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The proliferation of *coups d'État* in Africa: towards a new, more unstable era?

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In July and August 2023, *coups d'État* occurred in Niger and Gabon respectively, bringing this type of event back into the spotlight. They fit into a trend of government overthrows that has been on the rise since 2019 in Central and West Africa, particularly in the Sahel¹. Sudan (2019 and 2021), Mali (2020 and 2021), Guinea (2021) and Burkina Faso (2022, with two *coups d'État*) have experienced these political upheavals. When looking at the evolution of *coups d'État* worldwide from the 1950s to the present day, we observe a greater concentration of *coups* in Africa since the early 2000s, a trend that has been increasingly evident over the last five years.

Coups d'État on the African continent are part of a global context in which geostrategic and economic interests clash. The evolution in their frequency and geographical dispersion underlines the importance of establishing and applying regional and international norms. The use of sanctions against the perpetrators of *coups d'État* aims to support democratic principles and constitutional order but can also impact the populations and economies of the countries concerned. An analysis of the variation in Official Development Assistance (ODA) flows between the year preceding a successful *coups d'État* in Africa and the following year sheds light on the behaviour of donor countries and the sanction mechanisms associated with a reduction in foreign aid. Historical trends point to an evolution in this behaviour. During the Cold War, increases and decreases in aid flows were balanced. After 1990, our analysis suggests that more systematic and severe sanctions² were applied. However, in the more recent period, between 2011 and 2021, we observed a partial return to dynamics like those prevailing during the Cold War, in a multipolar world where Africa remains a field of multiple and conflicting interests.

1- Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Sudan.

2- In our analysis, we consider that a drop in ODA in response to a successful *coup d'état* is a form of sanction by donor countries. However, not all ODA reductions following a *coup d'état* can necessarily be attributed to an intention to punish.

Africa's importance in the historical evolution of coups d'État worldwide

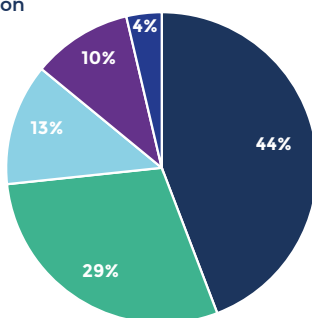
A concentration of coups d'État in Africa since the turn of the century

The latest *coup d'état* in Gabon in August 2023 is part of a lengthy string of government overthrows that has marked the African continent since the 1950s. This observation becomes clearer in the light of the work of American political scientists Jonathan M. Powell and Clayton L. Thyne. Since the publication of their pioneering article "*Global instances of coups from 1950 to 2010: A new dataset*" (2011), they have been updating their database on successful and failed *coups d'état* since 1952. According to their commonly accepted definition, a *coup d'état* is an "*illegal and overt attempt by the military or other elites within the state apparatus to unseat the sitting executive by unconstitutional means*", with or without violence. In their analysis, they make a distinction between successful *coups*, where the perpetrators seize power and hold it for at least a week, and failed *coups*.

From 1950 to September 2023, 491 *coups d'état*, 245 of which were successful, were recorded in 97 countries. Over this period, Latin America and Africa stand out as the two regions of the world most affected (Chart 1), accounting for 29% and 44% of the recorded *coups* respectively.

Chart 1 - Distribution of the total number of coups d'État by region between 1950 and September 2023

- Africa
- Latin America
- Asia-Pacific
- Middle-East
- Europe & Central Asia



Sources: Coface, Data of Jonathan. M Powell et Clayton. L Thyne

Bolivia and Argentina have the highest number of *coups d'état* (Table 1), with 23 and 20 respectively, followed by Sudan (17)³, Venezuela (13), Haiti (13) and Syria (12). For countries that have experienced several *coups*, except for Venezuela, it is also notable that the success rates of *coups d'état* are high, particularly for the African countries in this ranking: for instance, 90% of *coups* have been successful in Burkina Faso, while the rate reaches 50% for Sierra Leone and Ghana.

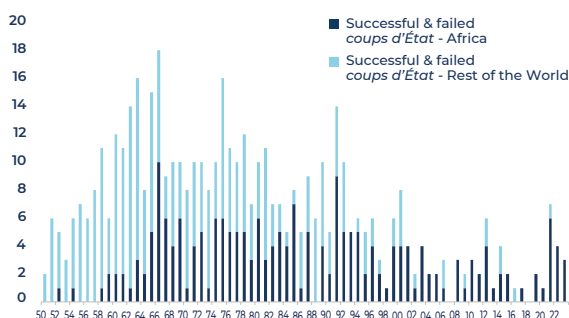
Table 1 - The 15 countries with the most coups d'État worldwide between 1950 and September 2023

Country	Total number of coups d'État	Total number of successful coups	Rate of success
Bolivia	23	11	48%
Argentina	20	7	35%
Sudan	17	6	35%
Venezuela	13	0	0%
Haiti	13	9	69%
Syria	12	8	67%
Thailand	12	8	67%
Iraq	12	4	33%
Burundi	11	5	45%
Ecuador	11	5	45%
Sierra Leone	10	5	50%
Ghana	10	5	50%
Guatemala	10	5	50%
Honduras	10	6	60%
Burkina Faso	10	9	90%

Sources : Coface, Data of Jonathan M. Powell et Clayton L. Thyne

Data on *coups d'état* show a downward trend in these events globally from the mid-1960s until recently. However, since 2020 there has been an increase in *coups*, with a particularly high concentration in Africa (Charts 2 and 3)⁴. Since the 1990s, there have been systematically more *coups* in Africa than in the rest of the world. On average, between 2000 and 2023, 81% of *coups* were recorded on the continent, compared with 24% between 1950 and 1975 and 56% between 1976 and 1999. In fact, in some years, *coups* occurred exclusively on the continent, as in 2001, 2005, 2010, 2011, 2015, 2019, 2022 and 2023. This underlines the importance of Africa in the historical and recent evolution of *coups d'état*.

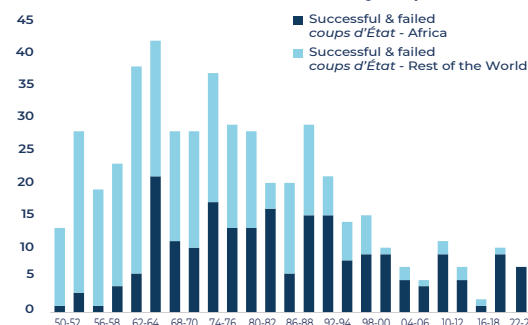
Chart 2 - Number of attempted coups d'État in Africa and the rest of the world



Data available until September 2023

Sources: Coface, Data by Jonathan M. Powell et Clayton L. Thyne

Chart 3 - Number of attempted coups d'État in Africa and the rest of the world over three-year periods



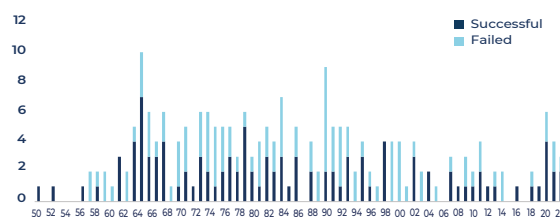
Data available until September 2023

Sources: Coface, Data by Jonathan M. Powell et Clayton L. Thyne

The proliferation of coups d'État in Africa since 2020 shows higher success rates

If we look specifically at the African continent (Chart 4), we see that the lull observed at global level from the 2000s onwards was also reflected on the continent. In other words, the downward trend in *coups d'état* worldwide is not simply linked to the decline in *coups* in the rest of the world. The acceleration in attempted *coups* in recent years is essentially attributable to events in Africa.

Chart 4 - Successful and failed coups d'État in Africa, 1952-2023



Data available until September 2023

Sources: Coface, Data by Jonathan M. Powell et Clayton L. Thyne

3 - Recording the highest number of coups d'État in Africa since 1958.

4 - 45 countries on the African continent are concerned.

Another striking fact since the start of the decade is that attempted *coups* in Africa have a higher success rate (64% - **Table 2**) than in previous decades (36% between 2000 and 2009, and 47% between 2010 and 2019). Success rates in the rest of the world up to 2010-2019 are influenced by successful *coups* in Latin America (51% of successful *coups* during this period), and to a lesser extent in Asia (23%) and the Middle East (21%). Since 2020, the only successful *coup* in the rest of the world was in Myanmar in 2021.

On closer examination, these recent events, marked by a series of military takeovers (or attempted takeovers), have mainly occurred in and around the Sahel region, affecting countries such as the Central African Republic, Chad, Mali, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Niger, and Sudan. In this area, they affect the French-speaking countries of Central and West Africa in particular, where 10 of the 14 attempted *coups d'État* (including 8 of the 9 successful ones) have taken place since 2020. This observation is not entirely new, since fifteen of the 26 successful *coups* in Africa since 2000 have been in French-speaking countries⁵.

Table 2 - Total number and success rate of *coups d'État* in Africa by decade, compared with the rest of the world (ROW)

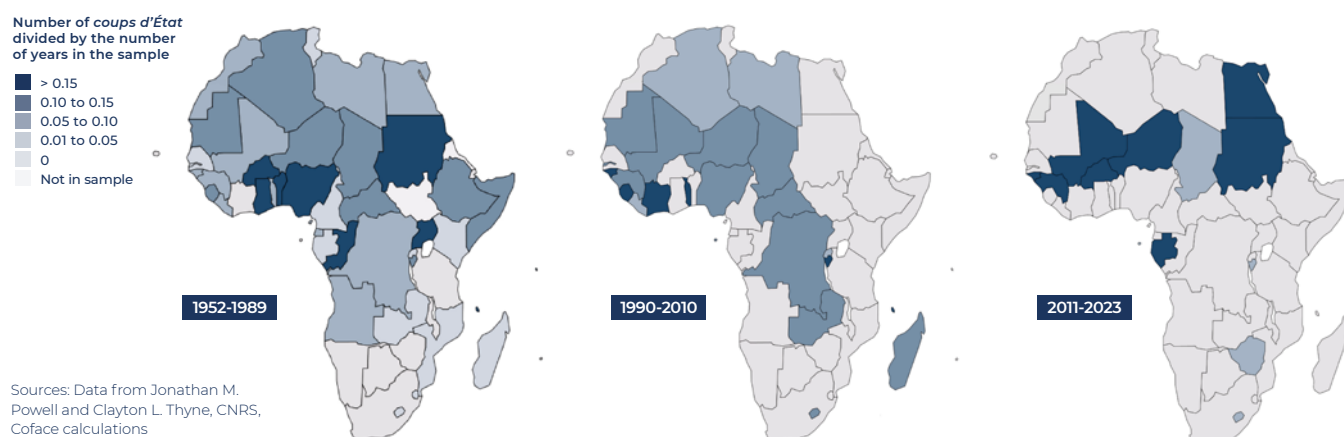
Decade	Coups d'État Africa ROW		Total number of successful coups Afrique ROW		Success rate Africa ROW	
	Africa	ROW	Africa	ROW	Africa	ROW
1950-1959	5	55	3	27	60%	49%
1960-1969	41	82	25	42	61%	51%
1970-1979	41	61	17	38	41%	62%
1980-1989	39	39	22	16	56%	41%
1990-1999	39	22	16	6	41%	27%
2000-2009	22	8	8	4	36%	50%
2010-2019	17	5	8	3	47%	60%
2020-2023	14	1	9	1	64%	100%
Total	218	273	108	137	-	-

Sources: Coface, Data by Jonathan M Powell and Clayton L. Thyne

Since 1952, *coups d'État* have been less widely dispersed geographically and increasingly concentrated in the Sahelian strip

To confirm the trends regarding *coups d'État* in Africa, we have analysed the historical evolution of their frequency and geographical dispersion within the continent itself, through the prism of three key periods (**Chart 5**). More specifically, the notion of *coup* frequency measures the number of *coups* attempts for a country during a given period, divided by the number of years in that period. This also makes it possible to control the data for countries that have gained their independence in the last 70 years, which concerns most countries on the continent. For instance, a country that became independent between 1952 and 1989 will have a frequency of *coups* calculated by dividing the number of *coups* by (1989 - the year of independence). The three periods selected, which will also enable us to analyse the behaviour of aid flows, are as follows:

Chart 5 - Geographical dispersion and frequency of *coups d'État*⁶ over three periods



Sources: Data from Jonathan M. Powell and Clayton L. Thyne, CNRS, Coface calculations

- **The Cold War period (1950-1989) was characterised by a high frequency and wide geographical dispersion of *coups d'État*.** These events stemmed from the post-independence upheavals of the 1960s. The newly established institutions were inherently fragile, contributing to the instability and difficulty to consolidate political regimes.

At the same time, the creation of continental and regional organisations signalled concerted efforts to stabilise the region. The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) was created in 1963 to promote unity and solidarity between African nations. Its aim was also to support the decolonisation process and promote the fight against apartheid. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was established in 1975 as a regional economic bloc to promote economic cooperation, regional development, democracy, and human rights.

- **Between 1990 and 2010, *coups d'État* occurred less frequently and were less spread out geographically than in the previous period.** However, the Sahel region remained particularly unstable, illustrating the persistent challenges in terms of governance and political stability.

The *coups d'État* that hit the continent were mostly initiated by military officers. Despite these upheavals, a relative lull prevailed, while many countries embarked on democratic transitions. Over this period, political stability in Africa generally improved, while regional and continental standards were strengthened. At the OAU's Algiers Summit in 1999, a decision was adopted to ban the perpetrators of *coups d'État* from attending future meetings. The Lomé Decision, adopted at the 2000 summit, marked the beginning of a zero-tolerance policy towards *coups d'État*. Finally, the founding of the African Union in 2002, as the successor to the OAU, consolidated efforts to promote political unity, socio-economic development, democracy, and human rights on the continent.

- **The high frequency and concentration of *coups d'État* in the Sahel region since 2011 and particularly since the 2020s.** Countries with a high frequency of *coups* are concentrated in a band around the Sahel, except for Gabon. The perpetrators of *coups* may have been encouraged by the emulation effect generated by the succession of *coups* in the region.

As shown in **Table 2**, the number of successful *coups d'État* on the continent has increased over this period, with success rates of 47% between 2010 and 2019, and 64% between 2020 and 2023. The success rate observed in the last decade on record, which is not yet over, is comparable or even higher than those that prevailed in the 1950s and up to the end of the 1960s.

5 - Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Gabon, Niger, Senegal, and Togo.

6 - Successful and failed coups, according to the latest data (updated to September 2023) from American political scientists Jonathan M. Powell and Clayton L. Thyne.

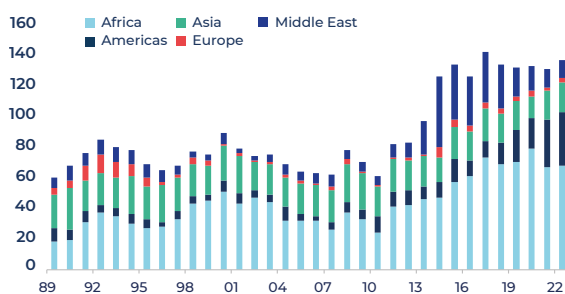
Coups d'État have regularly been preceded by a deterioration in the security situation, notably linked to the activity of jihadist terrorist groups. This situation also encourages the smuggling of arms, migrants, and precious materials across the Sahara to North Africa, Europe and the Middle East. While the concentration of *coups* in the Sahel region has been remarkable in recent years, it should be noted that most of these countries have a long history of *coups d'État*

Finally, recent events in the Sahel are taking place in a context where the world order is evolving, with the presence of foreign players with varied interests in the region. For example, the presence and strategy of Russia, notably by using mercenaries from the Wagner group - renamed Africa Corps - to protect the juntas, is a common factor in countries that have experienced *coups d'État* in recent years.

A continent still beset by security and political risks, particularly in the Sahel

The recent deterioration of the security situation in Africa, and particularly in the Sahel region, indicated that risks had increased since the start of the decade (Chart 6).

Chart 6 – Number of active conflicts by region



Sources: Uppsala Conflict Data Program, Coface

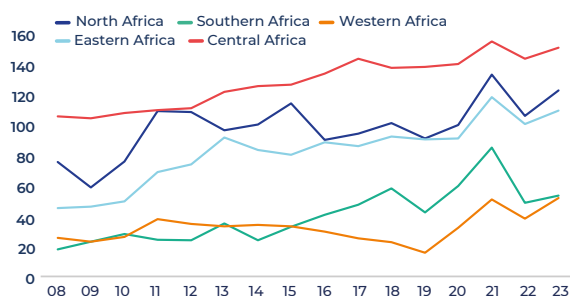
The inability of governments - even those supported by external forces (in particular France, via Operation Barkhane in the Sahel between 2014 and 2022) - to reduce insecurity linked to jihadist terrorism, corruption, poverty and food insecurity has fuelled a climate of mistrust towards them. This context has encouraged the emergence of a situation where the armed forces are taking over from the civilian authorities in place. Mistrust of the political elites and disenchantment with the democratisation process have made their task easier.

To assess political risks, Coface also has a political and social fragility index⁷, which aims to measure the risk of social unrest and political clashes. It incorporates various socio-economic variables, distinguishing between factors of frustration (known as “pressures”) such as unemployment, inflation, inequality and corruption, and the means by which populations can express these frustrations (known as “instruments”), such as Internet access, level of education and urbanisation rate. The index also considers certain measures of institutional fragility. The index score ranges from 0% (low risk) to 100% (extreme risk).

Our political risks indicator also showed a particularly pronounced deterioration in Africa. In 2023, Africa recorded the highest average index (56%) compared with other regions of the world. When examining the

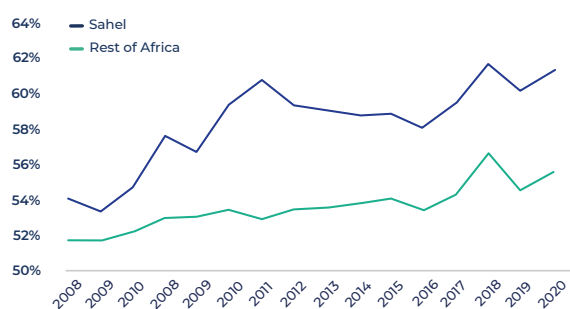
evolution of the index within the African continent and, more specifically, by region (Chart 7), Central Africa stands out, with an average index of 62% over the 2008-2023 period. In contrast, the average index for West Africa shows relatively lower levels, although with heterogeneity: Nigeria reached 63% in 2023, Guinea 62%, while Cabo Verde recorded 28% in the same year.

Chart 7 - Average political and social fragility index by region of the African continent



Source: Coface

Chart 8 - Average political and social fragility index in the Sahel* and the rest of Africa



Source: Coface
* Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Sudan

Finally, Chart 8 shows a consistently higher score in the Sahel area than the average for all other countries on the African continent, with Sudan's high score contributing significantly. Niger's score showed an upward trend between 2016 and 2020, rising from 46.1% to 51.3%. Its highest level was reached in 2011, the year following a successful *coup* attempt. The country, like Burkina Faso (hit by two *coups* in 2022) and Mali (with *coups* in 2020 and 2021), faced many challenges, including poverty, food insecurity and jihadist attacks, despite the presence of French and international forces. Moreover, the evolution of the index for the Sahel between 2008 and 2014 stands out clearly from that of the other countries on the continent, with a marked increase since 2012. Armed conflicts and military operations, particularly those linked to the fight against terrorism and regional instability, have aggravated social and political tensions.

While Gabon does not face the same security challenges as the Sahel countries, its score also reveals a high level of risk. With a score of 69.4% in 2023, up 1.5 percentage points from 2022, the Central African country moves up to number 12 in our global ranking of the riskiest countries. The *coup d'état* in 2023 is similar to the one in Guinea in 2021, as it involves leaders who had been in power for a long time, often trying to change the constitution in order to keep it.

Official development assistance is crucial for many African countries, but it is also a strategic tool for donor countries

Many African countries are facing a high level of indebtedness, aggravated by more restricted access to financing because of the rise in interest rates, while financing needs are still substantial. In this context, Official Development Assistance (ODA) flows, recorded in the balance of payments, can play a crucial role, depending on the country, by partially offsetting various financing shortfalls. Political uncertainty, combined with the high frequency of *coups d'état*, would make it difficult to maintain investment and aid programmes in the region, thus exacerbating the continent's financial difficulties.

More specifically, although ODA to Africa fell in 2022, with a 7.8% decline in support for sub-Saharan Africa due to the war in Ukraine and political instability on the continent, the trend since 1960 shows an almost steady increase, which has been particularly marked since the early 2000s (Chart 9).

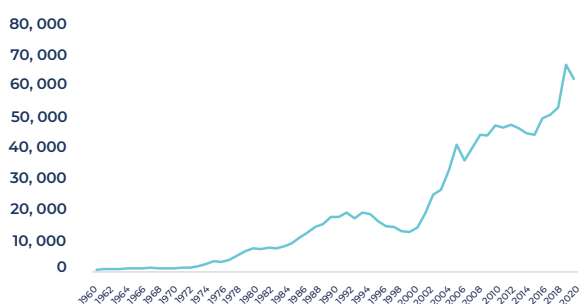
ODA remains an important component of the Gross National Income (GNI) of some beneficiary countries. In sub-Saharan Africa, net ODA represented 3.4% of GNI in 2021 and 4% in 2020⁸. In Mali, ODA reached around USD 1.4 billion in 2021, equivalent to 30% of the total government budget. However, ODA flows vary considerably from one country to another (Chart 9.bis) and from one year to another. While some countries, such as Benin, Gambia, Niger, Nigeria, and Togo, saw a significant increase in ODA between 2015 and 2017, Liberia and Sierra Leone saw a sharp fall¹¹.

For some countries, net ODA flows as a percentage of their GNI were never very high throughout the period, as their economies were larger and able to generate

income by means other than aid. South Africa, for example, averaged net flows equivalent to 0.29% of GNI between 1993 and 2022. Conversely, in the case of Guinea-Bissau, net ODA flows averaged 30.9% of GNI over the 1975-2022 period. Moreover, for some countries, the share of ODA in their GNI remains relatively low over the overall period but rises suddenly in years marked by political instability. A striking example is the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2003, when ODA accounted for around 62% of GNI. That year was characterised by political turmoil following the end of the civil war, the signing of peace agreements, historic elections, and the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping mission. For these reasons, we have decided to focus specifically on the impact of coups on foreign aid flows¹². This approach also allows us to highlight the crucial role of ODA flows as potential sanction levers. For instance, several donor countries and international donor organisations have chosen to suspend their aid to penalise non-compliance with democratic principles, as shown by the suspension of ongoing French ODA¹³ projects in Niger and Burkina Faso in 2023.

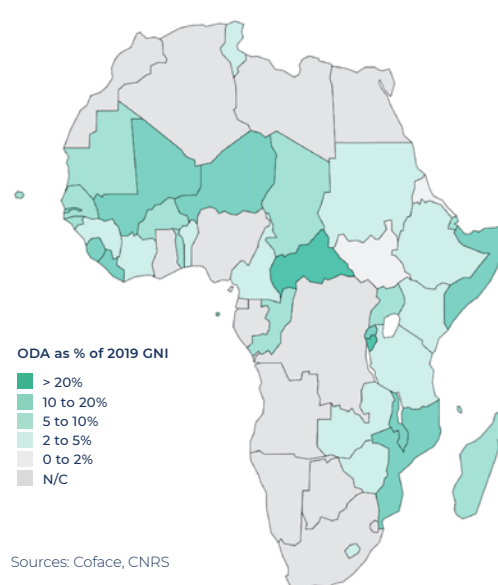
Furthermore, analysing the impact of coups on ODA provides more robust results than studying the impact on macroeconomic variables such as GDP growth or foreign direct investment (FDI), which involve various methodological challenges. In addition to the challenges associated with the availability and reliability of data, it is also difficult to disentangle the direct effect of a coup from that of other exogenous shocks, especially in the case of recent coups, given that these countries have been hit by the successive impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and global monetary tightening. Also, these *coups* often occur against a backdrop of pre-existing political and social tensions, which creates an endogeneity bias and makes the analysis even more complex.

Chart 9 - Evolution of net ODA⁸ received in sub-Saharan Africa⁹ (current million USD)



Sources: OECD, Coface

Chart 9.bis - Official development assistance as a % of gross national income - 2019



Sources: Coface, CNRS

8 - Net ODA includes disbursements of concessional loans, net of principal repayments, as well as grants from official entities of Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members, multilateral institutions and non-DAC countries.

9 - 48 countries are included in the sample.

10 - <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/DY.ODA.ODAT.GN.ZS?locations=ZC>

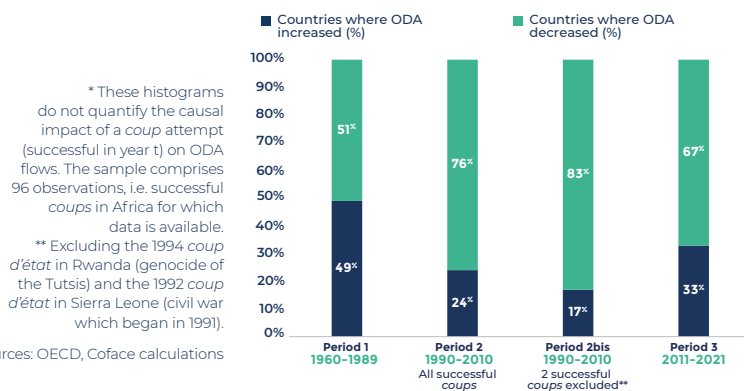
11 - DEPENDANCE VIS-A-VIS DE L'AIDE PUBLIQUE AU DEVELOPPEMENT (APD EN AFRIQUE DE L'OUEST – Insa SANE, Moustapha SANE and Abdou Aziz NIANG (2022).

12 - Foreign aid, or official development assistance (ODA), is defined by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) as "official assistance consisting of grants or loans made to countries or territories by the official sector and intended to promote the economic development and welfare of developing countries" (2014). Humanitarian aid may be included in the contributions of some of these donors.

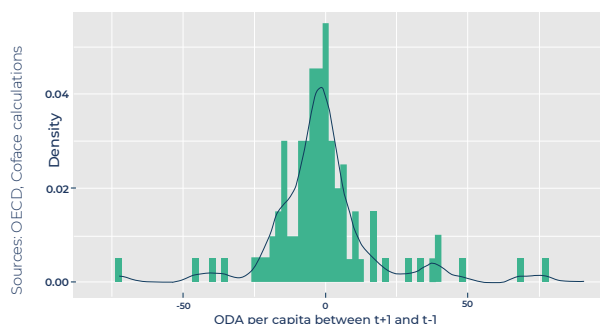
13 - Except for humanitarian aid, some specific projects for populations in similar situations, and some projects carried out by partners with multilateral funding (the interruption of which could create legal risks), autonomous organisations such as local authorities, universities and NGOs may continue their cooperation without financial support from the State.

Do OECD Development Assistance Committee donors penalise successful coups by adjusting their aid?

We analyse the variation in total ODA disbursements¹⁴ (Chart 10) per capita between the year before (t-1) and the year after the successful coup (t+1) using panel data from 1960 to 2021¹⁵, for African countries where coups have occurred (in t) and for which we have data. We consider the three periods defined above (1960¹⁶-1989, 1990-2010 and 2011-2021) to analyse ODA flows in response to a successful coup. This allows us to study the behaviour of the 30 donor countries of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and to provide perspective on historical trends. The second period, from 1990 to 2010, is analysed by considering two samples. The first (Period 2) includes all successful coups over this period. The second sample (Period 2.bis) excludes two specific successful *coups d'État* from our analysis: those provoked by the genocide of the Tutsis in Rwanda (1994) and the civil war in Sierra Leone (1992, the war began in 1991), two events that were accompanied by massive humanitarian crises that forced a response from the international community.

Chart 10*: Variation in ODA flows (constant prices) per capita between t+1 and t-1 for all OECD DAC donors by period

- During the 1960-1989 period, variations in ODA flows were balanced, with 49% of variations corresponding to increases and 51% to decreases. This balanced distribution between increases and decreases in ODA suggests that OECD DAC donor countries did not systematically punish successful *coups d'État*. During this period, donors used their aid as an economic and political tool to maintain their influence, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. As such, foreign aid was a geopolitical lever to influence potential allies in the developing world. Furthermore, as Chart 11 shows, variations in ODA flows between t+1 and t-1 were, for the vast majority and with a

Chart 11 - Evolution of ODA disbursements per capita (2021 USD) between t+1 and t-1 for the period 1960-1989

few exceptions, close to 0, reinforcing the idea that successful coups had little impact on ODA flows. This finding is confirmed by an econometric approach presented in Box 1.

Box 1 - The effect of a successful *coup d'État* in Africa on ODA flows

To complete our findings from Charts 9 and 10, we estimate the effect¹⁷ of a regime change provoked by a *coup d'État* in Africa on OECD DAC aid flows¹⁸ received by the countries affected by these *coups*. A key hypothesis, linked to the endogenous nature of coups, is that successful *coup attempts* are exogenous to the determinants of ODA flows. We consider it unlikely that factors affecting ODA flows (such as economic development, the quality of governance, colonial relations, the nature of the military) also influence the chances of a successful *coup d'État*.

We run an Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression to explain the variation in per capita ODA between the year before and after the coup using panel data from 1960 to 2021, for African countries where coups have taken place and for which we have data. Our explanatory variable of interest is a binary variable indicating whether the coup was successful or failed as defined by Jonathan M. Powell and Clayton L. Thyne. We also include control variables specific to the political, social, and economic characteristics of the countries.

$$\Delta ODA_{d,r,t} = \alpha + \beta * SUCCESSFUL_COUP_{r,t} + \gamma ODA_{d,r,t-1} + \phi X_{r,t-1} + \varepsilon_{d,r,t}$$

Where:

- t refers to the country-years during which coup attempts (successful or failed) took place in the recipient country r;
- $\Delta ODA_{d,r,t}$ corresponds to the variations in total net disbursements¹⁹ of ODA, expressed per capita from donor d (OECD DAC donor country) to recipient r (African country where a *coup d'État* took place in t) between the year preceding the *coup d'État* (t-1) and the year following it (t+1);
- $X_{d,r,t}$ includes control variables²⁰ linked to the recipient country in t-1, based on the key assumption that the binary variable SUCCESSFUL_COUP is exogenous to aid flows conditional on $X_{d,r,t}$. These variables include, for example, the logarithm of GDP per capita, the Polity2 score from Polity IV, a measure of democracy on a scale of -10 (hereditary monarchy) to 10 (consolidated democracy), or the number of votes at the UN aligned with those of the US, France, and Japan (a proxy for the geopolitical distance between country r and donor d).

We estimated this equation for the first two periods to confirm our hypotheses of changes in the behaviour of ODA flows following a *coup d'État*. However, we did not estimate this equation for the 2010-2021 period, which only comprises around ten observations.

Over the 1960-1989 period, the coefficient associated with the *coup d'État* variable (SUCCESSFUL_COUP) is not significant. This confirms our analysis of the behaviour of donor countries during the Cold War (Charts 9 and 10). Their geopolitical and economic interests probably undermined their willingness to make ODA politically conditional. However, for the post-Cold War period up to 2010, the coefficient on the variable SUCCESSFUL_COUP is negative and significant at the 10% confidence level. OECD DAC donors would therefore have reduced the amount of aid disbursed in response to coups, all other things being equal.

- The 1990-2010 period illustrates a change in the behaviour of donor countries in allocating ODA. We observe that successful *coups d'État* contributed to a significant reduction in foreign aid. In Period 2, 76% of countries recorded a decrease in ODA. When excluding the successful coups in Rwanda (1994) and Sierra Leone (1992) in Period 2.bis, the results are even more convincing, with ODA decreases for 83% of the successful coups. Rwanda was also heavily dependent on ODA, particularly in 1994, when it represented 95% of its GNI according to OECD data. Compared to the first period, the post-Cold War period is characterised by more visible sanctions. For instance, the largest decreases in ODA per capita were recorded following the coup in Sao Tomé and Principe in 2003 (a decrease of USD 456 million), in Gambia in 1994 (a decrease of USD 34.9 million), and in Côte d'Ivoire in 1999 (a decrease of USD 22.2 million). Collective efforts by donors to promote good governance and democracy, and to penalise *coups* by reducing aid, became the norm since the early 1990s, with the emergence of the concept of political conditionality. As for the first period, an econometric analysis described in Box 1 validates our results.

14 - OECD data and net ODA flows from DAC countries to African countries.

15 - We stop in 2021 because we are interested in variations between t+1 and t-1, and the 2022 data were the latest available at the time of writing.

16 - First available data.

17 - Based on the methodology used in the following article: Takaaki Masaki, *Coups d'État and Foreign Aid*, World Development, Volume 79, 2016, Pages 51-68, ISSN 0305-750X, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2015.11.004>

18 - Chinese and Russian ODA data for Africa are not included in our analysis.

19 - Not ODA commitments.

20 - We also include in our model: a binary variable capturing whether country r is a former French colony; a binary variable capturing whether a given country is part of a military alliance (or a military treaty of mutual defence, non-aggression, understanding and/or neutrality) with one of the five major bilateral donors: the US, UK, Germany, Japan and France; an indicator of ethnic fragmentation; agricultural land as a percentage of land area; the number of years the leader has been in power; whether the leader has been democratically elected; whether the leader has ever been a member of the military; bilateral trade with France and the US; and military capabilities, i.e. the log of the number of military personnel in the army.

- **Looking at the more recent period (2011-2021)**, 33% of successful coups show increases in ODA between t+1 and t-1, while 67% show decreases, which is a shift from the previous period. This trend would suggest that period 3 is geopolitically closer to period 1, where donors appear to be less punitive about coups through a reduction in aid. Thus, it seems that the behaviours adopted in the most recent period, marked by a return to geostrategic interests and a multipolar world, as well as competition for influence on the African continent, are more comparable to those prevailing during the Cold War.

The high frequency of successful *coups d'État* on the continent during this period has occurred in a context marked by the multiplication of players - state or non-state - offering security or economic alternatives. China and Russia were joined by emerging countries such as India, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, as well as advanced countries such as the United States, Germany, Japan, and Israel.

The recent wave of coups from 2019 reveals that, despite the sanctions and suspensions implemented by the African Union and regional blocs, coups persist on the continent. Moreover, when sanctions are implemented, they are often temporary. ECOWAS was forced to lift certain sanctions against Mali, Guinea

and Niger after the juntas presented roadmaps for a return to democracy. The remaining sanctions were lifted when ECOWAS realised that they were counter-productive for the return to democracy, affecting the population more than the military leaders. The threat by the three Sahelian juntas to withdraw from regional bodies was also a factor in this decision. In addition to humanitarian considerations, donors also consider the violent or non-violent nature of the *coup*. In fact, recent coups in the Sahel have not involved much violence.

While the results of the statistical analysis of ODA variations between the year preceding a successful coup and the following year make it possible to observe a trend up to 2021, the most recent coups could not be included in the sample due to a lack of data. However, we can put forward the hypothesis that if we already observe a decline in the use of sanctions through a reduction in ODA between 2011 and 2021, the effects of the war in Ukraine in terms of global geopolitical fragmentation and the non-alignment of a large part of the African continent with the Western bloc could reinforce this trend. This new configuration could limit the use of ODA as a lever of pressure, particularly by the Western bloc, against the perpetrators of coups d'état, who have the opportunity to move closer to large emerging countries already present in Africa with well-defined diplomatic and commercial strategies.

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