

# CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS & IMPLICATIONS ON POLITICAL EFFICACY IN THE GREAT LAKES & EAST AFRICA

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# INTRODUCTION

An analysis of the conflicts, politics, economic stability and youth participation in governance structures within the Great Lakes and Eastern Africa regions has to take into account:

- the diverse historical trajectories,
- key protagonists and vertical & lateral actors
- subsequent implications for peace and stability in the respective countries and regions.
- Impact on political efficacy & citizen participation in reclaiming the civic space.

## CLAIMING CIVIC SPACE - POLITICAL EFFICACY

- **Civic space** refers to – the multi-level structures and institutions; socio-cultural and religious values as well as individual and group aspirations that facilitate citizen participation in governance
- **Political efficacy** refers to the perception that it is worth engaging in politics and social actions that can bring the desired change
- **Political efficacy** has **external** (government's responsiveness, political systems & actors) and **internal** factors (individuals capacity to understand issues on governance, politics & commitment to social-political engagement)
- Analysis of Great Lakes & East Africa

# THE DRC

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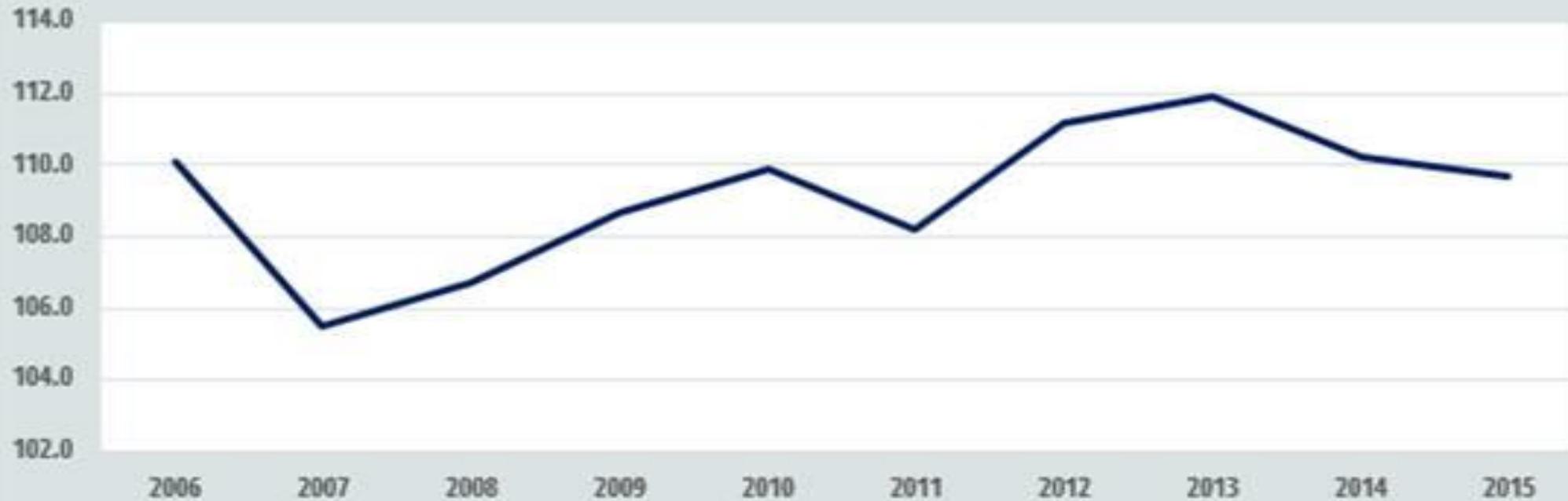
# FRAGILITY TREND IN DRC

## Overall Trend 2006-2015

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Trends: Worsening   Improvement

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# RECLAIMING CIVIC SPACE

- High fragility index tends to negatively affect the civic space
- There are **frustrations over the shrinking civic space** in DRC –The youth have come out in large numbers to resist Kabila's third term bid & some have lost their lives
- **Militarization** of peace and conflict – a major concern; Kabila strategy
- Multiple rebel groups in the country – civilian participation in governance is impeded
- High levels of political consciousness & belief in political efficacy but limited support structures
- Is the opposition running out of non-violence strategies?
- There is media freedom – but polarized between opposition and government
- The DR Congo has around 175 newspapers and magazines, 300 radio stations and 50 TV stations.

# RWANDA

- The story of Rwanda is defined around the 1994 genocide (against Tutsis & moderate Hutus) that killed more than 800,000 people
- The genocide was a culmination of intermittent conflicts, suppression and marginalization between the two Hutus & Tutsis
- 22 years later, under the leadership of the charismatic leader, Paul Kagame, Rwanda is now experiencing economic development and national stability
- **Reconstructing the past:** Attempts at prosecution of genocidaire; construction of genocide memorials; gacaca courts & reconciliation efforts; democratic elections key for nation building

## RECLAIMING CIVIC SPACE- RWANDA

- More than half of Rwanda's population is youth under 20 years – means never experience genocide, but still affected by the aftermath
- There has been a direct correlation between Kagame's rise to power and the decline in political freedom in Rwanda.
- The ruling Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) has **maintained zero-sum** access to power in two ways:
  - the creation of predatory laws to inflict an atmosphere of intimidation;
  - the elimination of all effective political opposition
  - Newspaper readership – limited and press generally exercise self-censorship.

# BURUNDI

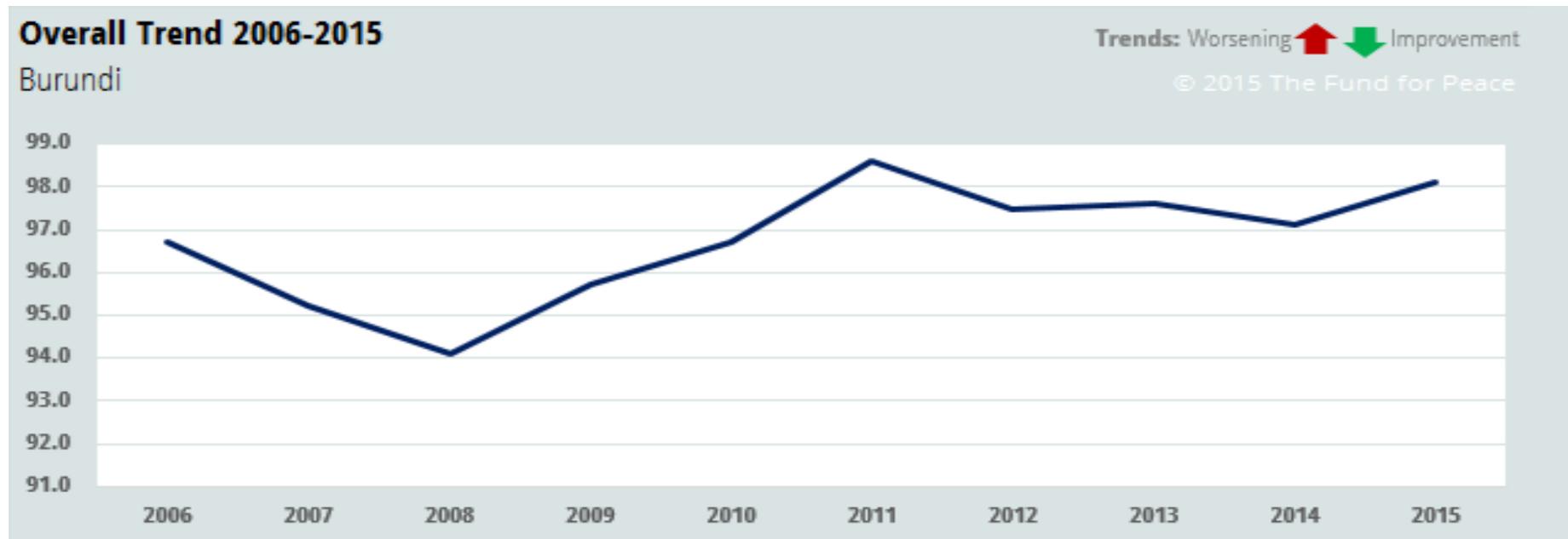
■ The analysis of Burundi conflict is grounded on a history

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# FRAGILITY TRENDS IN BURUNDI



Source: The Fund for Peace, 2015

# RECLAIMING CIVIC SPACE - BURUNDI

- Burundi government has become suppressive
- a number of civil society organizations have been deregistered by the government.
- The youth are both **propagators** of violence and **victims** of violence by government: many came out in large numbers to oppose the third term presidential bid & but the government used the youth for violence – **Imbonerakure** – (see far)
- Many were arrested or killed, while some left the country – more than 250,000 people fled the country in the last 12 months
- A number of NGOs and CSOs have been deregistered and private radios vandalized and shut down
- The churches have been conducted **quiet diplomacy** with the government but the latter has remained hostile to such initiatives

# KENYA

- Kenya – strongest economy in the region and has played a key role in peace efforts in its neighbouring countries.
- The country faces a number of challenges related to governance and security
- **Corruption** is at a chronic level and many government sectors have been involved in the vice – The Catholic Church condemned corruption in Nov 2016 pastoral letter
- **Politics is ethnicized and ethnic identities** are politicized leaving the electoral population at the mercy of ethnic kingpins who often influence the voting pattern
- In the **pastoral communities** in northern Kenya there have been cattle raids and bloody conflicts that have cost lives
- **Al Shabaab** terrorist group is a major threat to national and regional stability

# RECLAIMING CIVIC SPACE - KENYA

- Levels of youth participation in politics is high – an indication of high political efficacy
- During the electioneering period, the youth play varying roles – campaigners; candidates; instigators of violence
- Civil society is shrinking its effectiveness in the country – cooptation 2002 elections
- 2008 post-election violence over disputed results – dented democratic gains
- In the 2013 general elections – Kenyans elected a much higher number of younger politicians compared to other years – youngest 25yrs
- The controversy around ICC (president & vice president) – threatened civic space
- Attempts at silencing NGOs – Public Benefits Organizations (PBO) Acts
- Vibrant media but controversial media regulation 2013 – led to protests from media houses

# UGANDA

- Uganda has had a long history of the struggle for nation building
- Different levels of intermittent conflicts – LRA conflict 22 years
- While Uganda currently enjoys relative stability, it is still in many respects a divided country, both politically and economically.
- The government has made some positive progress in its program of Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for Northern Uganda (PRDP)
- There have been attempts towards ending impunity
- Recent (Nov 2016) conflicts in Kasese demonstrate government's militarization approach to peace & conflict

# RECLAIMING CIVIC SPACE - UGANDA

- The youth's level of political participation in **Uganda** has remained relatively low despite the existence of mechanism to champion their interests.
- Most of the youth organizations in the country are not well organized and are mostly urban based, subsequently, excluding the rural youth
- Despite their demographic dominance the youth participation in politics and governance is less-influential. This indicates a low level of external political efficacy.
- The Ugandan youth have been used to instigate violence against their opponents
- The political participation of the young – hampered by the heavy handedness of the government against dissident voices
- Uganda pioneered liberalisation of the media in Africa
- The country has a **vibrant media sector** – close to 200 private radio stations and dozens of television stations and print media outlets

# SOUTH SUDAN



- Protracted conflicts
- Struggle to attain state legitimacy
- Humanitarian crisis

# REPUBLIC OF S. SUDAN FRAGILITY TRENDS

## Overall Trend 2006-2015

South Sudan

Trends: Worsening   Improvement

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# SOUTH SUDAN

- South Sudan, the world's youngest nation, seceded from Khartoum in July 2011 following the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) that ended the longest civil war in Africa
- The conflict with Khartoum, ethno-political competition within the government, and lack of economic development prevent South Sudan from experiencing peace
- The Nuer-Dinka ethnic conflicts have characterized the country since independence even though there have been other ethnic conflicts
- The Dinka, through President Salva Kiir's authoritarianism, have held the most important ministries and managed oil proceeds in favour of their ethnic groups
- Kiir expelled representatives of other communities from relevant public docket
- Forcing ministers and military officers from non-Dinka ethnic groups to resign, including his deputy president Riek Machar and the latter's spokesperson James Gatdet

# RECLAIMING CIVIC SPACE – S. SUDAN

- Decline of external efficacy explains the increasing involvement of the **South Sudanese** youths in armed groups
- **Militarization of conflicts and political space** – there are limited avenues for political participation and expression of opinions
- The immediate option left for the youth is joining armed groups, whether government or militia
- Control of media – Journalists risk arrests for criticizing the government
- The **socialization of military, politics and ethnic identities** has destroyed the minimum democratic structures in place and weakened youth participation in politics
- Infrastructure such as schools, roads and hospitals have been destroyed – production of a generation without education & employment options

# POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

- **Conflicts** – strengthen and develop conflict resolution skills that are multi-dimensional (diplomacy, religious leaders, community/cultural leaders, etc)
- **Ethnicization of politics & identities:** social-political and ideological campaigns meant to build national identity founded on the values of the nations
- **Increase political efficacy** through diverse mechanisms of citizen participation in governance (elections, media, budget debate, monitoring governance, constitutional review, etc)
- **Opportunities for the youth:** high population of the youth with nothing to do is a time-bomb. Increase opportunities for the youth in employment; governance; community leadership; conflict resolution mechanism

# ELECTION, POWER & CORRUPTION

