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SHaSA: Governance, peace and security in Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Malawi, Mali and Uganda:

Comparative survey-based data from NSOs towards the Sustainable Development Goals & African Union Agenda 2063

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Introduction

Survey-based statistics on governance, peace, and security (GPS) are already being implemented and published by national statistics offices (NSOs) in Africa, under the auspices of the *Strategic Harmonization of Statistics in Africa* (SHaSA) programme (Box 1). This policy brief demonstrates how survey-based statistics can inform and enhance important international and Africa-wide discussions about measuring GPS. Such discussions include:

- National statisticians and stakeholders in the UN's Inder-Agency and Expert Group (IAEG) on measuring SDG 16 (Box 2): justice, peace, and accountable institutions;
- A team of experts from regional organizations and initiatives who are formulating indicators for the Agenda 2063 due to be adopted by African Heads of State; and
- African Union Commission (AUC) members currently reworking monitoring instruments for the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) in alignment with all these efforts.

The NSOs of the five countries covered in this brief – Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Malawi, Mali and Uganda – have been early implementers of the GPS-SHaSA surveys. The countries represent established democracies, as well as those emerging from transition or still turbulently engaged in it. The results bear not only on important Africa initiatives, but also on indicators for SDG 16. This confirms the importance, alongside other sources and kinds of data, of NSOs' monitoring SDG 16: "Without peace and good governance, all the gains made in Goals 1-15 will be wiped out. Without accountable and effective institutions of government, there will be no room for addressing systemic issues."[1]

Box 1. SHaSA, the Strategic Harmonization of Statistics in Africa

SHaSA, the Strategic Harmonization of Statistics in Africa, is a programme of the community of forty-three national statistical offices (NSOs) in Africa. One of its work areas is governance, peace, and security (GPS), a programme a approved in December 2012. Thereafter, under the auspices of the Statistics Division of the AU and with facilitation and funds from the UNDP Africa Region, representatives of NSOs from Africa's five regions collaborating with UNDP, the authors, and international foundations to develop detailed, harmonized add-on survey-questionnaires and administrative schedules in the area of GPS. During 2013-15 ten African countries administered the surveys. In 2014-2015 Uganda, Burundi, and Mali issued official publications of survey results and, along with Cote d'Ivoire and Malawi, have shared their anonymized data with the authors for this brief.

Box 2. SDG Goal 16 – Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Provisional targets: 16.1 significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere – 16.2 end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children – 16.3 promote the rule of law at the national and international levels, and ensure equal access to justice for all – 16.4 by 2030 significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen recovery and return of stolen assets, and combat all forms of organized crime – 16.5 substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all its forms – 16.6 develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels – 16.7 ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels – 16.8 broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance – 16.9 By 2030 provide legal identity for all including birth registration – 16.10 ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.

Analysis

The importance of these relationships emerges in the ensuing analyses. In Figure 1, the left-most grey bars show proportions that were very or fairly satisfied with the working of democracy. This proportion was relatively high in Burundi (76%) and Uganda (72%) alike, reflecting past decades as multi-party states. For Burundi, this satisfaction may suggest that their recent leadership conflict does not arise from popular dissatisfaction with the underlying institutions of democracy.[2] The satisfaction level is appreciably lower in Mali (58%), where elections were restored in 2013 following an attempted secession. It is also low in Cote d'Ivoire (56%), where the 2015 election was the first in many years to be uneventful. Malawi (64%) falls between, where the multi-party system is proving robust across party change.

Within the satisfaction category, there is considerable variation among the countries regarding particular attributes of democracy: examining transparency and accountability confirms the importance of differentiated measures. Lower overall scores show respondents are more critical of these attributes. Transparency

is reflected by whether government information is perceived as adequate or comprehensive, displayed by the dark blue bars in Figure 1. It is noticeably higher in Malawi, Uganda, and Côte d'Ivoire (47%, 42%, and 38%) than in Burundi and Mali (27% and 26%). Accountability, reflected by 'Parliament listens to people like us' is lower still as shown by grey bars. Uganda, Côte d'Ivoire, and Mali (33%, 31%, and 29%) fare better than Burundi and Mali (21% each). Referring back to SDG Targets 16.6 and 16.7 in Box 2, it seems that decision-making is more easily representative than transparent or responsive.
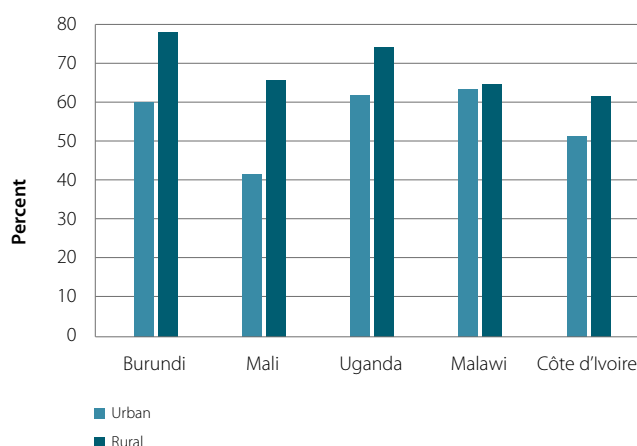
To what extent is decision-making inclusive? One indication may be obtained by *disaggregation*. Considering overall satisfaction with democracy in these surveys, there is no significant difference by gender. However, satisfaction is appreciably lower in urban areas of the countries, most notably in Mali and Burundi (Figure 2). The exception is Malawi, perhaps because of its high rural proportion of population.

The GPS-SHaSA governance questionnaire can subtly differentiate respondents' perceptions of democracy

Figure 1 Perceptions of democracy, transparency, and accountability

- Satisfied with democracy
- Government information adequate
- Parliament listens to people
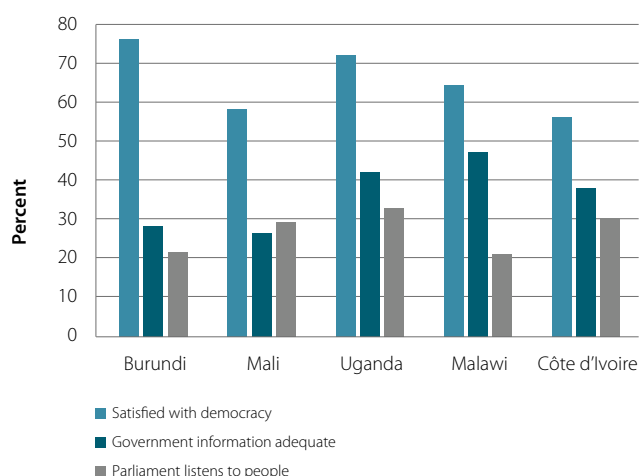
Figure 2 Satisfaction with the working of democracy


- Urban
- Rural

by asking about eight characteristics, the 'fundamental freedoms' of SDG Target 16.10, and asking respondents to indicate, firstly, the extent to which the characteristics are essential for them and, secondly, the extent to which they are respected in practice in their country (Figure 3).[3]

Consider for instance the panel for Mali. The *lightly shaded polygon* shows the percentage of respondents who felt the respective attributes were essential. It shows that nearly 100% of respondents view freedoms of association, religion, and movement as essential. But the proportion drops under 80% in regard to both absence of discrimination and equality before the law. The *darker shaded inner polygon* shows the percentage of Mali respondents who felt the attributes were respected in practice. Nearly 100% of people thought freedoms

Figure 3 Fundamental freedoms of democracy: essential and respected
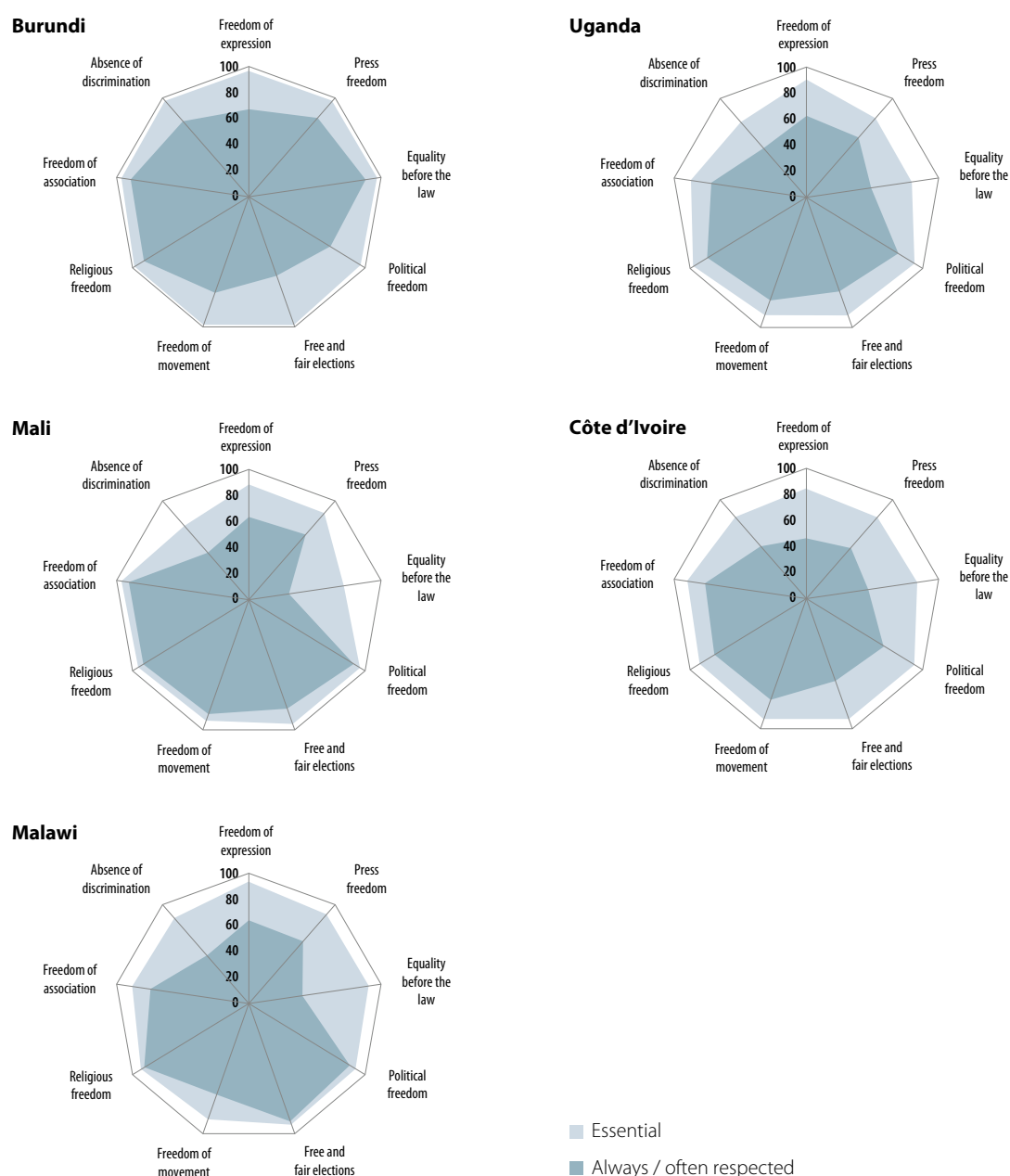
of association, religion, and movement were respected. But the figures for respect in practice drop somewhat for freedoms of the press and of expression (67% and 64%), and drop appreciably for non-discrimination (49%) and especially for equality before the law (30%).

Thus equipped, one may notice that Malawi displays a rather similar overall distribution to Mali. The differences are slight: scores are somewhat higher and more uniform for the freedoms regarded as essential, while the deficits in practice are also prominent for absence of discrimination (49%) and equality before the law (41%). In addition, respect for freedom of movement in practice is somewhat lower (70%). Uganda has similar deficits in regard to the extent to which absence of discrimination (52%) and equality before the law (50%) are respected in practice. They may appear less prominent than in Mali and Malawi because scores for respect in practice of the other freedoms are lower.

Burundi presents a strongly contrasting profile. Expectations of all freedoms score high.4 However, compared to Mali, Uganda, and Malawi noticeably fewer people see free and fair elections, freedom of expression, and political freedom as respected in practice (60%, 68%, and 69%), reflecting the previous and continuing electoral turbulence. However, Burundi's proportions for equality before the law (88%) and non-discrimination (77%) are higher than in the other three countries, perhaps related to its relatively greater ethnic homogeneity. Côte d'Ivoire, with lower apparent expectations than Burundi, is similar in having no particularly conspicuous deficits, but there is lower respect in practice for all the freedoms than in Burundi, notably equality before the law.

These GPS-SHaSA questions and this manner of presenting them illuminate and differentiate public assessment of the importance and the prevalence of the fundamental freedoms of SDG Target 16.10. They also allow assessments to conveniently monitor progress over time in relation to wider socio-political developments.

SDG Target 16.10 also specifically focuses on public access to information. In this regard, freedom of the press is seen from Figure 3 to be respected in practice in a range from low to high: Côte d'Ivoire (52%), Uganda (61%), Malawi (64%), Mali (67%) up to Burundi (80%) The scores for perception of press freedom as 'essential' are approximately 20 percent more in each case. This is also the pattern among the countries regarding approval of democracy in practice, as seen in the grey bars of Figure 1. It appears that, at least among these five countries, there is a *positive association* between perceptions of media freedom and successful democracy.

Accountability features explicitly in the overall definition of SDG 16, and specifically in Target 16.6. Citizens hold political institutions to account, ideally on an informed basis, not only to sustain their rights and freedoms, but also for the effective and fair delivery of public services for the wellbeing of themselves and their families: effective, accountable, and transparent institutions at all levels. In the GPS-SHaSA, this is canvassed as the proportions of people completely distrusting the public service as a whole. The results for complete distrust, which are not graphed in this brief, are significant in Uganda (16%) and Burundi (13%) but lower in Mali (4%), Malawi (4%), and in Côte d'Ivoire (5%). However, Figure 1 shows that Uganda and Burundi are where the proportions of citizens rating their democracies as successful are highest, while Mali and Côte d'Ivoire rate their democracies lowest. In other words, among these countries there appears to be an *inverse relationship* between satisfaction with democracy and trust of the public service. This will be discussed briefly below with the corruption scores.

Here it may be noted that the contrast between this inverse relationship and the positive relationship involving press freedom affirms the value of multiple targets for SDG 16: depending on circumstances, positive developments in the realms of the personal, social, administrative, and political may coincide, but do not have to coincide.

It is thus an open question whether reported levels of corruption, measured as the personal experience of giving a gift or bribe to a civil servant in the last twelve months, will *correlate* with other measured areas of concern. The incidence of petty corruption in

the previous twelve months showed lowest scores for Burundi and Malawi (3%), a somewhat higher number for Mali (8%) and even higher scores for Côte d'Ivoire (18%) and Uganda (19%).

Across these variations, however, there was one notable similarity when respondents are questioned about separate *sectors*, as seen in Figure 4. One may ignore the category 'Other', which subsumes categories with few mentions. Having to bribe police, shown by the dark blue bars, was the most common category, lowest in Malawi (29%) and highest in Côte d'Ivoire (72%). Paying bribes in the health sector, represented by grey, was next most common in Uganda (29%), Mali (11%), and Malawi (10%). In contrast paying bribes in the justice sector, the light blue bars, was next most common in Burundi (15%), with health close behind (14%). The tax authorities, represented by yellow, seemed least involved in soliciting bribes in all five countries (≤6.4%).

Another possible source of unfairness in accessing public services, and resulting in conflict, may be discrimination among social groups. The surveys question country respondents on both their perception and their actual experience of discrimination. This yields detailed information relevant to several of the SDG 16 targets on equal access and inclusiveness. Figure 5 profiles the levels of discrimination experienced by

respondents in the main sectors canvassed across all five countries.

One notes, firstly, that the countries fall clearly into two groups. The levels of experienced discrimination reported from Uganda and Malawi, the two Anglophone countries, are much higher than from the three Francophone countries. Only in the last-mentioned instance of discrimination, disability, do they converge.

Secondly, the most reported discrimination in all countries was clearly poverty, followed by inter-group ethnicity. Discrimination on the basis of poverty was high (nearly 30%) in the Anglophone counties compared to the Francophone (5-7%), and twice as prevalent as ethnicity. The other respects – religion, gender, and region – were noticeably less, and roughly equal in the two groups: higher in Anglophone (≥10%) and lower in Francophone (≤3%) countries. Two exceptions included a high regional discrimination in Côte d'Ivoire (12%) and lower gender discrimination in Malawi (5.5%). Thirdly, one finds that these results for experienced discrimination are very *highly correlated* with the perceptions that discrimination occurs, which is not graphed in this brief. This gives some pause to the oft-expressed scepticism about perception-oriented questions, at least on this highly salient topic.
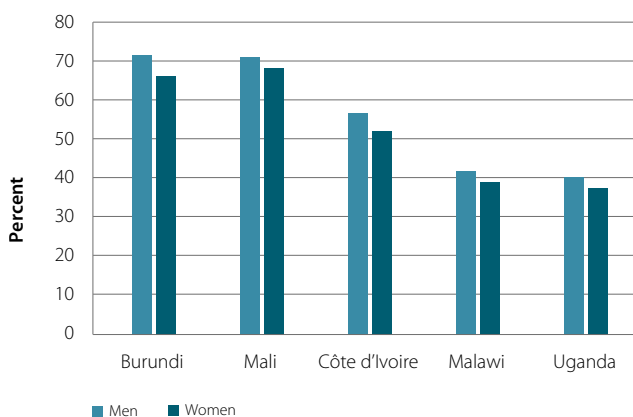
Figure 4 Proportion having to pay a bribe or give a gift to an official in the last twelve months
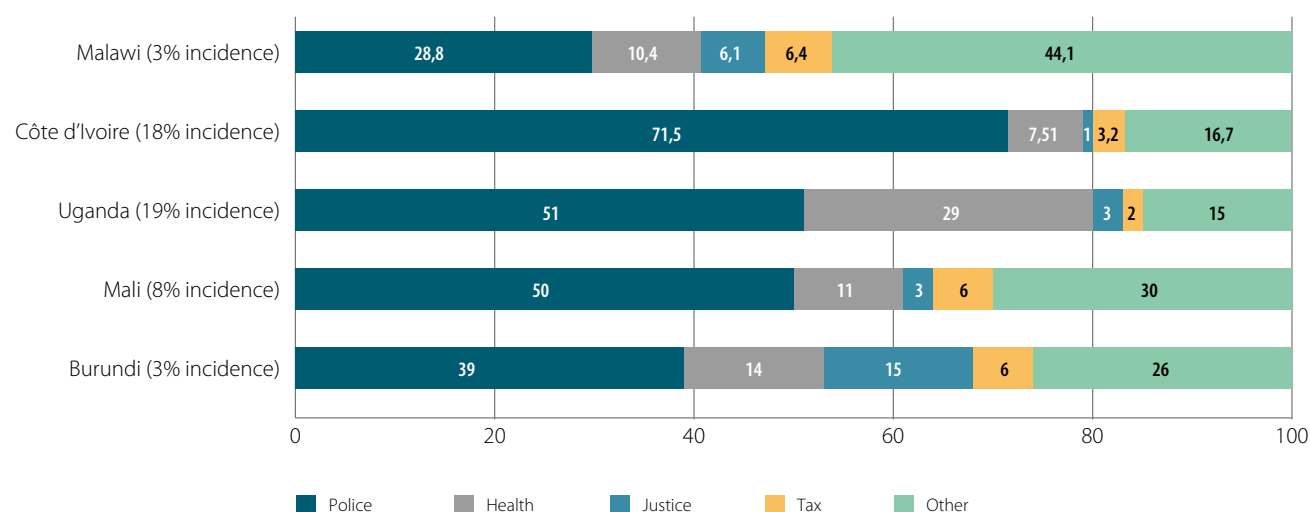
Figure 5 Personal experience of discrimination
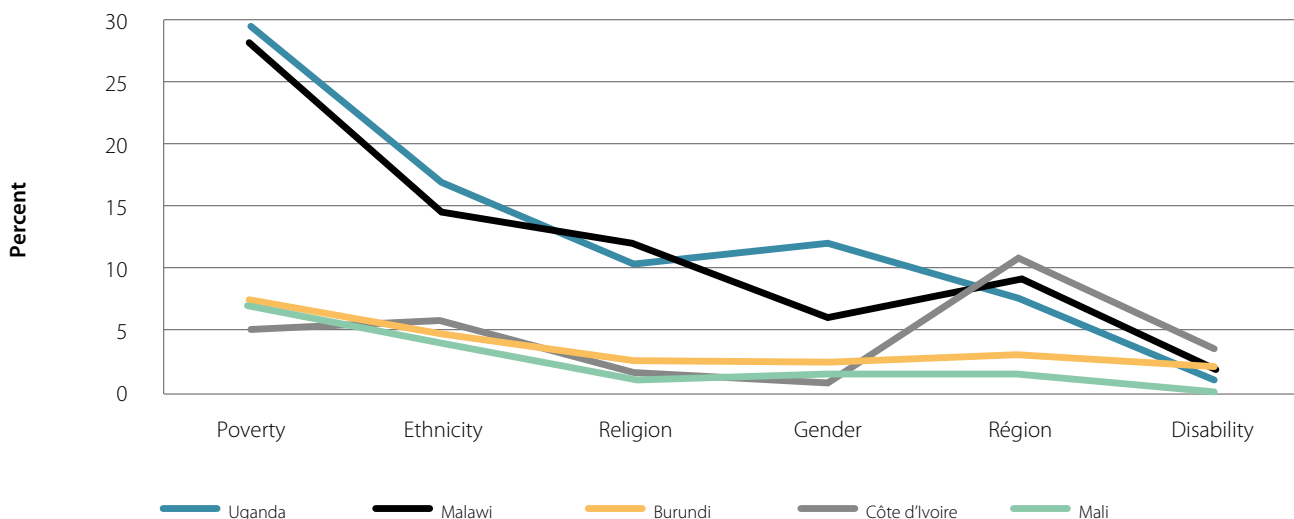
Figure 6 Respondent feeling fairly or completely safe

GPS-SHaSA questionnaires recognize that governance is closely linked with peace and security. The GPS-SHaSA security questionnaire distinguishes between respondents' sense of their personal safety and of the kinds of threats to their security in the wider society. Figure 6 deals with the extent to which respondents personally feel fairly or completely safe in the different countries broken out by gender. This is the topic of SDG Target 16.1.

Firstly, it is seen that in all countries more men than women feel fairly safe personally, but the difference

is relatively small. Secondly, there is a wide difference in the levels of perceived personal safety. The lowest levels were reports from Malawi and Uganda (~40%), the two Anglophone countries where the experience of discrimination was highest, seen in Figure 5. Likewise, the level of perceived personal safety is highest in Burundi and Mali, with Côte d'Ivoire not far behind, again, the same pattern as was seen for discrimination in the Francophone countries in Figure 5. Evidently, those most discriminated against are also those who feel their personal safety most threated. This has evident implications for policy interventions for improvement in both respects. It could also be relevant that rural dwellers feel safer than their urban counterparts, with Uganda the only exception.

Turning to respondents' readings of the greatest threats to their security in the wider society, Figure 7 shows that in every country hunger or poverty, and the related threat of unemployment, loom largest. However the levels of these apprehensions vary widely among countries with the highest threats felt in Burundi and Malawi (87%), followed by Mali (~80%). Local circumstances are seen to vary: poverty is seen as more of a threat than hunger in Côte d'Ivoire, while the reverse is the case in Uganda. Then, lower threat levels in most cases (10-15%) tend to follow either health hazards or criminal violence, followed by the remaining

**Figure 7 Potential threats to everyday security**
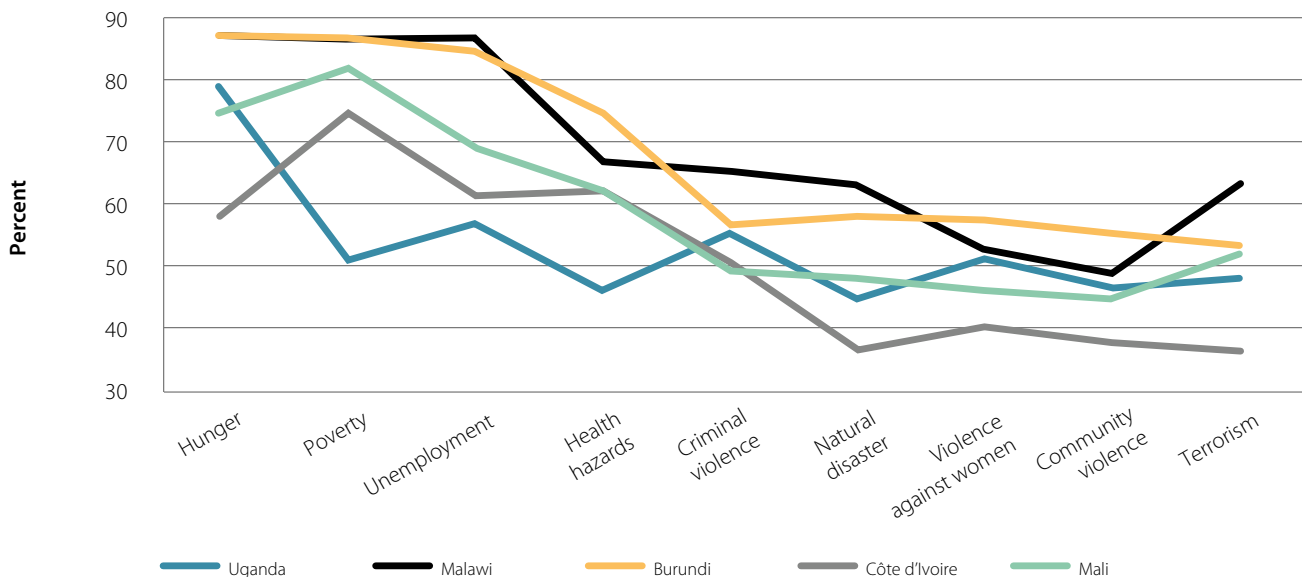
concerns: natural disaster, violence against women, community violence, and terrorism. In these regards, concern is lowest in Côte d'Ivoire (40%), followed by Mali and Uganda (45%-50%). But in Mali and Malawi there is an increase in the level of concern about terrorism.

One great benefit of the GPS-SHaSA survey instruments' being administered by NSOs is usually the large

Figure 8 Security threats in Mali 2014-15

sample sizes[5]. Another is that they may be repeated periodically. Taken together, these allow analyses of how trends may differ by sub-national region and how changing conditions may have effects over time. Mali offers an example, presented in Figure 8, which shows proportions of respondents who felt 'somewhat' or 'very' threatened.[6]
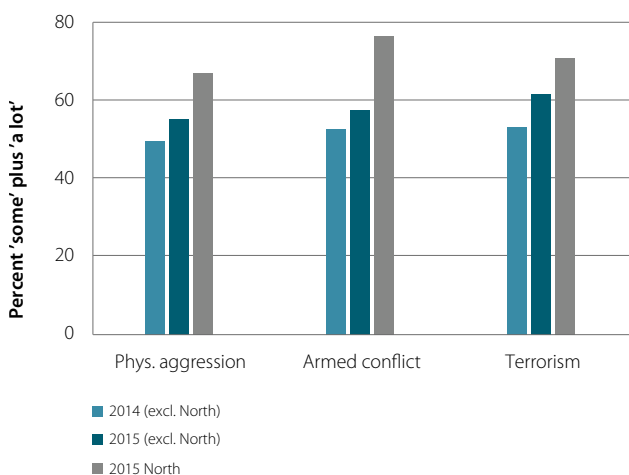
In Mali, the rise of perceived threats to security is tangible country-wide. Consider first the two front rows of bars, in green for 2014 and blue for 2015. They show that the proportion of those in Mali, excluding the North, who feel somewhat or very threatened has risen over the year, by armed conflicts (54% to 58%) and by terrorist threat (53% to 62%). Now compare the blue row with the red row. The latter shows the Northern provinces of Timbuktu and Gao, which had not been surveyed in 2014. Clearly the situation in 2015 is noticeably worse there than elsewhere in the country. The difference is greatest regarding fear of armed conflict: those who felt threatened in 2015 are high in the South (58%) but extremely high in the North (77%).

Policy Implications and Recommendations

Much longer documents would be necessary to analyse these findings in detail, as well as the many other findings from the surveys: in their socio-political context and their wider significance. But this policy brief has established a number of essential methodological points relevant to the role of NSOs in gathering GPS data. This policy brief has also established its suitability for illuminating the targets of SDG 16, particularly, as well as the GPS framework for Agenda 2063 and the revised APRM. The analysis demonstrates that:

- Survey-based GPS-SHaSA results that are comparable across countries are feasible, sensible, and revealing.
- Given their add-on form, GPS-SHaSA survey modules can be economically and promptly administered.
- The range of these survey results bears on all SDG 16 targets and the relationships among them, confirms the particular salience of 'bottom-up' survey-based indicators to GPS measurement, and demonstrates the value of multiple indicators.
- Likewise, in having been specifically framed by the relevant African charters and protocols on GPS, the indicators of GPS-SHaSA instruments align to Agenda 2063 and the reworking of the APRM measurement framework.
- NSOs in transitional as well as democratic states are interested and able to conduct GPS surveys.
- The responsibility for institutionalizing the production of GPS data should fall on official NSOs: their expertise in statistical standards and procedures enhances the reliability of data; they have the official legitimacy to collect these data; and such data should be conceived as a public good, similar to other official statistics.

As Helen Clarke, Administrator of the UNDP, has stressed, "Governance, peace, and security are not experienced in the same way by rich and poor, young and old, or employed and unemployed. To match the post-2015 agenda's ambition of 'leaving no one behind', there is an important role to be played by nationally representative surveys."[7]

Endnotes

1   Paul Okumu, Africa Platform, *Social Watch e-Newsletter*, 214, 15 May 15, 2015. For a clarification of the relationship between governance, peace and security, conceptually in UN and African policy, and empirically in *Afrobarometer* data, see Mark Orkin, "Democratic governance and accountable institutions", mimeo, 2013.

2   Mireille Razafindrakoto and François Roubaud, "La situation socio-politique au Burundi vue d'en bas : état des lieux et aspirations citoyennes pour éclairer les stratégies de sortie de crise", mimeo, DIAL, 2015.

3   This particular approach draws directly on the pioneering GPS work conducted with NSOs by IRD-DIAL. See Mireille Razafindrakoto and François Roubaud, "Governance, Democracy and Poverty Reduction: Lessons drawn from the 1-2-3 Surveys in Francophone Africa", *The African Statistical Journal*, 2 (May 2006) 43-82.

4   In the case of Burundi the support for the eight freedoms is uniformly near 100% because in that questionnaire the answers were offered as a "yes/no" dichotomy rather than the intended four-point scale.

5   The samples were weighted national probability samples. The sample sizes were: Burundi (13,116), Côte d'Ivoire (3,082), Malawi (13,965), Mali (13,835), Uganda (1,036).

6   The data and analysis for Figure 8 are drawn from Mireille Razafindrakoto et François Roubaud, "Les modules *Gouvernance, Paix et Sécurité* dans un cadre harmonisé au niveau de l'Afrique (*GPS-SHaSA*): développement d'une méthodologie d'enquête statistique innovante", *Statéco,* 109 (2015), 111-141.

7   Speech at Launch of the Oslo Governance and Peacebuilding Dialogue Series, UNDP Oslo Governance Center. 12 June 2015.