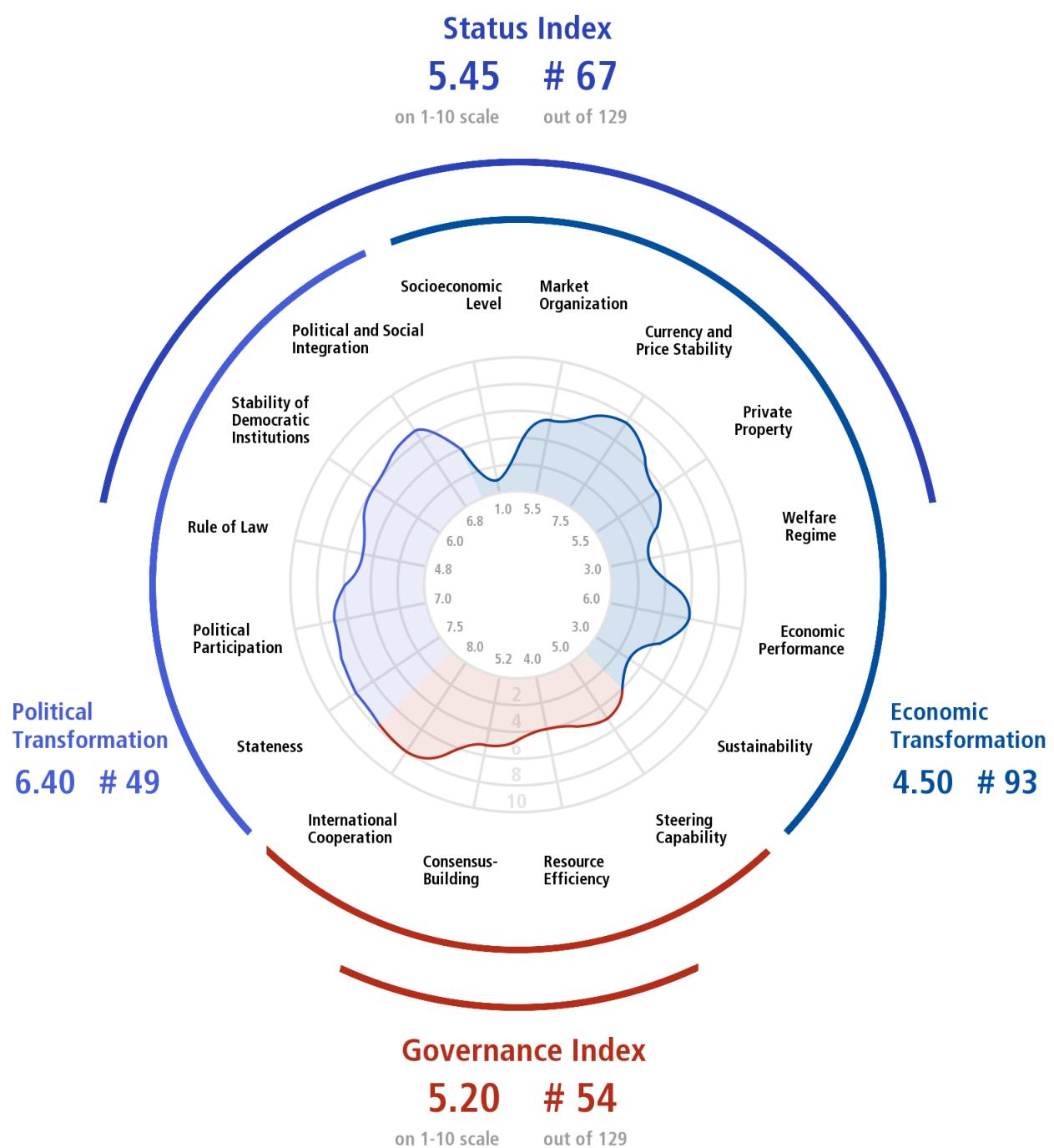


# BTI 2018 Country Report

## Burkina Faso



This report is part of the Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index (BTI) 2018. It covers the period from February 1, 2015 to January 31, 2017. The BTI assesses the transformation toward democracy and a market economy as well as the quality of political management in 129 countries. More on the BTI at <http://www.bti-project.org>.

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## Contact

Bertelsmann Stiftung  
Carl-Bertelsmann-Strasse 256  
33111 Gütersloh  
Germany

**Sabine Donner**  
Phone +49 5241 81 81501  
[sabine.donner@bertelsmann-stiftung.de](mailto:sabine.donner@bertelsmann-stiftung.de)

**Hauke Hartmann**  
Phone +49 5241 81 81389  
[hauke.hartmann@bertelsmann-stiftung.de](mailto:hauke.hartmann@bertelsmann-stiftung.de)

**Robert Schwarz**  
Phone +49 5241 81 81402  
[robert.schwarz@bertelsmann-stiftung.de](mailto:robert.schwarz@bertelsmann-stiftung.de)

**Sabine Steinkamp**  
Phone +49 5241 81 81507  
[sabine.steinkamp@bertelsmann-stiftung.de](mailto:sabine.steinkamp@bertelsmann-stiftung.de)

### Key Indicators

Population	M	<b>18.6</b>	HDI	<b>0.402</b>	GDP p.c., PPP \$	<b>1720</b>
Pop. growth <sup>1</sup>	% p.a.	<b>2.9</b>	HDI rank of 188	<b>185</b>	Gini Index	<b>35.3</b>
Life expectancy	years	<b>59.8</b>	UN Education Index	<b>0.296</b>	Poverty <sup>3</sup> %	<b>76.4</b>
Urban population	%	<b>30.7</b>	Gender inequality <sup>2</sup>	<b>0.615</b>	Aid per capita \$	<b>55.1</b>

Sources (as of October 2017): The World Bank, World Development Indicators 2017 | UNDP, Human Development Report 2016. Footnotes: (1) Average annual growth rate. (2) Gender Inequality Index (GII). (3) Percentage of population living on less than \$3.20 a day at 2011 international prices.

## Executive Summary

Burkina Faso is a low-income, landlocked sub-Saharan African country. In 2015, gross per capita income in Burkina Faso was \$615. Its population, which is growing at an average annual rate of 3%, was estimated to be almost 18.11 million inhabitants in 2015. The economy is heavily reliant on agricultural production, with close to 80% of the active population employed in the sector. Cotton is the country's most important cash crop, but gold exports have gained importance in recent years. Poverty and social exclusion are quantitatively and qualitatively extensive, and structurally ingrained.

In 2015, Burkina Faso turned a new page in its history. One year after the popular uprising of October 2014, which forced President Compaoré into exile after 27 years in power, the country held presidential and legislative elections. Roch Marc Christian Kaboré of the People's Movement for Progress (Mouvement du Peuple pour le Progrès, MPP) emerged as the first civilian president to be elected following free and transparent elections. The MPP also obtained a parliamentary majority following municipal elections held in May 2016. However, two events shook the country during this transitional phase. On September 16, 2015, the presidential guard, RSP, led by its commander, General Gilbert Diendéré, launched a coup d'état against the transitional government. Virtually all civil society groups mobilized in mass resistance against the putsch. Despite massive violence perpetrated by the RSP, in which at least 14 protesters were killed and more than 250 injured, the protests succeeded and forced Diendéré to give up after six days. Second, on January 15, 2016, more than 29 people were killed in a terrorist attack on a hotel and restaurant in Ouagadougou.

## History and Characteristics of Transformation

After achieving independence from France in 1960, Burkina Faso endured decades of political instability, characterized by mass strikes and military coups. The 1983 coup led by Captain Thomas Sankara, who attempted to model the country and its society on the basis of a social revolutionary program, stands out for its anti-imperialist and populist leanings. Four years later, in 1987, Sankara was assassinated in a military coup organized by Blaise Compaoré. The country began its gradual democratic transformation, and by 1991 several new parties had been formed and legalized. A new constitution was also approved in June 1991 via referendum, albeit with low voter turnout. Opposition forces demonstrated their dissatisfaction with the constitution through strong internal pressure, mainly exerted by the unions, forcing Compaoré to consider substantial reforms. The first presidential elections in 1991 led to further boycotts by the opposition. The only candidate on the ballot, Compaoré, was re-elected with only 25% of the electorate participating.

In 1992, Burkina Faso held its first multiparty parliamentary elections. Facing weak opposition, Compaoré's Organisation pour la Démocratie Populaire/Mouvement du Travail (ODP/MT) achieved a two-thirds majority. The president's party, renamed the Congrès pour la Démocratie et le Progrès (CDP) in 1996, repeated its success with an even bigger landslide victory in legislative elections five years later. The dominance of the ruling party and the weakness of the opposition turned out to be one of the largest obstacles to democratization during this period. The National Assembly's ability to govern was theoretical at best and lawmaking has been reduced to a one-party affair. Political opposition began to form outside parliament. Institutions of representative democracy began losing credibility among the population. Human rights violations, notably by the security forces, occurred frequently. A culture of impunity and a weak rule of law prevailed. This became most obvious when Norbert Zongo was killed in December 1998. Zongo, editor of the weekly newspaper L'Indépendant, had investigated the death of David Ouédraogo, who was a chauffeur of President Blaise Compaoré's brother François Compaoré. Ouédraogo was accused of theft, and instead of being brought to trial in the regular way, he was taken by the presidential guard and finally died in the presidential palace's infirmary. The death of Norbert Zongo triggered mass protests by trade unions, students and human rights groups. Consistent political pressure forced Compaoré to make concessions. Numerous institutional and electoral reforms represented a qualitative improvement over the previous system.

Compaoré was re-elected president in 2000 and 2005. The weak, fragmented opposition, combined with the CDP's control of official resources that helped it sustain patronage networks and co-opt political opponents, strengthened the governing party's and the president's authority while further democratization of the country fell by the wayside. While the population's discontent with social, economic and political conditions has grown continuously, and serious criticisms of Burkina Faso's political system increased even from inside the ruling circle, Compaoré secured his fifth term in office with more than 80% of the vote in the November 2010 presidential elections.

His new mandate, however, has plunged very quickly into crisis. Massive protests arose after the death of Justin Zongo, a young man who died in the town of Koudougou in February 2011 after being detained by the gendarmerie several times. These protests triggered one of the most severe political crises in the country since Blaise Compaoré seized power in 1987: soldiers mutinied in Ouagadougou in March, and one month later even the presidential guard revolted. President Compaoré temporary escaped the capital and could only re-establish his authority by dissolving the government and discharging the prime minister after weeks of mass protests and mutinying security forces. The country's major underlying problems remained unaddressed, and the ruling elite continued to concentrate on efforts to safeguard their benefits and power.

In 2013 and 2014, tens of thousands of people took to the streets on a number of occasions and protested against Compaoré's attempt to revise article 37 of the Burkinabe constitution in order to enable himself to run for another term. The proposal for the constitutional revision was passed by the National Assembly on October 21, 2014. In response, students and workers went on strike. When the proposal was finally supposed to be adopted on October 30, 2014, protesters stormed the parliament building. Security forces made use of teargas, truncheons and firearms, and at least 30 people were killed. Compaoré withdrew the constitutional revision request and suspended the government. On October 31, 2014, he was forced by the military to resign. The army commander-in-chief took over power transitionally. After two weeks of military control with Commander Yacouba Isaac Zida as president, a transitional charter was signed by political parties, the military, civil society groups and traditional authorities on November 16, 2014. For the first time in Burkina Faso's history, a civilian was appointed (transitional) president, former diplomat Michel Kafando. Kafando nominated Zida as prime minister.

Presidential elections were scheduled for October 11, 2015. On April 7, 2015, a new electoral law was voted and, on June 5, 2015, a law was adopted that requires military personnel to quit the army before being appointed to public office. A core conflict related to the preparation of the presidential elections turned on the question of whether candidates, who had come out in favor of the disputed revision of article 37 of the constitution, could run for election. The transitional government decided that these candidates should not be allowed to run. Consequently, several confidants of the former president Compaoré were excluded from running as a presidential candidate.

On September 16, 2015, this resulted in a coup by the RSP, which was led by the RSP's commander, General Gilbert Diendéré. The RSP entered a cabinet meeting of the transitional government, and took President Kafando, Prime Minister Zida and two more ministers hostage. The news spread quickly and mass protests emerged immediately, with barricades burning in Ouagadougou and people trying to enter the presidential palace. The following day, Diendéré dissolved the transitional government and declared himself president. It was the third attempt by the RSP to suspend the transitional government.

International organizations, several national governments and civil society organizations around the world condemned the coup. The African Union temporarily expelled Burkina Faso, while representatives of Western African states, the AU and ECOWAS tried to mediate the conflict. In Burkina Faso, the trade unions declared a general strike and virtually all civil society groups

mobilized in mass resistance against the putsch. In Ouagadougou, the RSP proceeded to brutally suppress the protests. Between September 16 and 23, 2015, 14 protesters were killed and more than 250 injured. National and international media, too, were massively intimidated. The RSP destroyed the station of the national telephone company in Ouagadougou, which meant that telephone and internet access was temporarily unavailable in the capital. However, this did not stop the protests and, after hesitating initially, the national army prepared itself to intervene. Finally, six days after the coup, on September 23, 2015, Diendéré gave up and handed himself in.

Presidential elections were finally held only seven weeks later than initially scheduled, on November 29, 2015. Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, chairman of the Mouvement du Peuple pour le Progrès (MPP), succeeded in the first presidential ballot and was officially inaugurated president in late December 2015. However, from the point of view of most observers, this does not indicate a serious change in political orientation. Roch Marc Christian Kaboré had already been a government minister, prime minister and chairman of the National Assembly during the presidency of Blaise Compaoré. He left Compaoré's party, the former united party CDP, together with 72 other influential politicians, and founded the MPP in January 2014. According to many civil society groups, which had agitated for change following Compaoré's fall from power, the transition ultimately amounted to one CDP faction succeeding another CDP faction.

The country is facing serious security threats in the northern part of the country where terrorist attacks have been reported. The new development plan (PNDES) has been adopted, but is yet to be implemented due to a lack of resources. The judicial problems with former leaders, such as generals Diendéré and Bassole, is exacerbating political tensions within the country. The trade unions are engaging in strikes to secure salary increases. Therefore, the structural transformation is yet to be implemented. The political change has not yet produce economic and social changes.

The BTI combines text analysis and numerical assessments. The score for each question is provided below its respective title. The scale ranges from 1 (worst) to 10 (best).

## Transformation Status

### I. Political Transformation

#### 1 | Stateness

The state's monopoly on the use of force is established nationwide in principle. There are no other violent actors that control parts of the territory. However, the state's monopoly on the use of force has shown some signs of erosion during the period under review near Burkina Faso's border with Mali. (In the capital, problems are mainly related to state security forces that are detailed in the section on the government's power to govern). Several army, gendarmerie and police bases were repeatedly attacked between 2015 and 2016 by non-state armed groups most likely, linked to al-Qaeda Maghreb/AQM, at different locations across the remote north and west areas of the country. Consequently, the weaknesses of the state's security forces and deterioration in the state's monopoly over the use of force can no longer be ignored. This was also reflected in the government's conflict with the Koglweogo, local vigilantes, between February and April 2015, which resulted from the security forces weaknesses or unwillingness to tackle criminal attacks on intrastate roads.

Burkina Faso has a relatively high degree of ethnic diversity (more than 60 ethnic groups, with the Mossi constituting almost half of the population). Nevertheless, ethnicity is not a politically relevant category with respect to state identity. Ethnic, religious or other identity groups are rarely systematically discriminated against by legal or state institutions. The overwhelming majority of the population fundamentally acknowledges the state's constitution and accepts the nation-state as legitimate.

The state is defined as secular. Religious dogmas have no relevant influence on politics or legal order. Pentecostal church groups have gained prominence and social influence in the period under review, but do not significantly influence politics or the legal order. However, the religious authorities (Catholic, Muslim, and traditional religious authorities) play an important role in Burkinabè society and often speak up. They frequently act as mediators in local and national political and social conflicts. Numerous religious leaders signed the transitional charter and a variety of religious



authorities were also represented in the special college that appointed Michel Kafando transitional president. According to the national census, about 60% of the population are Muslim, 25% are Christian and 15% are animist. There are no tensions between religious groups. Though there are voices complaining that Muslims are disproportionately represented in government and the civil service. So far, Islamic fundamentalists have not exercised any noteworthy influence. Since the outbreak of the crisis in Mali, the risk of operations of the terrorist group al-Qaeda Maghreb (AQIM) spilling over into Burkina Faso has increased considerably. Also, the January 2016 attacks provoked a debate on the peaceful coexistence of religious groups, a core pillar of social coherence in Burkina Faso. In 2017, the government tried to regulate religion to reinforce secularism, but the legislation was contested by Muslim associations and was withdrawn. A controversial issue was a proposed ban on praying in public spaces.

The state administration suffers from politicization and extensive corruption on all levels. As a consequence, the existing structures provide most basic public services, but they show functional deficiencies and lack capacity in many areas. In particular, the population complains about shortcomings in basic infrastructure such as water, education (particularly regarding secondary schools and universities) and health care. According to the latest World Bank figures, only 82% of the population have access to water and only 20% of the population to sanitation. Apart from Burkina Faso's main roads (e.g., between Ouagadougou, Bobo-Dioulasso and the Ivorian border, and between Ouagadougou and Koudougou), roads and bridges are often in poor condition or unusable. Officially, decentralization was designed to devolve some political decision-making to local authorities and to bring social services and basic administration closer to the people of the country's 302 rural communes. (In addition, 49 urban communes exist, among them two with "particular status," namely Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso). In practice, however, thin financial, technical and human resources severely limited the extent to which this autonomy could be exercised and local administration could be strengthened.

## 2 | Political Participation

The constitution guarantees all citizens the right to vote in direct, general, uniform and free elections, as well as the right to run for political office. General elections are regularly conducted on the national level and universal suffrage with secret ballots is ensured. National Assembly and presidential elections were held on 30 November 2015. Voter turnout was 60.13%.

Roch Marc Christian Kaboré (Mouvement du Peuple pour le Progrès, MPP) won the presidential election in the first ballot with 53.49% of the vote. The second placed candidate was Zéphirin Diabré (Union pour le Progrès et le Changement, UPC) with 29.65%. Roch Marc Christian Kaboré was officially inaugurated president in late



1

Basic  
administration

6



1

Free and fair  
elections

7



1



December 2015. From the point of view of most observers, this does not indicate a significant change in political orientation. Roch Marc Christian Kaboré had previously been prime minister, a government minister and chairman of the National Assembly during the presidency of Blaise Compaoré.

In total, 99 parties were represented in the legislative elections. The MPP won 55 out of 127 seats, while the UPC won 33 seats, the CDP (the former ruling party of Blaise Compaoré) won 18 seats and the Sankarist party UNIR/PS won 5 seats.

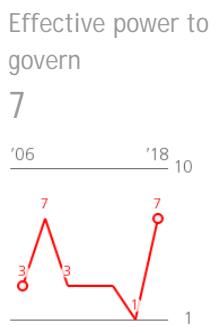
In addition, Nouveau Temps pour la Démocratie and the Alliance pour la Démocratie et la Fédération / Rassemblement Démocratique Africain won 3 seats each. PAREN (Parti de la Renaissance Nationale) and NAFA (Nouvelle Alliance du Faso) won 2 seats each. Meanwhile, one seat each went to Le Faso Autrement, to the Organisation pour la Démocratie et le Travail, to the Parti pour la Démocratie et le Socialisme/Parti des Bâtisseurs, to the Rassemblement pour la Démocratie et le Socialisme, to the Mouvement pour la Démocratie en Afrique and to the Union pour un Burkina Nouveau.

Municipal elections were held in May 2016. Again, the MPP, UPC and CDP won the vast majority of seats. The MPP won a total of 10,749 seats across 361 municipalities. The UPC won 2,974 seats across 253 municipalities. The CDP won 2,053 seats across 209 municipalities.

While several parties with different platforms are able to run, the principles of equality and fairness were (and still are, even after Compaoré's resignation) heavily constrained by the extensive patronage network maintained by the CDP and MPP, and their combined control over public administration and political institutions. The CDP and MPP's exclusive access to substantial resources allows for a nationwide campaign machinery, including media coverage and opponents have difficulty countering this. At the same time, despite some efforts to build coalitions, the opposition still suffers from extreme fragmentation and is unable to offer convincing political alternatives.

In general, the elected government has the power to govern, but both the military and civil opposition groups have the potential to veto government power. Also, after the putsch and presidential elections in 2015, the extent to which army officers influence political decisions or exercise veto power remains unclear. However, compared to the regime of Blaise Compaoré, the veto power of the military elite seems to have somewhat declined, given the fact that several high-ranking officers have been prosecuted by the military tribunal following the coup.

Within the security sector, other serious problems already existed under the Compaoré regime. Extensive economic grievances (e.g., poor pay and housing) among the security forces persist despite the government's efforts to meet their demands. The political aspects of the incidents have never been addressed. These



grievances, combined with political and ethnic fractionization of the security forces, have long threatened to undermine the state's monopoly over the use of force to the extent that these grievances could destabilize the regime at any time. This again became evident between September 16 and 23, 2015, when the presidential guard launched a coup d'état against the transitional government. Though popular protests succeeded in overcome the coup, disturbances and divisions within the army have remained.

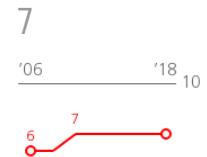
Freedoms of assembly and association are constitutionally guaranteed and exercised extensively by oppositional political parties and civil society groups (in particular, trade unions, students and human rights groups). However, in September 2015, at least 14 unarmed civilians were shot dead during protests against the presidential guard's coup d'état. Human rights groups complain, moreover, that people are arrested and accused due to their participation in protests (e.g., protests against an industrial mine in the province of Bam in June 2016).

Association / assembly rights



1

Freedom of expression



1

Freedom of the press and freedom of speech are constitutionally guaranteed and nowadays relatively secure. Radio is the most important media; numerous broadcasting stations exist. Staff of the state-owned media complain about heavy political influence by the ministry of communication. Most journalists working for state-owned media avoid political controversial issues. The private media are relatively independent and often critical of the government. Occasionally, journalists are imprisoned or fined for insulting public officeholders, for example. During the September 2015 coup d'état, journalists were frequently threatened by the presidential guard. The Information Code grants journalists free access to sources of information, with exceptions for information pertaining to the internal or external security of the state, military secrets, strategic economic interests, ongoing investigations or legal proceedings, and anything that threatens people's dignity and privacy. In practice, officials use these exceptions frequently, and accessing government information remains difficult. There are no government restrictions on access to the internet, which only a small percentage of the population has access to. Internet access is growing but all in all still limited to urban areas. In the Global Press Freedom 2016 survey by Freedom House, Burkina Faso scored 41 out of 100 points, an improvement of 3 points compared to 2015. On the Reporters Without Borders' Press Freedom Index, Burkina Faso improved 4 positions from 2015 and ranked 42 out of 180 counties in 2016.

### 3 | Rule of Law

The institutional separation of powers between the executive, legislative and judicial branches is guaranteed in the constitution, but significantly limited in practical terms. The president's position is, *de jure* and *de facto*, strong, whereas the National Assembly's authority and involvement in decision-making suffers from limitations in efficiency and mechanisms of oversight. Moreover, the strong role of the military and inability of the democratic institutions to control the military is a potential threat to the legislative, as became obvious in the course of the 2015 crisis.

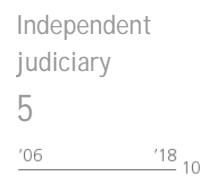
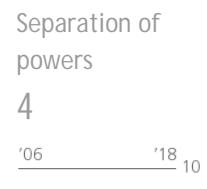
The Senate, a relatively new institution established in 2012, could help strengthen the legislative branch against the powerful executive. However, it needs to be assured that the second chamber will not suffer from the same weaknesses as its predecessor. The country's first Senate was abolished in 2002 following political concessions made to the opposition, which considered the body duplicative, costly and insufficiently independent from government.

The judiciary can at best partially balance the dominance of the executive.

The judiciary is formally independent and institutionally distinct but dominated and politicized in practice by the executive branch. The executive orchestrates judicial appointments and promotions, and prosecutors are part of a hierarchy headed by the justice minister; because of this, the executive interferes in judicial decisions. The judicial system suffers from corruption, which stems from an overall system that is inefficient, poorly trained and poorly equipped. The economic vulnerability of its members makes them susceptible to exploitation, and they operate under extreme political pressure. Efficient court proceedings are rarely conducted when politically or economically powerful people are concerned. Legal processes also accelerate when they serve the government's interests. Notably, this is the case when quick legal proceedings against members of the army and the police were necessary in response to public outrage and demands for justice. Fighting government officials' impunity has ranked among the population's main demands since the murder of journalist Norbert Zongo, but the judiciary only hesitantly moves toward solving this or other crimes with suspected government involvement.

In the period under review, official investigations were set up to investigate four cases in which people killed during the course of the popular October 2014 uprisings. Several investigation committees were established in September 2015, but none were given a mandate to investigate potential human rights violations or murders.

Members of the presidential guard, including senior officers, who were responsible for the 2015 coup d'état have been charged by a military tribunal with crimes including threatening state security and murder, but have not yet been sentenced.



Public officials can be sued for the abuse of power or for other inappropriate actions. The leading figures of the government, however, are rarely subject to such measures. In general, lawsuits against public officials are only conducted in cases of disloyalty, or if public pressure requires the government to offer up a political scapegoat. Most politicians enjoy de facto immunity from prosecution. Fighting rampant political and bureaucratic corruption, including the criminal prosecution of corrupt officeholders, has been one of the public's main demands for many years and that demand continued during the period under review. Isolated cases of corruption are prosecuted, but often without consequence. Corruption is widespread in all sectors of the economy and government. In 2015, the government passed a new anti-corruption law. However, enforcement is weak due to poor access to information, a culture of impunity and ill-equipped institutions.

The constitution forbids torture, but, in practice, security forces often subject citizens to torture and inhumane and degrading treatment. During the period under review, repeated acts of brutality by security forces have been reported, both in police stations and the prison, and in particular by the presidential guard in the course of the 2015 coup d'état. Security forces, specifically the "anti-riot brigade" (Compagnie républicaine de sécurité), frequently intervene violently in demonstrations by students and other citizens. At least five students, for instance, were injured during a demonstration on the University of Ouagadougou campus in October 2016, when security forces deployed tear gas. Prison conditions are harsh and at times life-threatening. Cases of long-term detention without trial or access to legal counsel are widespread. Equality before the law and due process under the law exist in theory, but, in practice, it is often only citizens with financial means who can secure a fair or speedy trial. In addition, the right to fair trial is limited by popular ignorance of the law and a continuing shortage of magistrates. Protected by a corrupt and easily swayed judiciary, the government cultivates a culture of impunity. Freedom of religion and a ban on discrimination, both guaranteed by the constitution, are generally respected. A law condemns all kinds of discrimination, including gender discrimination, but the government does not effectively enforce it. Homosexuals, persons with disabilities and persons with HIV/AIDS are often confronted with social and economic discrimination, and women's rights (including reproductive rights) are not always guaranteed in practice. In rural areas, traditional practices and values hold that women are inferior. More than 50% of girls are married, sometimes forcefully, before the age of 18, while 10% of girls are married before the age of 15. While such attitudes change slowly, the government's awareness campaigns and community outreach efforts to change attitudes toward women are said to have contributed to some modest improvements. The transitional government, in October 2015, passed a law to prevent and sanction violence against women and girls, including forced and early marriages and sexualized violence. Though the government's commitment to fight female genital mutilation through new legislation and advocacy campaigns

#### Prosecution of office abuse

4

'06 \_\_\_\_\_ '18 10



1

#### Civil rights

6

'06 \_\_\_\_\_ '18 10



1

seems to have had some impact, female genital mutilation is still widely performed, especially in rural areas.

#### 4 | Stability of Democratic Institutions

Democratic institutions exist, but are functional only to a limited degree. Though this has improved after the turnover of Blaise Compaoré. At national, regional and local levels, stability suffers from difficulties in the rule of law and a dysfunctional, politicized and often corrupt administration that lacks both materials and qualified personnel. In the past, the National Assembly was weak and has never been much more than a rubber stamp for the government's legislative propositions. It is still too early to evaluate to what extent this has improved following the recent regime change. However, from top to bottom, institutions still suffer from corruption, which limits their performance.

Acceptance and support for democratic institutions has increased but is still relatively low both among the government and large segments of the population. This has improved as a consequence of the popular protest that stopped the presidential guard's coup d'état and the presidential elections of November 2015. However, national institutions are still largely irrelevant to the rural population. During the period under review, the army proved to be more of a destabilizing influence than a guarantor of stability or security, as became evident following the 2015 coup d'état. At least some of the key actors of the previous regime and the 2015 coup, among them Blaise Compaoré and General Gilbert Diendéré, are being pursued by international courts to stand trial. However, the underlying problems affecting the country's political and military institutions have not been resolved, and there is a significant risk of another military coup.

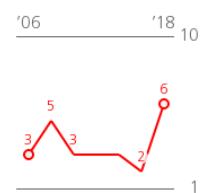
#### 5 | Political and Social Integration

In Burkina Faso, nearly 200 political parties exist. For the 2015 national election, 99 parties were officially registered with the national election commission. In the National Assembly, 14 parties are represented. The largest parties are the MPP (Mouvement du Peuple pour le Progrès) with 55 seats (around 43% of the seat share and the party of the new president), the UPC (Union pour le Progrès et le Changement) with 30 seats (around 24%) and the former ruling party the CDP (Congrès pour la démocratie et le progrès) with 15 seats (13%). The party system is moderately fragmented. Though volatility has increased since the last election when the CDP held 77 seats and the MPP did not yet exist. However, this situation should be put in perspective, as the country has only recently emerged from the collapse of the previous authoritarian regime.

Except for the CDP and MPP, the party system is highly fragmented and the level of organizational stability is low. The parties' fragmentation and the inability of the

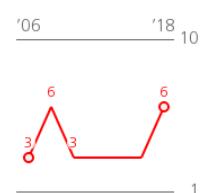
Performance of democratic institutions

6



Commitment to democratic institutions

6



Party system

5



opposition parties' representatives to build stable coalitions have been two of the main obstacles to the country's democratization process for the last 20 years.

The system lacks programmatic capacities and shows weaknesses with regard to the population's social integration and political education. Parties can therefore only partially fulfill their political role. Civil society groups are much more able to integrate large parts of the population and contribute significantly to the absorption of democratic awareness and action. Ideologies and programmatic issues do not play a significant role in party membership.

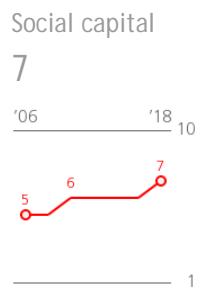
Many non-parliamentary groups and an active civil society exist in Burkina Faso. Most important are the trade unions, student associations and human rights organizations. However, other interests, in particular of rural groups, are underrepresented. Yet the quality of representation is high. Interest groups, cooperative associations or civil society organizations are able to cooperate when pursuing a common goal, better than political parties. In 2015, civil society organizations, in particular youth groups, played a central role in the popular resistance against the coup d'état. Human rights organizations are steadily putting pressure on the authorities to investigate human rights violations, in particular, following the 2014 protests, which led to the overthrow of Blaise Compaoré and his regime, and the 2015 protests against the coup. Moreover, human rights organizations persistently keep political murders, namely the cases of Thomas Sankara, Norbert Zongo and former student body president Dabo Boukary, on the agenda. During the period under review, civil society groups increasingly engaged in collective action in order to defend people's rights and claims related to the expansion of industrial mining in remote rural areas.

Meaningful statistical data is available from the Afrobarometer's Round 6 survey, whose preliminary results were published in 2016, refers to data collected between 2014 and 2015 before the elections that followed Compaoré's downfall were held. According to the results, a strong majority (81%) of Burkinabè respondents preferred democracy over any other kind of government. Only 5% of the respondents supported the idea that a nondemocratic regime might be preferable. Meanwhile, 85% of respondents rejected presidential dictatorship and 59% of respondents rejected military rule as a system of government. (Two thirds of favored a two-term limit on presidential mandates, according to the survey conducted in 2012.)

Regarding the actual functioning of democracy in Burkina Faso, the survey showed increased but still limited esteem. Only 35% see the country as a full democracy which however represents an increase compared to 24% in 2012. Approval of democracy and limited terms, and rejection of military rule, have increased following the fall from power of Blaise Compaoré and the overcoming of the coup d'état. However, fresh survey data reflecting attitudes to the new regime is currently not available.



There are a large number of autonomous, self-organized groups, associations and organizations in Burkina Faso that address social, political, cultural, environmental or other topics. In many areas, civic organizations take on a representative function that government institutions, including the parliament, are not able (or not willing) to perform. Civic organizations are cooperative and strategic. They generally operate under the principles of self-regulation and are a voice of political and social concern. It is difficult to assess the level of trust among the Burkinabè population, as no relevant public opinion survey is available. An important factor, in any case, is the culture of “jocular relationship,” which permits members of different ethnic groups to make jokes about each other without causing bad feelings. This cultural trait has been widely praised as a reason interethnic relations in the country have been amicable.



## II. Economic Transformation

### 6 | Level of Socioeconomic Development



Poverty and social exclusion are quantitatively and qualitatively extensive and structurally ingrained. In the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report 2015 (HDR) Burkina Faso scored 0.402 and ranked 183 out of 187 countries (2014: 181), despite steady but minor improvements in the country's Human Development Index since 1975. According to the World Bank World Development Indicators 2015, GNI per capita was \$640 in 2015 (2013: \$670), placing Burkina Faso well below the average for sub-Saharan Africa (\$1,637), but nearly on the average level of that of the group of low-income countries (\$619). In the context of extreme poverty and widespread inequalities, social exclusion is severe and structurally reinforced, especially in rural areas and for women. Despite some minor improvements in the education sector, literacy and school enrollment rates remain extremely low with an average literacy rate of 28.7% of the population age 15 and above. In 2014, the gross enrollment ratio in primary education improved to 86.9% (2012: 85%) and at secondary level to 28.4% (2012: 26%). Access to education is constrained by large disparities from province to province and between urban and rural areas. Gender disparity has decreased. Burkina Faso was scored 0.881 points on the UNDP's Gender-related Development Index 2014 (GDI). In 2013, Burkina Faso ranked 187 and scored 0.607 points. In the Gender Inequality Index 2014, Burkina Faso scored 0.631 and ranked 144 out of 155 countries. Despite recent improvements, social indicators remain weak and Burkina Faso is unlikely to meet the U.N.'s Millennium Development Goals. The poverty rate remains high, with 63.8% of the population living in severe poverty in 2014. According to the UNDP HDR 2012, 81.1% of the population lived on less than \$2 a day, while 82.8% of the



population (12,875 thousand people) were multidimensionally poor and a further 7.6% of the population (1,177 thousand people) lived closed to the multidimensional poverty threshold.

The Gini coefficient for Burkina Faso is relatively low (35.3), while the poverty (63.8%) and the literacy (28.7%) rates further show the lack of development.

Economic indicators		2013	2014	2015	2016
GDP	\$ M	11934.6	12400.7	11148.8	<b>12115.2</b>
GDP growth	%	2.8	4.2	4.0	<b>5.9</b>
Inflation (CPI)	%	0.5	-0.3	1.0	-
Unemployment	%	3.3	3.3	3.1	<b>3.0</b>
Foreign direct investment	% of GDP	4.1	2.9	1.5	<b>2.5</b>
Export growth	%	-13.7	-3.2	0.6	<b>0.6</b>
Import growth	%	21.5	1.2	13.2	<b>-5.7</b>
Current account balance	\$ M	-1345.2	-997.6	-	-
Public debt	% of GDP	28.8	30.6	33.4	<b>35.7</b>
External debt	\$ M	2564.6	2542.9	2622.0	<b>2824.9</b>
Total debt service	\$ M	78.7	92.2	112.1	<b>121.7</b>
Net lending/borrowing	% of GDP	-4.0	-2.0	-2.2	-
Tax revenue	% of GDP	16.8	15.3	14.1	-
Government consumption	% of GDP	21.3	22.0	22.4	<b>22.4</b>
Public education spending	% of GDP	4.6	4.6	4.1	-
Public health spending	% of GDP	3.5	2.6	-	-
R&D expenditure	% of GDP	-	-	-	-
Military expenditure	% of GDP	1.4	1.4	1.3	<b>1.2</b>

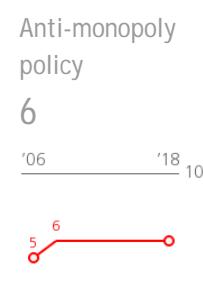
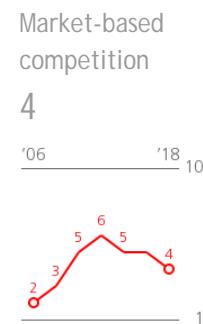
Sources (as of October 2017): The World Bank, World Development Indicators | International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Economic Outlook | Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Military Expenditure Database.

## 7 | Organization of the Market and Competition

The institutional framework for market competition remains weak, with significant entry and exit barriers, pervasive corruption, a weak judicial system, a lack of access to financing for small and medium-sized enterprises. The informal sector is large. The Heritage Foundation's Index of Economic Freedom 2016 describes Burkina Faso's economy as "mostly unfree" and ranked it 104 out of 178 countries (2015: 102), and records a decrease of 0.5 points compared to 2015. With an overall score of 59.1, Burkina Faso is above the sub-Saharan African average of 55.5 points and slightly below the world average of 60.7 points. Similarly, the World Bank Doing Business 2017 survey noted a slight worsening of the business climate in Burkina Faso, ranked the country 146 out of 190 economies, a drop of 4 places from the previous year. Despite some improvement in the last years and the successful implementation of recent reforms, Burkina Faso has made little progress in some areas of economic freedom, such as the simplification of the business start-up process, the set-up of two commercial courts in the two major cities, and ongoing tax administration reforms.

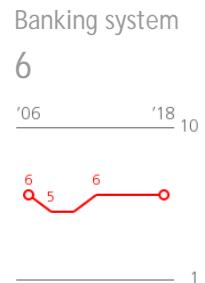
The formation of monopolies and oligopolies is not regulated consistently. No clear and comprehensive legal provisions exist. In principle, the rights of foreign and domestic private entities to own enterprises and engage in all forms of remunerative activities are guaranteed by the constitution and the investment code. Businesses can be freely established and sold. Some public enterprises continue to enjoy a monopoly in certain markets, including the electric and water utilities, the national lottery, mail, rail equipment and fuel imports.

While foreign trade officially follows nondiscrimination principles, supplementary taxes on imports, targeted import bans, as well as significant non-tariff barriers such as inadequate infrastructure and corruption, all limit foreign trade. As a member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Burkina Faso's objective is to adapt national regulations according to the Treaty on the Harmonization of Business Law in Africa (OHADA). Despite the harmonization of the majority of trade policy instruments, mainly import measures, the implementation is far from complete in all areas. A landlocked country, Burkina Faso depends heavily on its neighbors, especially Côte d'Ivoire, for non-regional trade. According to a 2010 WTO report, Burkina Faso has improved its institutional and regulatory framework since the previous review of the country's trade policy, in 2004. Burkina Faso is a member of the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes and hence participates in the peer review process, which encourages all countries to adopt an effective exchange of information in tax matters. The latest review was published in 2016 and rated Burkina Faso overall "largely compliant." A full report on the measures taken by the government is supposed to be submitted in



2017. Corruption is becoming more and more pervasive. Since 2007, the surveys of the Burkinabè NGO Réseau National de Lutte Anti-corruption (REN-LAC) have ranked the customs service as the most corrupt institution.

Burkina Faso's banking system is supervised by the regional central bank, the Banque Centrale des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (BCEAO), which serves all members of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU). Previously regulated and controlled by the government, the banking system continues to undergo restructuring to promote competition and improve the microfinance sector. Despite some progress in terms of diversification and increased access to financial services offered by banks, the overall health care system has limited ability to finance the economy. Besides general weaknesses in the judicial and regulatory system, the sector lacks innovative financial instruments, notably access to credit for small to medium-sized enterprises. The banking sector is composed of 12 commercial banks and five specialized credit institutions. The IMF reports that, at the end of June 2011, three of the 12 banks held almost 50% of the total banking systems' assets. Access to banking services remains low, at about 7% for the country as a whole and interest rates, in spite of good bank capitalization, are high at 10% to 12%.



As of March 2013, Burkina Faso received a sovereign rating of B from Standard and Poor's. Regional and national fixed incomes markets are still in their early development stages.

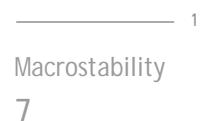
The Heritage Foundation acknowledges that the government has pursued banking liberalization and restructuring, encouraging competition in the financial sector. However, according to this source, the banking sector remained underdeveloped, providing a low level of access to banking services in general.

## 8 | Currency and Price Stability

Burkina Faso benefits from its membership in the CFA franc zone. The common currency has a fixed parity with the euro, which is guaranteed by the French Treasury. The exchange rate policy is heavily influenced by that of the European Central Bank (ECB) and thus it felt the effects of the depreciation and the crisis in the euro zone.



According to the World Bank, consumer price inflation fell to approximately 1% during the period under review.



The government's fiscal and debt policies generally promote macroeconomic stability, but there remains a moderate risk of debt distress due to Burkina Faso's excessive dependence on commodity exports, low diversification of the export sector and its reliance on external financing for most of its public investment programs.

Prior to the sociopolitical events of 2014 to 2015, Burkina Faso had experienced sustained economic growth. A recent IMF African Department publication identifies Burkina Faso as one of the few resource poor, low-income countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) that have been able to achieve consistently high economic growth rates over a 15-year period. According to the IMF, Burkina Faso has a good track record of maintaining macroeconomic stability even in the face of severe shocks in recent years. However, higher, more diversified and sustainable economic growth is essential in order to substantially reduce poverty and inequality.

While natural resource wealth from gold and other commodity exports has the potential to accelerate the country's development, resource-rich developing countries that plan to increase public investment financed in part by external borrowing may carry substantial debt risk.

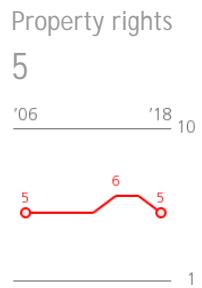
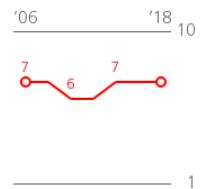
According to World Bank data, total debt service, in 2015, was 4.4% of exports of goods, services and primary income. The current account deficit, as a percentage of GDP, was 8.14% in 2014. External debt was 9.14% of GNI in 2014. Cash surplus was 7% of GDP in 2014. Total national debt was \$611 per capita in 2014. General government final consumption expenditure was 62.7% of GDP in 2015. Total reserves, including gold, were at \$260 million in 2015.

## 9 | Private Property

Property rights and rules regarding the acquisition of property are adequately defined under the law, but weaknesses in the judicial system complicate or prevent their protection or implementation. The International Property Rights Index (IPRI) for 2016 does not include Burkina Faso. In 2014, Burkina Faso ranked 71 out of 97 countries, and saw its IPRI score weaken by 0.3 points. According to Doing Business 2017, it takes about 67 days to register a property and four procedures are involved. Burkina Faso law permits private ownership. However, traditional systems and traditional authorities (chiefs) play an important role in allocating and protecting rights to land and, in practice, agricultural land is mostly governed by customary tenure systems. Land tenure insecurity is a serious and increasing problem. Structural deficiencies remain in enforcing property rights, including the arbitrary removal of land titles.

Regarding the land property, there is a lot of manipulation and corruption, and many conflicts arise out of the unclear property rights. Two or more different persons can hold the property document for the same land, leading to conflict.

The exercise of privatizing state-owned enterprises has been delayed. Whereas privatization has been far-reaching in some sectors (e.g., mining, hotel business), it has been delayed in others, in particular in key sectors of basic provision such as water supply (Office national de l'eau et de l'assainissement, ONEA) and electricity



(Société Nationale d'Electricité du Burkina, SONABEL). According to the latter, a privatization process has been ongoing since the respective bill was passed by the National Assembly on July 4, 2001 (loi no. 012-2001/AN du 04 juillet 2001 portant autorisation de privatisation de la SONABEL).

Private companies can, in principle, act freely but they may encounter economic, political and social barriers to development, such as a lack of financing. According to the Doing Business 2017, it takes about 13 days on average to start a new business and three procedures are involved. In 2017, Burkina Faso ranked 72 out of 190 countries for ease of starting a business (2016: 77).

## 10 | Welfare Regime

Rudimentary measures to preserve social welfare do exist but are extremely diverse in terms of territory, social strata and sector. The country cannot systematically combat poverty on its own. More than 75% of non-agricultural employment exists in the informal sector of the economy. Thus, only a very small group of salaried workers, including state employees, benefits from the country's modest social security system. Existing social welfare laws provide pensions, disability insurance, occupational injury insurance and health insurance. Workers and unions have demanded improved social welfare networks for years and continued to make this a key issue during strikes. The government, in cooperation with donors, has continued its efforts to increase access to education and health care, in addition to basic needs such as clean water and sanitation services, and to promote income-generating activities for vulnerable social groups. The poorest households will benefit from subsidies and school nutrition programs, reduced fees for health care services and the introduction of cash transfer schemes. Since 2016, the president has launched a program, which includes free medical care for pregnant women and children between the ages of 0 and 5. However, given the shortage of medical supplies, the program still has deficiencies. The main target of the development policy SCADD (Stratégie de croissance accélérée et de développement durable) is to combat poverty and improve people's well-being based on an enforced stimulation of the annual GDP growth. These efforts have shown minor success in the field of education. The gross enrollment rate for primary education increased from 85% in 2013 to more than 86% in 2014 and from 28% in 2013 to 30% in 2014 for secondary education, according to the World Bank. Overall, these are still low levels even for regional standards.

Burkina Faso has a Gender Inequality Index value of 0.631 and ranked 144 out of 188 countries in 2014. Enrollment and literacy is also imbalanced in gender terms. The World Economic Forum Gender Gap Report 2016 ranked Burkina Faso 123 out of 144 countries (2013: rank 102). This is low also in regional comparison and compared with other low-income countries.

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Social safety nets

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Equal opportunity

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Only 0.9% of adult women have reached a secondary or higher level of education compared to 3.2% of their male counterparts. For every 100,000 live births, 400 women die from pregnancy related causes; and the adolescent fertility rate is 115.4 births per 1,000 live births. Female participation in the labor market is 77.1% compared to 90.0 for men. Inequalities and disparities remain widespread across the sectors. Even though ethnicity is not a reason for the denial of equal opportunity, women and members of other vulnerable social groups have limited access to education, social services, public office and so on. In the agricultural sector, women have less access to micro-credits, land rights, technology and know-how.

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## 11 | Economic Performance

Agriculture is the most important economic sector, with close to 80% of the active population employed in the sector. Cotton is still the country's most important cash crop, but gold has recently become the most important export. Burkina Faso is the fastest growing and fourth largest gold producer in Africa. A combination of several factors, including exogenous shocks linked to the persistent fall in the price of raw materials, the sociopolitical crisis and the impact of the Ebola epidemic in the sub-region have resulted in a slowdown in the rate of economic growth. GDP growth of 4% was recorded in 2015, significantly lower than the average of 6% registered over the previous decade. This downturn has had an impact on public finances, reflected particularly in a fall in domestic revenue and a drastic decline in public investment. Private investment also contracted, owing to the wait-and-see attitude adopted by private investors following the regime change in 2014, the coup d'état of September 2015, and the presidential elections of November 2015. The strong growth of the mining sector is increasingly structured around the industrial sector, but the primary and tertiary sectors continue to be the main drivers of economic growth, accounting for 23% (agriculture) and 51.5% (services) of GDP, as estimated for 2015. Consumer price inflation was around 1% in 2015. As the West African CFA franc is pegged to the euro, the exchange rate is relatively stable. Burkina Faso's current account balance is chronically negative. However, the country's external position improved in 2015, with a current account deficit of 7.7% of GDP against 11.1% in 2013. This improvement was due to a decline in imports (following the fall in oil prices) and the rise in exports. The external deficit was covered by external support and commercial bank financing.

Output strength

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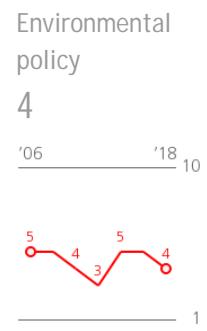
The commitment-based budget deficit was 2.1% in 2015, although on a cash basis it was around 3.4% of GDP, due to the payment of expenses corresponding to the previous year. This deficit was covered by the support of technical and financial partners. Burkina Faso has benefited from various initiatives, including Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) and the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI). The World Bank disbursed \$100 million for budgetary support. Furthermore, in June

2015, the Board of Executive Directors of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved an extended credit facility. Inflation remained low, at less than 1%.

The employment to population ratio was at 80.7% in 2014. The tax revenue rate was 15.52% of GDP in 2014.

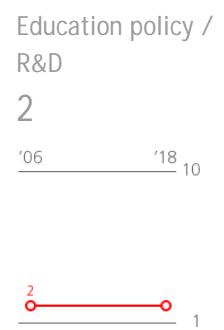
## 12 | Sustainability

On the political level, green parties are rather insignificant and people are generally not well informed or sensitive to environmental issues. However, awareness of environmental issues and sustainable development of the economy have improved. To ensure environmental sustainability is one of the eight most important objectives of the SCADD. However, environmental policies issues remain subordinated to other economic considerations. This becomes obvious with the expansion of industrial gold mining. Burkina Faso relies heavily on natural resources and encounters severe climate problems such as droughts and floods. Severe floods affected 2,000 people in Burkina Faso in August 2016.



In the SCADD from June 2011, the IMF and the World Bank state that land degradation is a severe problem and that 34% of the territory (9,234,500 ha of agricultural land) is degraded due to anthropogenic (agriculture, livestock, land tenure, fuel wood, etc.) and climatic reasons, with an annual estimated increase in land degradation of 105,000 to 250,000 ha. The mining industry, in particular, is causing severe damage by the use of chemicals (cyanide, mercury). Slash-and-burn agriculture is a current technique in the agricultural sector. Burkina Faso is one of the pilot countries of the Forest Investment Program (FIP). The Investment Plan was endorsed in June 2011. The FIP is an initiative of a group of donors within the framework of the Climate Investment Fund with the goal of reducing deforestation and promoting sustainable forest management. Success has been limited thus far though.

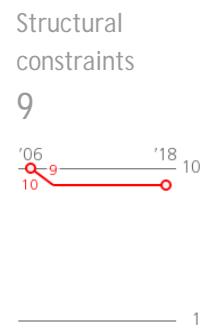
The state's system of primary, secondary and tertiary education remains inadequate despite increased investment and some improvements, such as the expansion of the free school program for all children from three to 16 years under the new Strategic Development Program for Basic Education (PDSEB) running from 2012 to 2021. Despite some minor improvements in the education sector, literacy and school enrollment rates remain extremely low, with an average literacy rate for people aged 15 and over of 28.7%. In 2014, the gross enrollment ratio in primary education improved to 86.9% (2012: 85%) and at secondary level to 28.4% (2012: 26%). There are also huge gender imbalances. Access to education is constrained by large disparities between provinces, and between urban and rural areas. Deficits in the education sector are due to weak infrastructure and the low quality of education. Permanent infrastructure and investment in science as well as research and development remain underdeveloped, despite increased government expenditure in education and rising donor assistance over the years. According to the World Bank, government expenditure on education was low at 4.5% of GDP in 2015.



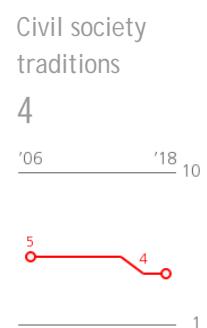
## Governance

### I. Level of Difficulty

The structural constraints on effective governance in Burkina Faso are still massive. Chief among them is the extremely high poverty rate, as reflected in all common indicators such as the low GDP per capita and Burkina Faso's bottom ranking in the Human Development Index (183 out of 187 countries in the HDI 2015). Other constraints include a weak infrastructure, in both physical and institutional terms; vulnerability to weather risks (floods and droughts), which regularly affects the country's ability to produce staples as well as part of its main export commodities (cotton and livestock); the low diversification of the economy; its high dependency on imported fuel and food; and its concomitant exposure to world market developments as well as unstable terms of trade for its main export products. The country's landlocked situation adds a further level of difficulty. Despite the recent recovery of the cotton sector and the booming mining sector, Burkina Faso's current account balance remains negative and is characterized by high imports of services and capital goods imports. The country's economy is highly vulnerable to fluctuations in world prices. The country lacks an educated labor force due to a rudimentary education system and a low literacy rate.



Burkina Faso has considerable civil society traditions by sub-Saharan standards. The fragmentation and fluctuation in the number of political parties do not reflect these traditions, and one should not mistake the relative strength of civil society with particularly strong political influence. Numerous organizations and associations, which partially have their roots in pre-colonial society, constitute one of the society's key strengths. These organizations include "groupement villageois" (village groups) and other community-based associations, which were originally self-help groups or traditional warrior associations. Trade unions, student unions, human rights groups and a wide spectrum of literacy, environmental and women's advocacy groups, such as trade and professional organizations, are vital to civil society in Burkina Faso.



The federation of trade unions Confédération générale des travailleurs du Burkina (CGT-B) originated from the French Confédération générale du Travail (CGT). It is the biggest trade union federation in Burkina Faso in terms of membership figures. Apart from the CGT-B, five other trade union federations exist: The Confédération Nationale des Travailleurs du Burkina (CNTB), the Confédération Syndicale

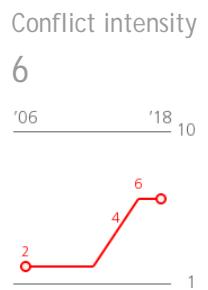
Burkinabè (CSB), the Force Ouvrière – Union Nationale des syndicats libres (FO-UNSL), the Organisation Nationale des Syndicats Libres (ONSL) and the Union Syndicale des Travailleurs du Burkina Faso (USTB). The trade unions in Burkina Faso are organized along ideological lines. Overlaps in personnel among the civil society associations are commonplace. Virtually all functionaries of the CGT-B and its member organizations were previously organized in the student movement, notably in the Union Générale des Etudiants Burkinabè (UGEB) and Association Nationale des Etudiants Burkinabè (ANEB), which are ideologically close to the CGT-B.

Trade unions, human rights organizations, students and political opposition parties joined forces in the Collectif d’organisations démocratiques de masse et de partis politiques (Collective of the Democratic Mass Organizations and Political Parties, or “Collectif”) following the murder of journalist Norbert Zongo in December 1998. The “Collectif” still exists today. Furthermore, in December 2014, to mark the anniversary of Zongo’s death, the collective mobilized thousands of people for a central demonstration in Ouagadougou, as it has done regularly in the 16 years since his murder. The collective is led by the Mouvement burkinabè des droits de l’homme et des peuples (MBDHP), one of the most active human rights organizations in West Africa. The MBDHP, the trade union federation CGT-B and the student union UGEB had already collaborated since the late 1980s. Their most recent alliance is the Coalition nationale de lutte contre la vie chère, la corruption, la fraude, l’impunité et pour les libertés (Coalition against the High Cost of Living, Corruption, Fraud, Impunity and for Freedoms), founded in March 2008 in the course of intense protests against high food and fuel prices.

In the course of the protests against the constitutional referendum, a new civil society group came into existence in July 2013, the Balai Citoyen (literally “citizens”). The founders and leaders of Balai Citoyen are the reggae musician Sams’K le Jah and the rapper Serge Bambara aka “Smockey.”

Social capital and trust is relatively high by regional standards. In interethnic relations, so called “jocular relations” ease potential tensions. As anthropologists have documented, people can joke about other groups without causing insult and friction.

Social cohesion in Burkina Faso is relatively high. Social unrest and popular dissatisfaction with the political elites have steadily grown over the last couple of years, and reached a peak with the 2014 protests and the overthrow of Blaise Compaoré. Almost all different groups of society demonstrated, some in quite a violent manner. Among them were marginalized urban youth (unemployed, informal sector, petty traders and the like) students, teachers, workers, judiciary personnel, security personnel and merchants. The growing gap between a small circle of wealthy, powerful figures and the poor masses has widened dangerously, mainly as a result of the government’s policies, which are predominantly oriented toward



maintaining power rather than the well-being of the population. Therefore, the potential for conflict has grown over the years. This trend clearly continued during the period under review. The security forces (army, gendarmerie, and particularly the presidential guard) once again turned out to be a central player and frequently more a risk than a guarantee of security. Numerous disputes, often about local traditions, political authority or natural resources (land, water) were reported during the period under review. Some seem to follow ethnic lines. However, the deep split between Burkinabè society and the political elite arises not along ethnic or religious lines, but rather along social lines. As such, radical political actors occasionally have success in mobilizing groups and protest movements.

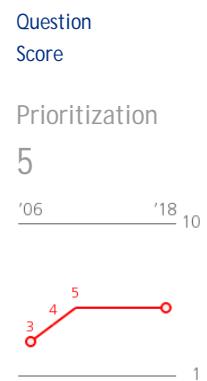
One field of conflict that has particularly increased and intensified during the period under review is the expansion of industrial mining. Gold mining has expanded enormously in Burkina Faso since the late 2000s. Currently, 11 industrial gold mines and one zinc mine are active, most of them started within the last years. Virtually all mines are accompanied by conflicts between local communities, particularly artisanal miners, on the one hand, and state and company security forces on the other. During the period under review, some of these conflicts have escalated when security forces reacted violently to local protests. For example, protests against the True Gold mine near the town of Ouahigouya in Yatenga province in January 2015, and against the Bissa Gold mine close to Kongoussi in Bam province in June and August 2016.

Although religious extremism has been quite low in Burkina Faso traditionally, there is an increasing risk of (externally born) conflict in the country, exemplified by the terrorist attacks in the capital on January 16, 2016.

## II. Governance Performance

### 14 | Steering Capability

The government has recently defined “National Plan for Economic and Social Development (PNDES)” for the period of 2016 to 2020, focusing on the structural transformation of the country’s economy and the welfare of its people. The government has, by and large, adequately pursued strategic economic priorities that correspond with the normative framework in terms of striving for a market economy. The social turmoil in the period under review had only a marginal impact on the main sectors of economic growth (e.g., mining). However, with regard to the political system and democratization, it remains unclear to what extent the new government will prioritize political transformation and democratization over ensuring its own power position, following the transfer of power from Blaise Compaoré. Until now, the government has made few far-reaching efforts to investigate and sanction



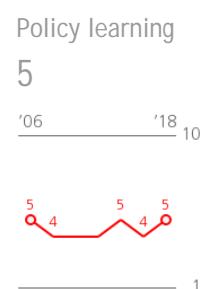
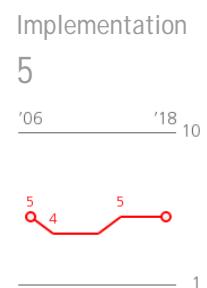
economic and political crimes, and hold guilty individuals among the old and new elite responsible for human rights violations. Rather, it might be that, as under the previous regime, the government's strategy will be to calm the dissatisfied population, without reacting to civil society's social and political claims or introducing meaningful reform measures.

The “National Plan for Economic and Social Development (PNDES)” for 2016 to 2020 was introduced shortly before the end of the review period. It is too early to evaluate its implementation. However, it is obvious that Burkina Faso remains extremely sensitive to developments in the global markets and dependent on the goodwill of donors, a situation that is aggravated by the structural constraints facing the country. Despite positive steps, reforms are so far sometimes implemented superficially or incompletely (e.g., by the mining law that was revised in June 2015, but lacks any by-laws or administrative regulations). Improvements in conditions are not expected in the short or medium term. Although reforms are properly prepared and legally enacted, they often fail to become fully implemented. In many cases, the government simply does not have the required capacity to monitor results. Lack of qualified personnel is also a severe challenge. Poverty reduction measures have not been effective and poverty levels remain high, while most social development indicators (health, education, gender equality, etc.) are, despite slight improvements, still alarming. Furthermore, decentralization and a culture of self-help mean implementation of measures is typically left to local institutions or organizations. In many cases, organizations' financial support is dependent on foreign donors, which relieves fiscal pressure on the state budget. All in all, the effective impact of reforms is subject to the constraints of a global market economy. The government continues to successfully pursue its primary objective of maintaining its hold on power. It is unlikely that the resignation of former president Compaoré or the 2015 presidential elections have seriously challenged the existing power structure. The political elite is closely linked to former CDP, turned MPP politicians. Its machinery of power, which includes unlimited access to state resources, still exists and overrides actors who might try to hinder the effective implementation of this political objective.

Burkina Faso's path of transformation has long been characterized by partial and shortsighted democratic reforms that only go as far as necessary to address instances of social unrest and intense popular pressure. During the first year of the period under review, a transitional government was in power, with one week of suspension during the presidential guard coup in September 2015.

The new government has only been in office for one year now, so it is quite early to evaluate its policy learning performance. There is a better chance for learning compared to the transitional government.

However, none of the policies implemented by the elected government so far have fundamentally addressed the underlying problem that blocks substantial democratization and social development: a small elite unwilling to be held



accountable for the abuses, corruption and mismanagement, which exacerbates social and economic inequalities.

Bureaucratic constraints are a key obstacle to policy implementation in Burkina Faso and no serious efforts have been made to reform policy implementation procedures.

## 15 | Resource Efficiency

Available human, financial and organizational resources are utilized efficiently in very few areas. Huge amounts of resources are wasted due to corruption, clientelism, favoritism, poor coordination, and the country's lack of infrastructure and official monitoring. A recent report by the government's anti-corruption body ACSE, published in April 2016, investigated public contracting under the transitional government. It heavily criticized the transitional government for a lack of transparency in public spending. For example, 55% of government spending was accounted for under the category "exceptional procedures."



Moreover, the fillings of jobs or dismissals of public servants often serve favoritism or political motivations, hindering effective management. Insufficient financial resources limit the autonomy of the local state administration. The country's youth, who as a whole are economically disenfranchised and lack adequate education and employment, have become increasingly frustrated with the selfish behavior of the political leadership and are essentially being ignored en masse as a valuable resource. This once more became visible in the 2016 student protests. Many citizens respond with caution or even distrust to government appeals for help in contributing human or economic resources to meet development objectives. The fruits of public goodwill have been too often harvested. Consequently, directed reforms are often met with skepticism. The country cannot manage the level of state debt on its own and has benefited and will continue to benefit from debt relief under the IMF and World Bank's Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative.

According to the 2016 IMF review, all quantitative performance criteria and indicative targets have been met, as well as most structural benchmarks. Tax revenues have decreased during the transition period, but are expected to consolidate and increase, according to the IMF.

The commitment-based budget deficit was 2.1% in 2015, although on a cash basis it was around 3.4% of GDP, due to the payment of expenses corresponding to the previous year. This deficit was covered by the financial support of multi-national donors (World Bank, IMF). Based on current budget support commitments, the overall deficit would expand to 3.6% of GDP in 2017. The current account balance is expected to improve due to increased gold production, and rising gold and cotton prices from a deficit of 8% in 2015 to a deficit of 7.6% in 2016.

The population's skepticism about reforms helps to explain the government's conflicting objectives, even in cases where it may show foresight in seeking necessary change. Too many times, the authorities have made vast promises of far-reaching political reforms, but have mostly failed to deliver. Peasants and urban laborers fear, with good reason, that their efforts are misused to benefit only a small group of elites. Although the government does try to coordinate conflicting objectives and interests, it is not always successful.

A lot of conflicts exist today over the issue of the coordination of the presidential development plan, the office of the prime minister, and the economy and finance ministries. The prime minister does not have the capacity to regulate conflicts and set objectives.

Effective institutions and mechanisms of coordination, both horizontally between the ministries, departments and other national agencies, and vertically between political and administrative levels, are virtually absent. The self-interest of powerful individuals and elites furthermore continues to hinder policy coordination.

According to the anti-corruption NGO REN-LAC (Réseau National de Lutte Anti-corruption), the overwhelming majority of the population considers politics and public administration in Burkina Faso fundamentally corrupt. Corruption on all levels is one of the main problems blocking democratic and economic development in the country. The perception of corruption is widespread and the government's rhetoric and institutional action in fighting corruption is significant. Besides the Superior Authority of State Control (ASCE), an entity under the authority of the prime minister that merges the High Commission for the Coordination of Anti-Corruption Activities, the State Inspector General, and the National Commission for the Fight against Fraud, there is the Public Accounts Court, which audits the government's accounts and complements the functions of the ASCE, and the Regulatory Authority of Government Tenders, which monitors government contract processes. All of these bodies have comprehensive mandates and they have already exposed corruption at different levels of government and administration. In almost no cases, however, have their findings or recommendations been followed by action. Though the law provides criminal penalties for official corruption, the government did not implement it effectively. There are few reliable public sources of information about corruption, and the media are often left to publish rumors and accusations. Few government agencies provide customer-friendly services (for example on Web sites), which seriously compromises citizens' ability to obtain information about government operations, including the proposed national budget. Laws or regulations guaranteeing information access do not exist; nor does a provision for the president and major officeholders to declare assets acquired during public service. In 2013, Burkina Faso was accepted as a compliant in the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). Within this context, civil society organizations were granted a structured

Policy coordination

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Year	Score
'06	5
'13	5
'18	1

1

Anti-corruption policy

4

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Year	Score
'06	3
'13	4
'18	4

1

mechanism for accessing powerful contacts within mining companies and government.

During the period under review, the National Transitional Council of Burkina Faso adopted two anti-corruption laws. One law on the prevention and repression of corruption in March 2015 and one organic law on Burkina Faso's anti-corruption authority, the High Authority for State Control and Anti-Corruption (ASCE-LC), in November 2015. Under the new anti-corruption legislation, members of the government, including the president, lawmakers and any official responsible for managing state funds, must declare their assets as well as any gifts or donations received while in office. The new High Authority for State Control and Anti-Corruption has been constitutionalized, and will have a higher degree of independence from the executive, stronger investigative powers and financial autonomy.

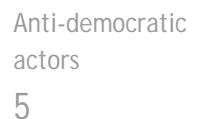
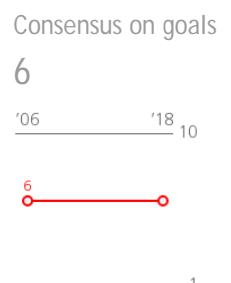
The new legislation is clearly an important step, although its effective implementation remains to be seen.

## 16 | Consensus-Building

A consensus on the tenets of democracy is driven by opportunism rather than a deep conviction of the benefits of such a system. Consequently, further democratization has, so far, always been carried out only with reluctance and particularly in response to civil society pressure. In the period under review, this once again became visible when popular resistance forced the presidential guard to give up after one week of coup d'état. The relatively broad range of actors that were united in the resistance against the September 2015 coup d'état, despite political disagreements among them, demonstrates a principal consensus on goals such as strengthening democratic institutions and rejection of military rule.

Major political actors agree on the tenets of a market economy. The majority of the population, however, has yet to benefit from a socially responsible market economy while it suffers from the negative effects of privatization, restructuring and liberalization. However, consensus on democratic institutions is shared by a broader range of actors than the consensus on the principles of a market economy. A considerable share of civil society organizations are engaged in the enhancement of democracy, but do not necessarily link these efforts to promoting a liberal market economy.

Burkina Faso is a more or less neo-patrimonial state, and politics is dominated by clientelism and political patronage. Within such a system, maintaining power becomes the primary or only objective for the political elite, and democratic reforms that could undermine this strategy will be circumvented by any means, which include exclusive access to the state's machinery and its financial resources. In such a system,



real reformers are rare, though they have grown both number and influence since the transfer of power from Blaise Compaoré. In the period under review, the military, in particular the presidential guard, has been the main anti-democratic actor. Civilian authorities were unable to maintain effective control over the military.

Beyond that, the ruling elite, including both party politicians and wealthy businessmen, are, de facto, opposed to the basic ideas of democracy, as they only support democratic institutions as far as these serve their own interests. While the exact influence of businessmen on policy-making is unknown, it must be assumed that they do have some degree of veto power. The customary authorities (traditional chiefs), also play an important role, both within and parallel to the state power structure.

It remains to be seen how far the current president and government are willing and able to advance democratization, and to fight impunity, corruption and human rights violations.

In Burkina Faso, in general, ethnic and religious conflicts are not as pronounced as in neighboring countries. Islamist extremism poses a threat due mainly to outside influences. The government tries to avoid religious and large-scale ethnic conflicts.

Some societal cleavages along socioeconomic and politico-ideological lines are manifested in social conflicts or tensions. Political aspects of discontent have increasingly figured in demonstrators' social and economic grievances. The period under review revealed that state authorities were at least partly responsible for exacerbating conflicts. This became obvious, for instance, in the conflict with the Koglweogo vigilantes in 2016, and in numerous conflicts related to the expansion of industrial and semi-industrial mining (e.g., Yagha 2015, Ramatoulaye/True Gold mine 2015, Kongoussi/Bissa Gold mine 2016).

Furthermore, at the local level, both political conflicts, reflecting political conflicts at the national scale, and social tensions, related to land use and tenure between autochthon and migrant land users, are frequent. In the period under review, the government and state authorities were mainly concerned with national-level political and military conflicts, and largely failed to manage local conflicts effectively. The erosion of state authority in the last few years has made it still harder to contain localized conflicts. All in all, the political leadership repeatedly failed to prevent cleavage-based conflicts from escalating.

While civil society participation is permitted in general, organizations' influence on the political leadership's democratization efforts becomes apparent only in situations when ignoring civil society would seriously endanger the government's power. The 2015 transitional period was an exception, with relative strong civil society representation in the National Transitional Council. This was due to the crucial role civil society organizations and popular protests played in the transfer of power from

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Cleavage /  
conflict  
management

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Civil society  
participation

6

Blaise Compaoré. Though in the protests that overthrew Compaoré and in the subsequent transition period, particularly during the popular resistance to the coup d'état, political (opposition) parties, including the now ruling MPP, and civil society organizations increasingly collaborated. However, this has significantly decreased since Roch Marc Christian Kaboré and the MPP have won power. Nevertheless, political and economic reforms in Burkina Faso are mainly the result of pressure from opposition parties and different civil society actors, primarily trade unions, student associations and human rights organizations. In this way, all these groups exerted considerable influence over the political agenda. This influence touched not only economic and social welfare policy, but also, to a limited extent, issues such as impunity, the judiciary, corruption and others.

A straightforward strategy to deal with historical acts of injustice in Burkina Faso remains one of the most important steps toward further democratization and reconciliation of society. Burkina Faso's political leadership, neither the previous nor new administration, have started any serious reconciliation attempt. Burkina Faso has yet to establish anything resembling a truth and reconciliation commission, for example, to examine past human rights violations and, in particular, the circumstances of the assassinations of Thomas Sankara, Norbert Zongo and Dabo Boukary. Furthermore, human rights violations, and killings related to the protests in October 2014 and the popular resistance against the coup d'état in September 2015, are yet to be seriously investigated, as civil society organizations point out.

In March 2016, a "High Council for Reconciliation and National Unity" (Haut Conseil pour la Réconciliation et l'Unité Nationale, HCRUN) was officially installed. The body of 21 members has a five-year mandate to "shed light on crimes and all other kinds of severe human rights violations from 1960-2015." (Meaning that potential human rights violations committed after the current government has seized power are not included). It remains to be seen how far this newly created institution will be effective or whether it is simply a political facade.

## 17 | International Cooperation

Burkina Faso has advanced in implementing its development programs supported by the international community. The influx of funds is increasingly being allocated as grants, which reflects donor satisfaction with ongoing reform measures. A May 2012 debt sustainability analysis prepared by the World Bank and the IMF acknowledged significant improvements in the authorities' capacity to manage debt, upgrading Burkina Faso's debt distress from "high" to "moderate." This allowed Burkina Faso to receive financing other than grants, providing both new opportunities and new challenges. In its 2015 analysis, however, the IMF emphasized that debt management capacity needs to be further strengthened.

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Reconciliation

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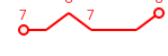


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Effective use of support

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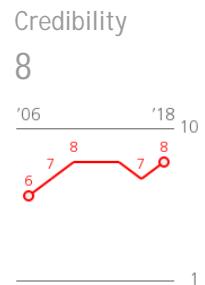
In the period under review, the new development plan “plan national de développement économique et social est le nouveau référentiel de développement du Burkina Faso” has been approved. The plan covers the period of 2016 to 2020 and replaces the previous 2011 to 2015 development strategy “Stratégie de croissance accélérée et de développement durable (SCADD).” The development plan is supported by the International Monetary Fund’s (IMF) Extended Credit Facility (ECF). Key indicative targets of the ECF include: a ceiling on net domestic financing both of and outside central government, a ceiling on the amount of new non-concessional external

debt contracted or guaranteed by government, accumulation of external arrears, a ceiling on the overall fiscal deficit including grants, the floor on government revenue and a floor on poverty-reducing social expenditures. Recent reviews commended that the government shall improve transparency and strengthen the tax base.

Burkina Faso’s strong performance under the program despite the social difficulties and adverse external shocks. Burkina Faso’s economic policy remains strongly dependent on international aid. In 2014, Burkina Faso received, according to the World Bank, \$1.12 billion (\$63.67 per capita) of net Official Donor Assistance (ODA). ODA remains at a very high level. Burkina Faso has benefited and will continue to benefit from debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative.

As the current president and government have only been in office for one year, the level of confidence the international community has in the new administration can only be evaluated to a limited degree. It would desirable, in any case, that the international community pressures on the administration to thoroughly investigate political and economic crimes, and human rights violations, as well as to promote social development and improve civil society participation.

The crisis in Mali, and the international fight against terrorism in the region, further strengthened security cooperation between Burkina Faso, and regional (e.g., Mali) and international (e.g., France, the United States) partners. For instance, the United States and Burkina Faso engaged in a number of military training and exchange programs, particularly in counterterrorism. Burkina Faso hosts two regionally-oriented national schools financed by French cooperation, which take in trainees from third countries: ISEPC, the higher education institute for civil protection, and EMTO, the technical military academy. In addition, in the framework of Operation Barkhane, which was launched in August 2014, France has a base of operations in Ouagadougou.

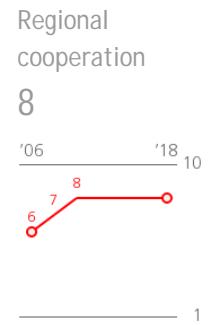


Cooperation with neighboring countries is strong, even though Burkina Faso had some problems with Côte d'Ivoire and Togo after the collapse of the Compaoré régime. Now Burkina Faso's relations with these two countries are very friendly. Regional organizations, such as ECOWAS, in which Burkina Faso actively engages, have further consolidated this dynamic.

Working within a regional context is a key element of Burkina Faso's statehood. More than 60 ethnic groups in the country have cross-border settlements; nomads and migrant workers depend on pastures and jobs in neighboring countries; the fight against desertification, non-state armed groups/terrorism and trafficking is impossible without regional collaboration; seaport access for landlocked Burkina Faso is dependent upon agreements with neighbors to the south; and the CFA franc pegs the country to other states with the same currency.

The ongoing crisis in adjoining Mali has led to new challenges, which have shaken the authorities in Burkina Faso. Despite the signing of the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali in June 2015, insecurity continues to exacerbate migration pressures in the region. More than 33,000 Malian refugees are still living in Burkina Faso in camps managed by the U.N. refugee agency (UNHCR) and the Burkinabe government in the Sahel region. The majority of refugees are living in two refugee camps (close to the desert towns of Djibo and Dore) where the climate is harsh, there is increasing competition over natural resources and people's quality of life is deteriorating.

At the same time, the fragmentation of the Malian state and its consequences pose a major threat to the stability of the whole region and increase the risk that Islamist terrorist groups such as AQIM will rise in influence in the Sahelian countries, including Burkina Faso.



## Strategic Outlook

The period under review saw quite a high level of conflict and instability. The challenges Burkina Faso is now facing are enormous. In the 54 years since decolonization, the political system has been characterized by putsches and military rule, and half of this period was under Blaise Compaoré. Though hopes for a fundamental political transition are currently weak, 2015 was, nevertheless, a unique year in Burkina Faso: It is beyond example that a whole country opposed a military coup and therewith forced the putschists to resign and, for the first time in the country's history, free elections were held, which were won by a presidential candidate without a military background. Still, many representatives of the oppositional groups, who had protested against Blaise Compaoré and his planned renewed term, were ultimately disappointed by the subsequent transitional phase. With regard to impunity, corruption and reprocessing of human rights violations, achievements remain far behind many people's ambitions.

The new president must now take responsibility for the political, social and legal reappraisal of the Blaise Compaoré era. This includes the development of a multiparty system that makes representative democracy possible and in which other parties can seriously compete with the CDP after its two decades as the ruling party. Until now, party politics in Burkina Faso mainly served as a way to secure access to and control the distribution of state resources, rather than as a mechanism for achieving political consensus and majorities. However, Burkina Faso's greatest challenge lies in the redefinition of the role of the military. Above all, this means the effective limitation of the power of the military, the neutralization of the army as a political actor and the subjugation of the armed forces to transparent parliamentary control.

There must be a legal reappraisal of cases of murder and disappearances that in all probability were politically motivated. These legal proceedings should not be limited to the well-known cases of Thomas Sankara and Norbert Zongo, but also include those of political activists from student, human rights and trade union movements. An important requirement for ensuring that future governments in Burkina Faso do not use the same violent methods for dealing with the opposition as in the past is the clarification and public reappraisal of these cases, and legal proceedings against the responsible political and military perpetrators.

Key issues that need to be addressed include: democratic transformation; investigation of political and economic crimes, and human rights violations; combating impunity and corruption; managing natural resources and economic growth in an inclusive way, so that all Burkinabè, in particular the poor and marginalized groups, can benefit from the country's potential.

The government will need to continue its economic reform program to meet its poverty reduction objectives. The mining sector, in particular the gold mining sub-sector, are forecast to be the major drivers of economic growth. The mining code does not need to be further revised, but strengthened with by-laws that put the communal development fund into effective practice. The output of the agricultural sector will depend heavily on climate conditions, although there is also a lack of

adequate irrigation systems and reservoirs. The diversification of the sector and the expansion of irrigation systems are urgently needed. The level of support and the impact of measures envisaged by the government will influence cotton sector growth.

Better targeting of poverty alleviation measures remains an urgent task upon which the government has not yet fully embarked, and which also faces structural constraints. Furthermore, the country must continue improving its difficult business environment, for example, by strengthening the judicial framework. Burkina Faso should enforce the diversification of its main sectors and increase public spending to further support agricultural development, and it should invest in public works to reduce high vulnerability to external shocks and to provide employment opportunities. Finally, a stronger emphasis should be put on education, social protection and gender policies in order to promote socioeconomic development.