see table A.2 in Appendix A for the full Social Protection Stress Test Questionnaire). For each question, the tool proposes five alternatives, which are scored on a scale from 1 to 5. The lowest score refers to a 'latent' situation, while the highest score refers to an 'advanced' situation. Scores can be aggregated by section, by building block, and eventually for the overall assessment. Table 1.2 provides an illustration of the scoring scale for the overall assessment. The value of the assessment lies not just in its scores, but also in its role as a basis for a productive dialogue around various aspects of ASP systems. Due to the qualitative nature of the questions and guidelines for scoring, the ratings are indicative in nature and may not be fully comparable across countries. However, they are useful to identify areas for further investments and, over time, to help monitor progress in a specific country.

Photo credit: From WorldBank

TABLE 1.2: Social Protection Stress Test Tool Scoring Scale

Latent	Nascent	Emerging	Established	Advanced
The social protection system is weak (in terms of reach and systems) and does not have the adaptive capacity to scale on demand.	The social protection system is limited in coverage and efficiency but can pilot and integrate some basic adaptive features that allow for a small increase in "reach."	The social protection system has intermediate coverage and has some capacity to expand in response to some shocks but with limited "reach."	The ASP system can cover most needs and respond to many shocks, but some gaps are still identified.	The ASP system is strong, with near-universal coverage, and can scale up and down efficiently and effectively to cover those in need.

Source: World Bank. 2021b.

This regional report builds on assessments carried out in each country between October 2021 and September 2022. The assessments were based a series of workshops, that were comprised of government authorities, UNICEF, WFP, and the World Bank, between October 2021 and September 2022 (see Appendix for details on workshop dates and participants for each country). It is important to note that in the period since the application of the stress test, some countries have continued to make progress. While the text in this report attempts to capture the most significant developments, these changes are not reflected in the classifications presented in figure 2.1, figure 2.2, figure 2.3, figure 2.4, and figure 2.7.

Photo credit: From WorldBank

2. Progress on the Four Building Blocks for ASP: A Mixed Picture

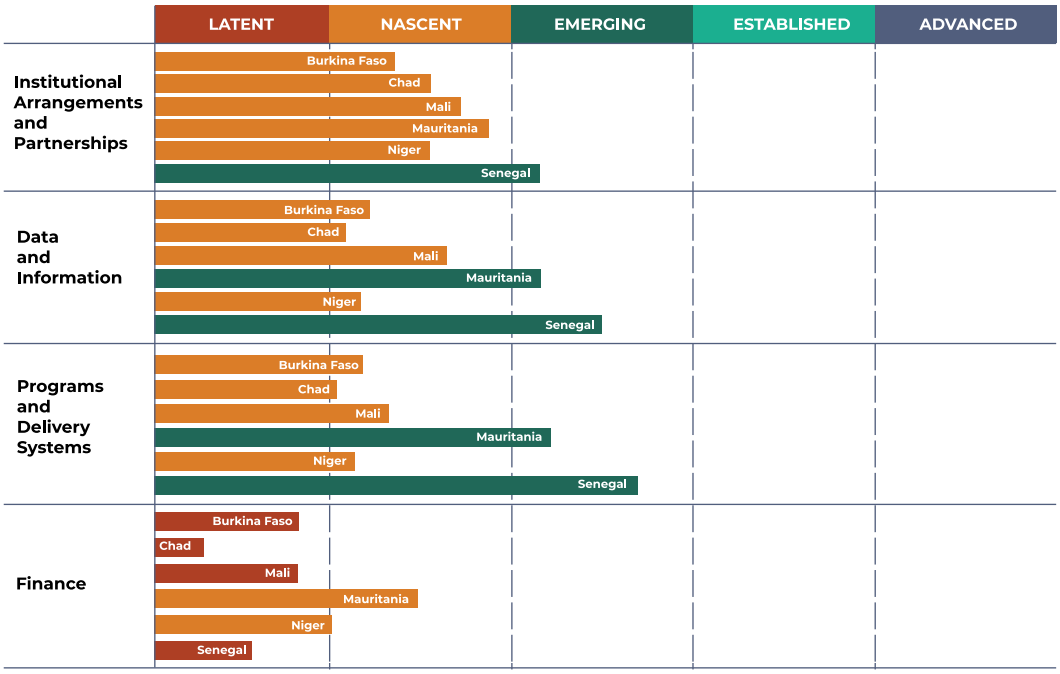
2.1 Overview

Overall, each of the countries have made significant progress in establishing some of the key ASP building blocks, from their starting point nearly a decade ago. All countries have the foundations of an ASP system, can provide regular cash transfers to a certain percentage of the poor, and have the capacity to respond to some shocks, particularly annual food insecurity, albeit with some delays. In addition, countries are currently piloting innovative approaches, related to EWS, program design, triggers, or payments. The greatest advances have been made in Mauritania and Senegal — particularly in terms of the two building blocks of Data and Information, and Programs and Delivery Systems. Senegal is the only country in which the system is considered at an "emerging" level of development. Coverage of routine safety nets in these two countries has now reached a national scale and is providing a strong foundation upon which to launch shock responses. This is illustrated by the response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Mauritania, which involved scaling up its cash transfer programs to 210,000 households Mauritania, (the routine safety net program had 80,000 beneficiary households at the onset of the pandemic). In Niger, despite its lower foundational coverage, cash transfer programs were scaled up to reach 375,000 households in response to COVID-19 in 2021.

Progress is not uniform across countries or building blocks (figure 2.1). All countries have either established a social registry or the foundations of a social registry, however the static (nondynamic) approach to data collection and limited coverage result in data that can be obsolete and incomplete, which makes it difficult for countries to identify poor and vulnerable households affected by shocks. The limited coverage of safety nets remains a critical constraint to a more mature approach to ASP in four of the countries — Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, and Niger. Similarly, the low penetration of digital payment systems in countries limits the adoption of modern payment approaches. Finally, Finance is the building block with the least progress across all countries. The low ratings in the Finance building block also point to a need for other components of the system to be in place, with sufficient coverage and delivery capacity, before countries can focus on the mobilization and coordination of financing.

Overall, while there is a strong foundation and commitment to ASP, much remains to be done. In each country, there remains a critical need to apply a concerted and carefully sequenced plan of action across building blocks. Operationalization is a key priority, because systems, policies, or delivery mechanisms have frequently been established but not yet fully implemented.

FIGURE 2.1: Summary of Stress Test Assessment



Source : Original figure for this publication

Note: Figure based on assessments completed in October 2021 in Burkina Faso; September 2022 in Chad; June 2022 in Mali; November 2021 in Mauritania; May 2022 in Niger; and January 2022 in Senegal. Progress realized since these assessments are reflected in the text.

2.2 Institutional Arrangements and Partnerships : Key Findings

In the Sahel, all countries are making progress on ensuring that ASP is underpinned by appropriate policies, response plans, and coordination arrangements (box 2.1 and figure 2.2). Countries are integrating ASP into their national social protection policies and have established national response plans that define responses to food insecurity. Progress is more limited on the implementation of these policies and plans.

The discussion on ASP and shock response in the Sahel revolves around food and nutrition security (rather than specific hazards such as drought or floods). Hence, coordination among ASP actors and with DRM actors is critical to ensuring greater use of ASP instruments in responding to shocks. Clear institutional arrangements for coordination and allocation of roles and functions to different actors could help promote a more transparent and efficient collaboration. Strong initiatives are emerging in the Sahel, allowing for social protection instruments to play a more central role in shock-response strategies and to benefit from its associated financing.

Finally, external partners are critical for the ASP agenda, both for the mobilization of financing and, in some fragile contexts, for implementation. Hence, strong collaboration between governments and partners is essential to avoid duplication, inefficiencies, and tensions. There are emerging examples of partners aligning with national systems and priorities, as opposed to operating parallel systems. Overall, government leadership is essential to the coordination of external actors, in addition to an explicit effort by those funding these actors to promote convergence and alignment.

BOX 2.1 : WHAT IS THE FOCUS OF THE INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS BUILDING BLOCK?

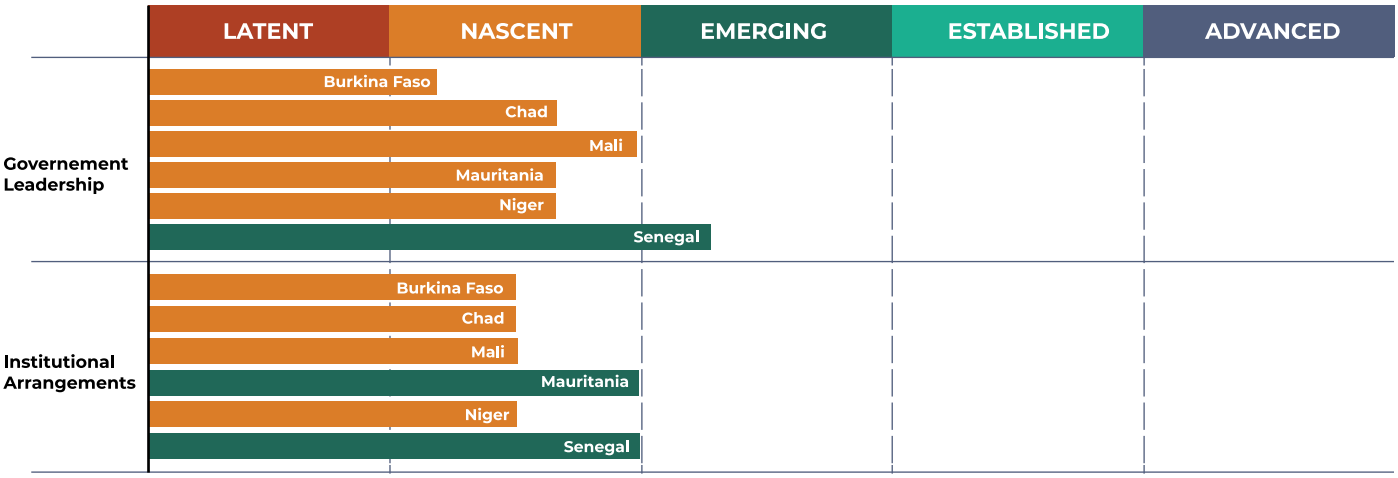
The Institutional Arrangements and Partnerships building block considers the extent to which adaptive social protection (ASP) is underpinned by appropriate policies, contingency plans, coordination arrangements, and government leadership. The multidisciplinary and interagency nature of ASP requires diversified expertise and coordination among the various policy frameworks, plans, organizations, and programs involved in social protection, disaster risk management (DRM), and climate change adaptation. A clear articulation of the respective roles and responsibilities can help establish actionable, operational partnerships for the delivery of ASP. Strong government leadership is important to successfully coordinate or create links between DRM and social protection agencies — who are often otherwise disconnected.

This building block is concerned with assessing the ability of a country's government to lead shock response efforts, both ex ante and ex post. This ability provides an indication of the overall development of a country's institutions. Consequently, the questions in this section seek to ascertain the relative strength and capacity of governmental institutions to drive planning for shocks and for coordination with, and of, other stakeholders and actors in response to shocks. The assessment is based on the following questions :

- Is there any government policy or strategy that recognizes the role of (adaptive) social protection in DRM?
- Is there a contingency plan or response plan, with links to risk assessment, which determines the actions to be taken in case of shocks?
- How effectively does the government lead the response plan and implementation?
- Is there a public agency which is formally tasked with leading the social protection shock-response efforts?
- Is there a coordination mechanism or institutionalized link between DRM (or the institutionalized system responsible for shock response) and social protection agencies?

Sources : World Bank 2021b; Smith and Bowen 2020; Bowen et al. 2020

FIGURE 2.2: Overview of the Institutional Arrangements and Partnerships Building Block



Source: Original figure for this publication.

KEY FINDING 1:
Countries in the Sahel are incorporating ASP principles into their national social protection policies and are habitually preparing response plans to guide their response to food insecurity, although implementation is often limited.

Countries in the Sahel all have national social protection policies, and most are taking steps to incorporate the core principles of ASP into these frameworks. Building on policy frameworks for social safety nets that, until recently, focused primarily on chronic issues (for example, addressing structural poverty and vulnerability), countries in the region are beginning to integrate needs that are related to covariate shocks. Mauritania is updating its policy settings to reflect the increasing role of safety nets in shock-response and the government's commitment to the ASP agenda. Similarly, in Chad, the national social protection strategy, that is currently under preparation, is expected to reflect the strategic relevance of ASP and highlight its core components. In Burkina Faso, progress is also being made on the integration of ASP into the new social protection policy and into the food security response framework. Although progress is observed in social protection strategies, there is limited integration of ASP considerations into national disaster response policy frameworks, such as plans for floods or fires, and into the annual lean season response plans.

In the Sahel, the main instruments for shock-response are food and nutritional security response plans. Governments and partners in the Sahel have historically focused on food and nutritional security. Because food insecurity results from different types of shocks and hazards, most response plans are hazard-agnostic but focus predominantly on the recurrent annual lean season. In addition, several countries have risk- or shock-specific plans, particularly for floods, but these typically receive less resources. Comprehensive contingency plans would be necessary, to enable faster and more effective responses by planning in advance what steps should be taken when a shock occurs (box 2.2). For instance, Mauritania has a contingency plan for floods, Plan de contingence national de réponse aux inondations, and a response plan food insecurity, Plan National de Réponse, in addition to the national emergency response plan, Organisation des Secours, with the food insecurity plan more advanced.

Typically, food insecurity response plans are based on the national Early Warning System (Cadre Harmonisé, box 2.10) and, every year, describe the anticipated needs in the various regions and guide decisions on interventions from governmental and nongovernmental actors. For example, in Chad, the national response plan identified seven provinces at risk and estimated that more than 5.3 million people would be food insecure (1.5 million people in a severe situation) during the 2023 lean season. In Niger, the budget of the National Response Plan for 2022, estimated at US$437 million, was financed by the government (43 percent) and partners (57 percent).

Note: Figure based on assessments completed in October 2021 in Burkina Faso; September 2022 in Chad; June 2022 in Mali; November 2021 in Mauritania; May 2022 in Niger; and January 2022 in Senegal. Progress realized since these assessments are reflected in the text.

BOX 2.2 : WHAT ARE CONTINGENCY PLANS FOR ASP?

Contingency planning is an essential measure to help countries prepare their systems for shocks. A good contingency plan will address all phases of the delivery chain and will outline needed modifications to processes and changes to systems and institutions. It provides the opportunity to define — in advance — key issues including the following: roles and responsibilities of different actors, adaptations that are needed for processes and systems, development of standard operating procedures, training of stakeholders, and articulation of links to wider disaster risk management (DRM) plans. Ultimately, contingency planning can ensure faster, more effective, and more coordinated implementation.
Source: Smith and Bowen 2020.

The realization of commitments related to shock response in social protection policies and contingency plans has been constrained, often due to financing challenges. In Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, and Niger, operationalizing the vision of the social protection policy — that safety nets should reduce vulnerability to shocks and disasters — has been constrained by inadequate financial resources and limited mainstreaming of DRM into social protection programs. Similarly, one of the challenges in the region is the operationalization of response plans, which are often hampered by inadequate funding and limited coordination. Incomplete operationalization suggests that policy documents do not guarantee implementation, and that implementation may need to take precedence over the development or revision of social protection frameworks.

RECOMMENDATION 1:
Incorporate shock-response functions and instruments into national social protection strategies and include ASP programs as response vehicles in national shock-response plans.

FOR GOVERNMENTS:

- Expand the focus of national social protection strategies beyond chronic issues such as structural poverty and vulnerability, to include building resilience and responding to shocks.
- Integrate ASP as a key component of disaster risk management and include as a response mechanism in contingency planning and national food insecurity response plans.

FOR DONORS AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS:

- Increase awareness, among all development and humanitarian actors, of the role that ASP instruments (including social registry and payment mechanisms) and programs can play in contributing to shock-response.
- Coordinate around joint messaging on the role of ASP (regular safety net, resilience or economic inclusion, and shock-response interventions) and their inclusion in national policies.
- Promote operationalization of policy commitment to provide support through national systems where possible, and align with national systems otherwise.

KEY FINDING 2:
In most countries in the Sahel, the institutional landscape for ASP lacks strong anchoring, clarity of roles, and coordination mechanisms across its own actors and with actors from other sectors that are involved in shock response or disaster risk management.

Coordination within the ASP sector remains complex. A key issue is fragmentation within and between agencies that have social protection responsibilities. For instance, in Mali, two agencies are charged with implementing routine safety nets, with no coordination mechanisms. In Niger, the National Mechanism for Prevention and Management of Food Crises faces internal coordination constraints because its three units tend to work in silos as follows: the Cellule Système d'Alerte Précoce (EWS Cell) is responsible for monitoring food insecurity, the Cellule Crises Alimentaires (Food Crises Cell) is in charge of short-term food and nutrition insecurity responses, and the Cellule Filets Sociaux (Safety Net Cell) is focused on the programming of regular and shock-responsive cash transfers. In contrast, Senegal has addressed past overlaps and lack of clarity in mandates through the recent anchoring of the Fond de Solidarité Nationale (National Solidarity Fund; FSN) at the ministry responsible for community development and equity, with a clear mandate to implement shock-response programs, and through clarification of the mandate of the Délégation Générale à la Protection Sociale et à la Solidarité Nationale (General Delegation to Social Protection and National Solidarity; DGPSN) to focus on regular cash transfers and productive inclusion programs. However, the annual response plan and climate insurance instruments are under the responsibility of other institutions, which can constrain coordination. Experience in the region shows that there can be important challenges even when there are close institutional links between units working on ASP, especially when internal authority, coordination, and resource allocation still needs to be clearly defined.

Coordination between agencies responsible for rapid-onset shocks and those focused on food insecurity remains weak. The absence of coordination mechanisms can create the potential for institutional friction and conflict, rather than institutional collaboration. In Senegal, while mechanisms exist for coordination between the ministries responsible for DRM (which falls under the purview of the Ministry of Interior) and social protection, they are

not adequately operationalized. In Burkina Faso, the interministerial Conseil National de Secours d'Urgence et de Réhabilitation (National Council for Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation) and the Conseil National pour la Sécurité Alimentaire (National Council for Food Security) have overlapping competencies, which leads to inefficiencies regarding lines of authority. In Chad, efforts to coordinate horizontally have been limited by the absence of a framework for coordination between ministries involved in social protection and those in charge of responses to food insecurity. This weak coordination is due in part to the vertical and external dimensions of ASP coordination (box 2.3), which cannot be addressed by a simple framework.

BOX 2.3: THREE KEY DIMENSIONS FOR EFFECTIVE COORDINATION ON ASP

Effective shock response for adaptive social protection (ASP) will depend on coordination among many stakeholders across the following dimensions:

- *Horizontal coordination.* Across national government departments managing social protection programs, social registries, and disaster response.
- *Vertical coordination.* Among central government bodies and those decentralized bodies and local government actors involved in the safety net delivery chain.
- *Coordination with external actors.* Particularly among international humanitarian actors that fund and deliver emergency cash and voucher responses and have overlapping aims in addressing needs.

Source: Smith and Bowen 2020.

Some countries are making progress on institutionalizing links between social protection and food security actors. Mauritania has established a permanent institutional platform — Dispositif National de Prévention d'Alerte Précoce et de Réponse aux Chocs d'Insécurité Alimentaire et Nutritionnelle (National Early Warning and Food and Nutrition Insecurity Shock Response System; DCAN). DCAN is responsible for the entire shock response chain, preparing the diagnosis based on early warning tools, supporting the production of the national response plan, managing the Fond National de Réponse aux Crises Alimentaires et Nutritionnelles (National Food and Nutrition Crisis Response Fund; the FNRCAN), and coordinating the implementation of the response. DCAN comprises all government agencies involved in food security, as well as technical and financial partners. In 2022, for its first year of implementation, the DCAN was successful in coordinating cash transfers to all households in need. In Niger, a 2022 decree (Arrêté 0195 PM of October 13, 2022) recognized cash transfers as the response modality to support food insecure households in the national response plan, paving the way for greater integration. In Senegal, coordination between agencies involved in shock response — including the Secrétariat Exécutif du Conseil National de Sécurité Alimentaire (Executive Secretariat of the National Food Security Council), which is responsible for the coordination of the food security national response plan, and the FSN — resulted in the implementation of a cash transfer response to food insecurity by the FSN, as part of the national response plan. In Burkina Faso, a reform of the Conseil National de Sécurité Alimentaire (National Food Security Council) and the overall food security response framework will explicitly include social protection in responses by designating the national flagship social safety nets program as one of the disaster response modalities. In contrast, the Conseil National d'Orientation Stratégique de la Protection Sociale (National Council for the Strategic Orientation of Social Protection) in Mali, established in 2016 for the purpose of promoting dialogue and coordination between social protection stakeholders, has played a limited role.

RECOMMENDATION 2:

Define roles and responsibilities and establish coordination mechanisms among a broader range of ASP actors and with other governmental and non-governmental DRM actors.

FOR GOVERNMENTS :

- Define mandates and roles of institutions responsible for social protection, shock response, and DRM.
- Establish or streamline national coordination mechanisms and ensure participation of government and nongovernmental actors as relevant, based on the shock.

FOR DONORS AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS :

- Provide technical and financial support to national coordination mechanisms, including through adequate human resources.
- Participate in the coordination mechanisms.
- Identify operational modalities to progressively deploy interventions within the national framework.

KEY FINDING 3:
Government leadership and capacity to promote the alignment of partners is essential but remains constrained.

In the Sahel, partnerships are critical for the ASP agenda, both for financing and, in some fragile contexts, for implementation. Most countries in the region experience a certain degree of reliance on international partners, particularly when there is insufficient domestic funding or capacity to mount comprehensive national responses to shocks. In Chad, external support for the social safety net program includes financing and convening. Other shock-response interventions are limited to short-term emergency support provided by humanitarian partners. In Mauritania, partner financing has complemented funding for routine programs and food security interventions, although the government has contributed a growing share of the needs. International partners in this country have typically included WFP, Oxfam, and Action contre la Faim, which implement cash transfer programs aimed at supporting food insecure and poor households during the lean season. In addition to financing, there are also challenging contexts where partners can play an important role in the implementation of some programs, including in areas plagued by fragility or conflict in particular in Burkina Faso and Mali, or when government capacity is still under development.

Strong collaboration between governments and partners is essential to avoid duplication, inefficiencies, and tensions, and there are emerging examples of partners aligning with national systems and priorities, as opposed to operating parallel systems. The advancing ASP agenda has helped to catalyze strategic and technical coordination between international partners and government on food insecurity (for other shocks, the picture is more nuanced). For instance, in Mali, international partners are working within the national social protection framework, relationships are strengthening, and there is good alignment and collaboration. In Mauritania, the government, the World Bank, and WFP jointly developed a satellite data-driven decision tool to support the national EWS. In addition, through the leadership of the National Food and Nutrition Crises Prevention and Response Framework, all partners intervening in food security response use the social registry and subscribe to the directives of the national response plan developed by the government. In Niger, enhanced coordination has materialized between UNICEF, WFP, and the government supported by the World Bank, over the development of the core pillars of an ASP system. Also, a shock response program in response to the socioeconomic impact of the COVID-19 crisis was jointly implemented by the World Bank–supported ASP government program, UNICEF, and WFP. This is helping to focus attention on strengthening national systems rather than on creating parallel structures. Some countries are also setting up instruments that seek to channel both internal and external resources through a single mechanism (see section on Financing).

Government leadership is essential to align humanitarian responses to food insecurity with national social protection systems (Kreidler et al. 2023). It is essential for the government to set a clear direction on ASP and take a leadership role on the implementation of response plans. In Chad, there are limited efforts and incentives toward convergence or alignment with government programs — partly explained by the government's limited capacity to take an active leadership role in social protection. Similarly, the weak political and governance context in Mali reduces the incentives for alignment. In Burkina Faso, most humanitarian activities take place in insecure areas where routine programs have limited coverage. In Senegal, there is a need for improved intragovernmental coordination to encourage humanitarian actors to harmonize their ways of working. There are multiple options for governments to foster greater convergence and alignment with national systems. Recent experience suggests that some are easier to achieve, including promotion of the use of national delivery systems such as payment systems or grievance redress mechanisms, while convergence is harder to achieve in other areas (box 2.4). In addition, international actors who finance humanitarian partners also have a role to play, because they can prioritize convergence and provide implementing actors with clear incentives for alignment, rather than implicitly incentivize departures from national systems by demanding an alignment with their own priorities (Kreidler et al. 2023).

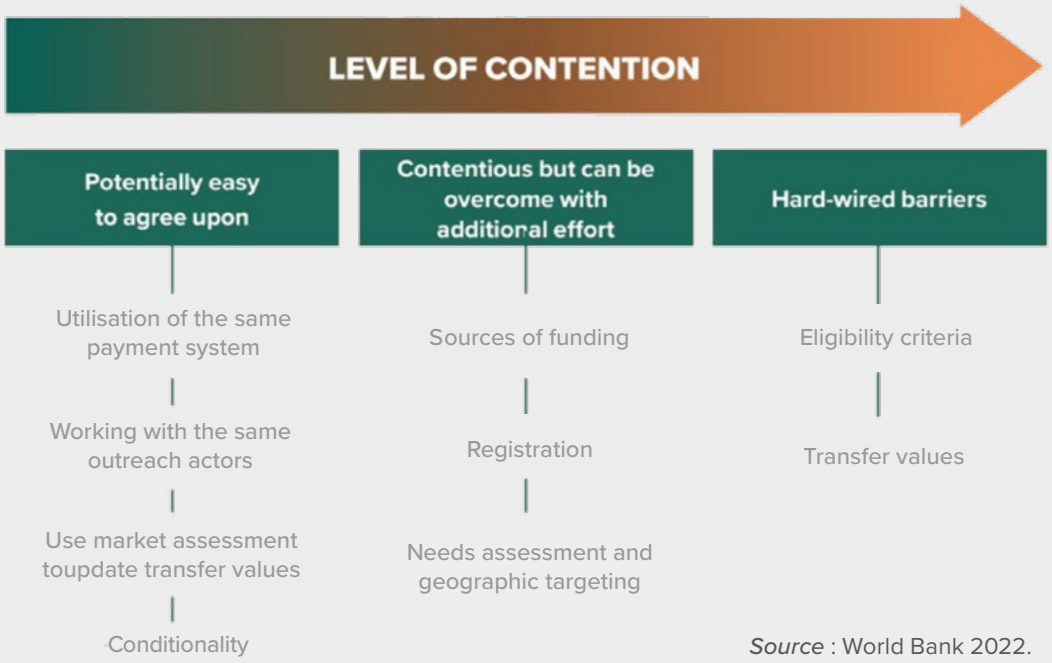
Photo credit: From WorldBank

BOX 2.4 : WHAT HAS WORKED FOR ALIGNMENT AND CONVERGENCE BETWEEN NATIONAL SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS AND HUMANITARIAN AID IN THE SAHEL?

Humanitarian assistance tends to operate in urgent and volatile contexts with short-term horizons, while national social protection systems — including regular social safety nets — typically focus on longer term issues. However, both types of interventions share a broad goal to protect the poorest and most vulnerable. This common goal is an opportunity to better connect humanitarian assistance to the national social protection system, particularly in the Sahelian context, which is characterized by persistent and cyclical food insecurity.

Increased convergence can lead to greater efficiency and effectiveness, by encouraging cross-learning, preventing duplication, reducing confusion among beneficiaries, increasing coverage of programs, minimizing transaction costs, and optimizing response time. Recent experience highlights that convergence can be seen as a fluid and adaptable concept, in which some elements are more amenable to harmonization than others (figure B2.4.1). For instance, the alignment of payment systems and use (or not) of conditionality are generally easier to converge on, while eligibility criteria and transfer value (a recurrent topic of disagreement) are more difficult, because they are more closely linked to program or actors' identity and values. Some elements, such as funding sources, beneficiary registration (which raises issues of data protection and interoperability), definition of vulnerability, and ways to identify geographical zones of intervention, can be contentious but can be overcome with additional effort. By focusing on low-hanging fruits, actors can help build momentum toward more complex agreements in the future.

FIGURE B2.4.1: Level of Contention in Program Elements



Source : World Bank 2022.

Low-hanging fruits such as payment systems can be catalysts for convergence (see section on Data and Information Systems). Outreach and communication with communities are another way to increase convergence with minimal effort, because programs tend to leverage the same frontline delivery staff or organizations. In Senegal, local civil society organizations, which help the government implement the social safety net in the field, also work with other cash assistance programs. These social operators are key to enabling convergence because they ensure that a consistent interlocutor communicates on behalf of various programs.

While registration can be a contentious element, differences can be overcome. Social registries can provide the data for all programs to identify eligible households, using their own criteria. However, humanitarian actors intermittently require faster registration processes or different data than is available in social registries. Ensuring that social registries provide quality data and include variables used by key actors, can help incentivize joint approaches on registration (see section on Data and Information Systems).

Sources : Kreidler et al. 2023; Saidi and Ruiz 2023.

RECOMMENDATION 3:
Strengthen the government leadership and convening role on ASP and promote the alignment or integration of financial and operational partners' support within national systems.

FOR GOVERNMENTS:

- Streamline the elaboration process of the national response plan and lead its implementation, anchoring the process in a collaborative approach.

FOR DONORS AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS:

- Participate in the national coordination mechanism and in the elaboration of the national response plan.
- Identify opportunities for harmonization of programs and collaboration.
- Support the implementation of the national response plan by providing support through national programs, using national systems, or, at a minimum, aligning with national parameters.

2.3 Data and Information Systems: Key Findings

In the Sahel, the Data and Information Systems building block is among the most developed of the four ASP building blocks, due to advances made in the development of social registries (box 2.5). All countries in the region have, or are currently developing, a social registry. The largest social registry in the region is in Senegal, which covers approximately one-third of the population across the national territory. The social registry in Mauritania also covers the entire national territory and all poorest households. Despite this progress, challenges remain. The limited coverage of registries in most Sahel countries, and their reliance on in-person surveys, constrains their dynamism and their relevance for shock response. In addition, greater institutionalization and interoperability of social registries must be achieved, to ensure that they are used by a broader range of governmental and nongovernmental actors in their responses to shocks and in their promotion of resilience among the poor and vulnerable.

All Sahel countries have early warning tools and food insecurity classification systems — namely the Cadre Harmonisé (Harmonized Framework) — which focus on food and nutrition security (rather than specific hazards) and provide estimates of the number of food insecure households each year in different regions. However, these tools face technical challenges related to data accuracy and reliability, as well as important capacity and financing challenges, because they frequently rely on external support to ensure their functionality. It remains critical to ensure a strong link between the early warning tools, the processes of

BOX 2.5 : WHAT IS THE FOCUS OF THE DATA AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS BUILDING BLOCK?

The Data and Information Systems building block recognizes that a social protection system can only take appropriate and timely action if it can be adequately informed. The two key aspects which affect a country's ability to respond in a timely manner and target the affected population are (1) functional and up-to-date social registries, and (2) Early Warning Systems (EWS).

Social registries, or other forms of databases which include information about beneficiaries or potential beneficiaries, can play a valuable role in adaptive social protection (ASP) systems. The efficiency and successful performance of the social protection system relies on knowing who the beneficiaries should be and how to reach them. Social registries underpin this, because they can be instrumental in identifying households or individuals who are impacted by certain shocks, or likely to be impacted, based on their characteristics and vulnerabilities.

The key objective of functional EWS is to monitor and provide alerts as to the occurrence of a natural hazard event. EWS are essential to ASP, because without the ability to forecast a shock and its likely location and impact, it is not possible to prepare a timely response to this type of shock. This building block seeks to understand whether the ASP system can rely on a country's EWS.
The assessment is based on a series of questions related to social registries and EWS, including as follows :

- What kind of registry is used to target beneficiaries for a shock response? What is its coverage, particularly of disaster-prone areas? Are there other databases that could significantly expand reach?
- What share of records is older than three years and is there a protocol for updating the registry?
- Does the data in the registry allow targeting, identifying, locating, and contacting the beneficiary and transferring the benefit during shock response?
- Do humanitarian partners use the government's registry for their response?
- Are there any data privacy regulations with a specified course of action in the event of a privacy breach?
- Are there functional EWS for the shocks the country is exposed to?
- Is the national EWS capable of warning (monitoring and alerting) of shocks?
- Has the government undertaken vulnerability and risk assessments to assess the impact of shocks based on EWS data?

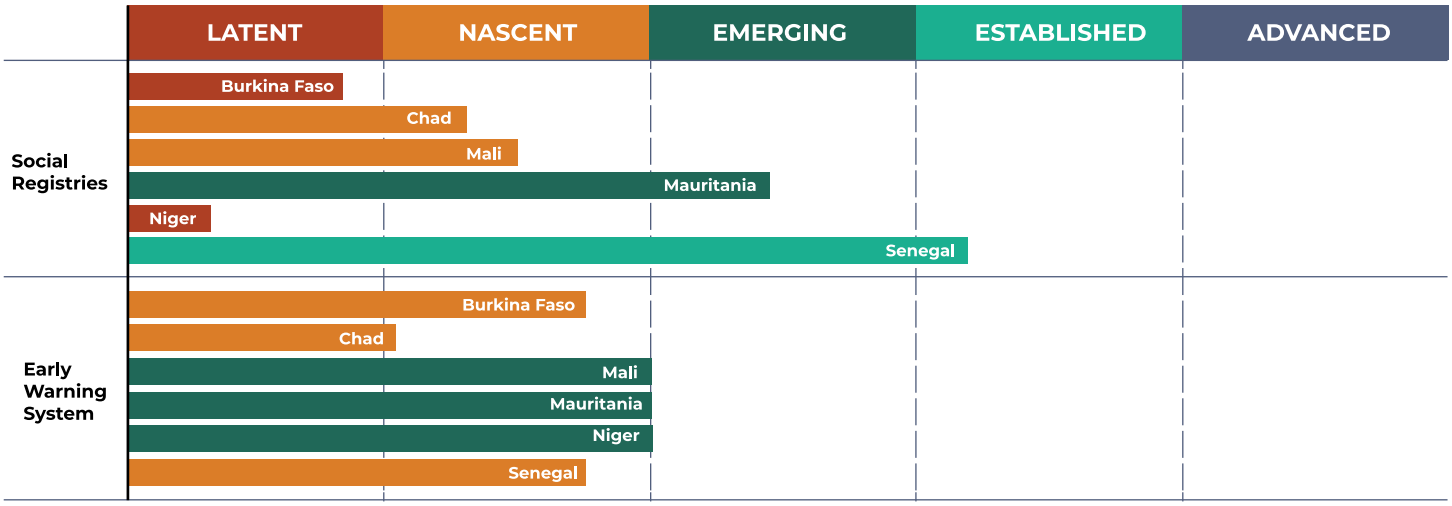
- Is there an agreed trigger to initiate shock response or to scale up social protection systems in shock response?

Sources: World Bank 2021b ; Smith and Bowen 2020; Bowen et al. 2020.

KEY FINDING 4:
A strong buy-in to social registries has resulted in their expansion across the Sahel, though many countries are yet to cover all geographic areas and households vulnerable to shocks.

One of the most active areas of ASP progress across the Sahel region is the establishment of social registries. The Sahel is characterized by varying levels of development in social registries. In Senegal, the unique national registry contains information on approximately 550,000 households from all areas of all 14 regions — approximately one-third of the population and all the extreme poor — and its expansion to approximately one million households is under way. The registry in Mauritania is also national in its coverage and includes approximately 1.3 million people out of a population of 4.5 million. Mali has a similarly broad social registry, with information on 1.2 million households — approximately one-third of the population – but the data was collected using different questionnaires. In other countries in the region, significant efforts are still needed to improve the coverage and relevance of social registries: Burkina Faso is developing a new comprehensive social registry, expected to be populated with approximately 200,000 households in the first phase (by the end of 2023). In Chad, the registry's coverage is expanding but remains low, currently including households from only 14 of the country's 23 provinces, with coverage varying significantly, ranging from 76 percent in one region to single-digit coverage in others. Since the assessment reflected in figure 2.3, Niger has made significant progress in the development of its unified social registry, building on the national safety net program's operations management system, which currently includes information on 400,000 households (approximately 11 percent of the population) and data directly collected by the social registry unit. The scope of the social registry database in Niger will expand to 800,000 households by the end of 2024.

FIGURE 2.3 : Overview of the Data and Information Systems Building Block



Source : Original figure for this publication*

*Note : Figure based on assessments completed in October 2021 in Burkina Faso; September 2022 in Chad; June 2022 in Mali; November 2021 in Mauritania; May 2022 in Niger; and January 2022 in Senegal. Progress realized since these assessments are reflected in the text.

The ability of social registries to inform shock-response is limited in several countries by incomplete geographic coverage. Social registries can be a powerful tool for reaching beneficiaries affected by a shock (box 2.6). Apart from Senegal and Mauritania, whose social registries cover all regions, communes, neighborhoods, and villages, the geographic coverage of social registries in other countries in the Sahel is still limited. As registries are progressively rolled out, they typically start in the poorest or most food-insecure areas, which do not always overlap with shock prone areas. When geographic coverage is limited, those vulnerable to shocks who live in other areas are de facto not included. Hence, only registries that have national coverage can provide a strong basis for response to different types of shocks or risks.

BOX 2.6: THE POTENTIAL USE OF SOCIAL REGISTRIES FOR SHOCK-RESPONSE

Globally, shock-responsive social protection programs are making greater use of preexisting social registries (and other databases) to reach shock-affected households. Social registries are information systems that support outreach, intake, registration, and determination of potential eligibility for one or more social programs. They have a social policy role, as inclusion systems, and an operational role, as information systems (Leite et al. 2017).

Low coverage or exclusion of some at-risk populations limits the relevance of social registries in shock response — particularly the horizontal expansion of programs. If coverage of at-risk populations were to be high, governments would have a ready means to rapidly identify households likely to have been affected by a shock. In such circumstances, governments could provide additional support to affected households already enrolled in ongoing programs (vertical expansion) and provide temporary support to affected households not enrolled in regular programs (horizontal expansion). High coverage social registries would therefore contribute to a timely and efficient shock response.

The quality of the data is also important. Over time, some data in social registries are likely to become outdated — whether wealth approximations, household composition, employment, or contact details. They may also not reflect population movements. More dynamic (or adaptive) intake and registration processes, with on-demand mechanisms built in for the regular updating of records, may help to retain the relevance of the data for targeting emergency assistance.

Source: Adapted from Smith and Bowen 2020

Registries also typically focus on households that are chronically poor or food-insecure and are less able to identify households who are at risk but not currently in chronic poverty or food insecurity. Safety net programs in the Sahel were primarily established to provide support and services to the chronically poor. Hence, registries have tended to include households based on their chronic conditions (poverty, food insecurity, and so on), and do not necessarily capture those who are also at risk of falling into poverty in times of shocks, but who are not currently among the poorest. For instance, a social registry might not capture households who are just above the poverty line and living at the edge of a river prone to flooding, or in informal housing on unstable land in an urban slum. Two exceptions exist however, in Senegal and Mauritania, where registries explicitly aim to register an additional layer of households vulnerable to shocks as follows: the planned expansion in Senegal to one million households also aims to cover those vulnerable to falling into poverty in case of shocks (where the definition of vulnerability relates to the volatility of consumption), and the registry in Mauritania includes additional households, based on degree of vulnerability of different areas, to ensure the registry will be relevant for shock-response interventions. The registries in Chad and Mauritania also include refugees, as a pre-requisite for their inclusion in the routine and shock response social protection programs.

Increasing the registration of at-risk populations in all regions is critical to ensure that a system is prepared for shocks, however there are numerous operational challenges. Registration of all poor, vulnerable, and at-risk households would facilitate a horizontal expansion in case of a shock but requires significant financing and human capacity. Relying on new technologies, such as geospatial data, could enable a quicker identification of households (in Mauritania, the georeferencing of households provides a mechanism to monitor interventions). Some of the requirements or processes involved in registering households can also pose a challenge to widescale enrollment. For example, in Burkina Faso, the proportion of the population that holds the prerequisite documentation to register for social protection — such as an official birth certificate, a certificate of citizenship, or a national identification card — is estimated at 56.4 percent (with lower rates for women). Furthermore, registration is particularly challenging in conflict-affected areas, because of limited accessibility and security risks. However, needs are often significant in those areas, as shocks and conflicts exacerbate pre-existing vulnerabilities. To address some of these challenges, countries have designed and deployed mechanisms to reduce the risk of exclusion, including as follows: in Burkina Faso, households are supported to obtain national identification cards; in Senegal, beneficiaries who do not have recognized identification cards can nominate a person outside of the household as the recipient; and in Mauritania, an official identification is not required for the national safety net programs (recognizing that majority of the poorest quintiles would otherwise be rendered ineligible). Finally, ensuring displaced people are considered for registration, and eligibility for routine programs, remains a challenge in most of the region.

RECOMMENDATION 4:
Expand the coverage of social registries to all geographic areas and all households vulnerable to shock, to ensure that they can be leveraged for shock response.

FOR GOVERNMENTS :

- Develop and implement a national social registry expansion strategy in line with patterns of vulnerability, food insecurity and displacement, to ensure households in extreme poverty or vulnerable to shocks or food insecurity are included.
- Update the data collection protocol and instruments, to ensure all relevant variables are included (to proxy poverty and vulnerability) and to respond to the needs of all potential user programs.
- Identify mechanisms to address constraints linked to insecurity and displacement.

FOR DONORS AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS :

- Support analysis to improve understanding of vulnerability to food insecurity and shocks (including drought and floods, among others) and inform social registry coverage expansion and questionnaires or variables.
- Support the development of the social registry expansion strategy to ensure adequate coverage.

KEY FINDING 5:
Keeping social registries updated is a challenge in the Sahel but is essential for their use in shock-response.

Ensuring social registries have regularly updated information is an important prerequisite for an inclusive shock response. Information on households can quickly become outdated, because of a shock, population movement, changes in living conditions, the labor market situation, demographic composition, etc. Low data quality can significantly impact the ability of a program to respond in time (box 2.7). Therefore, a key question for Sahelian countries in responding to shocks is how to ensure recent data that provide granular information on who has been (or is likely to be) affected by a shock. In the region, countries with social registries have adopted different criteria for data currency. Mali and Mauritania have established that data in their registries should be no older than three years to be considered up to date, while Senegal has mandated a four-year life cycle and Niger has adopted a five-year benchmark. However, despite these provisions, most countries haven't yet been able to put in place mechanisms for regular updating. Mauritania and Senegal are the only countries with a protocol or plan for updating. As a result, in Senegal, all data in the registry is less than four years old, while a systematic update process is under way in Mauritania (the government is currently interviewing all households in the country with a short questionnaire, and then focusing on the most vulnerable with a more detailed questionnaire). Despite not having a protocol, two-thirds of social registry records in Mali are less than three years old[15]. However, in Chad, a significant proportion of social registry records are already more than three years old.

BOX 2.7 : HOW REGISTRATION ERRORS IN MALAWI CAUSED DELAYS IN PROVIDING SHOCK RESPONSE

In Malawi, the overall pace of implementation of the urban response to COVID-19 was delayed due to significant data quality issues. Key information that was to be captured by enumerators was later found to be incomplete or inaccurate. As a result, mobile network operators had to undertake a comprehensive exercise to match up names of beneficiaries with phone numbers and National Registration Identifications. This process caused a substantial delay in the response implementation and shows the potentially significant impact of errors originating from the registration exercise.

Source : Paul et al. 2021

Presently, countries in the Sahel collect information on households through waves of widescale data collection, which limits countries' ability to maintain current data. Sahelian countries use an administrator-driven approach, whereby they reach out to households at specific times, through specific mechanisms, rather than an "on-demand" approach, whereby households can take the initiative to provide information or updates. Countries took different paths to establish social registries as follows: one path purposefully transitions a large registry of beneficiaries into the foundation of a social registry; the other path, more widely used in the Sahel, develops a social registry from scratch, typically to serve as a basis for the rolling out of a national program (this is the case in Chad, Mauritania, and Senegal, and will be the case in Burkina Faso, which had initially envisaged building the social registry from an existing beneficiary list).

Adopting dynamic (or on-demand) inclusion methods could help increase the currency of data. A dynamic inclusion system allows anyone to register or update their information in the social registry at any time, providing more agency to households and enabling a continuous flow of data. These systems require a functional interface for households and hinge on the existence of broad administrative systems that enable households to provide official documentation and prove their identity or other aspects of their status or socioeconomic conditions. Dynamic mechanisms can be used during regular times and in the aftermath of a shock. Some non-Sahelian countries, including Brazil's Cadastro Unico and Turkey's Integrated Social Assistance Service Information System (ISAS), are incorporating on-demand measures. One option, which requires a unique identifier common to all databases, is to harness existing administrative data sources, such as civil registration and vital statistics, national identification data, or beneficiary databases from programs or agencies. Such channels were used

in responses to COVID-19, as in the case of Togo (box 2.8) (Barca 2020). In some contexts, additional rapid needs assessment can be implemented around a shock to quickly update information, although this requires strong processes and systems. For instance, in Ethiopia, in the wake of a shock, including droughts, the Ethiopian National Disaster Risk Management Commission is responsible for conducting needs assessments and channelling resources to meet those needs through a coordinated and government-led approach to financing (Bowen et al. 2020).

While not all on-demand approaches are feasible in all Sahelian contexts, options exist. Many of the options described above may be too demanding on human and financial resources, or require greater penetration of digital technology, however alternatives could be considered. Options for dynamic inclusion systems include permanent local offices or a strong involvement of existing local social service staff. In addition to adopting more dynamic methods, some Sahelian countries are exploring options for modular data structures, which would include core modules (information to be collected for all households) and complementary modules (information to be collected depending on program requirements). Also, depending on how quickly different data age, different variables could be updated with different frequency or use different modalities. Finally, user feed-back – receiving updated information from users and ensuring its incorporation in the social registry - could be better harnessed to update data. This would require both mobilizing users and ensuring technical aspects are covered through enhanced data exchange (see following section).

BOX 2.8 : TOGO'S SUPPORT TO INFORMAL WORKERS DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS

In Togo, support to informal workers during the COVID-19 crisis used an on-demand approach. The government established a digital registration and enrolment platform on which potential beneficiaries could log their details. Within a few months of being launched in 2020, nearly 1.4 million individuals (or 35 percent of the adult population) were registered. The eligibility of these individuals (their status as informal workers) was then assessed by cross-referencing the registrants' occupation against the voter registry, which included information on the location and occupation of individuals.

Source: World Bank 2021a.

RECOMMENDATION 5:

Operationalize protocols to regularly update social registry data, assessing the feasibility of combining administrator-driven methods, on-demand intake modalities, and the use of administrative records through interoperability.

FOR GOVERNMENTS :

- Develop protocols to regularly update the social registry that combine administrator-driven and on-demand intake modalities.
- Identify options to streamline social registry questionnaires and data collection processes to facilitate regular updating while ensuring social registries serve the needs of existing and potential users.
- Explore options for dynamic updating through interoperability with other information systems and sources of administrative records (identification, health, education, tax, and telecoms, among others).
- Develop a multiyear strategy to expand and regularly update the social registry and to plan for human and financial resources.

FOR DONORS AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS:

- Provide technical support for the design of updating protocols.
- Provide multiyear support in line with government social registry expansion and updating strategy and in coordination with other partners.

KEY FINDING 6:
Social registries are not fully integrated or leveraged in the region, so their potential in terms of increased efficiency and timeliness is yet to be fully realized.

In the Sahel, social registries are only partially integrated into the broader ecosystem of existing information systems of different sectors or actors. When databases can exchange information, governments can deploy shock-response in a more timely and efficient manner, including by limiting duplication. Sharing can also promote more integrated interventions for poor and vulnerable households. In Mali, there are several instances of the ecosystem being leveraged, including an information exchange between the social registry and the database of the Régime d'Assistance Médicale (Medical Assistance Scheme), which holds information on the socioeconomic status and living conditions of 70,000 individuals. In addition, some humanitarian nongovernmental organizations have leveraged the social registry, and UNICEF has used the Medical Assistance Scheme's database to identify beneficiaries for a cash transfer program. In addition to the increased coordination and effectiveness of interventions, sharing social registries can increase efficiency and curb expenditure, because some of the costs related to the identification of households or individuals are shared.

In addition to coverage and quality issues, bottlenecks related to data privacy or sharing are key constraints to the broader leveraging of social registries by multiple actors. Some of the key factors that enable interoperability include unique identification, data exchange protocols, and information sharing agreements (as well as the quality of the other databases that could be linked to the social registry to complement their information). The lack of uniform and robust regulatory frameworks to protect data privacy can also hamper integration and is an issue in the region (Kreidler et al. 2023). Sharing data can also pose significant protection risks in contexts of conflict and displacement. While all countries have frameworks, regulations, or laws that safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of social registry data records, there are still limitations to the implementation in some countries. In many countries, data sharing protocols to support interoperability or access have yet to be developed or signed, which is another constraint to enhanced interoperability. Examples from the region and beyond provide a strong basis to address this limitation. For instance, in Nigeria, the data sharing agreements proved very useful to organize the response to the COVID-19 crisis (Smith 2021).

Realizing the potential of the social registry ecosystem requires political leadership, institutionalization, and coordination mechanisms. The quality of social registries can be boosted by having multiple users, since their needs and data requests can incentivize increases in coverage and quality. However, commencing this cycle of data improvement will require political leadership to promote programs and the use of social registries, rather than different actors deploying their own data collection and identification processes. Governments can implement incentives or regulations to promote or mandate the use of social registries by government programs and for shock responses or other targeted interventions. For example, in Senegal, a 2021 presidential decree institutionalized the social registry and made it the mandatory tool for targeting all social protection programs in the country. However, such decrees and incentives create useful incentives only where registries have sufficient coverage and quality to be effectively useful for programs. In practice, social registries are being leveraged by government and nongovernmental actors when the database has relatively large coverage, high relevance, and high quality, and programs can benefit from using them (reduction in cost, reliability of information, etc.). For instance, in Mauritania and Senegal, the social registries currently have more than 25 governmental and nongovernmental users (Box 2.9). In Chad, 12 partners have signed data sharing agreements to use the social registry, though only one program currently provides and uses the data. Where coverage is too limited or data incomplete or outdated, governments and partners tend to rely on their own databases or carry out complementary registration.

BOX 2.9 : RANGE OF USERS OF SOCIAL REGISTRIES IN MAURITANIA AND SENEGAL

In Mauritania, social registry users include a range of government actors and programs — the regular safety net program Tekavoul, shock-response government interventions, the health insurance scheme, the health ministry, the fish distribution national agency, and the ministry responsible for youth employment. The social registry is also used by a range of nongovernmental actors, institutions, and United Nations (UN) agencies, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), WFP, Action contre la Faim, Oxfam, Medecins du Monde, Save the Children, Veterinarians without Borders, and the World Bank. Similarly, in Senegal, the social registry is used by government and nongovernmental programs and actors. Governmental programs and actors include the national social safety net program, the national solidarity fund, the health universal coverage agency, the ministry responsible for women and children, the national food security council, and the national electricity agency. Actors outside of government include multilateral institutions and UN agencies (for example, the World Bank, WFP, and UNICEF), as well as international and national nongovernmental organizations such as the Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED), Caritas, Save the Children, Oxfam, World Vision, and Action contre la Faim, among others.

RECOMMENDATION 6:
Promote the use of social registry data among a range of actors by ensuring its quality and relevance, and establishing adequate data privacy and sharing protocols.

FOR GOVERNMENTS:

- Institutionalize social registries to ensure their sustainability with an adequate legal framework.
- Encourage use of social registries, by ensuring they address the needs of programs in terms of coverage, data quality, and variables.
- Assess the data privacy and protection status of the social registry, and improve protocols as needed.
- Establish data-sharing protocols between the social registry, user programs, and other relevant stakeholders.
- Develop an outreach campaign to inform potential users about the social registry and its potential use.
- Establish a working group for technical users, to identify areas for improvement.

FOR DONORS AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS:

- Use the social registry to determine the potential eligibility of all ASP interventions, when possible (implementing partners).
- Where the social registry is not yet sufficient, use the social registry questionnaire and methodology and contribute to its expansion.
- Encourage or require implementing partners use the social registry when possible, and use its methodology otherwise (donors).

KEY FINDING 7:
While Sahel countries all have EWS for food security, their institutionalization and ability to provide timely and accurate predictions remain limited.

Early Warning Systems are critical inputs for the design of shock-responses, their timeliness, and their geographic relevance. EWS provide information on potential hazards, and, in the case of the Sahel, also on measures of impact, mostly food insecurity. They aim to predict the intensity, timing, location, and potential impact of the shock. Governments, partners, and communities can use the information to design responses and act swiftly; before households resort to negative coping strategies. Globally, countries that have developed substantive to comprehensive EWS have eight times fewer disaster-related mortalities than those with systems with more limited coverage (UNDRR and WMO 2022). In the Sahel, countries set up early warning instruments in the mid-1980s, which collect data on rainfall, market prices, and food stocks, to identify areas and population groups at risk of food and nutrition insecurity. Since 1999, Sahelian countries have been participating in the multipartner regional Cadre Harmonisé (Harmonized Framework) (Box 2.10).

Countries in the Sahel all have tools that focus on food insecurity, but they face technical, financial, and capacity challenges. A key challenge relates to the granularity of estimates. For instance, in Burkina Faso, to address the insufficient disaggregation (at the provincial level), which provides inadequate granularity for programming, the government has initiated a process to identify data sources available at the municipal level. In Chad, satellite data has been used to pilot regional disaggregation at the level of sous-préfecture. Another challenge relates to delays in publication of estimates. Sharing information on impending shocks with users at the local level (beyond central government agencies and partners) can at times be constrained by the following: weak dissemination channels, as in Mauritania; ineffective phone-based alert systems, as in Mali; or difficulties communicating in local languages, as in Senegal. Some systems also suffer from complex institutional and coordination mechanisms, which can slow down the analysis, as in Niger. Finally, all countries' early warning mechanisms continue to rely heavily on international financial and technical support and, despite years of investment, the ownership by governments and their capacity to spearhead these efforts remain limited.

BOX 2.10 : THE CADRE HARMONISÉ

The Cadre Harmonisé (Harmonized Framework) is a food security analysis tool, which contributes to national and regional food and nutrition insecurity assessment, mitigation and response. It improves decision-making for governments and implementing partners to respond to shocks and strengthen resilience. This global tool, known outside the Sahel region as the Integrated Phase Classification system (IPC), was developed at the request of governments, development partners, humanitarian actors, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and civil society. It currently leverages existing national and regional information systems spanning climate, agriculture, livestock farming, fishery, hydrology, household economy, food consumption patterns, disaster risks, conflicts, markets, migration, humanitarian assistance, health, nutrition, and gender, among others. Based on existing information systems, it classifies the severity of food and nutrition insecurity using the following scale :

- *Phase 1.* Households can meet essential food and nonfood needs without engaging in atypical and unsustainable strategies to access food and income.
- *Phase 2.* Households have minimally adequate food consumption but are unable to afford some essential nonfood expenditures without engaging in stress-coping strategies.

- *Phase 3.* Households either have food consumption gaps that are reflected by high or above-usual acute malnutrition, or are marginally able to meet minimum food needs, but only by depleting essential livelihood assets or through crisis-coping strategies.
- *Phase 4.* Households either have large food consumption gaps that are reflected in very high acute malnutrition and excess mortality, or can mitigate large food consumption gaps, but only by employing emergency livelihood strategies and asset liquidation.
- *Phase 5.* Households have an extreme lack of food or other basic needs even after full employment of coping strategies. Starvation, death, destitution, and extremely critical acute malnutrition levels are evident. (For Famine Classification, an area needs to have extreme critical levels of acute malnutrition and mortality.)

Progress is being made to improve data quality and integrate other outcomes and shocks, in addition to the current focus on food insecurity. While a focus on food insecurity is highly relevant in the Sahel, early warning instruments could also focus on other shocks and outcomes. An early warning mechanism specific to pastoral populations was also established in one region, because the pastoral calendar is different from the agricultural one that is used in the Cadre Harmonisé. Niger is currently expanding its early warning mechanism to incorporate information on droughts, using satellite data. A future step could be the inclusion of floods, which are increasingly relevant in the region, although the annual calendar for the Cadre Harmonisé might not be relevant to rapid-onset disasters. Data quality has also been a challenge in some of these mechanisms, and some countries are working on improving their predictive power, such as in Mauritania (Box 2.11).

Photo credit: From WorldBank

BOX 2.11: AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO REFORM THE EARLY WARNING TOOL IN MAURITANIA

A new model has been developed to counter the limited capacity of the food security early warning mechanism in Mauritania to acquire real time data and generate predictive forecasts. The government has worked with the World Bank, in partnership with WFP, to develop a food security predictive model for rural areas — the Food Insecurity Forecast Interface (FIFI). The model combines the use of historical data with remote monitoring of sensed climate-related variables.

FIFI can produce fairly accurate lean season food insecurity predictions early in the agricultural season (October to November), which is six to eight months ahead of the lean season. The data is used to forecast at the administrative Moughataa (Department) level at the peak of the lean season, and complements existing approaches, including those that rely on qualitative methods. This model was used as a contributing element to the data points of the Cadre Harmonisé in the last two years. To facilitate the production of information in real time, the government is setting up a data server with the required capacity.

Source: Blanchard et al. 2023.

It is critical to ensure that the data from EWS are used as inputs for the elaboration of response plans. Although the Cadres Harmonisés are prepared annually in the Sahel and processes are in place to develop response plans, their implementation is often affected by limited and irregular resources. Some countries are exploring mechanisms to use early warning information in decisions to launch responses, by setting preagreed rules (or triggers) in the form of objective mechanisms that determine when a response should be launched (for example, when a set index crosses a certain threshold, the response is triggered) (UNICEF 2019). Such triggers can be useful for some forms of prearranged financing (see Finance section), because they provide objective measures to disburse funds. Niger is currently piloting the use of a technology-driven approach to enable a faster response to shocks, using satellite early warning data to identify drought-affected areas (Brunelin et al. 2022). In 2022,[16] the program was activated for the first time, and was able to provide transfers to 15,200 drought-affected households three months before the traditional lean-season response. Other countries have faced challenges when developing triggers, including as follows: when triggers are not effectively linked to response plans because responses are still largely resource-dependent, as in Mali; or when concerns were raised that fragmentation could increase in case some actors do not adopt the triggers, as in Mauritania. More broadly, relying exclusively on automatic triggers can limit the ability of governments to decide on responses based on a broader set of criteria and can result in sub-optimal responses. Overall,

Note : For more information on Cadre Harmonisé and phases of food and nutrition insecurity, see the Cadre Harmonisé website at https://www.cadreharmonise.org/ and the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) website at https://www.ipcinfo.org/.

the ability of early warning mechanisms to inform response plans hinges on their quality, timeliness, reliability, and on institutional coordination mechanisms.

RECOMMENDATION 7:
Enhance government ownership, institutionalization, and functionality of EWS to ensure they inform the elaboration of national response plans and guide program design.

FOR GOVERNMENTS:

- Promote adjustments to the Cadre Harmonisé, to allow for enhanced objectivity and speed (using technology such as satellite data) and ensure adequate human and financial resources.
- Strengthen early warning mechanisms beyond food security, for hazards such as droughts and floods.
- Anchor the formulation of the national response plans in early warning data, predefining actions linked to established triggers, such as safety net scale-ups.

FOR DONORS AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS:

- Provide investments and technical assistance for quantitative risk assessments, for improvements of early warning data accuracy and speed, and for linking early warning with early action.
- Support the incorporation of adjustments to the Cadre Harmonisé to enhance objectivity and speed.
- Channel shock-response support in line with the national response plan based on early warning data, or use early warning data to design shock-response interventions.

2.4 Programs and Delivery Systems: Key Findings

In the Sahel, the Programs and Delivery Systems building block is also showing good progress, but important challenges remain to increase coverage and strengthen delivery systems (box 2.12, figure 2.4). In the Sahel, routine safety programs continue to expand across all countries, and have almost achieved national scale in Mauritania and Senegal. These programs have demonstrated their ability to decrease poverty, increase productivity, promote livelihood diversification, and build resilience to shocks. Burkina Faso has recently decided to deploy a national safety net programme, to be jointly with partners to provide both routine and shock-response support. Routine programs are critical to timely shock-response because they provide the foundations upon which ASP programs can be deployed.

Currently, delivery and payment systems are not fully adapted or prepared for shock response, and face programs face challenges to may payment in a timely manner when a scale-up is required. In particular, the digital payment infrastructure in the Sahel remains weak and faces many limitations, especially in rural areas. This impacts the transition away from cash in hand, although significant efforts to address these challenges are under way in the region, including in Burkina Faso. Moving toward more digital tools could increase the inclusion of remote and inaccessible areas, enable faster response, and reduce the need for beneficiaries to physically travel to collect payments.

Some of the region's programs still face serious inclusion limitations. Although a significant percentage of regular safety net recipients and productive inclusion program beneficiaries are women, further efforts are required to ensure gender-sensitivity of program design and delivery. Similarly, more progress must be made to include growing numbers of forcibly displaced populations in the region in social registries and in programs.

Overall, progress on programs and their delivery systems has been significant. However, issues remain, and it is critical to identify improvements to the design of programs and the operation of delivery systems early on, so that the necessary changes can be implemented before shocks happen. In addition, programs and delivery systems should predefine what will happen when a shock hits — what procedures will be changed, what functionalities will be added, and what steps will be followed — and embed them within operational manuals and systems.

Photo credit: From WorldBank

BOX 2.12: WHAT IS THE FOCUS OF THE PROGRAMS AND DELIVERY SYSTEMS BUILDING BLOCK ?

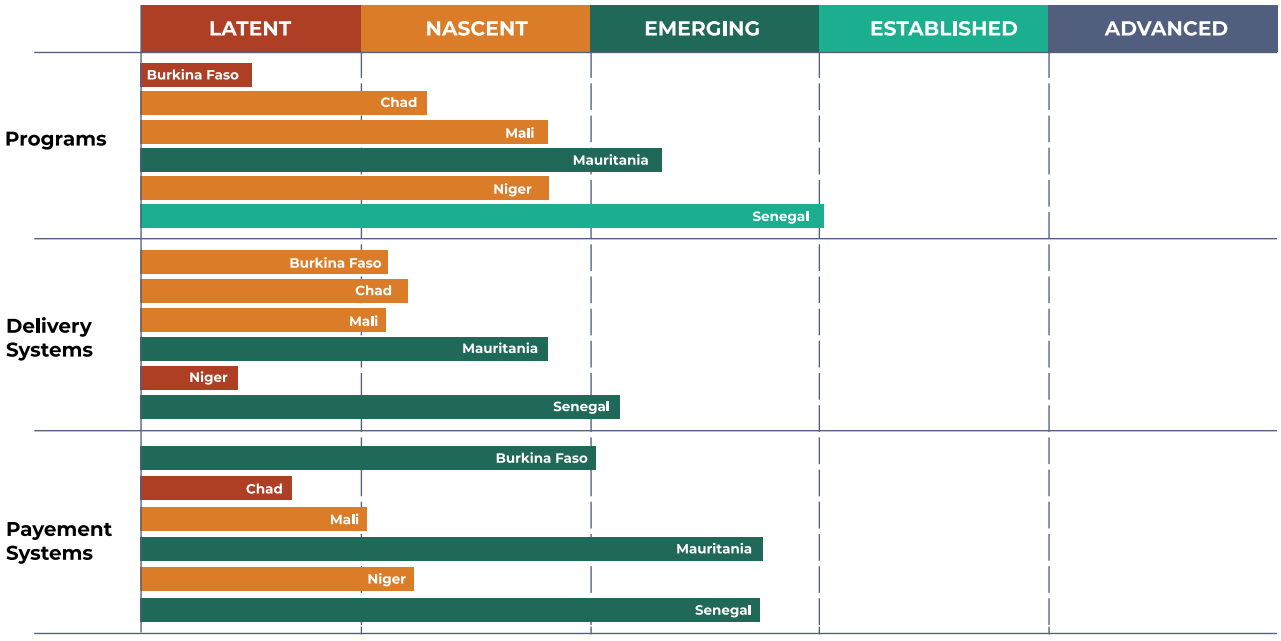
The Programs and Delivery Systems building block focuses on the capacity of social protection programs and their delivery systems to scale and adapt to a shock. A key element of this building block is the existing social protection system in a country and the coverage and diversity of its programs, because a strong social protection system helps to increase the resilience of households before a shock occurs. Adaptive social protection (ASP) focuses on shock-response and on building this resilience.
The extent to which a country has planned how it will respond to future shocks affects its capacity to respond when shocks occur. Ideally, a country should anticipate and plan for the adjustments that are needed to its routine delivery and payment mechanisms. For instance, this could include protocols and operational manuals, but also the human resources needed to implement a shock response. There are also different considerations involved in vertical and horizontal expansion, including the ability of the system to be inclusive, reach beneficiaries, meet the needs of populations, put in place communication channels, or handle grievances. Finally, this building block requires payment systems, which are central to the ability of the system to provide support to vulnerable households and ensure that shock-response programs reach those in need in a timely and efficient manner.

The assessment of this building block is based, among others, on the following questions :

- What kinds of noncontributory transfer programs, and livelihoods or productive inclusion programs, does the government operate? What is the coverage of social protection programs in the country?
- Does the amount of benefit provided during shocks contribute to maintaining household consumption and welfare?
- Are there communication mechanisms in place that can be leveraged in times of a shock to inform target beneficiaries about the program? Is there a grievance redress mechanism in place to resolve the complaints?
- Is the delivery of assistance informed by a needs assessment ? How are beneficiaries enrolled in the program in times of shock?
- What percentage of the poorest have a government authorized or recognized identification?
- Does the shock-response have design features to ensure the inclusion of women or other vulnerable categories?
- How are benefits of regular social programs transferred to beneficiaries ? How quickly can the payment system handle a temporary expansion of coverage?

Sources: World Bank 2021b; Smith and Bowen 2020; Bowen et al. 2020.

FIGURE 2.4: Overview of the Data and Information Systems Building Block



Source: Original figure for this publication.

Note: Figure based on assessments completed in October 2021 in Burkina Faso; September 2022 in Chad; June 2022 in Mali; November 2021 in Mauritania; May 2022 in Niger; and January 2022 in Senegal. Progress realized since these assessments are reflected in the text.

KEY FINDING 8:
In the Sahel, routine safety net programs are boosting the resilience and capacity of households to cope with shocks and provide a foundation for ASP, though their coverage remains limited.

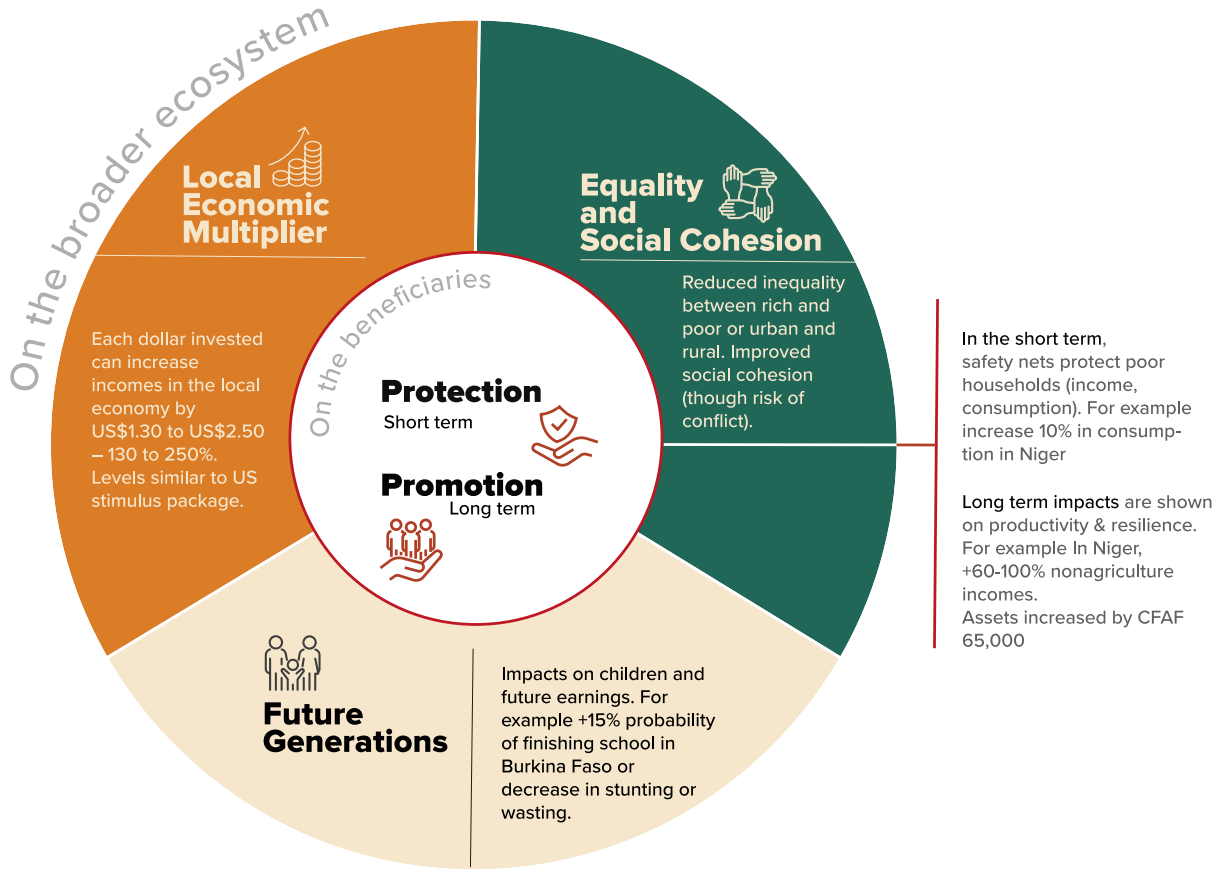
All countries in the region have developed routine social safety net programs, with varying degrees of coverage. There are now noncontributory cash transfer programs across the Sahel, providing routine support extremely poor and highly vulnerable households — an important shift from previous practices of more fragmented and ad hoc initiatives. Typically, the primary focus of these regular social safety nets is to reach households affected by extreme chronic poverty. Nonetheless, programs vary in scale. Coverage of regular safety nets is relatively high in some countries — approximately 20 percent of the total population (40–60 percent of the poorest two quantiles) in Mauritania, and approximately 15 percent of the population in Senegal. In contrast, the coverage in the remaining countries is relatively small and fragmented — including approximately 4 percent of the population in Burkina Faso, and approximately 8 percent of the poor in Niger. In Chad, only households from host communities are included in the program, in addition to refugee households. Limited coverage restricts the ability to scale up responses, particularly horizontally to new populations if shock-affected areas do not benefit from routine programs.

In the Sahel, routine safety net programs have shown their ability to build the resilience of households to shocks and increase their productivity. There is growing evidence of the strong positive impacts of safety nets, even in fragile contexts (figure 2.5). Impacts are measured on beneficiaries — by their poverty and consumption (immediate situation), and by their productive capacity in the medium to long term. The rates of return of programs focused on boosting household productivity are very high, and their effects are sustained over time (Bossuroy et al. 2021). In the Sahel, most countries are significantly scaling up the implementation of productive inclusion accompanying measures. However, their coverage remains limited and only a subset of cash transfer beneficiaries are included. Safety net programs in the Sahel have also shown impacts on the human capital of children (and hence their future productivity as adults). Estimates suggest that investments in households' resilience are more cost-effective than humanitarian assistance following shocks (droughts) (Venton 2018).

Routine safety net programs can also have impacts beyond beneficiary households – on local communities and the economy. Beyond beneficiary households, programs have also shown impacts on social cohesion by alleviating some of the stress related to extreme poverty or vulnerability and reducing inequalities within communities, as well as promoting interactions that help reduce stereotypes, prejudices, and exclusion. For instance, social support and participation in associations or community actions increased among beneficiaries in Mauritania, while programs incorporating life-skills training and sensitization on aspirations and social norms led to decreases in tensions and increased in empathy at the local level (Bossuroy et al. 2022). The impacts on social cohesion, can also be negative depending on program design or implementation – limited coverage in areas of high poverty incidence can led to tensions within communities (Della Guardia et al. 2022). Finally, ASP programs have shown important impacts on local economies, and are sometimes referred to as local economic multipliers. While effects vary by type and scale of programs, each dollar invested in ASP programs can be expected to increase incomes in the local economy by between US$1.30 and US$2.50 on average (an impact of between 130 and 250 percent), based on evidence from African countries outside of the Sahel.

Photo credit: From WorldBank

FIGURE 2.5: Impacts of Social Safety Nets in the Sahel



Source: Original figure for this publication.

Routine safety net programs and their delivery systems have provided a platform for shock-response initiatives. Countries have adopted a variety of approaches to incorporate shock-response into their systems. In Mali, the explicit emphasis on adaptation and resilience was operationalized through a vertical expansion of the regular safety net program (World Bank 2016). In Burkina Faso, a top-up was provided to regular beneficiaries during the lean season. In addition to this vertical expansion (increased support to beneficiaries of regular programs), other programs have also focused on horizontal expansions (reaching additional poor households who are particularly affected by shocks). In Mauritania, the **Elmaouna** program, a dedicated shock-responsive safety net program, provides unconditional cash transfers to vulnerable households impacted by covariate shocks, particularly droughts. In addition, the government is piloting a vertical and horizontal expansion of the national cash transfer program, *Tekavoul*, in response to shocks. In Senegal, response to shocks is implemented using the tools and delivery mechanisms developed for the well-established national cash transfer program.

RECOMMENDATION 8:

Enhance the coverage of routine safety net programs to include all chronically poor and vulnerable households and strengthen the resilience-building properties of programs

FOR GOVERNMENTS:

- Institutionalize the national regular safety net program.
- Develop an expansion strategy for the safety net program to cover all chronically poor and vulnerable with regular support.
- Commit the national budget (and mobilize donor support) to the national regular safety net program.
- Scale up economic inclusion and resilience programs for beneficiaries of the national regular safety net program.

FOR DONORS AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS:

- Implementing partners to provide regular support through national regular safety net programs or economic inclusion programs when possible, and align interventions with national programs (modality, targeting, amounts, and so on) when obligated to deliver separately.
- Financing partners to promote the use of national programs or alignment with national programs by implementing partners.

KEY FINDING 9:
Delivery systems are not ready to be harnessed for shock-response in all countries of the Sahel, which constrains governments' ability to respond in a timely and cost-effective manner.

Prior planning and preparedness are critical for timely shock-responses and can increase cost-effectiveness. The effectiveness of shock-responses hinges on their timeliness — their ability to support households before they are forced to engage in negative coping strategies. To do so, countries need clearly defined protocols and processes and the capacity to respond. Responses to the COVID-19 crises around the world show the importance of investing in the foundations of social protection systems that can deliver in a timely manner (box 2.13). For shocks that can be anticipated, programs could even aim to reach households before they are affected, because early cash transfers have shown greater positive effects than transfers made later in the process. For example, anticipatory action ahead of floods in Bangladesh was able to protect adult and child consumption over a long period and decreased the share of households that resorted to negative coping strategies (Pople et al. 2021). Niger has piloted an early response to the lean season, with assistance reaching beneficiaries months in advance (as early as March). This pilot was based on satellite early warning indicators and predefined triggers and yielded significant impacts (see section on EWS). There is growing evidence of the cost effectiveness of investing in systems and processes before shocks.

BOX 2.13 : SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS ARE CRITICAL FOR TIMELY RESPONSES, EXPERIENCE FROM COVID-19 CRISIS

Data from the responses of 53 countries to the COVID-19 pandemic showed that the main drivers of timely responses to shocks include the following:

- Contextual issues, such as national identification coverage, financial inclusion, and technological inclusion
- Strong legal frameworks and available domestic funding
- Access to data and information, via high coverage and high-quality social registries and social protection information systems
- Capacity to register people quickly, even for countries that substantially rely on preexisting data, to ensure that those who have only recently become vulnerable due to a shock also have access to social protection
- Use of digital solutions to speed up outreach, applications, enrolment, payments, and overall communication with beneficiaries

Source: Beazley, Marzi, and Steller 2021.

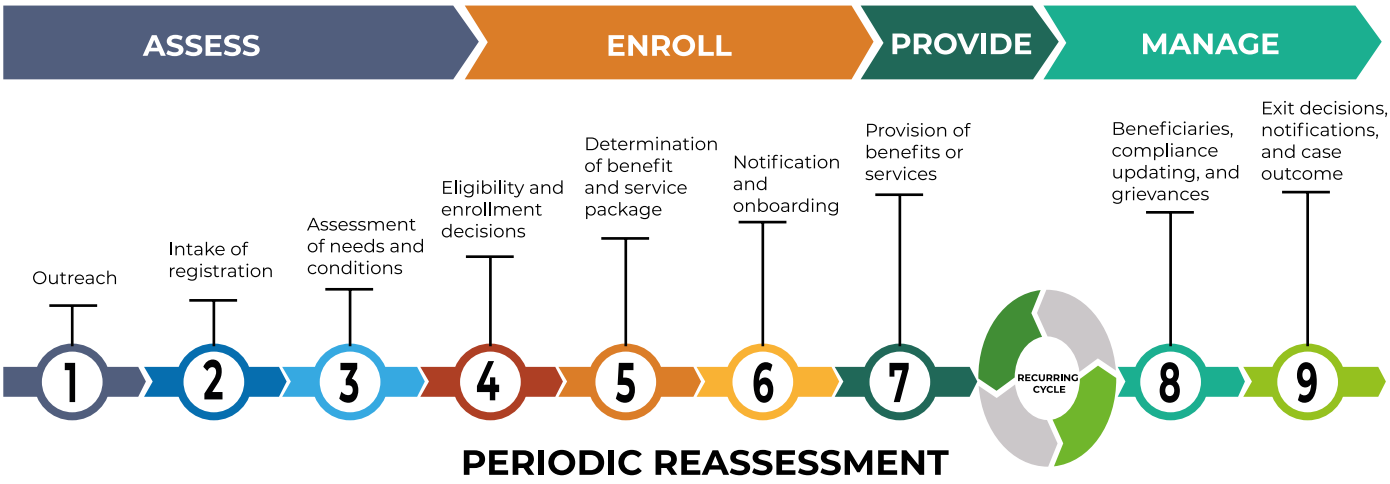
Many elements of the delivery systems do not have the capacity to support shock-responses, which often puts them under additional pressure. This can affect all aspects of the delivery chain, which face additional strains in times of shocks (figure 2.6). In particular, and as follows :

- *Outreach* and *awareness*. Systems of regular programs typically inform beneficiaries on program schedules and available grievance mechanisms, among others. In times of shock, these systems could be leveraged to inform households on shock-response programs, their temporary nature, and rules for eligibility. In Mauritania, the communication systems of the *Tekavoul* program and the social registry are leveraged by the shock-response programs (which have harmonized communications). In Senegal, the staff supporting the delivery of the national safety net program are often also contracted by humanitarian actors delivering emergency support, a double function which could be further leveraged. The outreach mechanisms can also provide information on shocks to help households prepare for them. However, in Chad, mechanisms are fragmented and their inability to scale up quickly limits their potential use in times of shock. Similarly, in Burkina Faso, information channels could be strengthened to reach the local level (for example, through vernacular languages or radio broadcasts) in times of shock.

- *Enrolment processes*. Typically, enrolment processes for regular programs include a series of steps, including as follows: identification of households, inscription, preparation of program cards, inclusion in information systems, and so on. Lengthy procedures are not adapted to rapid horizontal expansions. Digital payments can help, because phone numbers of potential beneficiaries can be collected while households are being registered and later used to make transfers without the need to go back to the households, as was the case in Senegal in response to floods in 2022.

- *Grievance redress mechanisms*. Common criticisms for these accountability systems across the region include instances of complaints not being recorded or addressed, failure to include multiple channels for reporting, limited awareness within communities, and limited monitoring of their use. For instance, in Niger, the safety net program only uses village committees to handle grievances, although a toll-free number is being piloted. In Senegal, the grievance redress mechanism is functional, but there is limited awareness of this mechanism among beneficiaries and the population at large and most grievances are addressed by front line social workers. However, in Mauritania, there is a grievance redress mechanism with multiple channels, including a toll-free number and also a network of social workers. This mechanism serves the three national safety net programs, to avoid confusion and duplication, but awareness among the population still needs to be improved.

FIGURE 2.6 : Delivery Chain for Social Protection Programs



Source: Lindert et al. 2020.

There is a critical need to put in place mechanisms for scaling up and pre-positioning the required resources for shock response. Most countries in the region still need to put in place operating procedures for scaling up. These include predefining how the support will be organized, and reflecting this in operational guidelines, contracts, job descriptions, and so on. Governments can predesign certain elements to address the additional burden that will be placed on systems to implement responses to shocks. For instance, governments can design the communications materials that will be used to inform communities or predesign the trainings they will provide to those involved in the delivery of a response. Governments can also precontract the actors that will be relied upon for shock response. This includes preagreed contracts with payment agencies to deliver additional payments, as is the case in Mauritania, or preagreed contracts with communications channels. Governments can also preidentify additional human resources that can be utilized to respond to shocks, or preidentify tasks that could be suspended to enable existing operational staff to focus on the response without disrupting regular programs. Finally, governments can build the capacity to surge as needed into systems, such as the various information systems.

RECOMMENDATION 9:

Enhance government delivery systems so they can perform their functions in times of shock and, as part of the national response plans, clarify ahead of shocks how they will be used.

FOR GOVERNMENTS:

- Within established institutional arrangements, prepare the plan for shock-response and outline the human and financial resources needed to implement scale-up.
- Establish a scale-up protocol for different parts of the delivery chain (outreach and communication, identification, registration, payment, management, and so on).
- Design shock-response interventions to provide support early, before impacts are felt, when feasible.
- Prepare the materials, tools, protocols, and staff for shock-response ahead of the shock, to promote a timely and rapid response.

FOR DONORS AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS:

- Participate in government-led response preparedness initiatives and reflect agreements in own response planning.
- Provide shock-response as part of the national response plan, delivering using government systems where possible and feasible; aligning with national systems otherwise.
- Financing partners to promote delivery under the national response plans and through government programs or systems, when feasible and appropriate.

KEY FINDING 10:
Payment systems across the Sahel can scale up, but face challenges in timely delivery across cash and digital modalities.

Cash in hand is still the main payment mechanism in routine safety net programs in the Sahel, which limits the system's ability to flex in a timely manner in response to shocks. The most common approach is for governments to contract payment agencies, such as microfinance institutions, post offices, and commercial banks, to distribute cash directly to recipients. There are efforts to digitize some aspects of the payment system, for instance beneficiaries are identified through a Quick Response (QR) code in Mauritania (which also plans to pilot mobile payment in 2023 in Nouakchott). But for the most part, cash for regular programs is physically handed over to beneficiaries, even in countries such as Senegal, where mobile payments have been piloted. Cash in hand processes can be cumbersome and slow, because payment operators typically need to transport large amounts across vast territories and stagger payments across communities over time. For regular programs, more than a month can be required to reach all beneficiaries. This timeline can extend further during a response. For instance, in Niger, COVID-19 support was provided to 375,000 households (more than 12 times the number of regular beneficiaries), and delays were observed, because payment systems were not established for such responses.

In the region, there has been some progress in establishing digital payment systems, which can help promote timely shock responses. Card-based and mobile technologies provide opportunities for timely transactions, including to mobile and displaced populations. Digital systems can also provide greater transparency, accountability, financial inclusion, and cost-efficiency (Smith and Bowen 2020). Chad piloted digital payments in response to COVID-19 in N'Djamena, and Mauritania is planning to pilot digital payments in urban areas. Senegal provides digital shock-response payments, and the program in Burkina Faso moved from cash to digital payments (with cell phones and SIM cards distributed to all beneficiary households). Such digital systems are highly relevant for routine programs in conflict contexts, as well as for expansion in times of shock.

Switching to digital payments and leveraging them for shock response raises a series of challenges in the Sahel, particularly outside of urban areas. Opportunities for digital modalities are limited beyond urban areas, because of limited infrastructure (lack of broad-band mobile and internet connectivity), low mobile penetration, stringent legal requirements (such as requirements for identification documents), which potentially have exclusionary effects. Even when digital transfers are feasible, mobile money is not always fully established in the local area, which means that beneficiaries must still withdraw cash and are not able to pay through a mobile wallet or application. Furthermore, mobile transfers can only operate if there are enough payment points with sufficient liquidity to cash out payments. In shock-response, a horizontal expansion also implies adding new beneficiaries who need to be registered for mobile methods. In areas with limited mobile penetration, regular safety net programs have at times opted to distribute mobile phones or SIM cards — which may not be cost-effective (or feasible from a procurement perspective) — for temporary shock-response programs. As for mobile money, certain countries, such as Mauritania, have regulations that require a national identification number to open a digital wallet, which constrains the adoption of that technology. Finally, a switch to digital payments could also create exclusion risks, particularly with financially or digitally illiterate individuals. In other parts of the world, ASP programs have found ways to address these barriers and have thus been an opportunity to increase the penetration of mobile and financial services when the size of the programs and their regularity provide a basis for network expansion.

Irrespective of the technology adopted, the rigidity of contracts and procurement procedures can limit the ability of systems to respond to shocks. Contracts with payment providers are often limited to routine transfers. They typically do not include provisions for shocks. This constraint can be addressed, as in Mali, Mauritania, and Niger, by establishing framework agreements that anticipate additional temporary payments. In such cases, emergency payment services do not need to be procured and contracted specifically for each shock, which can greatly reduce delays in payment. To date, full convergence in the use of payment systems by governmental actors and partners through unified payment platforms has not yet occurred in the Sahel. However, there were cases of actors using the same payment provider, as in Chad, where most humanitarian cash assistance programs used the same financial service provider as the government safety net program, albeit through separate contracting procedures. Overall, there is untapped potential in utilizing the collective negotiating power that comes with shared platforms, which reduces costs and cuts delays.

RECOMMENDATION 10:
Enhance payment mechanisms to improve timeliness and accountability, and ensure inclusion.

FOR GOVERNMENTS :

- Develop framework agreements with payment providers, which allow use for multiple programs or for easy scale-up in response to shocks and reduce transfer costs.
- Explore options for setting up a national payment platform that could be used by all programs, using multiple providers.
- Assess obstacles to adoption of digital payments, including obstacles faced by potential beneficiaries, develop plan to address them, and pilot digital payment options.
- Identify options to improve the ability of existing payment systems to reach the poorest and most vulnerable efficiently and safely.

FOR DONORS AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS :

- Provide technical assistance on developing payment platforms or deploying digital payment systems.
- Use government payment systems or platforms when possible and align with the government approach otherwise.

KEY FINDING 11:
Inclusion challenges persist in the Sahel and need to be addressed before shocks, so that solutions can be effectively implemented in the context of shock-responses.

Most routine safety nets have explicitly included a large share of women among their beneficiaries, but a gender focus is harder to achieve during horizontal expansions. Many regular programs in the Sahel select women as their direct recipients, for social safety nets and for productive inclusion initiatives. Women represent 70 percent and 75 percent of safety net beneficiaries in Mauritania and Senegal respectively, and nearly 90 percent of recipients of productive inclusion measures in Niger. In Burkina Faso, polygamous women are considered their own beneficiary households, which means that the number of women recipients exceeds the number of beneficiary households. As they build on existing programs, vertical expansions focus as strongly on women as the underlying routine program. For horizontal expansion, prioritizing women is dependent on their inclusion in social registries as well as explicit efforts during the process of identification of new beneficiaries, requiring significant communication and sensitization of communities. Women may also lack identification documents (if needed, particularly for digital payments), which is hard to rectify during an emergency and should be addressed before crises, during preparedness activities.

There are opportunities to develop stronger strategies to address the risks faced by women, which need to be seized during early design phases. Shocks have a disproportionate impact on women and girls and exacerbate gender inequalities. Crises can increase women's care responsibilities, disproportionately affect women's jobs and livelihoods, and increase the risk of violence against women and girls. A holistic approach to supporting women is necessary, before and during shocks. For instance, in Mali, a clear gender focus to address gender-specific risks has been introduced, with outreach, accompanying measures, and income-generating activities tailored to promote women's participation. More generally, mechanisms to prioritize women's access and to ensure that program designs are gender-sensitive should be included in the operational guidance or procedures of both regular and temporary programs (including inclusion in social registries discussed earlier). Box 2.14 provides further examples.

BOX 2.14 : DESIGN ELEMENTS TO PROMOTE GENDER INCLUSION AND ENSURE PROGRAM RELEVANCE, EXAMPLES FROM THE SAHEL

Various design elements can be used to promote greater inclusion during the assessment and enrolment processes (figure 2.6). For instance, in most countries, women are involved in the selection of cash transfer recipients, because village committees that identify and validate the list of poorest households have minimum membership requirements for women. For example, in Mauritania, these committees are required to have equal representation of women and men. Some programs deploy sensitization activities on social and gender norms in the community, to mitigate any potential pushback against women being the primary program recipients and to minimize related intra-household or community tensions.

Similarly, design elements have been considered, to maximize the impact of services provided. Many programs include a human capital component, typically consisting of community meetings for beneficiaries, as well as for men, on different topics around children, family, and gender. These meetings provide information and messages on caregiving practices and roles, child development and health, girls' education, management of family resources, coping strategies in times of shock, and gender-based violence and reproductive health. In some countries, such as Niger, this component also includes home visits to provide information to women on healthy child development.

The design of productive inclusion interventions is also based on the constraints faced by women when engaging in income-generating activities. In addition to lack of capital and skills, key psychosocial constraints include the following :

- Low education levels among women and high levels of gender inequality
- Low self-esteem or limited aspirations among women
- Unequal social norms around gender

Women's restricted mobility, limited control over household resources, and disproportionate share of domestic and care responsibilities further undermine their ability to engage in economic opportunities. As a result, key productive inclusion interventions have included a series of psychosocial elements to foster an environment in which women were more supported and empowered to undertake new income-generating activities (Bossuroy et al. 2022). The psychosocial interventions included life skills training sessions and community sensitization sessions that were focused on increasing the acceptability of, and building community support for, women's engagement in economic activities.

In the Sahel, efforts to ensure participation of other vulnerable groups are not integrated in ASP programs and require early consideration. Vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities, the elderly, or orphans may not be systematically included in regular safety net programs. In the Sahel, these programs tend to focus on larger households with children, in view of their objectives of strengthening human capital. This is despite the evidence that, on average, persons with disabilities have worse education, health, and employment outcomes and are more

vulnerable to shocks. Persons with disabilities can face substantial constraints to accessing and completing enrolment processes. Specific considerations must be already built into social registries and programs, to better ensure their inclusion and to promote designs that are adapted to their situations. This can be fostered by prioritizing the interoperability with disability registries. A key lesson from COVID-19 from outside the region is that countries with preexisting disability identification mechanisms and registries were better positioned to deliver rapid assistance and scale up social protection systems to provide support to persons with disabilities (based on Banks et al. 2021; Sammon et al. 2021).

Finally, in the Sahel, the inclusion of forcibly displaced population groups is a growing challenge, though recent progress has been observed in some countries. This growing category of individuals are not typically included in government's regular safety nets, productive inclusion, or shock-response transfer programs in the region. Rather, they are typically served by nongovernmental actors and international agencies, outside of government systems. One exception is Mauritania, which registered Malian refugees living in Nouakchott and M'Bera refugee camps in the social registry and considered them in the enrolment for the regular safety net program and hence the shock response programs. Limitations in the updating of the registry, however, constrain the inclusion of new arrivals (as a result, the percentage of refugees included in the regular program has decreased over time). Chad is a leader on the inclusion of forcibly displaced populations in the region, with an explicit focus on providing both routine and shock response support to refugees. The approach has a strong focus on ensuring both refugee populations and their host communities are served in a manner that promotes social cohesion and inclusion (Box 2.15).

BOX 2.15 : SUPPORTING REFUGEES AND HOST COMMUNITIES IN CHAD

In Chad, one of the objectives of the government's adaptive social protection (ASP) programs is to improve access to livelihoods and safety nets by refugees and host communities. The approach aims to transition from a humanitarian or emergency approach to a government-led approach and to ensure host communities are served concomitantly.

In addition to the regular program, shock-responsive measures provide cash transfers to poor and vulnerable households living in areas that are prone to recurrent climate shocks, including droughts and floods, and who face a high risk of acute food insecurity. To date, two shock-responsive interventions (one-time payments) have been implemented as follows: in 2021, a first intervention in N'Djamena benefitted approximately 22,000 households; and in June 2022, a second intervention provided support to a new wave of refugees from Cameroon and their host communities, which provided support to approximately 23,000 refugee and host community households.

RECOMMENDATION 11:

Address the constraints faced by women, forcibly displaced households, and other vulnerable groups to clarify institutional responsibilities and embed operational solutions in the design and procedures of regular and shock-response programs.

FOR GOVERNMENTS:

- Evaluate the constraints faced by vulnerable groups in benefiting from regular safety net programs, economic inclusion interventions, or shock-response support.
- Identify and deploy adaptations to various steps of the delivery chain to promote inclusion of vulnerable groups (outreach, identification, inclusion, delivery, grievances, and so on).
- Closely monitor program delivery to identify potential barriers to inclusion and timely delivery.
- Identify options to consider forcibly-displaced people for inclusion in programs.

FOR DONORS AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS:

- Support the government in the identification and implementation of solutions for the inclusion of vulnerable groups and the reduction of their barriers to access.

2.5 Finance : Key Findings

Progress on the Finance building block has been limited across most of the Sahel (Box 2.16, Figure 2.7). Apart from Mauritania, which can be considered to have reached a nascent stage of development with the establishment of the FNRCAN, the financing of ASP in the Sahel remains ad hoc. For shock response interventions, countries in the Sahel occasionally enact budget reallocation but mostly count on support from development and humanitarian partners; however, these approaches are not efficient and can result in delayed or insufficient responses. The prioritization of other building blocks relative to that of Finance is primarily due to the importance of building the capacity of country systems to disburse and deliver funds.

When broadening the notion of financing to that of routine safety net programs, some countries display greater government contributions. The stress test results presented above only reflect financing for shock responses. When also considering routine safety net programs, which are a critical base for shock-responses, a different picture emerges. Specifically, in Senegal, transfers of the regular safety net program, which is national in coverage, are fully financed by the national budget. Similarly, in Mauritania, the share of government financing for the routine national program is significant, and in Burkina Faso, plans anticipate a notable national government contribution.

Countries in the Sahel use a narrow set of shock-response financing instruments, besides budget reallocation and support from partners. Countries in the region have focused on insurance-based instruments, such as African Risk Capacity (ARC). Since food insecurity from frequent, low-intensity shocks is a chronic issue in the Sahel, insurance mechanisms may not be the most appropriate interventions (they are best suited for less frequent, high-impact shocks). Alternative instruments, such as reserve funds, can be more appropriate. There are already examples of such tools in Burkina Faso, Chad, and Niger, however these are not fully operational, still focus on food reserves and are yet to be used for ASP. Finally, donors will continue to play an important role in the financing of shock response in the Sahel for the foreseeable future, and the establishment of financing instruments should account for this and serve to better coordinate the response.

Photo credit: From WorldBank

BOX 2.16 : WHAT IS THE FOCUS OF THE FINANCE BUILDING BLOCK ?

To ensure that the adaptive social protection (ASP) system can meet increased needs following a shock, governments must be able to rapidly mobilize — and disburse — the additional resources required, in addition to the financing of regular programs. Delays in the disbursement of disaster funding increases the likelihood of vulnerable households adopting negative coping strategies and jeopardizing their resilience in the medium- and long-term.

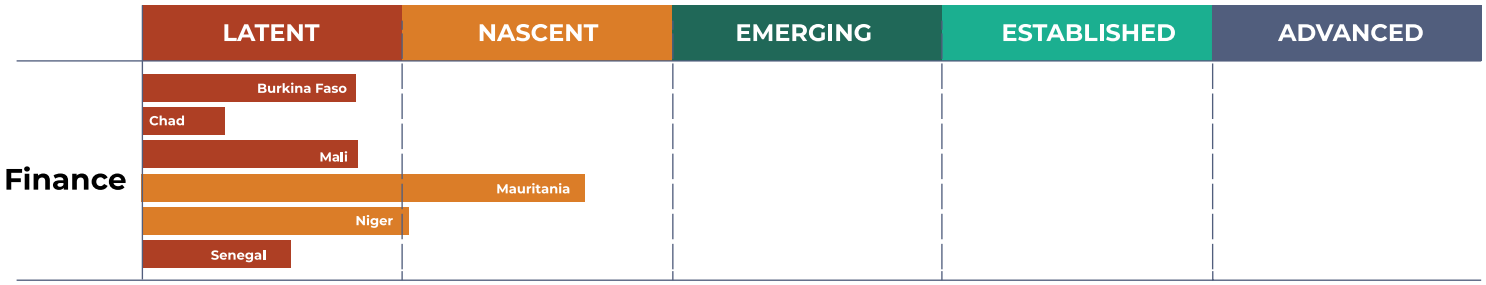
Some shocks are increasingly seen as predictable events that can be proactively planned for and managed, to ensure a timely response and to minimize their negative impact. Part of the solution to the financing challenge is for governments to develop a financing strategy before a shock occurs, which can be quickly activated in times of need. A risk financing strategy should fulfil the following: outline the financing instruments the government will draw upon to rapidly mobilize funding for the shock-response social protection interventions; outline the mechanisms that will trigger a response; and identify the interventions to be deployed.

The Finance building block seeks to ascertain the government's anticipation of their financing needs, that is, their ex ante financial planning. It seeks to answer the fundamental questions of whether the country knows how much money they will need and whether they have it earmarked to ensure they do not have to reallocate funds away from existing programs and development goals. Specifically, it asks four questions as follows:

- Does the government have a national strategy, policy, or legislation setting out commitments to disaster risk financing?
- Does the government have the capacity to analyze and model the potential cost implications of the shocks over time?
- Is financing in place to ensure a timely response to disasters
- Are there systems or mechanisms which can be used for ASP interventions?

Sources : World Bank 2021b; Smith and Bowen 2020; Bowen et al. 2020.

FIGURE 2.7: Delivery Chain for Social Protection Programs



Source: Original figure for this publication*

KEY FINDING 12:
In the Sahel, financing for shock-response social protection is typically mobilized in an ad hoc and piecemeal manner, which can be costly and create significant delays.

Except for Mauritania, countries in the region have not put in place ex ante, or prearranged, financing instruments for ASP. Ex ante financial planning is based on an understanding of the risk profile of a country. It involves an assessment of the resources a country will need to address shocks and the identification of ex ante options to finance the programs. In Mauritania, the FNRCAN was recently established to function as a contingency fund to finance shock-response using ASP programs and systems (Box 2.17). In 2022, the government of Mauritania set aside its first budget for the response to food insecurity during the lean season. These achievements underpin the status of Mauritania as the strongest performer in the region on this building block.

No countries in the Sahel have shock-response financing strategies in place. In many countries around the world, financing strategies focus on the financing of responses to all disasters and are implemented by multiple sectors. Although efforts to develop broad disaster financing strategies in Burkina Faso, Niger, and Senegal have been ongoing for several years, they have yet to be finalized. In the Sahel, capacity to model the potential cost implications of multiple shocks over time is limited, due in part to a lack of high-quality multiyear data. In addition, some shocks, such as conflicts or rises in food and input prices, cannot easily be quantified. Even when the financial modelling of shock response has been developed, as in Senegal, it has not yet been applied to ASP. In Niger, a financial model for the ASP-based drought response pilot program has been developed but has not yet been used to develop dedicated financing instruments. Finally, the institutional focus and related roles and responsibilities in many of the Sahelian countries is on food insecurity, rather than a broad approach to all disasters. Sahel countries might therefore consider starting with financing strategies that have a narrower focus on shock-response implemented through social protection programs (Box 2.18).

BOX 2.17 : THE NEW CONTINGENCY FINANCING FUND IN MAURITANIA

The Government of Mauritania has introduced a new institutional and operational framework for the coordination and funding of responses to food security crises in the country. Established as part of this reform, as the financial backbone of this framework, the Fond National de Réponse aux Crises Alimentaires et Nutritionnelles (the National Food and Nutrition Crisis Response Fund; the FNRCAN) aligns and optimizes the financing for responses to food security crises. The FNRCAN is expected to provide a mechanism to facilitate the channelling and pooling of government and partner resources, which can then be mobilized to address food security emergencies in a timely and effective manner.


Photo credit: From WorldBank

*Note: Figure based on assessments completed in October 2021 in Burkina Faso; September 2022 in Chad; June 2022 in Mali; November 2021 in Mauritania; May 2022 in Niger; and January 2022 in Senegal. Progress realized since these assessments are reflected in the text.

BOX 2.18 : WHAT FOCUS FOR A SHOCK-RESPONSE ASP FINANCING STRATEGY IN THE SAHEL?

Many African countries prepare comprehensive financing strategies that cover all major disaster risks and related costs across all sectors, including in Kenya, Malawi, and Mozambique. In contrast, in the Sahel, governments might consider starting small and developing a financing strategy for specific risks, costs, and sectors.

There are multiple reasons for this. First, data limitations constrain the estimation of costs resulting from specific disasters. Regionally standardized assessments (Cadre Harmonisé, Harmonized Framework) focus on food insecurity, and do not differentiate among the causes or shocks that led to insecurity. In addition, some of the major shocks that Sahel countries are exposed to are not easily quantifiable, for example, conflicts or price shocks, and hence cannot be easily included in a comprehensive disaster risk financing strategy. Finally, institutional structures in Sahel countries may be less conducive to adopting and implementing comprehensive disaster risk financing strategies covering all risks, costs, and sectors. All Sahel countries have chosen to establish food security response agencies, rather than disaster response agencies. This differs from countries in which chronic food insecurity is lower and response agencies focus on a variety of natural hazards, for example in Mozambique.

Taking the existing institutional landscape in the Sahel into account, it may be more practical to start by implementing a program-specific financing strategy, rather than a comprehensive national disaster risk financing strategy. Adaptive safety nets can be a useful starting point for this. Such a strategy would outline how scale-ups of the existing safety net would be financed for different types of shocks. If a Sahel government seeks to draft a broader strategy spanning multiple existing or potentially additional programs, it may be more relevant to establish a food security financing strategy, rather than a disaster risk financing strategy.

Source: Lung 2022.

Due to limited ex ante financing, shock response is often financed with significant delays, through ex post international financing or domestic mobilization. Resorting to ex post financing can be costly. For instance, ex post domestic mobilization via budget reallocation can cause significant stress given limited fiscal spaces – the 2012 food security crisis resulted in a 10 percent reallocation of the national budget and a deficit equivalent to 4 percent of GDP in Mauritania, straining public finances (World Bank 2019). International funding may fill a crucial gap, but when mobilized ex post, they often arrive with delay and are typically insufficient relative to needs. In term of coverage, only an estimated 61 percent of the people identified as in need of emergency assistance in 55 percent of affected municipalities were supported in 2022 in Burkina Faso. More generally, a 2011 analysis showed that in Sub-Saharan Africa, external humanitarian support after droughts arrived, on average, only seven to nine months after their occurrence, and often in amounts which did not reflect the scale of needs.

The development of prearranged financing for ASP is constrained by the nascent nature of ASP systems in most Sahel countries. Before dedicated financing instruments are established, the ability of safety nets and the social protection systems to respond to shocks must be robustly established. This requires the underlying safety nets to be functioning reliably and with broad coverage, and that clear shock response protocols and capacity are established. However, only Mauritania and Senegal have achieved broad coverage of registries and social safety net programs and mobilized sufficient political buy-in to devote significant domestic resources to their financing. The strength of the social protection delivery system remains nascent in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, and Niger. This applies also to the public financial management systems in place in the countries. Gaps in the financial management systems often preclude timely allocation and use of resources, as well as efficient and transparent expenditure tracking and analysis. Thus, the most urgent agenda in most Sahelian countries is to establish strong safety net programs and delivery systems, before turning to the financing of shock-response scalability.

RECOMMENDATION 12:

Identify options to establish prearranged financing instruments for shock-response programs using social protection mechanisms.

FOR GOVERNMENTS:

- Collect and analyze information on past food insecurity and shocks, to assess country risk profiles and financing needs.
- Ensure national response plans allocate funds for interventions that use ASP mechanisms.
- Ensure ASP financing mechanisms are ready to be deployed in response to shocks.

FOR DONORS AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS:

- Provide technical and financial assistance on national and regional data collection, and analysis efforts on shocks, impacts, and costs.
- Ensure emergency financing agreements allow implementing partners to align their responses with national delivery systems and programs.

KEY FINDING 13:
To date, most risk financing instruments adopted in the Sahel have been insurance-based, although reserve instruments may be more adapted to the region's risk profile.

Some countries have adopted sovereign drought insurance policies, but these are not specifically focused on financing ASP. A key actor is ARC, which is a specialized agency of the African Union that provides sovereign insurance solutions for its member states. All six countries of the Sahel are ARC member states and are participating in the African Development Bank (AfDB) Africa Disaster Risk Financing (ADRiFi) Programme, which has been subsidizing ARC policies in all countries since 2019. The ARC sovereign drought insurance policy has provided recent payouts to Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Senegal. However, these funds were not used to finance responses through social protection programs, but rather spent through parallel government interventions. In parallel, non-governmental actors did not align responses financed form ARC Replica payouts with the national social protection system, for example in Senegal. In addition, many countries faced the challenge of continuing to pay their premiums before the support from the ADRiFi. As a result, in some years, payouts were not triggered despite the occurrence of a drought. In addition to ARC, most governments in the Sahel are working on agricultural insurance, either via an established national program, as in Senegal, or national pilot programs, as in Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger.

Given the climate vulnerability profile of the Sahel, policy makers should consider alternative risk financing instruments to insurance, such as reserve funds. The Sahel region is marked by extreme climate vulnerability and countries are faced with high food insecurity every year. Large numbers of households are poor and work in agriculture, most in subsistence agriculture, and are therefore exposed to droughts. Insurance can be a cost-effective mechanism to manage infrequent and extreme risks or exceptional shocks, but is not the most appropriate tool for regular or annual food insecurity crises. From a financial perspective, contingency funds, for example in the form of dedicated national response funds, tend to be more suited. This is the approach Mauritania has begun to adopt with the FNRCAN (Box 2.17).

Some countries also have contingency instruments in place, but these predominantly focus on food distribution rather than cash transfers made through ASP programs. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, financial reserves for food security were set up in Burkina Faso, Chad, and Niger. These reserves are coresourced and comanaged by the respective governments and donors. While their operating modalities differ, these funds are active to this day and represent one of the main food security financing vehicles in the three countries (ECOWAS 2011). In 2022, the governments of Burkina Faso and Niger, along with the donor community, began efforts to reform various aspects of these funds, which could present an opportunity to include financing windows for transfers through ASP programs. Some governments have other funds in place, which could be reformed to support social protection programs — for example, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Senegal each have Fonds National de Solidarité (national contingency funds) aimed at providing social assistance during times of stress but they are not all fully functional yet.

RECOMMENDATION 13:
Focus on instruments that are commensurate with the risk profile of the Sahel and ensure that contingency instruments are set up to support social protection shock-response programs.

FOR GOVERNMENTS:

- Prepare a risk financing strategy, either nationally or for ASP shock-response mechanisms specifically, with instruments adapted to the country's risk profile.
- Develop and institutionalize financial instruments aligned with risk profile, for example combining a national contingency fund and sovereign risk transfer.
- Establish clear rules for disbursement of funds as per risk financing strategy.

FOR DONORS AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS:

- Provide technical assistance for the development of a financing strategy adapted to the country's risk profile.

KEY FINDING 14:
Financing for regular and shock-response ASP programs in the Sahel will require a mix of domestic and international funding for the foreseeable future.

All Sahel countries, especially the four central Sahelian countries, are dependent on external support to respond to humanitarian needs, something that is unlikely to change in the short to medium term. Together, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, and Niger request international food security-related humanitarian support of approximately US$1 billion annually, and receive, on average approximately US$360 million. Disaster-response efforts are often almost entirely donor-financed (Hoglund Giertz et al. 2022), although countries have recently begun financing parts of the regular and shock-response programs from national budgets. Mauritania and Senegal currently finance significant parts of their regular and shock-response social protection programs from national budgets, and Burkina Faso has committed to providing significant resources to the national safety net program in the coming years. With climate change, disasters are expected to occur more frequently and become more severe, thus disaster-related humanitarian needs are likely to increase over time, while national fiscal space remains limited. It is therefore likely that governments in the region will continue to require external support to cope with disaster costs for the foreseeable future. This will likely be the case, even if potential efficiency gains through more effective financing instruments materialize.

Risk financing instruments and strategies in the Sahel should explicitly account for continued donor contributions. Financing instruments and strategies in the Sahel need to account for the reality of continued external dependence. This can be done in various ways. For example, instruments can be designed to be cofinanced by governments and external partners. If such funds are governed by appropriate predefined rules, they can provide a more predictable and possibly cost-effective way to finance disaster costs than ad hoc assistance. They can also help to better coordinate and channel all resources allocated to disaster response. Another possibility is to specifically allocate certain risks or layers of risks to donor partners. A financing strategy will more effectively include donor contributions if it specifically states what they are expected to finance. Such strategies would thus require not only approval by the government, but they would also have to be developed in coordination with, and agreed, to by donors.

Some countries are developing instruments that receive contributions from government and donors, which could form the basis for broader donor-inclusive financing approaches. Sahelian countries have financial reserves for food security that benefit from both domestic and donor funds. These can serve as a basis upon which to build more ASP-oriented contingency funds that would accommodate donor contributions alongside government shock response budgets. The FNRCAN in Mauritania has achieved this. This fund is mandated with the consolidation of resources mobilized by the government and its partners to finance the annual National Response Plan. Rather than receive separate and disparate contributions, the government manages donor support and the response to food insecurity through the FNRCAN.

RECOMMENDATION 14:

Put in place financial instruments for shock-response using ASP mechanisms that enable government and donor contributions, thereby boosting the leadership of governments and coordination of partners.

FOR GOVERNMENTS :

- Design financial instruments such that they can receive funds from government and partners.

FOR DONORS AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS :

- Channel funds for shock-response through national financial instruments in line with the adopted risk financing strategy. Align calendars for allocating emergency funding with the national response planning cycle to promote timely support.
- Contribute to shock-response financing instruments over the medium to long term, decreasing the share of ad hoc fund raising.

Photo credit: From WorldBank

3. Conclusions and Recommendations

Countries in the Sahel have made significant progress toward establishing ASP systems. All countries have regular safety net programs that deliver cash to a certain number of beneficiaries in a routine manner, and all countries have piloted vertical or horizontal expansions, particularly in response to food insecurity and, in some cases, to floods and forced displacement. Countries in the region are also piloting innovative approaches to EWS, program design, program triggers, and payments. Mauritania and Senegal are at the forefront of this progress, particularly on the Data and Information and Programs and Delivery Systems building blocks of the ASP framework. Both countries are implementing national-scale registries and programs, and most of the extremely poor households are included in social registries and many of them benefit from routine safety nets. Although Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, and Niger have the ambition to set up national ASP systems and have made progress, their overall ASP systems remain nascent. These countries also face greater poverty and security challenges, which present political, financial, and logistical hurdles.

Progress is not uniform across countries or building blocks and important challenges remain in terms of scale, timeliness, and inclusivity. All countries have either established a social registry or the foundations of a social registry, but the static (nondynamic) approach to data collection and limited geographic coverage result in progressively obsolete and potentially incomplete data, making it difficult for countries to identify poor and vulnerable households affected by shocks. The limited coverage of programs remains a critical constraint to the adoption of a more mature approach to ASP in four of the assessed countries – Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, and Niger. All countries have piloted shock-response interventions to food insecurity and COVID-19 crises, with Niger and Senegal having also piloted a response to floods and Chad having piloted a response to a sudden influx of refugees from Cameroon. However, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, and Niger still struggle with providing regular programs to the poorest and most vulnerable at scale, and timely and adequate responses to those affected by shocks. Horizontal expansion — providing support to poor and vulnerable households affected by shocks who do not benefit from regular safety net programs (or are not included in the social registries) — is proving very difficult. Furthermore, the low penetration of digital payment systems, and barriers to access for some beneficiaries, hinders countries from adopting modern payment systems. In most countries in the Sahel, the institutional landscape for ASP lacks strong anchoring, clear roles, and robust coordination mechanisms for government agencies and external partners involved in shock or disaster risk management. Finally, Finance is the building block with the least progress across all countries. The financial resources required to bring regular programs and systems to scale are typically insufficient, with limited government mobilization of domestic resources for routine interventions. Similarly, resources for shock-response are often both insufficient and delayed, with limited mobilization ahead of crises.

The key findings and recommendations from this report can provide a roadmap for ASP development in the region, however this will require concerted efforts from both governments and partners. The good practices and innovations from the region can inspire governments and partners to prioritize investments in ASP systems, bring existing routine programs to full scale, foster greater resilience and productivity among the poor and vulnerable, prevent irreparable losses in human and productive capacity, and respond to shocks in a cost-efficient manner.

In each country, a concerted and carefully sequenced plan of actions needs to be applied across building blocks. A focus on operationalization is required, because in many cases, systems, policies, or delivery mechanisms have been established but not fully implemented. The following tables (table 3.1, table 3.2, table 3.3, and table 3.4) present a summary of the recommendations emerging from the report for each of the four building blocks of ASP: (1) Institutional Arrangements and Partnerships, (2) Data and Information, (3) Programs and Delivery Systems, and (4) Finance. Each country will need to identify priority recommendations on the basis of its own progress and challenges, as well as capacity and partnerships. These recommendations focus on actions by governments and actions by their donors and implementing partners. Indeed, in addition to government efforts, it is essential for partners that contribute to the financing or implementation of ASP in the region to continue to provide support to governments and align with their ASP programs, delivery systems, coordinating mechanisms, and financing strategies.

TABLE 3.1: Recommendations for the Institutional Arrangements and Partnerships Building Block

GOVERNMENT	DONORS AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS
Recommendation 1 : Incorporate shock-response functions and instruments in national social protection strategies and include ASP programs as response vehicles in national shock-response plans.	
• Expand the focus of national social protection strategies beyond chronic issues such as structural poverty and vulnerability, to include building resilience and responding to shocks. • Integrate ASP as a key component of disaster risk management and include as a response mechanism in contingency planning and national food insecurity response plans.	• Increase awareness, among all development and humanitarian actors, of the role that ASP instruments (including social registry and payment mechanisms) and programs can play in contributing to shock-response. • Coordinate around joint messaging on the role of ASP (regular safety net, resilience or economic inclusion, and shock-response interventions) and their inclusion in national policies. • Promote operationalization of policy commitment to provide support through national systems where possible, and align with national systems otherwise.
Recommendation 2 : Define roles and responsibilities and establish coordination mechanisms among a broader range of ASP actors and with other governmental and non-governmental DRM actors.	
• Define mandates and roles of institutions responsible for social protection, shock response, and DRM. • Establish or streamline national coordination mechanisms and ensure participation of government and nongovernmental actors as relevant, based on the shock.	• Provide technical and financial support to national coordination mechanisms, including through adequate human resources. • Participate in the coordination mechanisms. • Identify operational modalities to progressively deploy interventions within the national framework.
Recommendation 3: Strengthen the government leadership and convening role on ASP and promote the alignment or integration of financial and operational partners' support within national systems.	
• Streamline the elaboration process of the national response plan and lead its implementation, anchoring the process in a collaborative approach.	• Participate in the national coordination mechanism and in the elaboration of the national response plan. • Identify opportunities for harmonization of programs and collaboration. • Support the implementation of the national response plan by providing support through national programs, using national systems, or, at a minimum, aligning with national parameters.

Source: Original table for this publication.

TABLE 3.2: Recommendations for the Data and Information Building Block

GOVERNMENT	DONORS AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS
Recommendation 4: Expand the coverage of social registries to all geographic areas and all households vulnerable to shocks, to ensure they can be leveraged for shock response.	
• Develop and implement a national social registry expansion strategy in line with patterns of vulnerability, food insecurity and displacement, to ensure households in extreme poverty or vulnerable to shocks or food insecurity are included. • Update the data collection protocol and instruments, to ensure all relevant variables are included (to proxy poverty and vulnerability) and to respond to the needs of all potential user programs. • Identify mechanisms to address constraints linked to insecurity and displacement.	• Support analysis to improve understanding of vulnerability to food insecurity and shocks (including drought and floods, among others) and inform social registry coverage expansion and questionnaires or variables. • Support the development of the social registry expansion strategy to ensure adequate coverage.
Recommendation 5 : Operationalize protocols to regularly update social registry data, assessing the feasibility of combining administrator-driven methods, on-demand intake modalities, and the use of administrative records through interoperability	
• Develop protocols to regularly update the social registry that combine administrator-driven and on-demand intake modalities. • Identify options to streamline social registry questionnaires and data collection processes to facilitate regular updating while ensuring social registries serve the needs of existing and potential users. • Explore options for dynamic updating through interoperability with other information systems and sources of administrative records (identification, health, education, tax, and telecoms, among others). • Develop a multiyear strategy to expand and regularly update the social registry and to plan for human and financial resources.	• Provide technical support for the design of updating protocols. • Provide multiyear support in line with government social registry expansion and updating strategy and in coordination with other partners.
Recommendation 6 : Promote the use of social registry data among a range of actors by ensuring its quality and relevance, and establishing adequate data privacy and sharing protocols.	
• Institutionalize social registries to ensure their sustainability with an adequate legal framework. • Encourage use of social registries, by ensuring they address the needs of programs in terms of coverage, data quality, and variables. • Assess the data privacy and protection status of the social registry, and improve protocols as needed. • Establish data-sharing protocols between the social registry, user programs, and other relevant stakeholders. • Develop an outreach campaign to inform potential users about the social registry and its potential use. • Establish a working group for technical users, to identify areas for improvement.	• Use the social registry to determine the potential eligibility of all ASP interventions, when possible (implementing partners). • Where the social registry is not yet sufficient, use the social registry questionnaire and methodology and contribute to its expansion. • Encourage or demand implementing partners to use the social registry when possible, and use its methodology otherwise (donors).
Recommendation 7 : Enhance government ownership, institutionalization and functionality of EWS to ensure they inform the elaboration of national response plans and guide program design.	
• Promote adjustments to the Cadre Harmonisé, to allow for enhanced objectivity and speed (using technology such as satellite data) and ensure adequate human and financial resources. • Strengthen early warning mechanisms beyond food security, for hazards such as droughts and floods. • Anchor the formulation of the national response plans in early warning data, predefining actions linked to established triggers, such as safety net scale-ups.	• Provide investments and technical assistance for quantitative risk assessments, for improvements of early warning data accuracy and speed, and for linking early warning with early action. • Support the incorporation of adjustments to the Cadre Harmonisé to enhance objectivity and speed. • Channel shock-response support in line with the national response plan based on early warning data, or use early warning data to design shock-response interventions.

Source: Original table for this publication.

TABLE 3.3: Recommendations for the Programs and Delivery Systems Building Block

GOVERNMENT	DONORS AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS
Recommendation 8 : Enhance the coverage of routine safety net programs to include all chronically poor and vulnerable households and strengthen the resilience-building properties of programs.	
• Institutionalize the national regular safety net program. • Develop an expansion strategy for the safety net program to cover all chronically poor and vulnerable with regular support. • Commit the national budget (and mobilize donor support) to the national regular safety net program. • Scale up economic inclusion and resilience programs for beneficiaries of the national regular safety net program	• Implementing partners to provide regular support through national regular safety net programs or economic inclusion programs when possible, and align interventions with national programs (modality, targeting, amounts, and so on) when obligated to deliver separately. • Financing partners to promote the use of national programs or alignment with national programs by implementing partners.
Recommendation 9 : Enhance government delivery systems so they can perform their functions in times of shock and, as part of the national response plans, clarify ahead of shocks how they will be used.	
• Within established institutional arrangements, Prepare the plan for shock-response and outline the human and financial resources needed to implement scale-up. • Establish a scale-up protocol for different parts of the delivery chain (outreach and communication, identification, registration, payment, management, and so on). • Design shock-response interventions to provide support early, before impacts are felt, when feasible. • Prepare the materials, tools, protocols, and staff for shock-response ahead of the shock, to promote a timely and rapid response.	• Participate in government-led response preparedness initiatives and reflect agreements in own response planning. • Provide shock-response as part of the national response plan, delivering using government systems where possible and feasible; aligning with national systems otherwise. • Financing partners to promote delivery under the national response plans and through government programs or systems, when feasible and appropriate.
Recommendation 10 : Enhance payment mechanisms to improve timeliness and accountability, and ensure inclusion.	
• Develop framework agreements with payment providers, which allow use for multiple programs or for easy scale-up in response to shocks and reduce transfer costs. • Explore options for setting up a national payment platform that could be used by all programs, using multiple providers. • Assess obstacles to adoption of digital payments, including obstacles faced by potential beneficiaries, develop plan to address them, and pilot digital payment options. • Identify options to improve the ability of existing payment systems to reach the poorest and most vulnerable efficiently and safely.	• Provide technical assistance on developing payment platforms or deploying digital payment systems. • Use government payment systems or platforms when possible, and align with the government approach otherwise.
Recommendation 11 : Address the constraints faced by women, forcibly displaced households, and other vulnerable groups, to clarify institutional responsibilities and embed operational solutions in the design or procedures of regular and shock-response programs.	
• Evaluate the constraints faced by vulnerable groups in benefiting from regular safety net programs, economic inclusion interventions, or shock-response support. • Identify and deploy adaptations to various steps of the delivery chain to promote inclusion of vulnerable groups (outreach, identification, inclusion, delivery, grievances, and so on). • Closely monitor program delivery to identify potential barriers to inclusion and timely delivery. • Identify options to consider forcibly-displaced people for inclusion in programs.	• Support the government in the identification and implementation of solutions for the inclusion of vulnerable groups and the reduction of their barriers to access.

Recommendation 10 : Enhance payment mechanisms to improve timeliness and accountability, and ensure inclusion.	
• Develop framework agreements with payment providers, which allow use for multiple programs or for easy scale-up in response to shocks and reduce transfer costs. • Explore options for setting up a national payment platform that could be used by all programs, using multiple providers. • Assess obstacles to adoption of digital payments, including obstacles faced by potential beneficiaries, develop plan to address them, and pilot digital payment options. • Identify options to improve the ability of existing payment systems to reach the poorest and most vulnerable efficiently and safely.	• Provide technical assistance on developing payment platforms or deploying digital payment systems. • Use government payment systems or platforms when possible, and align with the government approach otherwise.
Recommendation 11 : Address the constraints faced by women, forcibly displaced households, and other vulnerable groups, to clarify institutional responsibilities and embed operational solutions in the design or procedures of regular and shock-response programs.	
• Evaluate the constraints faced by vulnerable groups in benefiting from regular safety net programs, economic inclusion interventions, or shock-response support. • Identify and deploy adaptations to various steps of the delivery chain to promote inclusion of vulnerable groups (outreach, identification, inclusion, delivery, grievances, and so on). • Closely monitor program delivery to identify potential barriers to inclusion and timely delivery. • Identify options to consider forcibly-displaced people for inclusion in programs.	• Support the government in the identification and implementation of solutions for the inclusion of vulnerable groups and the reduction of their barriers to access.

Source: Original table for this publication.

TABLE 3.4: Recommendations for the Finance Building Block

GOVERNMENT	DONORS AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS
Recommendation 12 : Identify options to establish prearranged financing instruments for shock-response programs using social protection mechanisms.	
• Collect and analyze information on past food insecurity and shocks, to assess country risk profiles and financing needs. • Ensure national response plans allocate funds for interventions that use ASP mechanisms. • Ensure ASP financing mechanisms are ready to be deployed in response to shocks.	• Provide technical and financial assistance on national and regional data collection, and analysis efforts on shocks, impacts, and costs. • Ensure emergency financing agreements allow implementing partners to align their responses with national delivery systems and programs.
Recommendation 13 : Focus on instruments that are commensurate with the risk profile of the Sahel, and ensure contingency instruments are setup to support social protection shock-response programs.	
• Prepare a risk financing strategy, either nationally or for ASP shock-response mechanisms specifically, with instruments adapted to the country's risk profile. • Develop and institutionalize financial instruments aligned with risk profile, for example combining a national contingency fund and sovereign risk transfer. • Establish clear rules for disbursement of funds as per risk financing strategy.	• Provide technical assistance for the development of a financing strategy adapted to the country's risk profile.
Recommendation 14 : Put in place financial instruments for shock-response using ASP mechanisms that enable government and donor contributions, thereby boosting the leadership of governments and coordination of partners.	
• Design financial instruments such that they can receive funds from government and partners.	• Channel funds for shock-response through national financial instruments in line with the adopted risk financing strategy. Align calendars for allocating emergency funding with the national response planning cycle to promote timely support. • Contribute to shock-response financing instruments over the medium to long term, decreasing the share of ad hoc fund raising.

Source: Original table for this publication.

APPENDIX A : SOCIAL PROTECTION STRESS TEST TOOL AND ITS APPLICATION IN THE SAHEL

The social protection stress test aims to assess the adaptiveness of social protection systems, in particular their ability to respond to shocks. It provides a framework with which users can convene relevant stakeholders to engage in informed discussions around potential gaps in their social protection programs and systems, so that solutions can be explored and implemented.

The social protection stress test is composed of two parts. Part One "Scenario building and assessing needs" examines the main sources of risk and prevalent shocks that a given country faces and provides an estimate of the number of people in need of support in the aftermath of different types and intensities of shocks. Discussing and clarifying likely scenarios for scaling up social protection enables the country team to agree on the types of shock that are most important to consider and has implications for the types of EWS needed and the speed of support. It also allows the team to quantify the challenges facing the system and understand the scale of vertical or horizontal expansion needed. Part Two "Scalability and adaptiveness of social protection" focuses on key elements of an ASP system. It seeks to capture the level of preparedness of the social protection system to respond to heightened needs. It provides scores (quantitative measures) and descriptive scales with a stylized high-level description of systems based on their scores (qualitative). The questionnaire is presented below.

In the Sahel, the assessments were based a series of ten workshops (table A.1), that were comprised of government authorities, UNICEF, WFP, and the World Bank, between October 2021 and September 2022.

TABLE A.1: Social Protection Stress Test Workshop Details

COUNTRY	WORKSHOP TYPE	DATE	PARTICIPANTS
Burkina Faso	First workshop (virtual	October 202	the World Bank, UNICEF, WF
Chad	First workshop (virtual) Second workshop (in-person)	November 2021 September 2022	the World Bank the government of Chad and the World Bank
Mali	First workshop (virtual) Second workshop (virtual)	November 2021 June 2022	the World Bank, UNICEF, WFP, the government of Mali, the World Bank, UNICEF, and WFP
Mauritania	Workshop (in-person	November 202	the government of Mauritania and the World Ban
Niger	First workshop (virtual) Second workshop (in-person)	October 2021 May 2022	the World Bank, UNICEF, WFP the government of Niger, the World Bank, UNICEF, and WFP
Senegal	First workshop (virtual) Second workshop (virtual)	October 2021 January 2022	the World Bank the government of Senegal and the World Bank

TABLE A.2: Social Protection Stress Test Workshop Details

	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
	BUILDING BLOCK: INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS	
	GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP	
1	Is there any government policy or strategy that recognizes the role of (adaptive) social protection in disaster risk management ?	• No (adaptive) social protection or DRM strategy / policy =1 • Strategies/policies exist, but are outdated or social protection and DRM do not link to each other, and ASP not mentioned=2 • Up to date strategies / policies exists with some recognition of the role of ASP in DRM (or vice versa) = 3 • Relevant social protection and DRM strategies exist with strong complementarity and links to some legislation and fiscal commitments =4 • Clear and reinforcing commitment to ASP in social protection and DRM strategies supported by appropriate legislation and fiscal commitments = 5
2	Is there a contingency plan or response plan (whether drafted by the government or not, it is recognized as such in times of crisis), with links to risk assessment which determines the actions to be taken in case of one of the shocks identified in Part One ?	• No=1 • There is a plan, but it was never activated during a shock/ not consistently activated OR there is a plan, but it is outdated and does not incorporate risk assessments=2 • There is an up-to-date plan which is/would be activated but does not have fully actionable implementation roadmap for an effective response and is not periodically reviewed nor tested=3 • There is an up to date, comprehensive and relevant plan for some shock(s), which includes risk assessment and scenario building which has been tested, is actionable and implementation-ready=4 • There is a plan for each/all shocks (including an action plan for unanticipated shocks), and clear guidelines as to when it is/ would be activated and up to date and is tested/implemented regularly and refined = 5
3	How effectively does the government lead the response plan and implementation ?	• There are no government led ASP activities — all is led by humanitarian partners without coordination with social protection or DRM = 1 • Government (social protection and/or DRM) and nongovernmental agencies run parallel ASP initiatives without coordination = 2 • Government (social protection and/or DRM) and nongovernmental agencies run parallel ASP initiatives with ad hoc postdisaster coordination = 3 • Government social protection and DRM have functioning institutionalized linkages and coordination (sharing data and information and coordinate on response based on respective roles) but no coordination with nongovernmental agencies=4 • Government social protection and DRM have functioning institutionalized linkages and coordination (sharing data and information and coordinate on response based on respective roles) and a coordination mechanism with nongovernmental agencies is functional = 5

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS		
1	Is there a public agency which is formally tasked with leading the social protection? shock response efforts (for the shocks identified in Part One)?	• No agency tasked =1 • No formal responsibility designated, but many agencies respond using their own systems and processes =2 • Several agencies tasked with response of some shock(s) (overlapping mandates) with limited level of coordination=3 • Clear responsibility and roles for some shock(s) assigned to agency(ies) though not for all shocks =4 • One agency tasked with shock response (or multiple agencies with designated roles and responsibilities) and covers all the shocks =5
2	Is there a coordination mechanism or institutionalized linkage between DRM (or institutionalized system responsible for shock response) and social protection agencies (for the shocks identified in Part One) ?	• No linkages: social protection actors (or agency) do not have an active role and/or do not have coordination mechanism with DRM actors=1 • Ad hoc linkages (not institutionalized), OR coordination institutionalized but in reality, social protection counterparts still struggle to coordinate with DRM counterparts=2 • Mostly functioning institutionalized linkages and coordination between social protection and DRM for some shock(s) only (social protection and DRM counterparts share data and information and coordinate on response based on respective roles for some shock only) =3 • Mostly functioning institutionalized linkages and coordination between social protection and DRM actors for most shocks =4 • Strong linkages and institutionalized coordination mechanisms between social protection and DRM for all shocks=5
BUILDING BLOCK: FINANCE		
1	Does the Government have a national strategy, policy or legislation setting out commitments to disaster risk financing ?	• No disaster risk financing strategy or policy document/s exist = 1 • Disaster risk financing policy document/s are under development, or if they exist are outdated and not linked to any ASP interventions= 2 • Some disaster risk financing policies or strategies exist but not backed by legislation or financial instruments = 3 • Disaster risk financing policy exists for at least one shock and some legislative / financial commitments in place = 4 • Clear disaster risk financing strategy exists for wide range of shocks with supporting legal / financial instruments in place that mention ASP interventions = 5
2	Does the government have ability to analyze and model the potential cost implications of the shocks identified in Part One over time ?	• No systems exist = 1 • No, but the government is actively building capacity in this area = 2 • Yes, an analysis has been performed based on historical data for a/some shock(s), including ASP scale-up plans = 3 • Yes, an analysis has been performed based on historical data as per ASP scale-up plans for some shocks and is owned by the Government = 4 • Yes, an analysis has been performed based on historical data as per ASP scale-up plans for all shocks and is owned by the Government = 5

3	Is financing in place to ensure a timely response to disasters?	• No specific financing instruments earmarked, response fully dependent upon budget reallocation and external aid = 1 • Some disaster funding earmarked but fully dependent upon budget reallocation and external aid and not specifically for ASP response. Some coordination with development partners and ministries to access finance = 2 • Some financing instruments earmarked for ASP response to some shocks, but amount limited to smaller events/more regular scale-up. Where additional finance required this experiences delays = 3 • Some contingency financing and / or market-based instruments in place for some proportion of potential ASP costs. Larger and infrequent shocks not fully covered = 4 • Instruments are ear-marked to quickly cover the cost of ASP scale-up from all shocks. Minimal delays to response = 5
4	Are there systems/mechanisms which can be utilized for ASP interventions?	• No clear system/mechanism in place to scale up ASP assistance in place = 1 • Systems/mechanisms exist for final distribution of assistance in line with social protection system — no upstream timelines or protocols exist. Systems to disburse and reconcile expenditure= 2 • Systems/mechanisms exist for the release of resources, but no clear timescales established and challenges in implementation remain. Systems to disburse and reconcile expenditure adequate = 3 • Systems/mechanisms and timescales for the release of resources exist but challenges in implementation remain. Good systems to disburse and reconcile expenditure down to beneficiary level = 4 • The processes and timescales exist for the release of all resources for ASP and good systems to disburse and reconcile expenditure down to beneficiary level = 5
BUILDING BLOCK: DATA AND INFORMATION		
EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS		
1	Is/are there a functional EWS for the shock(s) the country is exposed to? (shocks that are identified in Part One)	• No=1 • Yes, but not fully functional or pilot form=2 • Yes, for some shock(s) and functional while some others exist but very weak /not fully functional =3 • Yes, for most or all shocks and mostly functional=4 • Yes, for all regular/known/recurrent shocks and with high functionality/multihazard EWS=5
2	Is the national EWS capable of warning (monitoring and alerting) of one or more shocks identified in Part One?	• Inadequate monitoring and warning capability of any hazard (for natural shock)/ or other shocks (health, food insecurity etc.) = 1 • Some but limited monitoring and/or warning capability of hazards /or other shocks =2 • Some adequate monitoring and/or warning capability for hazards /or shocks most relevant to the country, though some issues with accuracy still, and limited ability to monitor other less relevant more infrequent shocks = 3 • Significant monitoring capability for hazards /or other shocks most relevant to the country but no other hazards/shocks =4 • High level of monitoring and warning capability across hazards and/or shocks =5

3	Has the government undertaken vulnerability and risk assessment(s) to assess the impact of shock(s) identified in Part One based on EWS data?	• No detailed vulnerability or risk assessments by govt exist=1 • Outdated or poor-quality assessment(s) of risk/vulnerability exist = 2 • Some assessment to determine impact of different shocks on different populations exists but relies heavily on external support /or is not wholly adequate = 3 • Government has the capacity to (and does) undertake risk/vulnerability assessment for some shocks regularly based on hazard or shock exposure and data and provide granular data on people in need = 4 • Government has the capacity to (and does) undertake a credible risk/vulnerability assessment regularly that is capable of providing granular data on estimated people in need in advance or very quickly in response to multiple shocks = 5
4	Is there an agreed trigger to initiate shock response or to scale up social protection systems in shock response (for the shocks identified in Part One) ?	• Shock response does not rely on EWS data for response = 1 • There is an ad hoc linkage shock response and EWS, where EWS data is used only sometimes = 2 • Some attempts to identify and document EW indicators, which can be used to plan disaster response, but actual timing and scale of response follow resources =3 • EW indicators are well-defined and documented with preagreed trigger thresholds to initiate a shock response. However, this is only limited to pilot programs or little coverage =4 • Defined/automatic EW triggers that lead to relevant agencies initiating the shock response, which includes guidelines on amount and coverage for some shock(s) = 5
SOCIAL REGISTRIES		
1	What kind of registry or database is used to target beneficiaries for a shock response ?	• A program social registry • Several program registries/databases • A national registry • A voter ID database • Humanitarian partners databases • Civil registry • Social security database • Telecom companies or client lists • Pension and social security databases • Dedicated management information system • None of the above/ad hoc registration
2	What is the difference in terms of urban coverage in the registry/databases vs. the likely affected urban population based on simulation ?	• Over 70%=1 • 50-70%=2 • 30%-50%=3 • 15-30%=4 • More households in the registry/database, or 0-15% fewer in the database than urban affected population % = 5
3	What is the difference in terms of rural coverage in the registry vs. the likely affected rural population based on the simulation ?	• Over 70%=1 • 50-70%=2 • 30%-50%=3 • 15-30%=4 • More households in the registry/database, or 0-15% fewer in the database than urban affected population % = 5

4	Share of records older than 3 years in the registry or database used? It can also be an approximation	• Over 70% (or information not available) = 1 • 50-70%=2 • 30%-50%=3 • 15-30%=4 • 0-15%=5
5	Based on approximation, are disaster prone areas covered by the registry or relevant databases?	• None=1 • Few disaster-prone areas covered=2 • Some of the disaster-prone areas covered = 3 • Most of the disaster-prone areas covered =4 • All the disaster-prone areas covered =5
6	Is there a protocol for updating the registry or relevant database (full update not day to day updates) ?	• No=1 • Yes, a protocol exists but has never been followed=2 • Yes, a protocol exists and has been mostly followed with some shortcomings (whether delays, or some deviation from the protocol or short of the full needed update) OR a protocol does not exist, but some updates have happened regardless = 3 • Yes, a protocol exists and has been followed and helped update the database completely, but the updates are irregular and at least 5 years apart = 4 • Update is regular and/or automatic =5
7	Does the data in the registry or in the databases used allow targeting, identifying, locating, and contacting the beneficiary and transferring the benefit (that is, having the address/phone/account information of the beneficiary) during shock response ?	• Data collected in the registry/database is not sufficient to target in a shock response =1 • Data collected in the registry/database is somewhat sufficient to target during a shock=2 • Data collected in the registry/database is mostly sufficient to target for a/some shock(s)=3 • Data collected in the registry/database is mostly sufficient to target for all shocks=4 • Data collected in the registry/database is fully sufficient to target for all shocks=5
8	Do humanitarian partners use the government's registry or other relevant government databases for their response	• No, humanitarian partners use their own proprietary beneficiary lists, with little coordination of lists =1 • Some use it but not consistently, relying on their own lists with some coordination but remains insufficient =2 • All have access but don't use it consistently relying on their own lists partially with some coordination, but overlaps remain =3 • They have access but use their own proprietary lists. However, mechanisms in place to avoid overlap in targeted beneficiaries that is, different programs are not covering the same beneficiaries= 4 • All have access and use it consistently /or humanitarian partners not involved in response =5
9	Are there other adequate (up to date, relevant data, geographic coverage) databases (telecom, humanitarians) available that can significantly expand reach ?	• No other databases available=1 • Databases available but not interoperable=2 • Databases available and could be made interoperable but no data sharing preagreements = 3 • Databases available and have data sharing preagreements = 4 • Databases available, which are interoperable and allow seamless expansion, or the government does not need to rely on other databases as its own database/registry has full coverage = 5

10	Are there any data privacy regulations with specified course of action in case of privacy breach ?	• No data privacy/security regulations exist = 1 • Data privacy regulations exist but are not implemented = 2 • Data privacy regulations exist with strict data sharing protocols with the private sector. However other government agencies can access and use this data = 3 • Data privacy regulations exist with strict data sharing protocols where the beneficiary is made aware of all the entities that could access their data = 4 • Data privacy regulations exist where beneficiary data is not shared with anyone. Other entities can only access aggregated or anonymized data = 5
BUILDING BLOCK : PROGRAMS AND DELIVERY SYSTEMS		
PROGRAMS		
1	What kind of noncontributory cash/in-kind transfer programs does the government operate ?	• None, or donor/NGO-run programs only = 1 • Government-run programs exist, but in limited geographic areas = 2 • Government-run programs exist nationally but are limited to specific categories (for example, disability, old age pension) = 3 • Government-run programs are operated nationwide but are fragmented or overlapping = 4 • A coordinate government-run program(s) is present nationally covering the life cycle/primate vulnerable categories without fragmentation or overlap= 5
2	What kind of livelihoods/employment protection programs exist ?	• None, or donor/NGO-run programs only = 1 • Selected programs exist (some of them run by the government), but are limited in scope/coverage and/or to certain geographic areas = 2 • Programs exist nationally but are limited in scope and/or coverage (for example, skills training only) = 3 • Various programs (delivering, for example, skills plus cash, credit and/or counseling) are operated nationwide with reasonable coverage, but are fragmented or overlapping = 4 • An integrated government-run livelihoods program/suite of programs (or in complete coordination with NGOs) is operating nationally with appropriate coverage = 5
3	Does the amount of benefit provided during shocks contributes to maintain household consumption and welfare ?	• Amount of benefit far from allowing households to maintain preshock consumption levels =1 • Amount of benefit covers a small part of the consumption impact and decision on amount is based on resources available rather than standard protocol =2 • Amount of benefit covers significant portion of the consumption impact, though coverage still a priority (can sometimes cover a lot sometimes a little) =3 • Amount of benefit provided compensates significantly (though not fully) for consumption impact, with some parameters for transfer amount outlined in protocol and minimal acceptable value = 4 • Amount of benefit provided compensates for potential consumption impact with formal guidelines/standards in place= 5
4	What is the coverage of social protection programs in the country ?	• 0-15%=1 • 15%-30%=2 • 30%-50%=3 • 50 to 70%=4 • Over 70%=5

DELIVERY SYSTEMS		
1	Are there communication mechanisms in place that can be leveraged in times of a shock to inform target beneficiaries about the program ?	• No or target population is not accessible=1 • Yes, but instruments are used in an ad hoc manner and are not tailored to the target population (for example, using pamphlets or using pamphlets in one language and not others when target population is illiterate) = 2 • Yes, with more effective strategies in some areas but is not implemented well in other areas = 3 • Yes, a comprehensive strategy is implemented (or is available) in both urban and rural areas, which are served by the program, but don't have capacity to expand to areas not currently covered = 4 • Yes, a comprehensive strategy that uses multiple sources (for example, a mix of cell phone, tv/radio, newspaper and other print media, and local community leaders) is available that can be scaled up as needed= 5
2	Is the delivery of assistance informed by a needs assessment ?	• There is no needs assessment tool=1 • There is a tool designed for needs assessments for cash as well as other assistance (such as food or shelter), but there are no mechanisms to link it to existing programs=2 • There is a tool designed for needs assessments and it informs the delivery of assistance through social protection programs via cash transfers=3 • There is a tool designed for needs assessments and it informs the delivery of assistance through social protection programs assistance other than cash transfers (such as food or shelter) =4 • There is a tool designed for needs assessments and it informs the delivery of assistance through the social protection programs via cash transfers as well as other assistance (such as food or shelter) =5
3	How are beneficiaries enrolled in the program in times of shock ?	• No enrolment mechanisms specified in case of horizontal expansion or existing beneficiaries have to register again for vertical expansion = 1 • In person near their place of residence at a specific time (no permanent structure available for registration) =2 • Self-enrollment in person (kiosk, one stop shop) or online/ phone without provision for alternative access = 3 • Self-enrollment by phone or internet as well as in person = 4 • Automatic enrollment OR multiple mechanisms used that ensure everyone among target population * can be enrolled =5
4	What percentage of the poorest two quintiles of population has a government authorized/recognized ID (national ID, birth certificate, voters ID, tax ID, etc.)	• 0-20% / Not available=1 • 20-40%=2 • 40-60%=3 • 60 to 80%=4 • Over 80%=5

5	Can beneficiaries or target population register complaints? Is there a grievance redress mechanism in place to resolve the complaints ?	• No/yes, but not functional =1 • Yes, but only through community committees/ in person and is limited to beneficiaries only =2 • Yes, there are multiple ways to register complaints, which can also be used by nonbeneficiaries. However, complaint resolution process is not tracked =3 • Yes, there are multiple ways to register complaints with triggers for response that tracks complaint resolution process = 4 • Yes, there are multiple ways to register complaints with triggers for response and tracking of complaint resolution process. After complaint resolution, follow up with beneficiaries to get feedback = 5
6	Does the shock response expansion have specific programs/design features to ensure inclusion of women ?	• No specific efforts are made to ensure inclusion of women=1 • Some efforts are made to improve access or outreach, but these are not effective or contextually appropriate =2 • Some efforts are made to improve access or outreach, including context-specific adjustments or measures to address upstream constraints (for example, provision of IDs or SIM cards to women to have better access) = 3 • Shock response plan includes a social mobilization component on top of tweaks in design features that tries to influence behavior or change restrictive norms to improve women's access to systems = 4 • The existing system already accounts for the major constraints faced by women and includes strategies to mitigate their constraints and improve access =5
7	Does the shock response expansion have specific programs/designs features to ensure the inclusion of other vulnerable categories (people with disabilities, elderly, refugees etc.)	• No specific efforts are made to ensure inclusion of other vulnerable categories = 1 • Some efforts are made to improve access or outreach, but these are not effective or contextually appropriate = 2 • Some efforts are made to improve access or outreach, including context specific adjustments or measures to address upstream constraints = 3 • Shock response plan includes a social mobilization component on top of tweaks in design features that tries to influence behavior or change restrictive norms or constraints to the inclusion of other vulnerable groups = 4 • The existing system already accounts for the major constraints faced by other vulnerable groups and includes strategies to mitigate their constraints and improve access = 5
PAYMENT SYSTEMS		
1	Currently, how are benefits or cash transferred to the beneficiaries?	• Payments/transfers are cash based or in kind undertaken in person by MFIs or other and no set up for digital transfers=1 • Payments/transfers cash based or in kind undertaken in person by MFIs or other but a small scale/pilot or discussion on digital transfers ongoing=2 • Some payments are digital or paid to bank accounts=3 • Most payments are digital or paid to bank accounts but use of funds is restricted to cash withdrawals from designated places =4 • All payments are digital with ability to spend directly from the account, for example, by debit card at merchant POS machine=5

2	How quickly can the payment system scale ?	• Payments would require significant time as system not in place or nor appropriate for response (that is, payments or assistance would arrive significantly after the shock occurs, likely some months) = 1 • Payments would experience some delay relative to shock as some systems in place but not most appropriate for some shock(s) identified in Part One (that is, payments or assistance would arrive after the shock occurs, days to weeks) =2 • Payments would experience moderate delays- some could be quick while others would lag (that is, payments or assistance relatively on time for some beneficiaries but delayed for others, no consistency in ability to respond on time) = 3 • Payments can be made with little delay for some shock(s) identified in Part One (that is, most payments practically on time relative to the type of shock, “delays” are small, few days at most= 4 • Payments can be made rapidly for all shocks identified in Part One (consider for different shocks different payment systems may be necessary, so ability to be able to adapt payment method as necessary-fit for purpose- is essential)= 5
3	What is the capacity of the payment system to handle a horizontal expansion of the main program ?	• Expansion of payments/benefits cannot be done at scale of need and limited to already targeted areas/localities =1 • Expansion of payments/benefits can be done at limited scale of need (that is, slightly more than the regular caseload, but mostly only if in same general area, or not multiple areas) =2 • Some ability to moderately expand payments/ benefits relative to need (that is, beyond current regular case load with some sizeable yet insufficient reach still) =3 • Significant ability to expand payments/benefits relative to need =4 • Strong ability to expand transfers/ benefits to cover most of the need or country if needed=5

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ENDNOTES

[1] During 2010–2019, real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth averaged 4.87 percent annually in the Sahel region, higher than the average in Sub-Saharan Africa (3.48 percent). Data in this note are from World Bank Data, World Bank, Washington, DC, (accessed June 30, 2023), https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG.

[2] The estimated poverty headcount ratios using national poverty lines in 2019 were 37.5 percent in Burkina Faso, 40.1 percent in Chad, 42.5 percent in Mali, 28.2 percent in Mauritania, 40.8 percent in Niger, and 37.8 percent in Senegal. Data estimates in this note are from Poverty and Inequality Platform (PIP), World Bank, Washington, DC, (accessed June 30, 2023), https://pip.worldbank.org/home.

[3] In 2018, the multidimensional poverty measure was 60.4 percent in Burkina Faso and 79 percent in Chad. Data in this note are from Poverty and Inequality Platform (PIP), World Bank, Washington, DC, (accessed June 30, 2023), https://pip.worldbank.org/home.

[4] These percentages are estimated to be approximately 30 in Chad, 32 in Mali and Niger, 38 in Burkina Faso and Mauritania, and 42 in Senegal (World Bank 2020b).

[5] The six countries in this study have collectively experienced 45 successful and attempted coups d'état since 1960. For more information about coups d'état in Africa, see "By the Numbers: Coups in Africa" on the Voice of America website at https://projects.voanews.com/african-coups/.

[6] For more information about the numbers of internally displaced persons, refugees, and asylum seekers in the Sahel region, see the UNHCR R4Sahel Coordination Platform for Forced Displacements in Sahel website at https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/sahelcrisis.

[7] For more information about the 2022 flooding in West and Central Africa, see the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) website at https://www.unhcr.org/us/news/briefing-notes/millions-face-harm-flooding-across-west-and-central-africa-unhcr-warns.

[8] For more information about GDP per capita growth in the Sahel region, see the World Bank Data website at https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.KD.ZG and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Data Mapper website at https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/datasets/WEO.

[9] For more information about food inflation in each Sahel country, see the World Bank Poverty and Equity Briefs website at https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/publication/poverty-and-equity-briefs.

[10] For more information about the current food insecurity situation in the Sahel region, see the World Food Programme (WFP) HungerMap Data website at https://hungermap.wfp.org/.

[11] For more information about food insecurity estimates in the Sahel region, see the Cadre Harmonisé website at https://www.cadreharmonise.org/en_GB.

[12] Household vulnerability can be understood as a function of hazard, exposure, and ability to cope with its impacts.

[13] An Early Warning System is "an integrated system of hazard monitoring, forecasting and prediction, disaster risk assessment, communication, and preparedness activity systems and processes that enable individuals, communities, governments, businesses, and others to take timely action to reduce disaster risks in advance of hazardous events". For more information on the definition of EWS, see the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) website at https://www.undrr.org/terminology/early-warning-system.

[14] Support by the World Bank to strengthen ASP in the Sahel has been embedded in continuous country engagements, benefiting from US$847 million from the International Development Association (IDA) since 2013 and US$172.95 million from SASPP since 2014.

[15] The most recent major updating effort, in 2019–20, benefitted from collaborative efforts by WFP, UNICEF and the World Bank.

[16] The trigger is linked to the water requirement satisfaction index, which uses precipitation and evapotranspiration data to generate an index that is closely correlated with the yield of millet.