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MANAGEMENT SUPPORT AND TECHNICAL ANALYSIS SERVICES (MSTAS) PROJECT

Changing Nature of Conflict Study

Phase One - Literature Review



June 20, 2016

This report was produced for review by the United Agency for International Development. It was prepared by the USAID Management Support and Technical Analysis Services (MSTAS) Project implemented by The Pragma Corporation and its partners in compliance with contract No. AID-OAA-M-13-00012.

Figure 1 Sub-Saharan Africa, Political Map¹



¹ Source: <https://aphg2015mhs.wordpress.com/2016/01/10/sub-saharan-africa-map-quiz/>

List of acronyms

ACLED	Armed Conflict Location and Event Data
AQIM	al-Qaeda of the Islamic Maghreb
CAR	Central African Republic
CPG	Conflict, Peacekeeping and Governance
DCAF	Democratic Control of Armed Forces
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
GED	Georeferenced Event Dataset
GTD	Global Terrorism Database
IANSA	International Action Network on Small Arms
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IS	Islamic State
ISS	Institute for Security Studies
MSTAS	Management Support and Technical Analysis Services
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
SCAD	Social Conflict Analysis Database
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
TOC	Transnational Organized Crime
UCDP	Uppsala Conflict Data Program
UN	United Nations
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WDR	World Development Report

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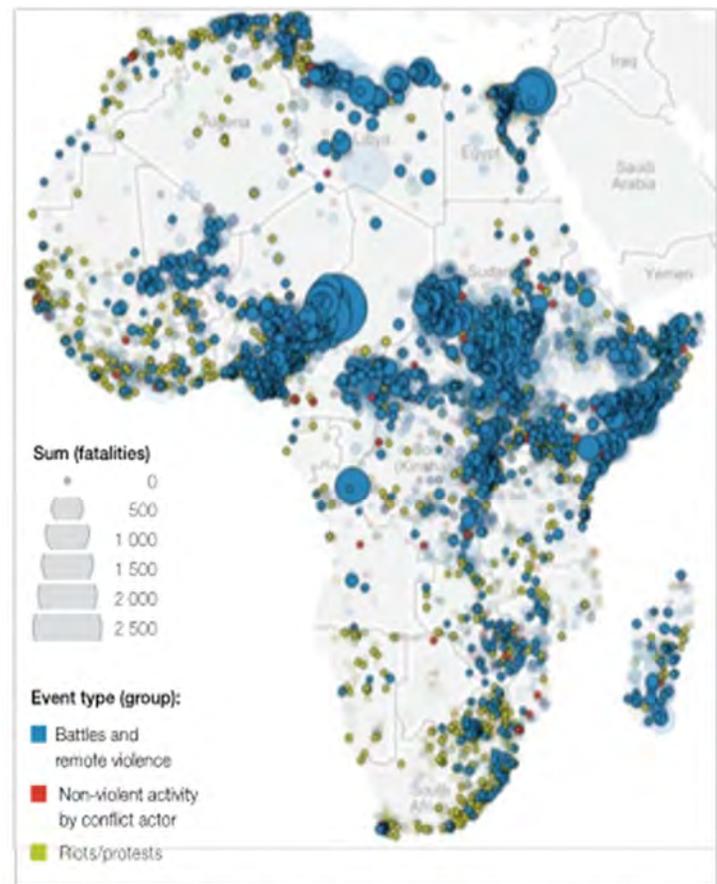
1.0 INTRODUCTION

Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is one of the most violent regions in the world in terms of sustaining the most wartime deaths per decade, and these conflicts and their trajectories, trends, and impacts are critical to understand and mitigate in order to ensure economic growth, inclusive development and regional stability. Sub-national conflicts involving contending armed and communal groups have become a major concern in many countries in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), such as Somalia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Central African Republic (CAR), Mali and Nigeria. The trajectory of conflict in SSA has had devastating economic and social impacts; for example, in 2000, 30 major conflicts, including 10 of the 23 civil wars taking place worldwide, were located in SSA. In 2014 there were more than 4,500 clashes between armed groups and more than 4,000 instances of armed violence against civilians.² Armed conflict stripped African economies of an estimated \$18 billion per year between 1990 and 2005, or approximately the equivalent amount of international aid from major donors in the same time period (IANSA et al., 2007). Even in the absence of active conflicts, many SSA countries carry the social, physical and economic scars of violent struggles from the past as they seek to develop and grow. As borders between countries in SSA grow increasingly established, rates of combat death as associated with interstate conflict are in decline. The fundamental nature of conflict has changed in the region towards increasingly intrastate-armed violence and the dividing line between armed conflict, organized crime and ideological extremist violence has become blurred. Unpacking the changing nature of violent conflict in the region is critical to understanding effective mechanisms to improve livelihoods and diminish the negative impacts of conflict on people and resources in SSA.

Figure 2 shows armed conflict in Africa between 1997 and 2014, as gathered from Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) (Cilliers, 2015). This 'hotspot' representation of conflict reveals distinct trends in the geographic loci of violent conflicts in Africa. The broad middle belt of the African continent represents a disproportionate conflict burden over this time period, with concentrations of highly fatal conflicts in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa, with greater stability in southern Africa. While the reasons for these geographic trends are as nuanced as the conflicts themselves, this literature review attempts to synthesize research and data to begin understanding conflict trends and drivers for SSA from 1995 to the present.

Though the origins of conflict in the region are as diverse as the conflicts themselves, general themes emerge from the literature as trends of conflict in the last twenty years. Conflict trends are categorically diverse and include

Figure 2 Map of Politically Violent Events in Africa, 1997-2014. (Cilliers, 2015).



Source: ACLED version 5, All Africa 1997 - 2014, www.acleddata.com/bitstream/version-5-data-1997-2014, updated with Realtime data to 3 September 2015, www.acleddata.com/data/realtime-data-2015 (both accessed 13 September 2015). ACLED gathers data in nine event types that have been collapsed into three event types in this figure.

² The Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) data set, March 2014.

political, economic, social, and environmental components. This research paper focuses on the following emergent conflict trends:

- **Trends in Non-State Violence;**
- **Trends in Ideological Conflict;**
- **Trends in Forced Displacement and Migration;**
- **Trends in Youth;**
- **Trends in Governance; and**
- **Trends in Transnational Organized Crime (TOC).**

While these topics are not exhaustive of the nature of conflict in SSA, they do contain a broad range of conflicts that have emerged in the last generation. Additionally, these conflict trends have running through them the theme of **exclusion, marginalization, and discrimination**. As a prominent force of conflict, exclusion and marginalization course thematically through each sub-category. Consistently in the literature, identity categories, when excluded from social, political, or economic processes were correlated with increased rates of armed conflict. In SSA, where competition for power, wealth, land and resources is intense, divisions along lines of identity become prominent forces in driving conflict. In the vast majority of these marginalization or exclusion circumstances feature prominently. The identity itself is not the driver of conflict, but rather, the relationship between that identity and the centralized government or the broader context of the state and that identity.

As borders have become more rigid since the end of the Cold War, subnational conflict actors have diversified and intercommunal conflicts are a major prominent component of conflict in SSA. Though generally smaller in scale, non-state actor conflicts can be very fatal and can erupt quickly. Because they do not rely on national identities, inter-communal conflicts can flow readily across porous borders in the region. These conflicts are generally centered on resources, territory, or authority, and can represent the grievances of a group or groups not being met within the centralized state. Additionally, most inter-communal conflicts occur in regions with simultaneous state conflicts.

Ideological and politically-driven conflicts have been on the rise in the last generation. Though the impacts of violent extremism are intensified with global media coverage and the popular imagination, the spread of ideologically-motivated conflict actors within the region is a clear trend in the literature. With loci in the west with Boko Haram, in the east with Al-Shabaab, and al-Qaeda of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in the Sahel, these sub-regional conflict actors who are ideologically motivated play important regional roles in conflict trends. With violence targeting civilians, this type of conflict causes massive forced migration, natural resource pressures, and transnational engagement. Additionally, these conflict actors are linked to trends in transnational organized crime to fund their political and ideological movements.

SSA continues to have the highest number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) globally. In addition to recognized refugee populations, IDPs in the region stress tenuous resource relationships, and can aggravate subnational conflicts. Recent upward trends in asylum seekers and economic migrants across SSA into Europe are disconcerting as established transnational criminal and terrorist networks are actively engaged in human smuggling and trafficking (Reitano, et al., 2014). SSA is also urbanizing very rapidly, and the next generation will see a dramatic urban influx. Considering that the majority of urban areas in SSA have vast proportions of the population living in slums, with little participation in the formal economy or political process, this urban migration is a conflict concern and an emerging trend.

Research into the role of youth in SSA conflict is beginning to emerge as an important trend. Through a variety of mechanisms, including economic and political marginalization, youth in SSA are vulnerable for recruitment as conflict actors. Additionally, if the demographic trends of youth population growth continue in SSA, a very large youth population in the region is forthcoming, and understanding the relationship between youth and conflict could become essential as this trend emerges.

Governments in SSA have generally been moving away from autocracy since the end of the Cold War. However state upheaval and instability is a commonplace occurrence during these transitions. State governments and their

various governing methods are more or less prone to distinct patterns in conflict.

Transnational organized crime in the region has been increasing since SSA began integrating in the global marketplace in the late 1980s. Although specific forms of TOC, e.g., arms trafficking and trade in blood diamonds, have been explored in the literature over the past several decades, the role of TOC writ large in conflict has been increasingly explored in the past several years. Some conflict actors perpetuate TOC to finance political or ideological operations. In addition to providing financing for other violent actors, TOC itself can lead to violence when TOC actors fight for control of the market or territory with rivals and/or security forces. TOC can also flourish in post-conflict and other contexts where criminal networks can capitalize on weak or nascent institutions and readily influence state actors to perpetuate their activities.

Understanding these conflict trends and drivers is essential for effective development planning, particularly as more than half of all U.S. foreign assistance goes to conflict-affected, post-conflict or fragile states (US State Department, 2010). The longer these communal conflicts continue to spread violence and backpedal decades of economic development, the more difficult it will become to regain these hard-earned advances in SSA. Using data from previous and current conflicts, the fundamental structure and order of these conflicts can hopefully be better understood. Then, development partners can engage communities at a meaningful flashpoint before a conflict manifests. By looking to the warning signs based on trends within past conflicts, we can move to a more predictive understanding of conflicts as they develop. Understanding the trends and drivers of conflict also enables partners working in conflict-afflicted areas to effectively plan and implement development projects that work within conflict contexts to improve livelihoods without unintended negative consequences that favor conflict itself.

2.0 METHODS, LIMITATIONS AND STUDY PARAMETERS

This literature review analyzes conflict trends in SSA over the past 20 years (1995 – present). The focus of the literature review is to explicate and describe major conflict trends in this region and identify key gaps in the understanding of relevant factors that drive conflict in this region. It includes a review of existing literature on conflict trends as well as research conducted by regional think tanks, and national and international organizations working on conflict mitigation and conflict prevention in SSA. Sources reviewed included four layers of research and analysis:

- ✓ *Layer 1, Individual Scholars and Experts:* This included a review of academic research, journal articles, and research papers from peer-reviewed publications. Criteria included: (1) academic credentials, (2) evident credibility in area of expertise (years of experience, research projects, quotes sources etc.), and (3) evidence of published articles in peer-reviewed journals.
- ✓ *Layer 2, Think Tanks (International and Regional):* This included a review of articles, analysis, and studies done by think tanks focused on Africa. Criteria included: (1) consistent analysis and work in SSA, (2) analysis of constituencies, and (3) evidence of published research and strategic dissemination.
- ✓ *Layer 3, Social Media Platforms (Donors, Multilaterals and Development Organizations):* This included a review of donor, multilateral and development related blog sites, articles, conflict analysis, and popular studies such as the World Bank, the UN, other donors, and NGO social media platforms. Criteria included: (1) review of research methods (triangulation with known and established data sets), (2) case study support, and (3) evidence of practitioner or expert status (10 + years in field of analysis or political discussion).
- ✓ *Layer 4, Triangulation with Established Data Sets and Conflict Analysis Projects:* Apart from contextual analyses from a variety of sources, the paper also triangulated research reviewed with data from large conflict data providers, such as the Uppsala Conflict data program (UCDP) at the Uppsala University in Sweden, the Armed Conflict Location and event data project (ACLED) at the University of Texas – Austin, the Social Conflict Analysis Database (SCAD) at the University of Texas – Austin, and the Global Terrorism database (GTD) hosted by the University of Maryland.

Research Parameters

For clarification, established research parameters and definitions were used to increase the utility of this report for USAID and USG stakeholders. Please see *Annex II, Glossary of Relevant Terms* for clarification and use of particular and recurrent terms.

Geographic and Regional Analysis

The SSA region includes all African countries except those listed as part of North Africa. North Africa consists of Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia. These countries were not reviewed, save where transnational crime or instability impacts these countries and/or region.

Understanding Data Sets

This literature review focuses on six major conflict data sets, with a particular emphasis on the Uppsala Conflict Data Programme Georeferenced Event Dataset (UCDP-GED) and the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED). For a more detailed explanation of these data sets and the others cited in this document, see Annex III.

3.0 DEFINING “CONFLICT TRENDS”

There is an abundance of available literature concerning conflict in SSA. In order to ensure the overall clarity of this research and dispense with popular sentiments that may not be supported by research and data, it is important to rigorously define conflict trends. For the purpose of this literature review, a “conflict trend” meets the following criteria: 1) cited as a conflict pattern or trend in more than three research studies and sources; 2) supported by one or more of the selected data sets spanning the period of review of this study, 3) cited as a concern to development partners, national actors, and/or donors, AND 4) cited as concern by regional institutions or bi-lateral governments working on security and conflict mitigation in SSA.

This study also distinguishes between “conflict drivers,” “conflict trends” and “conflict triggers” in order to more fully understand the dynamics of conflict in the region (Downie and Cooke, 2011). When analyzing sub-national conflict trends, this paper considers the conflict drivers and conditions of a country. Conflict drivers refer to a specific country’s historical or entrenched identity as it contributes to the overall dynamics of the country. These are diverse, and could include colonial history, sub-national power dynamics, population growth and age distribution, economic growth and unemployment, urbanization rates, etc. The structural identity of a country contributes in a theoretically predictive manner to understand which conflict trends are likely to develop and what will trigger conflict at a sub-national or national level. While conflict drivers may be present for a place, peace may persist if the conflict trends are favorable over time and there is no conflict trigger.

While a conflict trend as defined above is a long-term dynamic that can be analyzed nationally or regionally over a set period of time, and a conflict driver is a set of attributes specific to a place and its people, a conflict trigger is an event that, when combined with structural conditions, can instigate conflict. A conflict trigger is a concrete event that marks a transitional moment for conflict dynamics and could include events such as elections, natural disasters, or economic collapse (USAID, 2012).

4.0 GENERAL AND SUB REGIONAL TRENDS IN SSA (1995 – PRESENT)

Since the upsurge in violence immediately following the end of the Cold War, civil war in SSA has decreased steadily (Cilliers, 2015). However, other forms of lethal political violence have increased since 1995 (Raleigh, et al., 2013). The perpetrators of political violence have become more diverse and the actors have shifted, becoming increasingly localized and informalized (Raleigh, et al., 2013; Marshall, 2006). This is evidenced by the increase in non-state actor deaths and the increase in one-sided deaths, with a simultaneous decrease in battle deaths (Gleditsch, et al, 2002). Social and Political violence has increased precipitously in recent years, with 2014 the most deadly year on the subcontinent since the end of the Cold War (Cilliers, 2015; Melander, 2015). However, most countries are experiencing less violence and 92 percent of all fatalities recorded in 2014 in all of Africa occurred in nine countries (in order of fatalities per 100,000 people): the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Nigeria, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Egypt (Cilliers, 2015 and ACLED, 2015). In absolute numbers, Nigeria represents the highest fatalities, over 25 percent of the total African fatalities in 2014 (Cilliers and Hedden, 2014). But when adjusted for population, Nigeria falls to the sixth deadliest African country.

Figure 3, below, shows the fatalities reported to the UCDP from 1989 – 2014 for all three categories of violence in Africa, as overlaid with global rates (Melander, 2015). State-based violence in Africa has dropped precipitously since 2000, while one-sided violence and non-state based violence have both increased over the same period. Compared with the global trend line, Africa bears a disproportionate burden of both one-sided violence and non-state based violence, even with the exclusion of 500,000 estimated fatalities in 1994 from the Rwandan genocide. All three categories have risen since 2010, contributing to 2014 as the deadliest year for which data is available in this study period, though fatalities are far lower than they were in the years immediately following the genocide in Rwanda (see also Cilliers, 2015). As UCDP is conservative with reporting, these values should be seen as a minimum of fatalities in all categories.

Figure 3 Yearly fatalities in organized violence (thousands), 1989-2014 in Africa, as collected from UCDP data as overlaid with global figures for all three categories, excluding the 1994 Rwandan genocide (Figure from Melander, 2015).

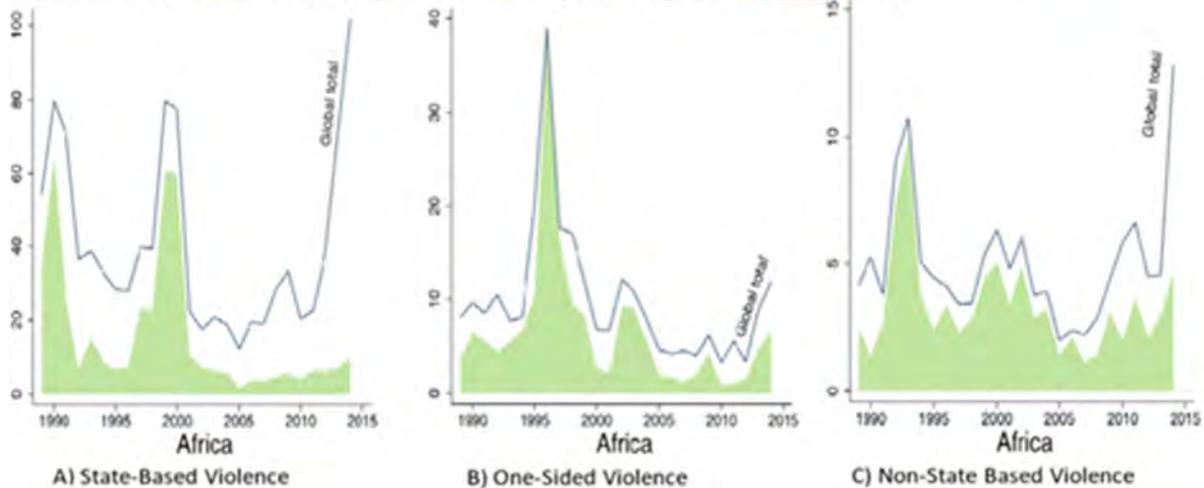
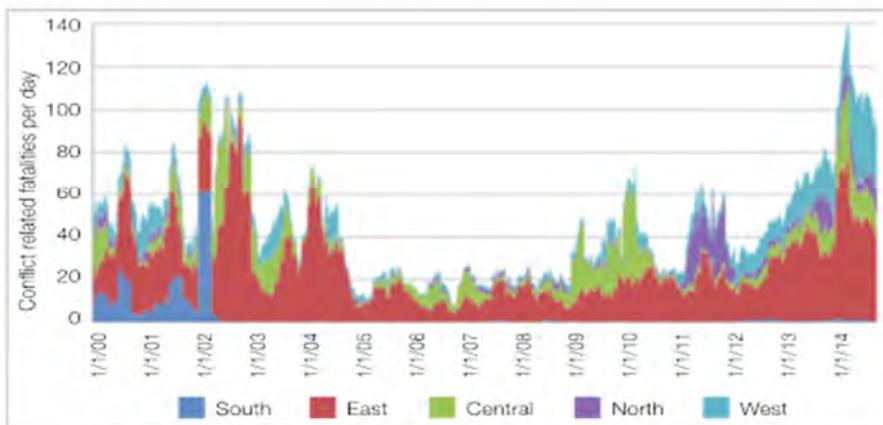


Figure 4, below, shows the regional burden of conflict in Africa, utilizing the ACLED dataset (Cilliers and Hedden, 2014). Consistently, East Africa/Horn of Africa has a higher conflict burden, due in large part to conflicts in Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan. Southern Africa has the lowest conflict burden. Though the region is slowly democratizing, southern African countries are often authoritarian in nature (with the exception of South Africa). Southern Africa also has some of the countries most newly independent from colonial rule.

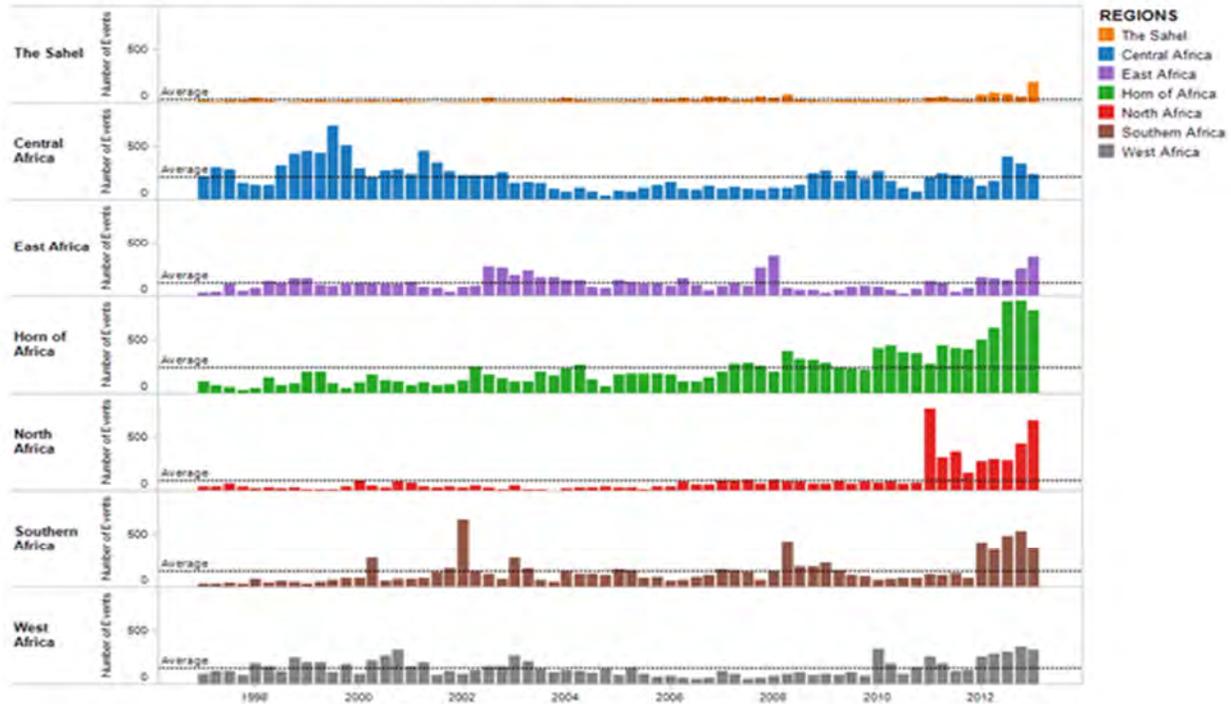
Figure 4 Conflict-related fatalities per day in Africa by region between January 2000 and September 2014, using ACLED. Figure from Cilliers and Hedden, 2014.



Source: ACLED dataset, www.acleddata.com (accessed 4 October 2014)

Figure 5 shows the same dataset, this time disaggregated by region. In addition to the consistently high levels of conflict in central Africa, the general increase in conflict in recent years is a striking feature of the graph. This dramatic conflict increase is noticed most acutely in the Horn of Africa.

Figure 5. Sub-regional conflict trends, Africa, 1990-2014. (ACLED, 2014).



Conflict in SSA is increasingly diverse, with a greater number of non-state actors, and an increase in one-sided violence. The last six years, especially, have seen a dramatic increase in all categorical conflict actors of political violence, with government forces and political militias responsible for most political violence (Raleigh, et al., 2015). Figure 6 shows both the increase in absolute conflict, and the increased diversity of conflict actors in the region. Political militias accounted for nearly one-third of all conflict in Africa in the most recent years. Since the mid-1990s, the proportion of battles has decreased, while there have been strong increases in the proportional rates of riots and protests, accounting for about 40% of political violence recorded (Raleigh, et al., 2015). This trend of increase in riots and protests could be related to regime change and increasing rates of democratization (Cilliers and Schunemann, 2013).

Figure 6. Political Violence by Conflict Actor Type in Africa, 2009-2015. ACLED, <http://www.acleddata.com/agents-of-violence-in-2015/>

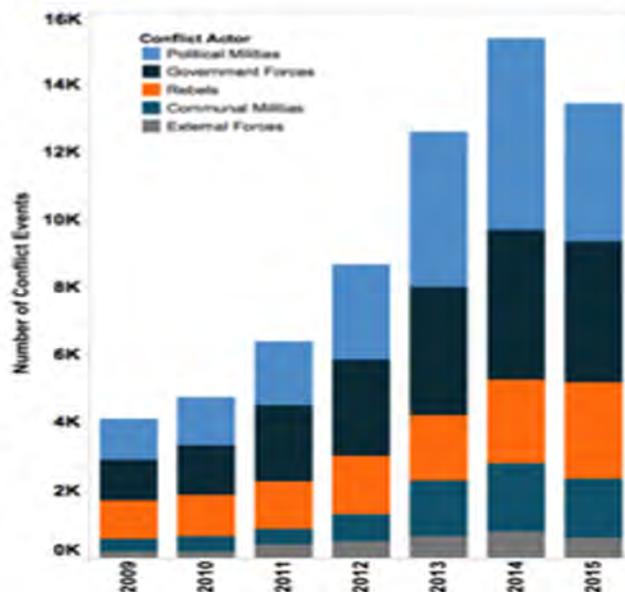


Figure 7 shows the trends in political violence by conflict type. The research, however, is inconclusive as ACLED is the sole source for comprehensive data on riots and protests. UCDP data indicates a similar increase in all conflict actors in recent years, with 2014 representing a particularly violent year in SSA (Pettersson, and Wallensteen, 2015).

Additionally, the line between political violence and criminal violence is increasingly blurred (World Bank, 2011). Though an early trend, therefore ambiguous in the literature, one hypothesis is that the competition between multiple non-state actors drives criminality for political gain (Cilliers & Schunemann, 2013; Shaw & Reitano, 2013). An additional trend of recent years is the increase in violent Islamist extremism³ in SSA. Since 1997, the number of records in ACLED of violent events involving politically motivated groups with ties to violent Islamist extremism has increased ten-fold (Dowd, 2013).

A large proportion of this increase is the result of increased activity in Somalia and Nigeria where Al-Shabaab and Boko Haram, respectively, have increased their conflict impact. But, there is also a discernable spread across the continent, both south and east of this ideological extremism. Figure 8 shows both the increase in violent Islamist activity across the whole continent, but also the increase in diversity of activity by country.

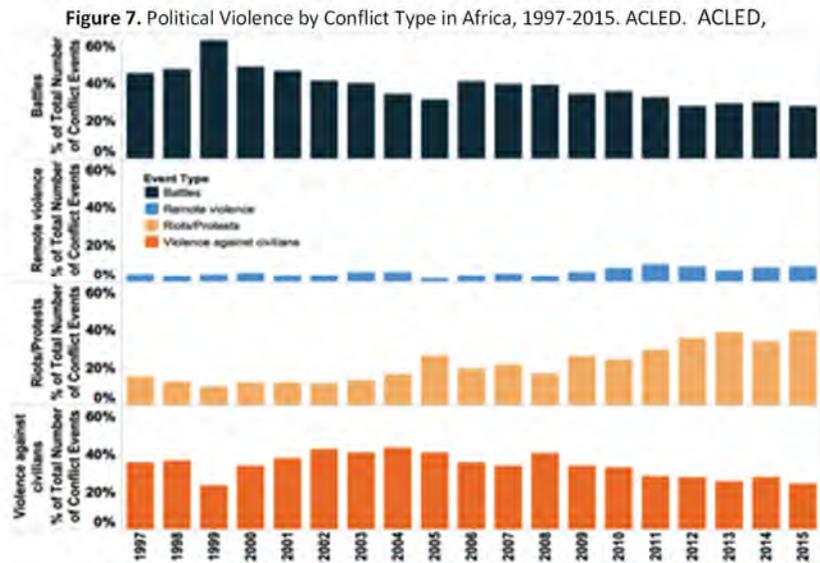
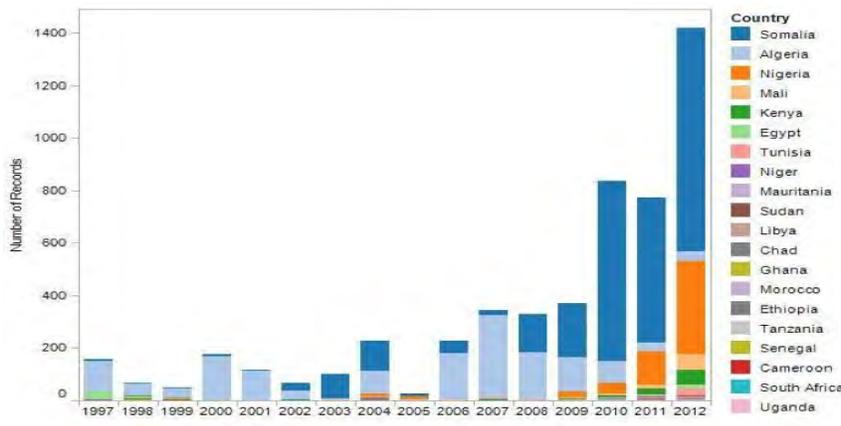


Figure 8. Violent Islamist activity by country, 1997-2012. Figure from Dowd, 2013.



Chad, Ghana, Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Senegal had fewer than 10 recorded incidents in 1997, but recorded incidents for these countries have increased substantively, particularly in 2012. The research didn't reveal any more recent data to extend this trend line, however, as ideologically - motivated violence has increased in the most recent years, it is very likely that this trend has continued and spread.

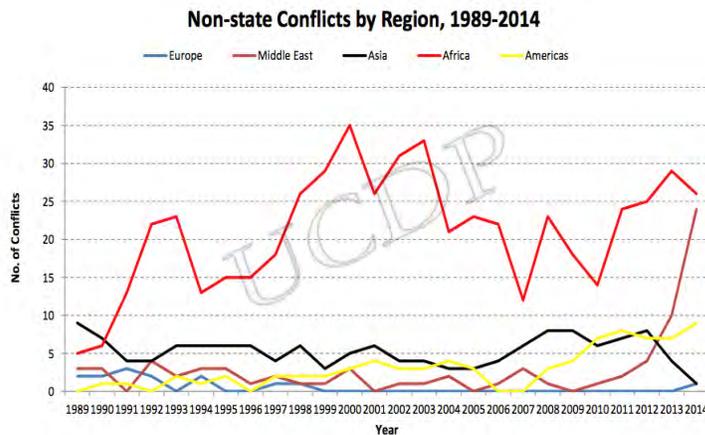
³ "Islamist" in "violent Islamist extremism" (VIE) refers to the fact that VE organizations frequently invoke concepts or symbols from Islamic texts, practices, or history, in order to articulate their political agenda and justify their actions. "Islamist" -- and not "Islamic" -- is used in order to underscore that the VE in question is not inherent to Islam, but entails the manipulation of Islamic referents by political actors.

4.1 TRENDS IN NON-STATE CONFLICT

SSA accounts for the largest global burden of non-state based conflict (Cilliers, 2015), a disproportionate trend that has been consistent since the end of the Cold War⁴. Conflict in this category is very diverse, and can include both violence against civilians and violence between non-state actors. Figure 9, below, shows non-state conflicts by region between 1989 and 2014. The African continent has seen a startling increase in non-state conflicts since the end of the Cold War, and the rates of conflict have remained high since then. Many of these conflicts can be described as ethnic or inter-communal conflicts.

With over three thousand ethnic groups and nearly as many languages, the African continent is the most ethnically diverse continent in the world. Ethnic diversity is not intrinsically a primary source of conflict (Downie and Cooke, 2011). However, it is the primary form of self-identification in SSA, and as such, it is a malleable category for self-interested parties in positions of authority (Downie and Cooke, 2011; Hilker and Fraser, 2009). Ethnicity becomes a ready mechanism to create a clear competitor as Hilker and Fraser succinctly describe: “religion and ethnicity can be particularly powerful legitimizing discourses to explain and offer solutions to people’s predicaments, given their apparently symbolic rather than real nature.” Ethnic identification peaks during election times, times of resource stress, and times of economic crisis (Marshall, 2006; Downie and Cooke, 2011). These are also the primary times for upsurges in conflict in general, much of it categorized along these differences.

Figure 9. Non-State Conflicts by Region, 1989-2014. (Pettersson & Walleensteen, 2015).



Analyzing trends in inter-communal conflict with existing datasets in the region requires application of a uniform definition and a nuanced statistical analysis. For the purpose of this paper, inter-communal conflict is any subnational conflict between two or more non-state conflict actors with a shared communal identity. The broadness of this definition is designed to capture vulnerabilities and ambiguities within the datasets. It is possible to glean broad trends from available literature, however any data should be used cautiously. One of the difficulties in researching inter-communal conflict is definitional. Inter-communal conflict is interchangeably referred to in the literature as violent tribalism, ethnic conflict, or any conflict between two or more non-state actors. Both ACLED and UCDP capture episodes of inter-communal conflict under the category of one-sided violence or violence against civilians (Pettersson & Wallensteen, 2015; Raleigh & Dowd, 2015); however, they do not explicitly disaggregate the data for these categories by inter-communal conflicts.⁵ Additionally, if left unabated, inter-communal conflicts can become civil wars, and would then be coded differently in the datasets, though the origins of the conflict would be the same (Marshall and Gurr, 2006). Analyzing trends in inter-communal conflict with existing datasets in the region requires application of a uniform definition and a nuanced statistical analysis. For the purpose of this paper, inter-communal conflict is any subnational conflict between two or more non-state conflict actors with a shared communal identity.

⁴ In the most recent years, non-state actor conflict in the Middle East has been rising dramatically, as reflected in Figure 9. Despite this precipitous increase, the number of non-state actor conflicts in the Middle East is much lower than the mean for SSA.

⁵ Unidentified armed groups are classified by ACLED in the same way as ‘political militias’, because ACLED argues that these unidentified groups possess the same ‘mercenary’ trends of political militias (Raleigh & Dowd, 2015). However, it is possible that these unidentified groups, while engaged in non-state based conflicts, are not actors of inter-communal conflicts. Empirically, though, they are quantified the same. UCDP subdivides conflicts between informally organized groups as to whether their allegiance is identity-based or politically-based (Pettersson & Wallensteen, 2015).

The broadness of this definition is designed to capture vulnerabilities and ambiguities within the datasets. It is possible to glean broad trends from available literature, however any data should be used cautiously.

In the whole of the African continent, around 80% of communal conflicts between 1989 and 2011 occurred in a country that also had state-based conflict during the same period, indicating the likelihood of communal conflict being exacerbated by national conflicts (Torbjornsson, 2016). Examples of these countries include the DRC, Somalia, Burundi, Sudan, South Sudan, and Mali. Inter-communal conflict risk is much higher in post-conflict environments, as national conflict can exacerbate local level conflicts. This is in part due to displacement resulting from larger-level conflict (Torbjornsson, 2016). Torbjornsson (2016) argues that inter-communal conflicts in SSA are categorically:

- **Conflicts of authority**, where the main goal is to control the other party;
- **Lootable resources**, largely over livestock, timber resources or oil; or
- **Territory**, where the parties' goal is to control the land but not the people within a contested territory.

To some extent, these conflicts over territory and over authority could also be resource conflicts, particularly when the contested territory includes graze land or farmland, or when the authority figure represents the interests of an identity group with a vested interest in a territory. Torbjornsson (2016) also argues that Africa has a higher conflict burden of inter-communal conflict because of higher resource stress and natural resource dependence.

Several recent and ongoing inter-communal conflicts in the region stand out to help understand the diversity of these conflicts and the consequences. Inter-communal conflict, particularly in states with weak governance or in the midst of state conflict, can be highly fatal and self-sustaining (Marshall & Gurr, 2006). Additionally, because these are non-state actors without access to state resources, inter-communal conflicts can encourage criminality. These conflicts are also frequently conflicts over natural resources or political power understood along identity lines. Inter-communal conflicts, when delineated along ethnic or sectarian lines, can be rapidly expanding, as civilians within those identity groups become conflict actors.

In Darfur in 2014, inter-communal conflict comprised only 5% of all conflict in Darfur, but these conflict episodes accounted for over 20% of all fatalities (ACLED, 2015). Much of the inter-communal conflict in Darfur can be traced to Sudan's failing economy and historic resource conflicts between pastoralists and farmers. But, competition over oil also contributes to these conflicts, particularly in Kordofan (ACLED, 2015).

In Northern Kenya the inter-communal conflict between the Pokot and the Turkana ethnic groups (Schilling, et al., 2015) was historically another pastoralist conflict in a drought-prone region. However, the discovery of oil has transformed the conflict between these two ethnic groups into a conflict over resource rights and access. has become a conflict over oil since its discovery in recent years. This intercommunal conflict, again delineated along ethnic lines, is a resource competition over oil reserves, and has transformed an historic livelihoods conflict into violent land rustling and village destruction by both groups.

In the Central African Republic (CAR), inter-ethnic violence between Muslim militia groups of the Sahel and Christian militia groups of the savannah spiraled to such levels of fatality as the conflict increased to create entire armed communities (IRC, 2015). As the conflict between the anti-Balaka and the Seleka intensified, sectarian violence spread, and social division increased, eventually leaving half of CAR's population in need of humanitarian aid (UN, 2015). The sectarian violence in CAR illustrates an important component of inter-communal conflict: the rapid capacity for expansion of violence. When conflict actors are delineated along identity group lines, civilians within those identity groups are more likely to take up arms and become conflict actors (IRC, 2015).

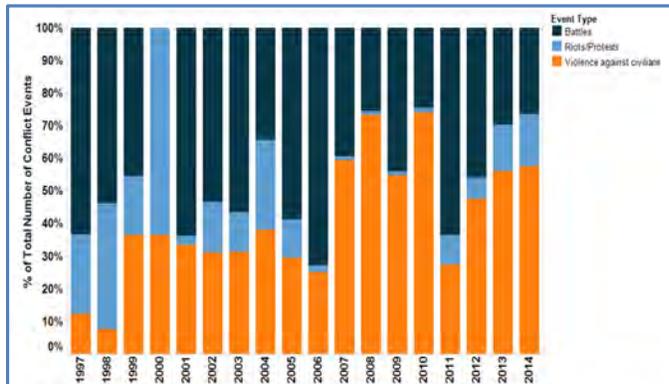


Figure 10. Percentage of Conflict Events and Reported Fatalities by Event Type, CAR, 1997-2014. (ACLED, 2015).

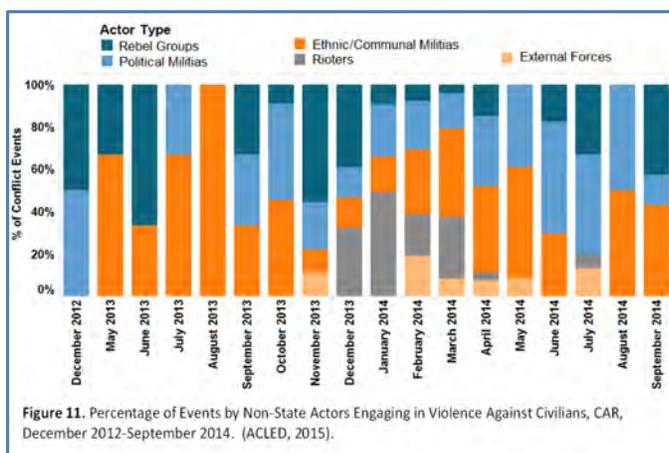


Figure 11. Percentage of Events by Non-State Actors Engaging in Violence Against Civilians, CAR, December 2012-September 2014. (ACLED, 2015).

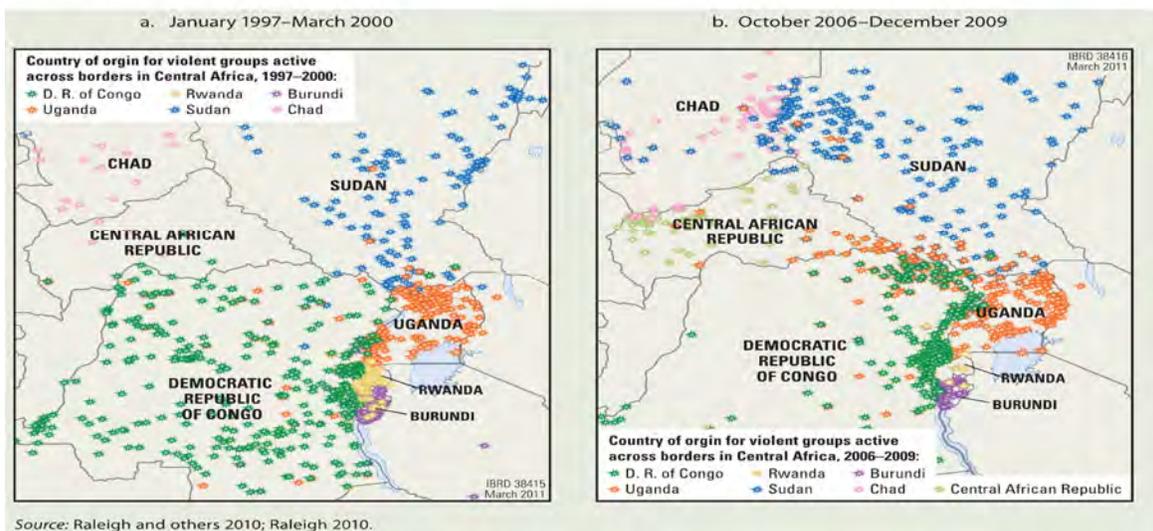
period, 80% occurring in areas with recent state conflicts. Difficult to empirically analyze, inter-communal conflicts are an important aspect of conflict in the region, responsible for a large number of civilian deaths and displacement.

Figure 10 shows the percentage of conflict events in CAR by event type, revealing that the majority of conflict violence in CAR is violence against civilians. Figure 11 sub-analyzes this category for the period of intense inter-communal violence in CAR, to show the percentage of conflict events by non-state actor type, showing the prevalence of ethnic and communal militia groups (largely anti-Balaka and Seleka). This level of analysis, as conducted by ACLED, shows the volatility of this inter-communal conflict, a prominent characteristic of this trend.

Another characteristic of inter-communal violence is the migration of conflict actors. Without state borders to dictate the fundamental nature of the conflict, inter-communal conflicts tend to be porous. Figure 12 shows the movement of conflict actors in central Africa from 1997-2000, and from 2006-2009 (World Bank, 2011). Particularly striking is the concentration of conflict groups along the eastern border of DRC in the second map, as well as the growing dispersal of conflict groups in Sudan and South Sudan.

Ethnic and Inter-Communal conflict in SSA is more likely in post-conflict settings or settings with ongoing state conflict. Generally, these conflicts are conflicts over access to resources along communal identity group lines. SSA has the largest global burden of non-state actors over the study

Figure 12. Movement of conflict actor groups in Central Africa, 1997-2000; and 2006-2009. (World Bank, 2011)



Source: Raleigh and others 2010; Raleigh 2010.

4.2 TRENDS IN VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Violent extremism is a type of violent conflict in SSA that causes massive social upheaval and global media interest. However, violent extremism does not act as a driver of conflict in the same way as the other categorical drivers. Rather, in many instances in SSA, violent extremism has been the end product of marginalization and exclusion. Defining violent extremism in SSA has historically been complicated because in many instances, such as in South Africa, groups that were labeled terrorists by western governments became liberation movements and eventually governments. Also, the distinctions between sub-national conflict actors (anti-Balaka in Central African Republic) and recognized terrorist organizations (such as al-Shabaab in Somalia) are often difficult to delineate (Cilliers, 2015). Though the Middle East remains the global region with the greatest incidence of violent extremism, three distinct multistate areas in sub-Saharan Africa have violent extremist groups with some connection to Islamic State (IS) or al-Qaeda: Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, al-Mourabitun and Ansar al-Dine all acting in the Sahel; Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin, and al-Shabaab in the Horn of Africa (Cilliers, 2013). Among these primary multinational terror actors are dozens of local armed groups. Sanderson (2016) highlights that all three of these groups began as local groups with pragmatic agendas. But as they have evolved they have seized more territory, and increased criminality to sustain their political/ideological end states. Territorial expansion has been most effective in poorly governed areas where lack of reach or state legitimacy provided an opportunity for territorial control.

Engagement with the IS and Al-Qaeda, and utilization of their cultivated media and tactical techniques, has enabled greater expansion by magnifying the terror of their message. The rapid proliferation of social media and the instantaneous, constant news cycle has played a role in guaranteeing the global circulation of conflict. In the case of violent Islamist extremism, particularly Al-Qaeda and the IS, this technology is essential for their growth and reputation. The rapid dissemination of images of their terror has magnified the impact of these groups arguably beyond their actual reach (Cilliers, 2015). Cilliers (2015) cites a Bloomberg Business report that indicated that lack of running water was responsible for more fatalities in Nigeria in 2014 than Boko Haram.

Boko Haram in Nigeria is an interesting example of violent extremism as an aspect of marginalization and exclusion. Boko Haram functions in disaggregated but well-organized areas across northern Nigeria. Up until very recently and its new affiliation with al-Qaeda, Boko Haram has remained uniquely Nigerian in character (Marchal, 2012), representing a national agenda. Characterized as a terrorist organization in part because of the targeting of civilians, prisons, politicians, schools, and infrastructure, Boko Haram has dramatically impacted daily life in areas of its activities (Marchal, 2012), particularly since the increase in violence beginning in 2014 (Cilliers, 2015). Most of the members of Boko Haram belong to the ethnic Kanuri, a former elite ethnicity of an empire founded in the modern-day province of Borno. Today the Kanuri are largely unemployed and illiterate with very poor access to education (Cilliers, 2015). The oil-rich Christian south of Nigeria has captured the vast majority of resource wealth, with Muslim Nigerians possessing only 25 percent of the wealth of Nigerian Christians. This economic marginalization is intertwined along ethnic and religious lines, enabling the tension to be understood as an ethnic/religious/ideological dispute. Further, the political marginalization of Kanuri Muslims from Abuja politics has isolated political discourse for this population to the most dominant shared cultural resource: the mosque. "When the mosque is the only outlet for mass politics the outcome is predictable: the Islamization of dissent," (Cilliers, 2015).

Men perpetrate most terrorist activity globally (OECD, 2009). However, specific circumstances increase the likelihood of women becoming actors of violent ideological extremism. Research by Badran (2006) into the radicalization of women in Muslim societies in Asia and Africa found that women who have lost loved ones in fighting, who are close to radical men, or women with strong political grievances are at risk of becoming engaged in extremist activities. Women may also join these groups for greater social authority, material gain, or out of religious pressure. In a study of suicide bombers from other regions (the Middle East, Sri Lanka, Colombia, and Chechnya), researchers found that motivations for women include fame and escaping monotonous gender expectations (Bloom, 2011). Similar research in Palestine concluded that these expectations frequently do not come to fruition and women are likely to be more discriminated against upon re-entry, in part for defying gender norms. Engaging in reduction or elimination of the structural forces that promote social, political, and economic divides between men and women may reduce the likelihood of women becoming involved in terrorist violence.

Figure 13 Terror incidents globally and in Africa from 1989-2014. Data from GTD, table from Cilliers, 2015.

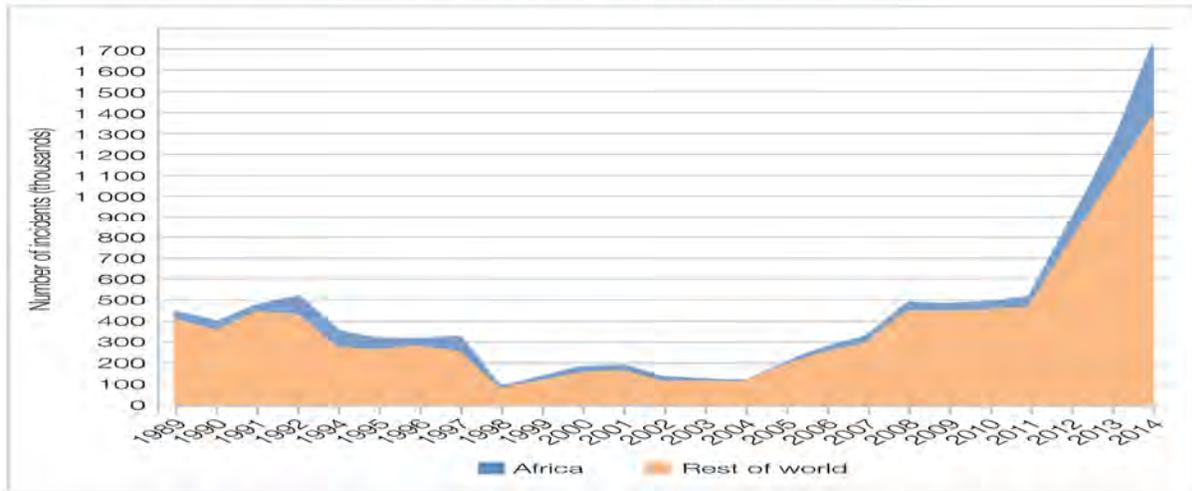


Figure 13 above shows the incidents of ‘terror’ in Africa and globally from 1989 until 2014 as computed by GTD. Africa represents a small proportion of global terror incidents, though the precipitous global increase in recent years is also reflected in Africa. This is due in large part to increased violence from Boko Haram. Addressing grievances that lead to terrorist activities is a matter of increasing inclusion: politically, socially, and economically.

Figure 14. Conflict events of Non-State Actor Seizing Territory by Location, 1997-October 2014. (ACLED, 2015b)



ACLED researchers recently studied whether the use of remote violence in SSA, such as improvised explosive devices (IEDs) or roadside bombs enable armed groups to attack targets that they don’t have the power to attack more directly (ACLED, 2015b). Data from the region supports this view, if the measure of strength is the expansion of territory. Since 1997, 4.57% of all battles in Africa have resulted in a non-state actor gaining territory. If the data includes only conflicts involving use of remote violence, that percentage drops to only 0.8%. Figure 14 shows all locations where non-state actors have seized territory from other non-state actors or from state actors between 1997 and 2014.

Figure 15 shows the use of remote violence over the same time period. While there is some overlap between the figures, there is a great deal of difference, indicating that remote violence may be indicative of a lack of combat capacity as Denselow suggests. Recent data of Al-Shabaab in Somalia is consistent with this trend. Since African Union troops pushed Al-Shabaab from Mogadishu in 2014 and the group lost territory, rates of remote violence by the terrorist organization have increased (Figure 16). This figure also shows how these groups have a tendency to use multiple tactics simultaneously.

Figure 15. Conflict Events of Remote Violence by Location, 1997-October 2014. (ACLED, 2015b).

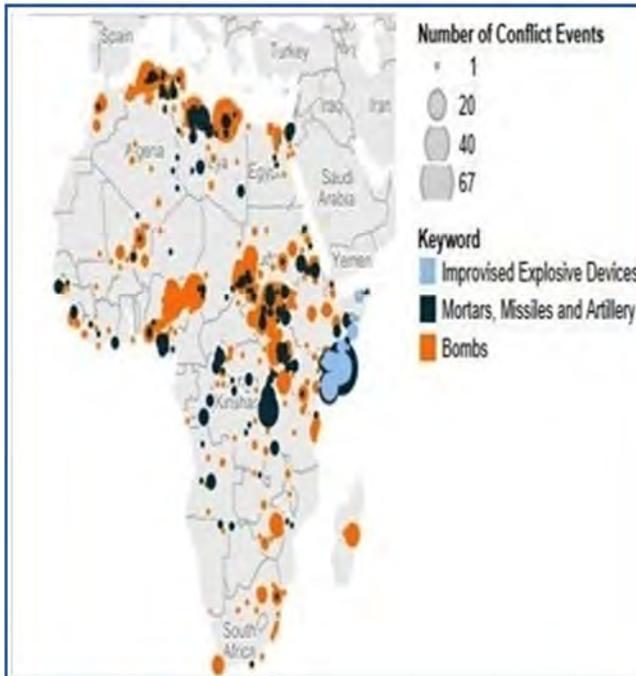
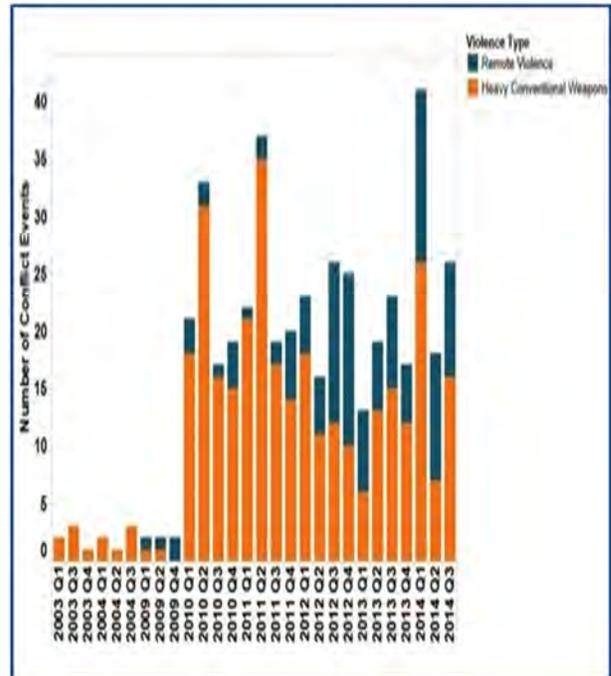


Figure 16. Conflict Events Involving Al-Shabaab Disaggregated by Weaponry, 2003-2014. (ACLED, 2015b)



4.3 TRENDS IN FORCIBLY DISPLACED POPULATIONS AND MIGRATION

SSA has the world's highest concentration of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and claims approximately 20 percent of the world's refugee population. More than 17 African countries have refugee populations of more than 50,000 persons each; Tanzania, Chad and Uganda are among the top refugee-hosting countries globally (Fischer and Vollmer, 2009). The voluntary and forced migration and displacement of people in SSA is both a product and cause of conflict. Displacement in the region can serve as an indicator of:

1. Poverty or Underemployment;
2. Armed Conflict; or
3. Environmental Degradation or Climate Change.

Further, population growth is correlated with increased displacement and migration (Naude, 2009). This is partly because a larger population necessarily decreases employment opportunities in regions where employment is tied to natural resources. It also increases resource competition for these primary resources. Naude (2009) found that while conflict is the primary driver for displacement in SSA, natural disasters and environmental degradation have played a statistically significant role in increasing displacement. He extrapolates further that displacement is correlated with economic loss, which increases conflict vulnerability. Finally, these forced displacements are likely

to be permanent; that is to say, return migration is negative. In 1995 there were roughly five million environmental refugees in the Sahel region of SSA, with only half returning home (Grote and Warner, 2009). Conflict and natural resource dependence can then be said to decrease economic growth, increasing poverty, and potentially fueling greater displacement, conflict, and resource degradation. This vicious cycle of poverty and resource dependence that typifies migration in the region is a massive economic loss for SSA, further decreasing stability (Naude, 2009).

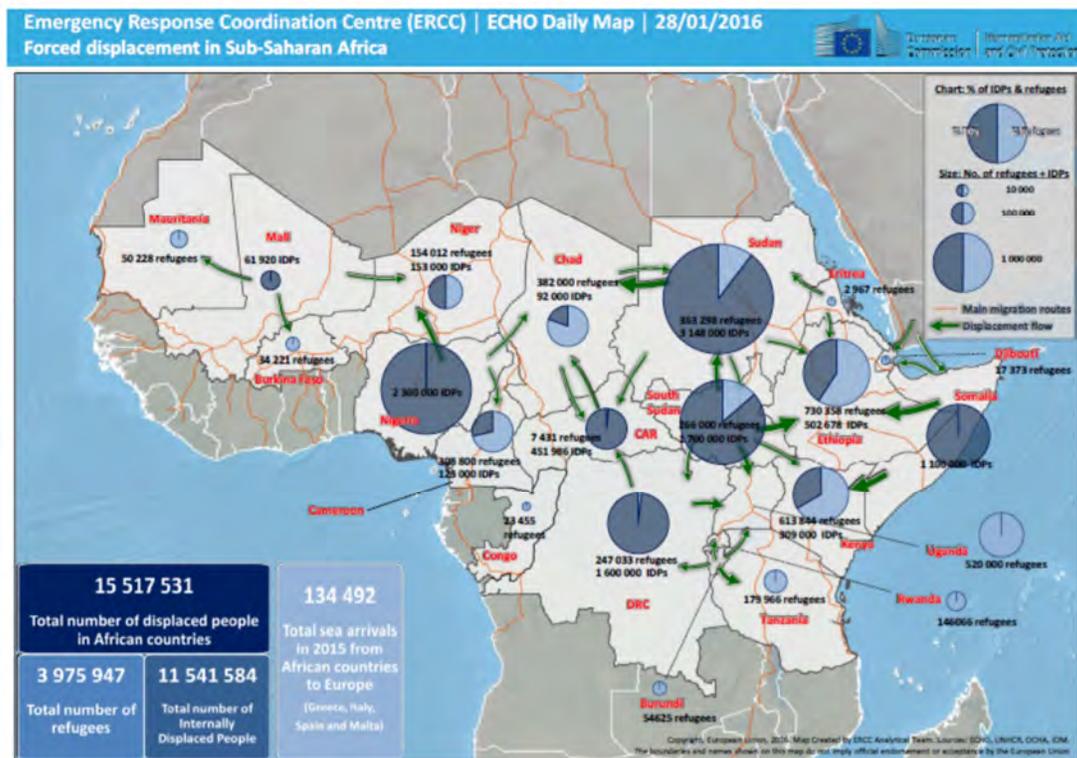
The three primary catalysts for migration are the products of insecurity as well as the causes of further insecurity. Displacement serves as a catalyst for conflict when it:

1. Threatens the sovereignty of host country borders;
2. Places an economic burden on host countries;
3. Creates a dense population of marginalized individuals, with little opportunity for return or economic development; or
4. Can be perceived as a threat to cultural identity of host populations.

In the event of an uncontrolled mass migration, a sudden influx of people might disrupt normal border flows and violate sovereign territory. Sudden immigration also causes stress to a host country's infrastructure and local resources. In this regard, migration can readily cause conflict as host country populations and new refugee populations compete for scarce vital resources. In the case of a refugee camp, or massive urban in-migration (e.g., Nairobi's Eastleigh suburb), a new population is created and defined by their marginalization. This dense concentration of marginalized people with very little economic opportunity can become a recruiting ground for radical ideologies that feed on separatism. Finally, an influx of an 'othered' population into a closed host society can create discrimination or suppression of minorities.

Figure 17, developed by the European Commission on Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection shows refugee and Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) populations and flows in SSA during 2015. Some countries, such as Rwanda,

Figure 17. Forced displacement in SSA, 2015. (European Commission on Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection, 2015).

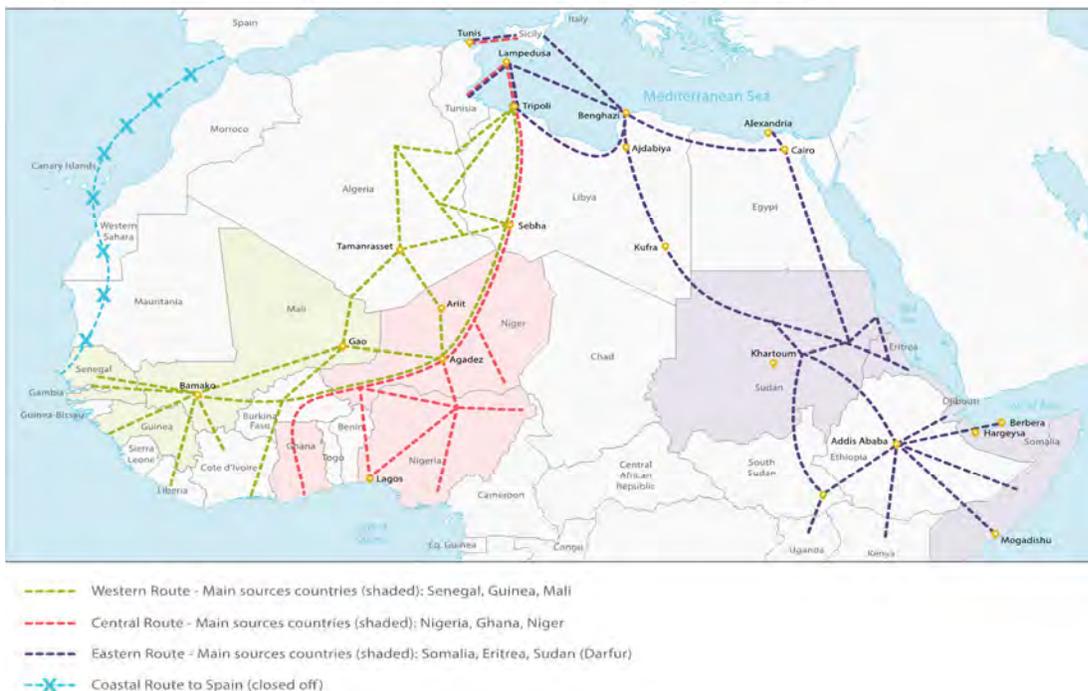


Tanzania, and Mauritania have only refugee populations, while the bulk of African forced displacement is in IDPs, especially in Nigeria, Sudan, South Sudan, DRC, CAR, and Somalia.

Additionally, in the case of refugee camps, security is often lacking, and when combined with the traumatic circumstances, violence within the camps may occur. The Chadian refugee camp, Farchana, houses approximately 20,000 Darfuris and is monitored by about 2,000 Chadian soldiers (Fischer and Vollmer, 2009). In this particular refugee camp, female refugees were at serious risk of sexual violence by both Janjaweed militiamen and Chadian citizens when they left the refugee camp searching for fuel wood. Up to 80 percent of all refugees are women and children, many of them suffering from a lack of education, at higher risk of child labor, exploitation, and sexual violence (Sheekh, 2009).

Beyond subnational or regional migration and displacement, there is a dramatic increase in human smuggling across SSA and across the Mediterranean Sea. Though this issue has been drawn into popular media outlets because of the European refugee crisis from Syria and the high fatalities in the Mediterranean in the last three years, especially, this migration route is an important conflict trend for SSA. There are two main migration routes for asylum-seekers from SSA, originating from some of the region’s most notoriously conflict-affected countries, supporting the notion of migration as an indicator of conflict (Reitano, et al., 2014). Though the flow to North Africa and across the Mediterranean to Europe is a mix of migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees, with complex and differing journeys (Malakooti, et al., 2015). Yet, they are following the same dangerous routes, often in the hands of the same dangerous smugglers. As Figure 18 below shows, the primary migration routes to Europe are the Western route, including movement from Senegal, Guinea, and Mali; the Central route, from Nigeria, Ghana, and Niger; and the Eastern route, including Somalia, Eritrea, and Sudan (Reitano, et al., 2014). These migration routes represent both human smuggling routes and human trafficking routes. Human trafficking via the Mediterranean Sea into Europe is deeply gendered, and is comprised of mostly women trafficked for sexual exploitation. In 2014, the arrival of trafficked women into Italy from SSA increased by 300%, most prominently from Nigeria and more recently, Cameroon (Malakooti, et al., 2015).

Figure 18. Common Migration Routes to Europe (Reitano, et al., 2014).



In a major study of migration trends across the Mediterranean by Altai Consulting for the International Organization for Migration (IOM), researchers found that primary motivations of migrants and asylum seekers are **“the need to flee from instability.”** For *economic migrants* from the region, these forms of instability are:

- Poverty;
- No livelihood options;
- Lack of regular employment;
- Low wages;
- No opportunity for education;
- Aspirational migration;
- Search for stability.

For Asylum seekers, the primary forms of instability are:

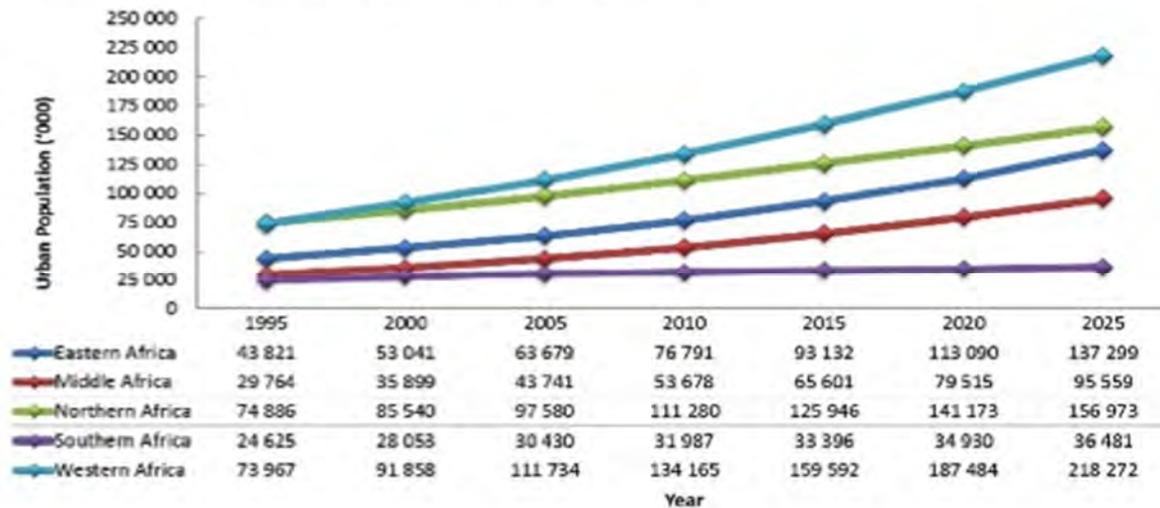
- War/conflict;
- Persecution.

The report is careful to point out that, though instability from war/conflict is the primary motivator for asylum seekers from SSA, there is an expectation of economic gain upon reaching Europe. In this way, tracking migration patterns, both forced and voluntary, becomes a tool for tracking both conflict and economic upheaval. Further investigation into migration patterns provides an angle through which transnational criminal networks can be accessed and analyzed, and for this reason is a very important conflict trend. Global Initiative argues that historical marginalization of transnational ethnic groups in the Sahelian region of Libya under Gaddafi’s regime permitted these groups to turn to smuggling and trafficking to earn a living, and since the fall of the regime, proliferation of these activities has only accelerated (Reitano, et al., 2014).

URBAN MIGRATION

Urban migration is a major facet of life in SSA, which is urbanizing faster than any other region in the world, 600 percent in the last 35 years (Sommers, 2010). Urbanization rates are anticipated to become more dramatic, with a tripling of SSA urban populations by 2050, 70% of those urban centers have fewer than 500,000 people today (UN, 2014). Figure 19 shows the anticipated urban growth rate by region within Africa, showing that while Southern

Figure 19. Urban Population Forecast by Region, Africa, 1995-2025. (UN, 2015).

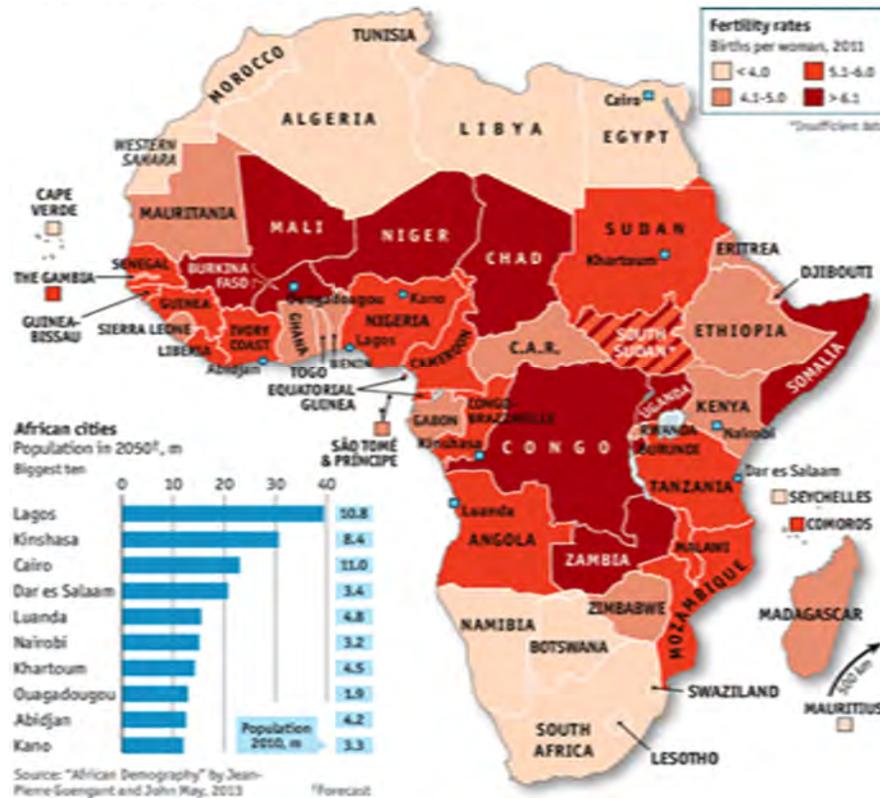


Source: UN Department of Economic & Social Affairs and Frost & Sullivan analysis.

Africa's urban populations will grow modestly, population growth is expected to be very dramatic in western African states.

Additionally, when projected urban population growth is combined with fertility rates, as in Figure 20, some interesting trends emerge. Most of the African countries with the highest fertility rates are in landlocked states in West Africa/the Sahel – notably Burkina Faso, Chad, Niger, and Mali. With the exception of Burkina Faso and the DRC, the countries with the highest fertility rates also do not have cities with the highest projected urban populations.

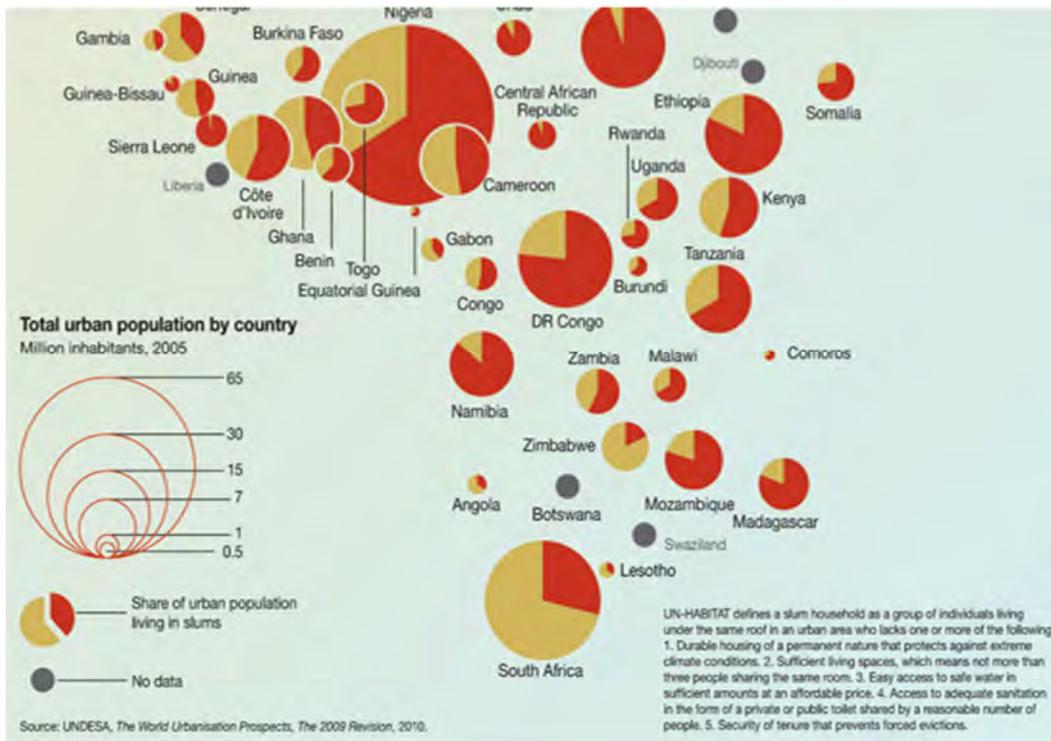
Figure 20. Fertility rates in Africa and urban population growth (Guengant and May, 2013)



In the case of Bahir Dar, Ethiopia, researchers mapped the city's expansion from 1957 to 2009 and found that the city expanded 31% annually, or 88 hectares per year (Haregeweyn, et al., 2012). This alarming pace of urbanization meant that 2,900 households had their farms seized between 2004 and 2009 for urban development. While most of these families received compensation, it was solely for the value of the farmland, and many of the farmers were illiterate and untrained for a transition to an urban livelihood. As urban populations subsumed these farms, food prices have increased within the city.

Conflict-affected countries are urbanizing even more quickly, and many refugees are fleeing camps and moving into cities (Sommers, 2010). In SSA, 72 percent of urban residents live in slum conditions. Figure 21 shows the proportion of urban populations in slum conditions. There is evidence that in nearly all conflict settings, young men are more likely to migrate than women or older men (Hilker and Fraser, 2009), particularly to urban areas. These urban “youth bulges” of young men have multi-faceted impacts on conflict. There is some indication that urban migration is a conflict-mitigating factor as it provides opportunities for interaction and coexistence between groups that would not mix in rural areas (Sommers, 2010). Further, the author argues that rural isolation and ethnic fear in Burundi and Rwanda fueled tensions and eventual genocide and that rural-urban migration was key for enhancing educational, employment and marriage prospects, particularly for young men. However, the literature also indicates that urban youth migration leads to criminality, unrest, and political, economic, and social isolation. Sommers (2003) notes that urban African migrants are “a majority feeling like a minority,” overlooked by political elite, by economic opportunity, and by traditional intergenerational society. The cultural and technological changes that urban migrants are exposed to make reverse migration less likely, and urban migration is generally permanent (Sommers, 2003). Some research suggests that these displaced urban migrants, particularly recent arrivals, are vulnerable for recruitment into violence by extremists (Richards, 2003, cited in Hilker and Fraser, 2009). However, Urdal (2008) argues that urbanization itself is not to blame for political violence, but the culprit for such violence is urban inequality.

Figure 21. Slum population in urban Africa



THE ROLE OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION IN FORCED MIGRATION

An additional emerging trend within the conflict literature is the role of climate change and environmental degradation in forced migration (Reuveny, 2007; Barrio, et. al., 2006; Hendrix & Salehyan, 2012; Hendrix & Claser, 2007; Black et al., 2011). Climate change and conflict are complex, multivariable phenomena, and at present there is no accurately predictive model for either, let alone in combination. However, strong links are developing that can aid in development programming and planning to lessen the impact of a climate change crisis. This begins with understanding the ways that climate change can contribute to conflict. Primarily, climate change operates as a multiplier of any conflict predispositions, and climate change-related events can serve as a conflict trigger. Climate

change can drive conflict in a few discrete ways (Reiling and Brady, 2014; Brown and Crawford, 2009; Woodrow Wilson Center, 2009):

- Direct environmental impact that changes human habitation patterns, such as desertification, sea level rise, or flood;
- Direct resource competition, such as water scarcity or shortage of arable or graze land, increased food prices or increased stress from food insecurity; or
- Increased conflict over the ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ as a result of climate change, the relative economic success or downturn within a local population.

These development challenges are not intrinsically conflict-laden. When combined with conditions of conflict such as poor governance, conflict history, inter-communal conflict or neighborhood conflicts, these climate change ‘threat multipliers’ can become security threats (Brown and Crawford, 2009). Marshall (2006) argues that the persistence of severe armed conflict in East Africa is in part the result of severe environmental degradation and resource stress.

In each of the three climate change events that can lead to conflict, one particular commonality is the relationship between climate change, conflict, and displacement or migration. As resource pressures or natural disasters or lack of economic opportunity drive people to resettle, the development challenge becomes a challenge of migration and displacement. In other words, once climate change pressures have driven populations from their homes, a climate change crisis has the same development challenges as any other conflict trigger that drives people from their homes. Where migrating populations settle, the livelihood opportunities in their new homes, how they integrate with existing populations, the resource pressures they bring to their new homes – all of these things impact conflict potential. Sadly, it is generally the most vulnerable who are driven from their homes by climate change pressures because of poverty, resource dependence, or lack of human capacity.

4.4 TRENDS IN YOUTH

There is a growing body of research analyzing the role of youth in conflict, and the increasingly strong link between a “youth bulge” and risk of armed conflict (Hilker and Fraser, 2009). The median age for SSA was about 19 years old, as compared to the median age in Western Europe of 43 years old (Cilliers and Schunemann, 2013). ISS correlates violence and large youth populations when combined with urban growth (Cilliers and Schunemann, 2013). A large youth population when combined with poverty is strongly correlated to increased conflict. High youth unemployment, limited training and education, stagnant economic development and marginalized political participation all contribute to increased conflict (Hegre et al, 2012). Recent demographics indicate that the predicted youth bulge will be larger than anticipated, as fertility rates are decreasing slower than anticipated (Guengant and May, 2013). Figure 20 shows predicted population growth rates and fertility rates across the continent. Particularly when this youth bulge is compounded by data linking conflict-afflicted and fragile states to decreased access to education (World Bank, 2011), this impending population increase is an important emerging trend. Hilker and Fraser (2009), in a large study unpacking youth correlation to violence and fragile states, concluded that the linkages between youth and conflict are correlated to:

- Un- and underemployment and lack of livelihood opportunities;
- Insufficient, unequal and inappropriate education or skills;
- Poor governance and weak political participation;
- Gender inequalities; and
- A legacy of past violence.

These factors create a youth population that is essentially prevented from growing up, unable to take on adult responsibilities because they simply do not exist (McIntyre, 2003). However, most youth experiencing these circumstances will not resort to violence. The authors describe a set of proximate causes that can catalyze these disaffected youth into violence. They are:

- Recruitment, coercion and indoctrination: Some youth are forced to engage in conflict through abduction, coercion, indoctrination, or for a lack of other means of survival.
- Identity politics and ideology: Some conflict movements are associated with ethnic, religious or identity ideologies that may draw young people to act.
- Leadership and organizational dynamics: There is a link between charismatic, powerful leaders and youth recruitment. The authors stress that the mechanism is unclear and more data are needed, but preliminary research suggests that youth are vulnerable to charismatic leaders redressing their grievances, even with violent means.
- Trigger events: A conflict catalyst such as elections, personal loss or trauma, economic crisis, etc., can motivate youth to violence.

These issues are particularly acute in SSA's growing urban regions, where youth population bulges that meet these criteria are most common. Also, urban areas tend to represent greater inequalities and the visible stratification of opportunity or lack of opportunity is impossible to ignore. The militarization of young people is the embodiment of the idea that youth are a commodity to be plundered to serve the agenda of the dominant actor in a conflict.

Additionally, armed violence is deeply gendered, particularly with regard to youth. Young men are the most common perpetrators and victims of conflict violence (OECD, 2009). Though women and girls represent 10-40 percent of youth engaged in armed conflict, women, boys, and girls are more likely to become survivors of non-lethal attacks or caretakers of male victims or heads of household in the absence of adults (Hilker and Fraser, 2009). Particularly with regard to youth, engagement by women and girls in armed conflict can be a means to challenge gender norms or to gain power in a gender-hierarchical society (Hilker and Fraser, 2009).

Barker and Ricardo (2005) have found that in many cultures elders and powerful men have the authority to decide when young men can hold land, inherit family wealth, or marry. They argue that younger men who have not achieved these social signifiers of manhood may be more likely to engage in violence. Young men's involvement in violence then becomes a means to empowerment, to gain 'manhood' status where it has otherwise been denied. Inherent in this argument is the implication that violent conflict is essentially 'masculine'. This underlying assumption means that using violence to solve conflicts (including against women) is a means of asserting power, masculinity, and authority. These attitudes may be socialized generationally. In 2005, Dowdney found that young people growing up amidst armed groups relate to that violence as normative. Repeated exposure to violence cloaked as definitional to masculinity shapes young men's attitudes towards violence, power, and respect. For example, rebel commanders in Sierra Leone used violent Hollywood films to socialize and desensitize children to violence (Richards, 2003).

Youth engagement in armed violence, particularly in the case of child soldiers, is an interesting area of study. There is no doubt that some youth are fighting because of abduction, indoctrination, or because of lack of other survival options, particularly in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Angola, Mozambique and Northern Uganda (Hilker and Fraser, 2009). However, to deny that some youth soldiers are engaging in violent conflict because of active decision-making is to deny an important component of the youth experience in these situations. There is a body of research that suggests that a portion of youth engagement in violent conflict comes from volunteerism (Brett and Specht, 2004; Peters and Richards, 1998). A study of youth soldiers in Burundi, Congo-Brazzaville, the DRC, and Rwanda found that up to two-thirds of all youth soldiers enrolled voluntarily (Dumas and de Cock, 2003). Particularly in the face of dire economic or educational options, the incentives given by violent actors, including money, land, positions of authority, and food, may be seen as a viable livelihood decision (Weinstein and Humphreys, 2008). A survey presented in the 2011 World Development Report found that motivations for youth in becoming rebels or gang members are nearly identical: unemployment and respect were far more important than belief in the cause, revenge or injustice (Fearon, 2010 as cited in World Bank, 2011). The protection from the armed group upon joining it is a form of coercion, and so any agency the youth possess in choosing to join is possibly negated. However, the reality remains that for many youth, this is a perceived choice, meaning that engagement from a programming perspective should be handled differently than if these youth were exclusively abducted.

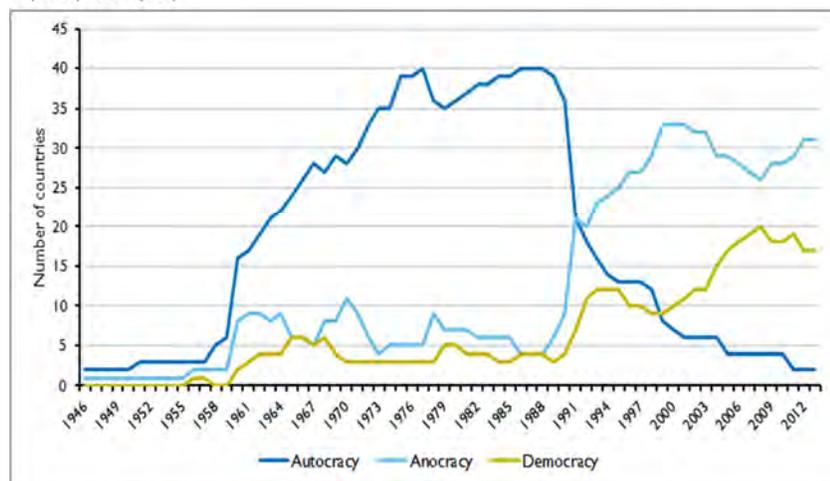
A challenge for identity, particularly with youth engaged in violent conflict, is the victimization of initiation. Violent, traumatic initiation rites are nearly ubiquitous in the conflicts of SSA, including in Liberia, Sierra Leone, the DRC,

Northern Uganda, Angola and Mozambique. An ethnographic study of child soldiers from Angola and Mozambique found that the violent initiation of young men becomes a powerful tool that reinforces their psychological separation from civilians (Honwana, 2006 as cited in Hilker and Fraser, 2009). These initiation rituals, in which the youth are simultaneously victims and perpetrators, create a situation in which their victimization becomes essential towards their identity as a soldier. The tragedy lies in the fact that the more acute the victimization, the more intractable the identity as perpetrator becomes, making rehabilitation very difficult. Youth ex-combatants have become a challenge for ending armed conflict in SSA. Some young men, having experienced power in the form of violence, are reluctant to return to civilian life, to the marginalization and intergenerational power differentials of their homes, as data from Sierra Leone and South Africa suggest. Similarly, some young men in Northern Uganda were afraid of returning home, fearing reprisal or prejudice related to their actions as violent actors, or fearing recapture and retaliation by the Ugandan military (Barker and Ricardo, 2005). Additionally, youth combatants lack the education, vocational experience and life skills for successful economic integration, relegating those who do attempt re-integration to an economic periphery of society (Sommers, 2003).

4.5 TRENDS IN GOVERNANCE

The Polity Project⁶ asserts that the most stable states are the ones that undergo gradual changes in institutional authority (Marshall, et al., 2014). Dramatic changes in authority patterns are disruptive and often lead to repeated conflict. States that are either firmly, internally democratic or autocratic tend to be more durable than those with mixed, anocratic traits (Marshall, 2006).⁷ Since the end of the Cold War, the trend in governance for SSA has been towards democratization. Figure 22 shows the clear trend towards shifts from autocratic governments at the end of the Cold War, with a less clear trend towards either democracy or anocracy. While democratic regimes are generally more peaceful than autocratic or anocratic regimes, and so this is a positive trend for lessening future conflicts, governance transitions are disruptive and prone to conflict. A transition from an autocratic state to a democratic state is likely to be tumultuous, while an autocratic state can maintain a veneer of stability and peace (by suppressing dissent) for decades. Though democratic governments are statistically less prone to conflict, the mechanism for that trend is unclear, and researchers are divided as to whether democracy is intrinsically more peaceful (Hegre, 2014). The Polity IV Project categorizes up to 30 African countries as anocratic, including Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Uganda, and Somalia, many of which would not self-describe as anocracies, but are considered to be such based on state processes. The Polity Project asserts that anocratic states are much more volatile, up to six times more likely than democracies to experience conflict. Regime turnover and human rights abuses are very likely in anocratic states. Thus, as SSA countries continue to become more democratic, institutional transitions will

Figure 22. Trends in governance in Africa (1946-2013), countries with population > 500,000. (Polity IV Project)



⁶ The Polity IV Project is a dataset covering all major, independent states in the global system from 1800-2014 continuously monitoring regime changes globally. The Polity Project assesses governments on a spectrum between hereditary monarchy through consolidated democracy, and tracks changes within regimes over time.

⁷ These governance categories are broad and imprecise, and represent a range of governance structures loosely grouped as either democracies (or "aspiring democracies"), autocracies, or anocracies. Some autocratic states in the region hold elections or permit some nominal form of political contest. Democracy in this context is intended to convey that political participation is real, even if it is confined to categorical elites. And anocracies are a middling category. Polity IV Project defines a government such as Nigeria's as an open anocracy; others describe it as an aspiring democracy (Downie and Cooke, 2011).

likely cause increased conflicts. However, these transitions should result in less state-based conflict and less one-sided conflict as democratic states have less violent intrastate conflicts and less citizen exclusion and repression (Cilliers and Hedden, 2014).

In autocratic states, where institutions are imbalanced and reflect the needs of the head of state, and where state order is inextricable from the head of state himself/herself, political leadership crises become the biggest triggers of governance-induced instability. Succession in these long-reigning autocratic states is a major cause of instability. Even in the event that an autocratic regime does not move towards greater democracy during a turnover of state leader, the issue of succession has the potential to create massive instability through jockeying for power and leadership for the subsequent generational leader.

POLITICAL CONFLICT PATTERNS

A comprehensive research study conducted in 2013, utilizing data from ACLED, grouped SSA political conflict into four useful categories with respective country case studies (Raleigh, et al., 2013). The authors define these distinctive conflict patterns, politically, as follows:

1. Multiple Conflict Transition State (Nigeria);
2. Repressive, Centralized Control State (Zimbabwe);
3. Public and Elite Instability State (Kenya); and
4. Conflicted and Fragile State (Democratic Republic of the Congo).

The authors argue that these four case studies and their typified conflicts represent distinct patterns of violence with respect to:

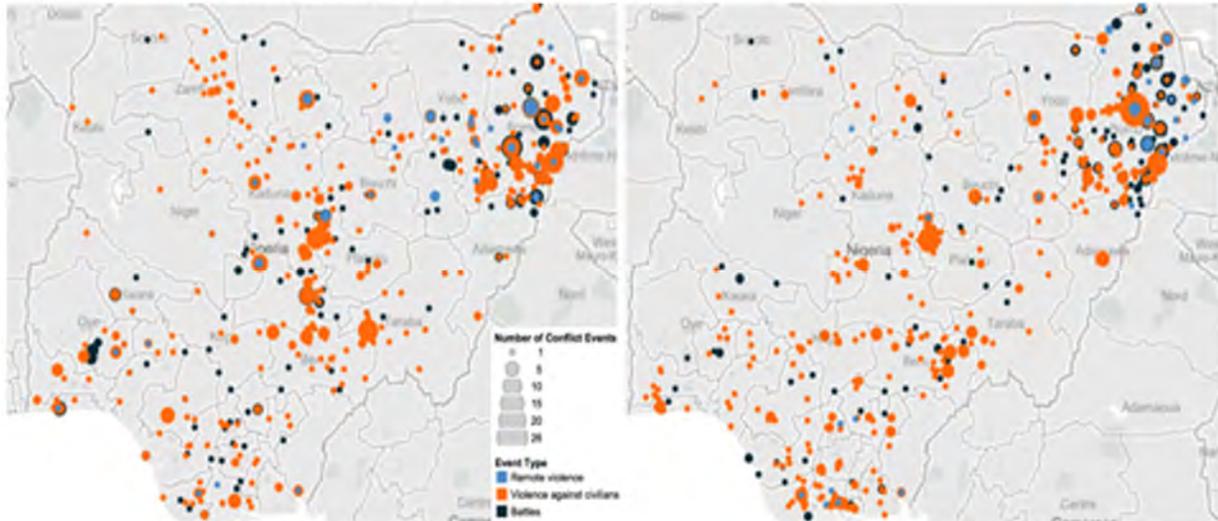
1. Actors of violence;
2. Sequence of violent events; and
3. Involvement of civilians and subsequent government response.

While necessarily reductive, this type of analysis can help complete a picture of the role of governance in driving or mitigating conflict in the region.

Multiple Conflict Transition State: Nigeria's conflicts are associated with a few geographically dispersed and very violent conflict actors. As the violence in Nigeria has shifted from a southern civil war to a central and northern militia contest, the violent conflict actors in Nigeria have maintained hierarchical organization as evidenced by geographic dispersion as combined with high fatalities. In Nigeria, generally, when armed conflict increases, civilians bear the burden, representing higher fatality rates. Also, distinctive violence types are in response to different conflict triggers, i.e., there are more riots as related to fluctuations specifically in oil prices, but other forms of violence are not correlated to changes in oil prices.

Figure 23 shows conflict events in Nigeria over the most recent data periods. The ubiquity of conflict events across the country demonstrates the dispersed nature of conflicts in Nigeria. The authors characterize this violence pattern as a Multiple Conflict Transition State, which could be similar to conflicts in Sudan, Ethiopia, or Ivory Coast.

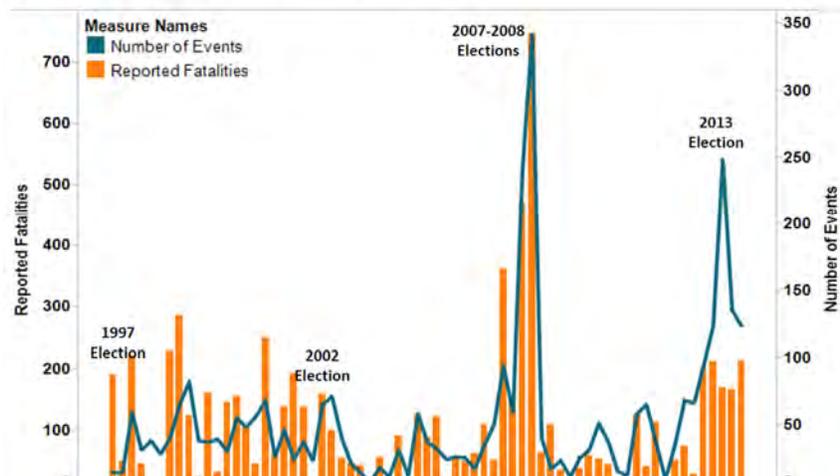
Figure 23. Political violence in Nigeria by event type, 2014-2015. (ACLED, 2015)



Repressive, Centralized Control State: In Zimbabwe, there is a high rate of generalized violence for the population size, but with few conflict actors and low numbers of fatalities. This is the pattern for nationalized repression across the state from the central government. The violence pattern in Zimbabwe is similar to other African states that are subject to military rule such as Swaziland, Namibia, or Guinea-Bissau. The authors contend that violence centered near national elections, and particularly violent events in urban areas, indicate instability around credibility and legitimacy of the state government. This conflict pattern is characterized by intermittent peace, but the authors (and others) caution that autocratic governments are stopgap measures for potentially larger eventual conflict (Cilliers, 2015; Marshall and Gurr, 2005).

Public and Elite Instability State: Kenya has generally high levels of violence, but violence patterns are complicated and inconsistent. In Kenya, political violence is endemic to the political action of the country, as suggested by the consistency of violence. Political motion in Kenya is engaged partially through political violence. Figure 24 shows conflict events and fatalities in Kenya from 1997 until 2014. Prominent in the figure are peaks of violence around elections. The other consistent violence trend in Kenya is pastoralist violence, as there are longstanding conflicts within these communities in Kenya. This type of rural violence is evidence of the state government's lack of reach or absence in these areas. The pattern of conflict in Kenya is fairly unique, but could be similar to

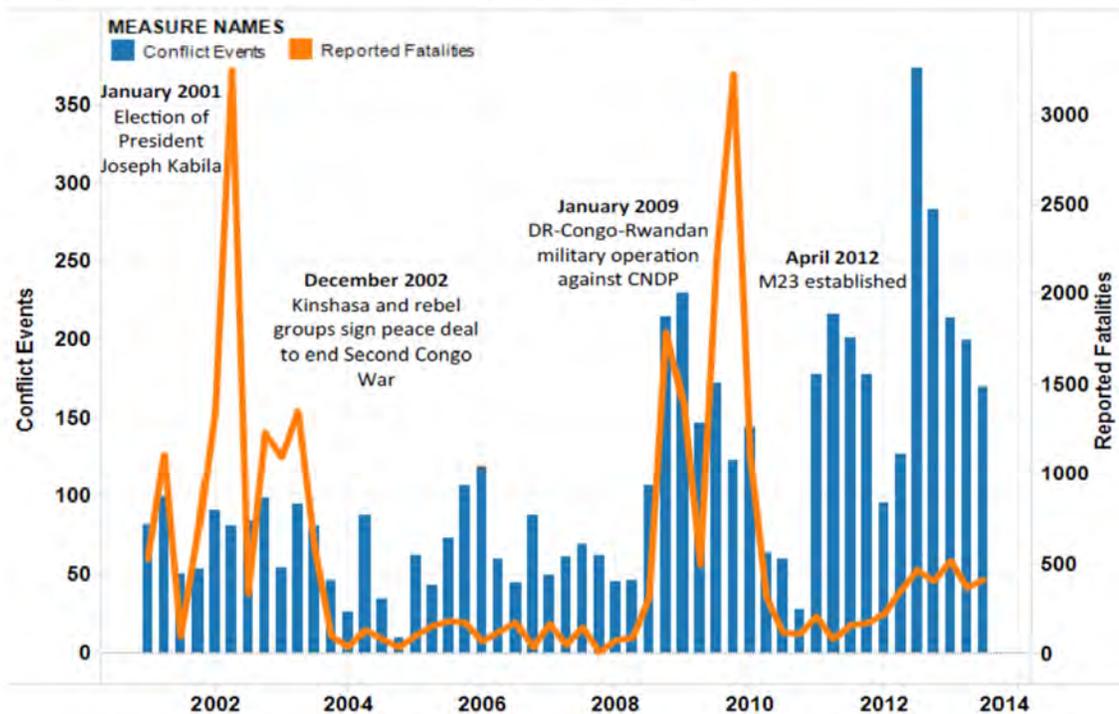
Figure 24. Conflict events and reported fatalities in Kenya, 1997-2013. (ACLED, 2013).



patterns in Uganda and South Sudan, where there are a high number of events with low fatalities and a low number of organized conflict actors.

Conflicted and Fragile State: The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has a very high number of conflict events with a high number of fatalities, along with a high number of conflict actors. Figure 25 shows conflict events and reported fatalities from 2001 until 2013 in DRC. Prominent is the trend of changing conflict actors associated with peaks of conflict events. This is the type of conflict pattern as associated with general and persistent state instability, such as South Sudan or Somalia. This category is what could be considered failed, weak, fragile or failing state violence. Every form of violence is represented, and the many distinct but changing actors suggests that there is room for new conflict actors as new 'leaders' of conflict, but that no established authority has been created. No new groups are successfully gaining new territory or expanding support in a way that would reduce other conflict actors in the area.

Figure 25. Conflict events and reported fatalities, DRC, 2001 – 2013. (ACLED, 2013).



State legitimacy is a vital aspect of maintaining political stability. In each of these cases of political conflict, violence erupts around issues of authority, reach and representation. While weak governance poses a difficult development challenge, programming that increases participation and transparency, provides for communal conflict mitigation mechanisms, and encourages sustainable livelihoods for non-state actors, should decrease the role that poor governance plays in driving conflict.

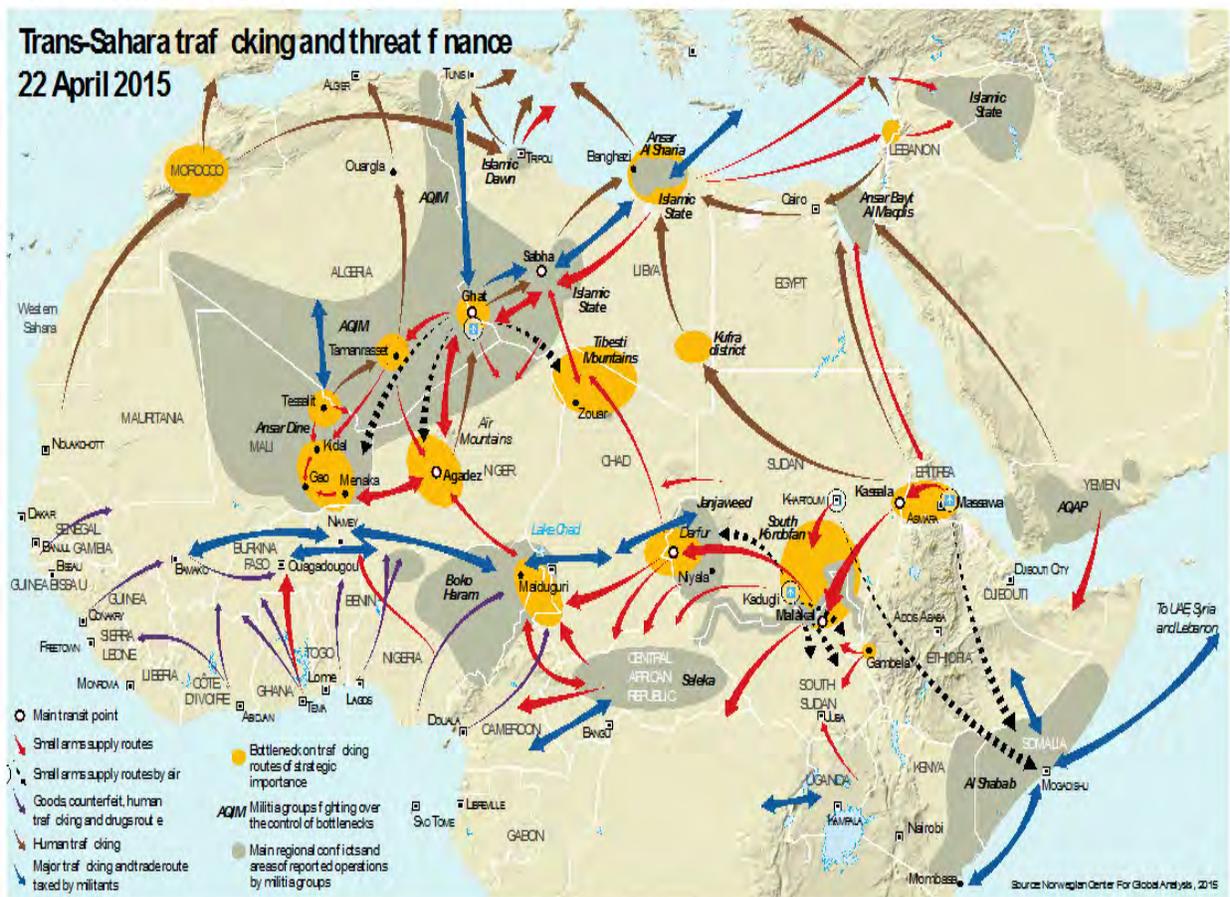
4.6 TRENDS IN TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME

Transnational organized crime has its roots in the region after the end of the Cold War, when political and social upheaval peaked, and transnational criminal networks began establishing themselves in the midst of the chaos. During the previous generation, transnational crime has become increasingly recognized as an important component of subnational conflicts. As the conflict actors have shifted in the last twenty years within the region to mostly non-state actors, criminality and criminal networks are playing a pivotal role in incentivizing and/or funding armed violence. Within SSA, transnational criminal networks illicitly traffick a wide range of commodities, including

narcotics, petroleum, diamonds, timber, ivory and other wildlife products, humans, counterfeit pharmaceuticals, cigarettes and weapons (World Bank, 2011; UNODC, 2013a; UNODC, 2013b). However, research and data into linkages between conflict in the region and transnational crime are only beginning (Shaw and Reitano, 2013). Extant research has come under fire by experts, as the main module for assessing the scale and impact of organized crime has historically been data on seizure of illicit goods. But with extensive corruption in the region facilitating and protecting criminal economies, it is difficult to assess what percentage of actual movement seized goods and assets represent (Shaw and Reitano, 2013). Additionally, there is a definitional problem within the research, as some prefer to think of organized crime actors in SSA as “warlords” or “violent entrepreneurs,” suggesting that the motivations of these criminal actors are distinct from their global counterparts (Shaw and Reitano, 2013). While it is fair to suggest that organized criminal actors in SSA tend to act on the periphery of additional political and social movements, beyond the primary economic identifiers, this should not exempt them from being understood as actors in organized crime. It does, however, pose a challenge for the researcher.

Figure 26 shows the flow of illicit goods, human smuggling and how these trade flows interact with conflicts and conflict actors. Major east-west trade routes are taxed by conflict actors, such as Boko Haram, the Seleka, and the Janjaweed (Global Initiative Against Transnational Crime, 2015). The trade hubs generally center around areas of conflict, or are controlled by conflict actors, suggesting that transnational crime is intricately linked to conflict.

Figure 26. Trans-Sahara trafficking and threat finance routes. (Global Initiative, 2015).

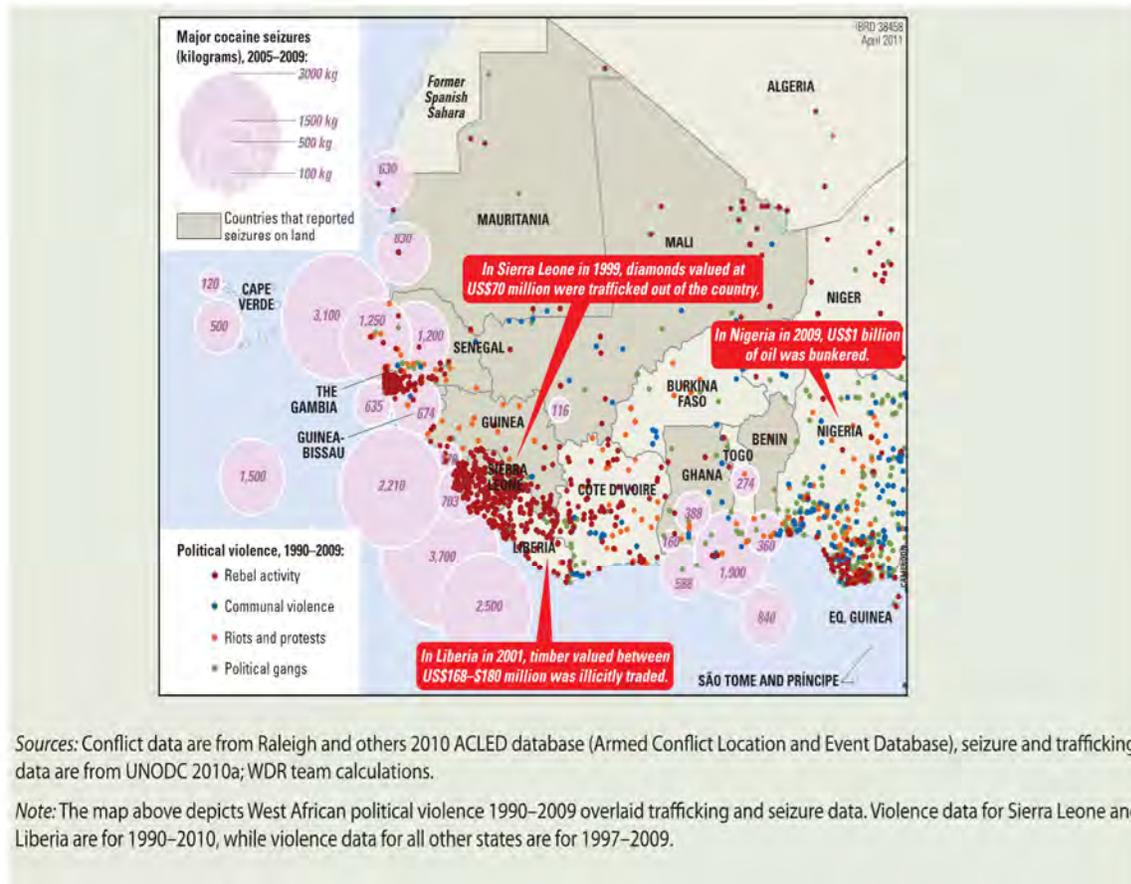


West Africa has been most extensively studied empirically for transnational organized crime and conflict, particularly with the rise of cocaine smuggling through the region en route to Europe since the new millennium (World Bank, 2011). In 2009 alone approximately 21 tons of cocaine were transited through West Africa, with only 0.4 tons

seized, or less than 5% (UNODC, 2011). One tactic of researchers interested in criminality and conflict is to overlay conflict data with seizure data to give a rough estimate of interplay between these two forces.

Figure 27 below, from the 2011 World Development Report shows political violence in West Africa as compiled from ACLED between 1996 and 2009, overlaid with cocaine seizures from 2005 to 2009. In addition, the role of illicit trafficking, including cocaine trafficking, has exacerbated instability in countries such as Guinea Bissau and Mali (USAID, 2013).

Figure 27. Major cocaine seizures, 2005-2009, in West Africa, as overlaid with political violence (1990-2009). (Figure from World Bank, 2011).



Though cocaine trafficking West Africa has received a particularly high amount of attention regarding linkages between conflict and criminality, there are other noteworthy and notorious connections in SSA. Oil bunkering and illicit trade in natural resources ranging from diamonds to timber to wildlife products are common in countries affected by conflict – both by conflict actors and those simply taking advantage of the instability. For example, resource-rich DRC has also been plundered of anything that could be monetized to fund conflict: timber, ivory, wildlife, gold, copper, and diamonds (de Koning, 2011). In eastern DRC, minerals have played an important role in funding armed conflict since Laurent Kabila in the 1990s, now with tacit participation by Rwanda and Uganda across the region’s porous borders (Shaw and Reitano, 2013; de Koning, 2011). Prior to the 1990s, exploitation of natural resources was small-scale and opportunistic, but the engagement of transnational criminal networks connected these resources to a lucrative international supply chain (UNODC, 2011). Conflicts in Angola, CAR, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Sierra-Leone, Somalia, and have evidence of instability related to transnational crime (World Bank, 2011; UNODC, 2011; Shaw and Reitano, 2013; USAID, 2013).

An emerging trend in transnational criminality is the smuggling of migrants from SSA across the Sahel and through North Africa. This growing business is a very lucrative finance opportunity for organized crime networks and

subnational conflict actors to purchase arms, establish larger armies, and demand taxation (Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, 2015). The strongholds for these groups are centered in Libya, with spillover movements into Mali, Mauritania, and Niger. The Touareg ethnic group of Libya is engaged in people smuggling, the transport of cocaine, and includes jihadist elements (Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, 2015). As people smuggling, arms trading, and drug trade across west Africa into the Sahel and on through the Sahara continue to be profitable for conflict actors, these trends will increase and spiral in their regional impacts. In the Horn of Africa, kidnapping, trafficking, and smuggling of Eritreans is a growing concern, especially as the relationship between Eritrea and Ethiopia continues to deteriorate.

One interesting trend identified in the literature is the nexus between illicit trafficking and violent extremists, notably AQIM in the Sahel. A growing body of literature analyzes how violent extremists in the Sahel either directly engage in illicit trafficking – such as the Al-Murabitoun leader Mokhtar Belmokhtar earned the nickname “Marlboro Man” given his extensive role in cigarette smuggling – or, more commonly, “taxes” traffickers for providing security (Lacher, 2012; USAID, 2013). This relationship is further complicated by complicit government officials (Lacher, 2012; USAID, 2013). Responses to both the terror network of AQIM in the Sahel, and the collusion of government officials will determine the trickle-down impacts of this crime-conflict nexus. Shaw and Reitano (2013) argue that in a region with criminality, corruption and conflict, “support to community structures, civil society organizations and independent media can provide momentum against organized crime where state institutions or political will are lacking.” Although less well-documented, there are also concerns and allegations around al-Shabaab, a Tanzanian Islamist group, as well as other non-state armed actors in East and Central Africa such as the Lord’s Resistance Army and the Janjaweed, illicitly trafficking goods including wildlife and heroin (UNODC, 2013b; Lawson and Vines, 2014). As is the case in the West African context, these claims warrant greater analysis to better understand the extent to which illicit trafficking is simply being “taxed” like any other forms of licit and illicit economic activity in territory controlled by non-state armed actors, and the level of resources that can feasibly be gained from illicit trafficking (UNODC, 2016).

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

SSA has seen a precipitous drop in state formation conflicts since the global upheaval at the end of the Cold War. The fundamental nature of conflict in the region has shifted from national, state-engaged civil wars to sub-national conflicts with a variety of different actors. This document triangulated comprehensive geo-temporal datasets of conflict trends in SSA with a literature review of conflict drivers in the region from 1995 until the present and identified categorical conflict trends. Markers of instability are categorically diverse and represent political, economic, social, and environmental conflict trends and triggers. Sub-regionally, the broad middle belt of Africa bears a disproportionate conflict burden. In recent years, violent conflicts have increased in all sub-regions, particularly in East Africa. Since 2000, state-based violence has dropped precipitously, counteracted by a rapid increase in non-state based violence. 2014 was the most violent year within this study period, and there are few indicators that that violence is presently receding.

Non-state actors have grown in diversity over the study period, perhaps as a result of upheavals and transitions in state governments. This is also an indication of the increased prevalence and violence of inter-communal conflicts over the study period. Up to 80% of inter-communal conflicts in SSA during the study period occurred in a country that also had state-based conflict in the same period, suggesting that these conflicts are exacerbated by state conflicts. Inter-communal conflicts are generally over lootable resources, authority, or territory. To some extent, all three categories are conflicts over resources, as authority generally represents access to resources, and territory represents land. Environmental degradation and exploitation in the region is likely to augment the impacts of inter-communal violence. Without state borders to delineate boundaries of conflict, inter-communal and ethnic conflicts tend to be migratory as actors engage or disengage regionally. This poses difficulties for interventions and causes regional displacement.

In recent years there has been a sharp increase in rates of ideologically-driven conflict. Particularly, conflict associated with Islamic extremism has increased regionally. While terrorist actors across the region are diverse, the targeting of civilians to effect ‘terror’ and promote an ideologically-driven political agenda has dramatic consequences for civilians living in these conflict-affected areas. There is an interesting body of research suggesting that use of remote

violence by terrorist actors indicates a lack of human capacity, and that trends in violence type as disaggregated by actor could suggest relative strength or weakness.

Migration and displacement are typically in response to poverty, underemployment, conflict, or environmental degradation. The resultant movement has the capacity to increase instability as displaced populations put pressures on their new homes. Urban migration in SSA is an important but often overlooked factor in conflict literature. With the potential to reduce divisions of ethnicity because of urban mixing, it also yields a stressful situation for underemployed, impoverished youth who are lacking family and community support and may be lured into criminal or conflict organizations. Climate change and the resource pressures associated with dramatic changes in precipitation and temperature is an emerging trend in the literature of migration. As habitation patterns are changed, and resource competition increases, environmental degradation will play a role in conflict trends.

Youth are an ever-growing component of civilian society in SSA. With a predicted youth bulge in SSA, combined with massive urban influx, particularly of youth, this trend is an important area of concern. When combined with demographic data, cities in already conflict-afflicted areas, such as Kinshasa, Khartoum, Nairobi, and Lagos are expected to have dramatic population growth. When considering the role of youth and masculinity, especially in these contexts, durable employment for youth populations will play a pivotal role in controlling conflict as associated both with urbanization and youth population growth.

Poor governance as a driver for conflict is a diverse category for any functions of the central government that increase social/political grievance due to lack of legitimacy, corruption, or lack of reach. Broadly, anocratic states are more prone to violent conflict than either autocratic or democratic states. However, autocratic states tend to delay eventual conflict as states transition to increased democracy. Development programming that encourages the transparency of and participation in state government will aid in maintaining state legitimacy and encouraging peace. Further, encouraging conflict resolution mechanisms at the community level, where central government's reach may not be possible, can preserve rural peace and engagement with the state.

Transnational crime and organized crime are a growing area of study in the region, particularly with regards to their role in creating and perpetuating conflicts. Data are sparse and disjointed, however, and concrete trends are difficult to establish. Information from West Africa suggests strong links between regions of violent conflict and areas of seizure of cocaine. The illegal exploitation of natural resources has historically been linked to conflicts and conflict actors, and frequently, collusion with state governments. Cautionary data suggests that allowing transnational criminal networks to grow in a country, as in the case of Mauritania, will have regional impacts as porous borders and transnational criminal networks seep into neighboring regions.

While the drop in state formation conflicts in SSA in the last generation has been encouraging, diverse violent conflicts continue to plague the region. Understanding the forces that augment or ameliorate conflicts in SSA is crucial for wise conflict-sensitive development planning. Based on this research, there are many areas of opportunity for development partners to engage in spite of diverse conflicts in SSA. Categorically, there is a huge opportunity in addressing exclusion, marginalization, and discrimination. Particularly with regards to conflicts engaging non-state actors, addressing or hearing the grievances that have driven them to violent conflict could have dramatic impacts for peace. Youth, too, are frequently excluded from formal economic and political processes because of long-term intergenerational effects of conflict. These disenfranchised youth are an important area of focus, as their lives will play decisive roles in the generations to follow. They are also more susceptible to ideological extremist violence, though data indicates the ideological component is not at the forefront of their motivation, but rather, economic opportunity is of primary concern. Urban migration and urban growth are areas of increasing opportunity, as the population shifts in the coming years. Understanding and mitigating transnational criminal activity is a herculean task, though one that could limit the regional scope of conflict associated with these highly profitable illegal activities. More research is needed in this field to begin to understand more concrete linkages between criminality and conflict actors, as well as criminality and state corruption that encourage conflict.

ANNEX I

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Layer 2: Think Tanks

Africa Regional Think Tanks		Specialty
1	Centre for Conflict Resolution	Conflict
2	South Africa Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA)	SA foreign policy, security, conflict,
3	Institute of Security Studies (ISS)	Human security
4	Free Market Foundation	Human development
5	Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies (ACPSS)	Development, international system
6	Institute for National Security Studies (INSS)	Terrorism, intelligence, arms control
7	Gulf Research Center (GRC)	Gulf Cooperation Council affairs
8	Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research (ECSSR)	Economy, military, strategic studies
9	Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA)	Social sciences
10	The African Center for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD)	Conflict Resolution
11	African Leadership Centre	Causes of Conflict
International Think Tanks (Outside of Africa)		Specialty
12	Oxford Research Group	Global Security
13	Royal United Services Institute	International Defense and Security

14	International Institute for Security Studies	Human security
15	Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)	International defense and policy
16	International Crisis Group	Conflict Prevention
17	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute	Global Security
18	Center for Global Development (CGD) Council on Foreign Relations	International Development Global Policy

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Layer 4: Data Sets and Conflict Analysis Projects

1. Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) at the Uppsala University in Sweden
<http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/UCDP/> ;
2. The Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) at the University of Sussex
<http://www.acleddata.com> ;
3. The Global Terrorism Database (GTD) hosted by the University of Maryland in the U.S.
<https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/> ;
4. Polity IV Project at the Center for Systemic Peace <http://www.systemicpeace.org/polityproject.html> ; and
5. Social Conflict Analysis Database (SCAD) at The Robert S. Strauss Center for International Security and Law at The University of Texas at Austin. <https://www.strausscenter.org/scad.html>

ANNEX II

GLOSSARY OF RELEVANT TERMS

Definitions: The following definitions have been used to clarify specific terms relating to the analysis of conflict trends in SSA that were used in this study.

- **Armed Conflict:** A contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory with the use of armed force between two parties (when referring to UCDP data, armed conflict, when between two parties, at least one of which is the state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths over a one-year period).
- **Anocracy:** A government that combines elements of democratic and autocratic states.
- **Asylum seekers:** Persons seeking to be admitted into a country as refugees and awaiting decision on their application for refugee status. If not admitted, they must leave the country and may be expelled, unless permission to stay is provided on humanitarian or other grounds.
- **Autocracy:** A government that sharply restricts civil rights and political participation, concentrates most or all political power in the executive, and distributes and transfers political power within a small political elite.
- **Conflict Drivers:** The historical or entrenched identity of a place as it contributes to the overall dynamics. These are diverse and could include colonial history, sub-national power dynamics, population growth and age distribution, economic growth and unemployment, urbanization rates, etc.
- **Conflict Trends:** A recurring cause of violent conflict over a period of time, as supported by statistical data collected in comprehensive conflict datasets.
- **Conflict Triggers:** An event or series of events that, when combined with conflict drivers, can immediately precipitate conflict, such as election, natural disaster, or commodity price collapse.
- **Exclusion:** A process by which certain groups are systematically disadvantaged because they are discriminated against on the basis of an identity category, such as ethnicity, religion, sex, age, migrant status, political affiliation.
- **Human Trafficking:** “The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.” (UN General Assembly Resolution 55/25)
- **Insurgency:** The organized use of subversion and violence to seize, nullify or challenge political control of a region. It is primarily a political and territorial struggle though may not always operate with a centralized structure; it may involve different actors with loosely connected aims and networks. (USAID, 2011)
- **Inter-communal conflict:** Any subnational violent conflict between two or more non-state conflict actors with a shared communal identity.
- **Non-State Conflict:** Use of armed force between two organized armed groups, neither of which is the state (when referring to UCDP data, this conflict results in at least 25 battle-related deaths over a one-year period).
- **One-Sided Violence:** Armed force by the government or state or other organized group against non-combatant civilians (when referring to UCDP, this conflict results in at least 25 deaths).
- **Political Violence:** A politically violent event is a single altercation where one or more groups often use force for a political end. Some instances, including protests and strategic development, are included to capture the potential precursors or critical junctures of a conflict.
- **Refugee (recognized):** A person, who “owing to well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinions, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country” (Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, Art. 1A(2), 1951).

- **Smuggling:** The procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident (Art. 3(a), UN Protocol Against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000). Smuggling is distinguished from trafficking in that no element of exploitation, coercion, or violation of human rights need occur.
- **Terrorism:** For an incident to qualify as a terrorist act it must satisfy three criteria: a) the intentional targeting of civilian, non-combatant populations; b) entail some level of extraordinary violence or immediate threat of extraordinary violence that creates 'terror', including violence or threats of violence to property; and c) the perpetrators of the incidents must be sub-national actors. Key elements include: violence or the threat of violence, calculated to create fear and alarm, intended to coerce action and generally directed against civilian targets, perpetrated by a sub-national group or individual with a political objective outside of general warfare actions (LaFree & Dugan, 2007).
- **Trafficking in persons:** The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation (Art. 3(a), UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the UN Convention Against Organized Crime, 2000).
- **Violent Conflict:** An act of *organized violence* between or across state groups, non-state groups and/or civilians. An event can occur across one or more days (e.g. a single recorded event can occur across several years) in a location (e.g. a single event can be recorded as occurring in the entire country). The event must result in at least one fatality.
- **Violent Islamist extremism:** "‘Islamist’" in 'violent Islamist extremism' (VIE) refers to the fact that VE organizations active in the Muslim world frequently invoke concepts or symbols from Islamic texts, practices, or history, in order to articulate their political agenda and justify their actions. 'Islamist' – and not 'Islamic' – is used in order to underscore that the VE in question is not inherent to Islam, but entails the manipulation of Islamic referents by political actors. Similar exploitations of religious imagery and traditions can be found in other cultures" (USAID, 2009, p. ii).
- **Violent extremism** refers to "advocating, engaging in, preparing, or otherwise supporting ideologically motivated or justified violence to further social, economic and political objectives" (USAID, 2011).
- **Illicit Trafficking** is defined as "the production, import, export, purchase, sale, or possession of goods which fail to comply with legislation" (international and national). **Illicit trade** consists of goods (i.e. trafficking in persons, small arms, minerals, wildlife and other natural resources, drugs, counterfeit pharmaceuticals, food products, etc.) that must be smuggled from their point of origin to a point of exchange or sale, often involving complex transnational routes and criminal or illegal networks. This may include various levels of violence and/or weak legislative oversight as well as endemic or institutionalized corruption and impunity.

ANNEX III

CONFLICT DATA SETS FOR DEVELOPMENT

This research utilizes several major international conflict datasets, each with their own unique attributes and assets. Understanding the features of these datasets and their relative utility and limitations is an essential component of this conflict research. The major conflict datasets are:

- Uppsala Conflict Data Programme (**UCDP**): independently funded, and hosted by Uppsala University;
- Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (**ACLED**): an independent NGO directed by Professor Clionadh Raleigh and hosted by the Robert S. Strauss Center at the University of Texas – Austin;
- Global Terrorism Database (**GTD**): hosted by the University of Maryland and partially funded by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the U.S. Department of State;
- Social Conflict Analysis Database (**SCAD**): hosted by the Robert. S Strauss Center at the University of Texas – Austin and developed by researchers at the University of Denver and the University of North Texas;
- Political Instability Task Force (**PITF**), hosted by the Center for Systemic Peace as part of the Integrated Network for Social Conflict Research (INSCR); and
- **Polity IV** Project, Political Regime Characteristics and Transitions, 1800-2014, hosted by the Center for Systemic Peace as part of the Integrated Network for Social Conflict Research (INSCR).

While all of these data sets have been consulted in this study, the majority of the literature reviewed utilizes either UCDP and/or ACLED. For that reason, this research is biased towards these two sources of data. UCDP and ACLED are primarily analyzed in the literature for several reasons, and each has distinct attributes and limitations (ACLED, 2015; Raleigh and Dowd, 2015; Eck, 2012; Nygard, et al., 2016). A brief overview of these two primary data sets is the focus of Table I below. The UCDP has multiple data sets. The data most relevant for this research is the UCDP – Georeferenced Event Dataset (GED).

While both sets of data rely on news sources to compile the sets of conflict events, their numbers differ dramatically. UCDP-GED has rigorous criteria for inclusion as it more narrowly defines the included events, requires an identifiable actor of violence, and requires a minimum of one fatality. ACLED, as a more inclusive database, has a much higher number of reported events, not all of which are violent, and some of which are duplicative because of the nature of event recording. For this reason, most of the empirical analysis in scholarly research utilizes UCDP-GED, as it is easier to control and identify trends statistically (Eck, 2012, Croicu, 2015). However, ACLED's intentions appear to be altogether different from UCDP-GED and its use in the literature reflects that essential difference (Raleigh and Dowd, 2015). While UCDP-GED was developed to identify trends in "armed conflict" as narrowly defined in the project, for the developers of ACLED, the fundamental unit of conflict observation is an interaction between groups, with the belief that these interactions can serve as predictors of future or more intense violence between these interacting groups, and that by recording all interactions, an accurate baseline of conflict can be established.

Most of the discrepancy in the data sets is in the category of violence against civilians because ACLED permits the inclusion of unidentified groups (or non-organized groups) and includes nearly 50 percent of events under this category. For these reasons, UCDP-GED has greater confidence that all events recorded make up a matrix of conflict between established groups, but ACLED is more inclusive of potential conflicts (Eck, 2012; Raleigh and Dowd, 2015; Bosetti and von Eisendel, 2015). ACLED treats all interactions recorded equally, so interactions involving the illegal slaughter of livestock are weighted equally from an empirical standpoint as interactions involving mass human casualties (Eck, 2012; Raleigh and Dowd, 2015). When possible in this research, an attempt has been made to more heavily weight conflict trends that are substantiated by both sets of data as the distinctions between the data collection and recording increase the validity of any trends that are cross-referenced⁸.

Table I Comparison of UCDP-GED and ACLED conflict data sets.

Dataset	UCDP – GED	ACLED
Focus	Organized Violence	Political violence
Date Range	1989-2014 (UCDP data without geo-reference from 1946)	1997-2014
Key Definitions	An act of organized violence between or across state groups, non-state groups and/or civilians. A single event can occur across one or more days, and can be inclusive up to the country level. At least one fatality must result for inclusion, and a minimum of 25 fatalities per year must occur for a group to be identified.	A politically violent event is a single altercation where force is often used by one or more groups for a political end. Occasionally, non-violent events such as protests are included in an attempt to capture a “potential precursor” to conflict. No fatalities need occur for inclusion.
Event Totals	22,000+ Events	100,000+ Events
Event Types	State-based, Non-State, One-Sided. Violent attacks that do not result in a fatality (rape, arson, riots) are not included, neither are non-violent events such as protests.	Battle (no change of territory, non-state actor gains territory, government regains territory); Headquarters or base established; Strategic development; Riots/Protests; Violence against Civilians; Non-violent transfer of territory; Remote violence.
Data Sources	News agencies, research reports, monographs, documents of international and multinational agencies and NGOS. Documents of actors themselves also included when available.	Daily local, regional, national, and continental media, NGO and humanitarian agency reporting, and supplementary Africa-focused news reports.

Note: Data in Table I are derived from (Croicu, 2015 and Raleigh and Dowd, 2015).