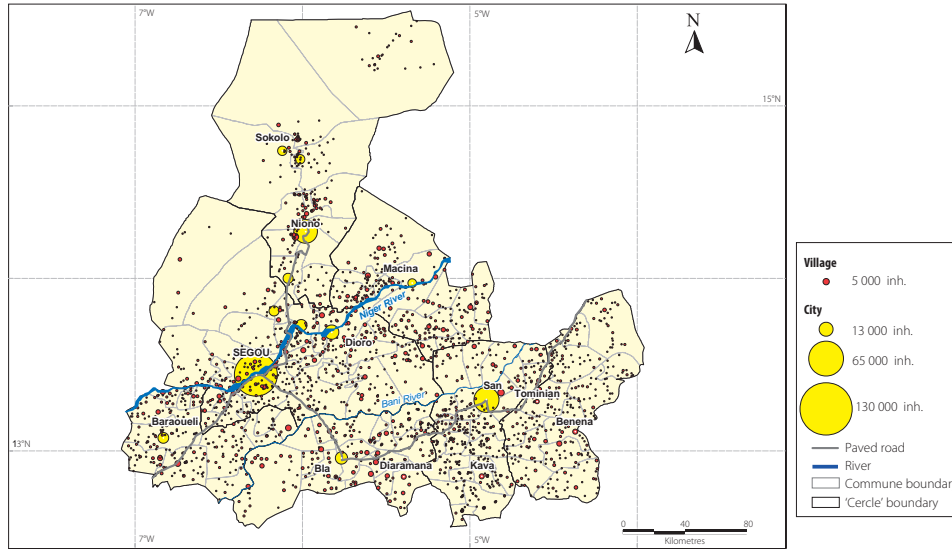


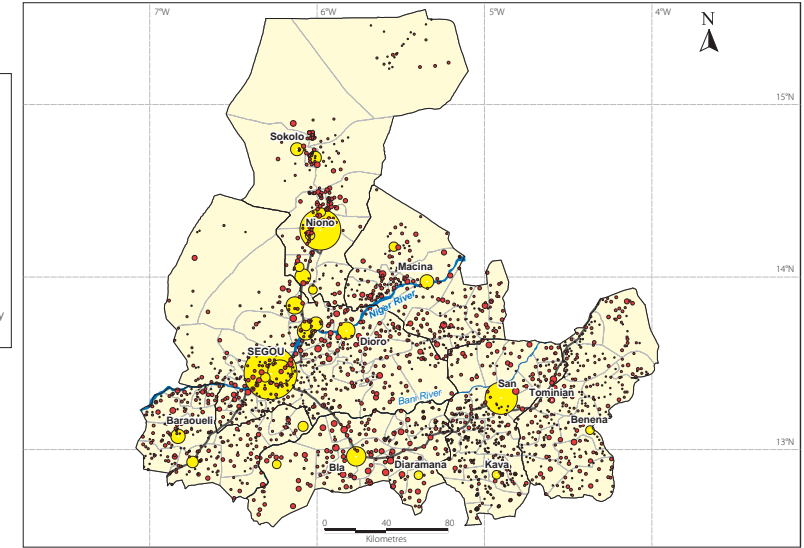
M44. Distribution of the population of the region of Segou in 1987

Source: RPGH 1987



M45. Distribution of the population of the region of Segou in 2009

Source: RPGH 2009



3

M46. Occupation of the population by sector of activity in 1987 and 2009

Source: RPGH 1987 and 2009

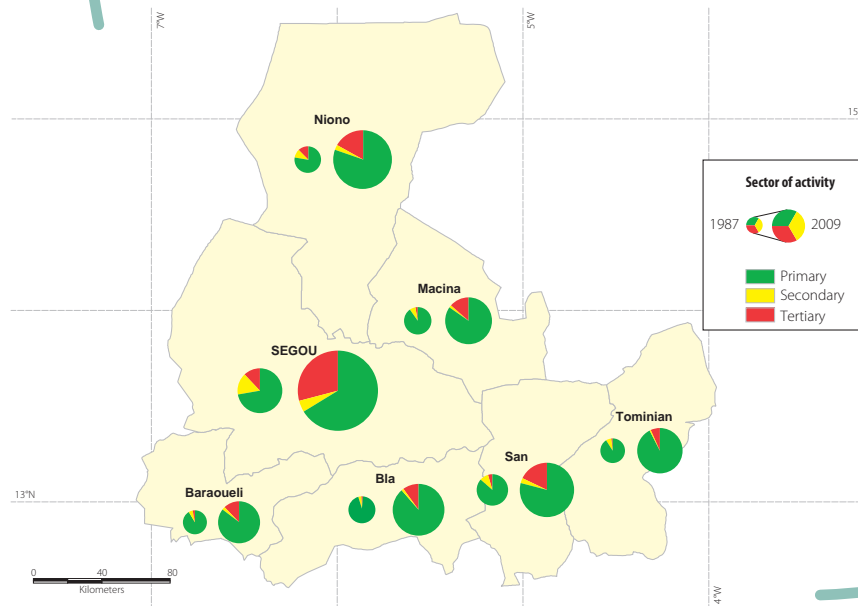
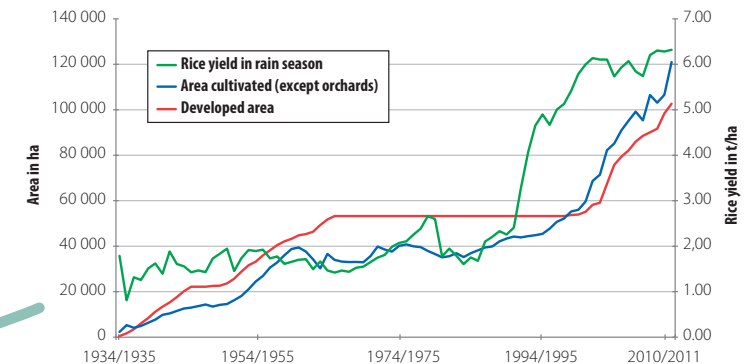


Fig. 22. Evolution of irrigated and cultivated areas and rice yields in the Office du Niger (1937-2011)

Source: Niger Office and authors' calculations



TERRITORIAL PLANNING TO MEET THE DEMOGRAPHIC CHALLENGE IN SÉGOU (MALI)

In Ségou, as in most parts of Mali, agriculture is still the main source of livelihood for households. There is considerable potential for developing irrigation and the agri-food sector in the region, but economic diversification remains a challenge in terms of meeting the demand for jobs, both now and in the coming decades. The development of strategies at the regional level provides an opportunity for mobilising synergies between stakeholders and between sectors.

• A long-standing specialisation in the primary and informal sectors

The city of Ségou, the capital of the kingdom with the same name during the pre-colonial period, is a commercial crossroads and political centre, and has preserved its administrative tradition. Today, it is nevertheless agriculture that best characterises the region and its diversity, with: in the south, rainfed production systems based on millet and sorghum, sometimes including cotton; in the central zone, between the Bani and Niger rivers, the extensive cultivation of millet; and in the north, the Sahel, which is dominated by extensive systems and small ruminant breeding. This specialisation has been reinforced by the emblematic water project initiated in the 1930s by the Office du Niger (ON), which has enabled the irrigation of plains north of the river covering more than 110 000 ha (with a potential of around 1 million ha) and the development of rice cultivation and vegetable growing. The

ON, and to a lesser extent the area of the Office Riz Ségou, are key components of the country's food security strategy that focus political attention and give substance to the region's articulation with the national level.

Despite ambitions of economic diversification through the development of the agri-food industry and the tertiary sector, considered as a source of long-term growth, this primary specialisation has not diminished over the last few decades. It has even resulted in a decline in the secondary sector since the late 1980s. The tertiary sector is gaining ground, but the jobs concerned are mostly and almost structurally informal.

• Challenges linked to the expected doubling of the population

The population of the Ségou region increased by a factor of 3.1 between 1960 and 2015, in other words 2.7 million more people (3.3 million for the whole of Mali). This growth has so far resulted in the extension of agricultural land and rural densification: although urbanisation is progressing, it is not concentrated in the three main cities of Ségou, Niono and San. Instead, we are seeing the spread of small towns and villages, especially with new districts and hamlets, which add to the network of secondary towns. This densification is occurring along three lines: along the Bamako-Mopti road (and beyond to Gao); along the Niger River with the municipalities of Barouéli, Bla and San; and, more recently, along the Ségou-

Niono road. These three routes for the movement of goods and people (especially with internal flows of seasonal agricultural workers) link the medium-sized regional towns, carry agricultural production towards Bamako and govern mobility towards Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso.

The population is expected to more than double by 2050, reaching 6.5 million people, with extreme densification in populated areas. This outlook will mean very high demand for jobs or income-generating activities. Assuming a constant employment rate of 70% (measured in 2012), 65 000 young people will need to find jobs every year by 2035, compared to only 38 000 in 2015. Cumulatively, this growth in demand represents around one million jobs to be generated between 2015 and 2035.

In 2035, a large part of activity will still be agricultural. Without any major technical changes, this growth will correspond to additional agricultural land requirements of 1.1 million ha by 2035 (compare to 1.4 million cultivated today). The plains provide significant potential for new land development, but the pace of extensions planned by the ON and the other irrigated areas needs to be tripled or quadrupled to ensure effective adaptation. Moreover, population densification will result in increased pressure on resources and more and more land-use conflicts between pastoralists, farmers and agro-pastoralists, in a context of insecurity caused by the jihadist threat in the northern and central parts of the country.

• The need for territorial strategies

Comparing past dynamics with the challenges of the next 20 years calls for the implementation of effective strategies for action. This implies creating income-generating, labour-intensive activities, while planning territorial development that takes into account pressure on natural resources.

Renewed attention needs to be given to agriculture, especially with a shift towards production systems that are better suited to resource management, require less costly inputs, provide jobs, and promote and develop the skills of local farmers. This means providing support for family farms and their development, especially in the irrigated areas, and exploring agro-ecological solutions. But strictly sectoral policies are not enough. Job creation should also involve amplifying current dynamics and intersectoral synergies, both upstream and downstream of agriculture (especially the potential for product processing), and anticipating ways to meet the needs of the people.

One prerequisite is therefore investment in healthcare and education, combined with population and mobility policies suited to the regional context. Investment must also be made in economic infrastructure capable of initiating rapid, inclusive diversification, based on the development of small and medium-sized enterprises and on progressive support for the current informal sector.

This kind of strategic approach calls for spatial planning that reinforces the territorial authorities' resources and their complementarities, the relocation of development policies and their articulation with the national level. The new guidelines for the Malian government's decentralisation policy, with the establishment of the regional development agencies and the creation of the new regions, are a step in this direction.

The territorial prospective study conducted in the Ségou region in 2015 (Sourisseau et al. 2016) uses population projections for 2035 and 2050 that assume the region's share in the total population of Mali (around 15%) remains stable. Based on a fertility rate of 6.14 children per woman in 2015 (derived from the 6.35 children per woman estimated for the whole of Mali by the United Nations for the 2010-2015 period), the average hypothesis of a linear decline in the fertility rate has been adopted, with 3.5 children per woman in 2050 (and 4.6 in 2035).

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