



Co-operating to Disarm

**AN ASSESSMENT OF ILLICIT SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS
PROLIFERATION AND FRAGILITY SITUATIONS**

BURUNDI





Co-operating to Disarm

VISION

“A safe and secure sub – region in a peaceful continent free from arms proliferation”

MISSION

To coordinate action against Small Arms and Light Weapons proliferation in the Great Lakes region and Horn of Africa

CORE VALUES

Flexibility
Gender Sensitivity
Integrity
Professionalism
Partnership
Team Work
Transparency

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ALC-	Authority Legitimacy and Capacity
AU-	African Union
CEPGL-	Economic Community of Great Lakes Countries
CSOs-	Civil Society Organizations
DRC-	Democratic Republic of Congo
FGD-	Focus Group discussion
FNL-	National Forces of Liberation
GDP-	Gross Domestic Product
HRW-	Human Rights Watch
ICG-	International Crisis Group
IFAD-	International Fund for Agriculture Development
KII-	Key Informant Interviews
MGDs-	Millennium Development Goals
MPR-	Movement for Popular Resistance
NGO-	Non-governmental Organizations
RECSA-	Regional Centre on Small Arms
RED-	Tabara-Resistance for the Rule of Law in Burundi
RFI-	Radio France Internationale
SALW-	Small Arms and Light Weapons
UN-	United Nations
UNDP-	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR-	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UPR-	Union of patriots for the revolution
USA-	United States of America
WHO-	World Health Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Fragility situations in Burundi have been in existence for many years owing to the protracted conflicts and the proliferation of illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). Since Independence in 1960, Burundi has experience intermittent conflicts which have left a trail of death, distraction and displacements. In its 2015 ranking, the Fund for Peace ranked the country at position 18 out of 178.

The overall objective of this study was to establish the link between fragility situations and proliferation of illicit SALW and how both impact on human development and livelihoods. Fragility situations in Burundi are characterised by insecurity (83%), presence of armed groups (78%), ungoverned spaces (77%) and the presence of Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps (69%). The key drivers of fragility situations were identified as weak governance (84%), protracted conflicts (83%), proliferation of illicit SALW (80%), porous borders (78%) and economic and social exclusion (73%).

The impact of fragility and proliferation of illicit SALW on development and livelihoods has been dire. Populations have been displaced, lives lost and key service delivery institutions disrupted. For instance, the health and transport sectors are dilapidated while unemployment and desperation have contributed towards populations vulnerability to mobilization into armed criminal gangs further sustaining the vicious cycle of insecurity. Economic paralysis and political uncertainty have also contributed to increased poverty levels and significantly hampered foreign investments.

Burundi's government in collaboration with regional and international actors have put in place a number of measures to address fragility and the proliferation of illicit SALW. These initiatives have, however, been reactive, piecemeal and so far largely ineffective. In order to strengthen resilience, the study, recommends the following, strengthening of governance institutions, addressing proliferation of SALW, commitment to implementing comprehensive security sector reform, sensitization and awareness creation, provision of alternative livelihood interventions and post conflict reconstructions.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Burundi, a former Belgian colony, gained its independence in 1962. However, its consecutive governments have remained ineffective, predatory, and corrupt,¹ consequently contributing on and off conflicts by diverse social and political factions. The history of violent conflicts in Burundi has been long and unwinding. For instance, the 1972 and 1993 conflicts resulted in massive displacements, deaths and subsequently civil war while, an internationally brokered power-sharing agreement between the Tutsi-dominated government and the Hutu rebels ended the conflict in 2005. The peace agreement allowed for a transitional process that initiated an integrated defence force and a new constitution that facilitated national elections, which brought a majority Hutu government to power under President Pierre Nkurunziza.

Since 2005, the country has held elections in 2010 and 2015. While the 2010 elections ushered in a decade of calm with improved development in infrastructure, governance and security, the 2015 election were controversial following the dispute over the interpretation of the constitutional provision on whether President Pierre Nkurunziza (the incumbent) was eligible to contest a third term. The court's ruling that allowed Nkurunziza to run for another term resulted in protests in the streets by citizens supported by some civil society organizations and religious leaders. The move was seen as going against the 2000 Arusha Accord that set a limit of two presidential terms.² The confrontations between government security agents, civil society mobilisers, and the general populace led to death and displacement. More than 150,000 people fled the country and are currently refugees in the neighbouring countries.

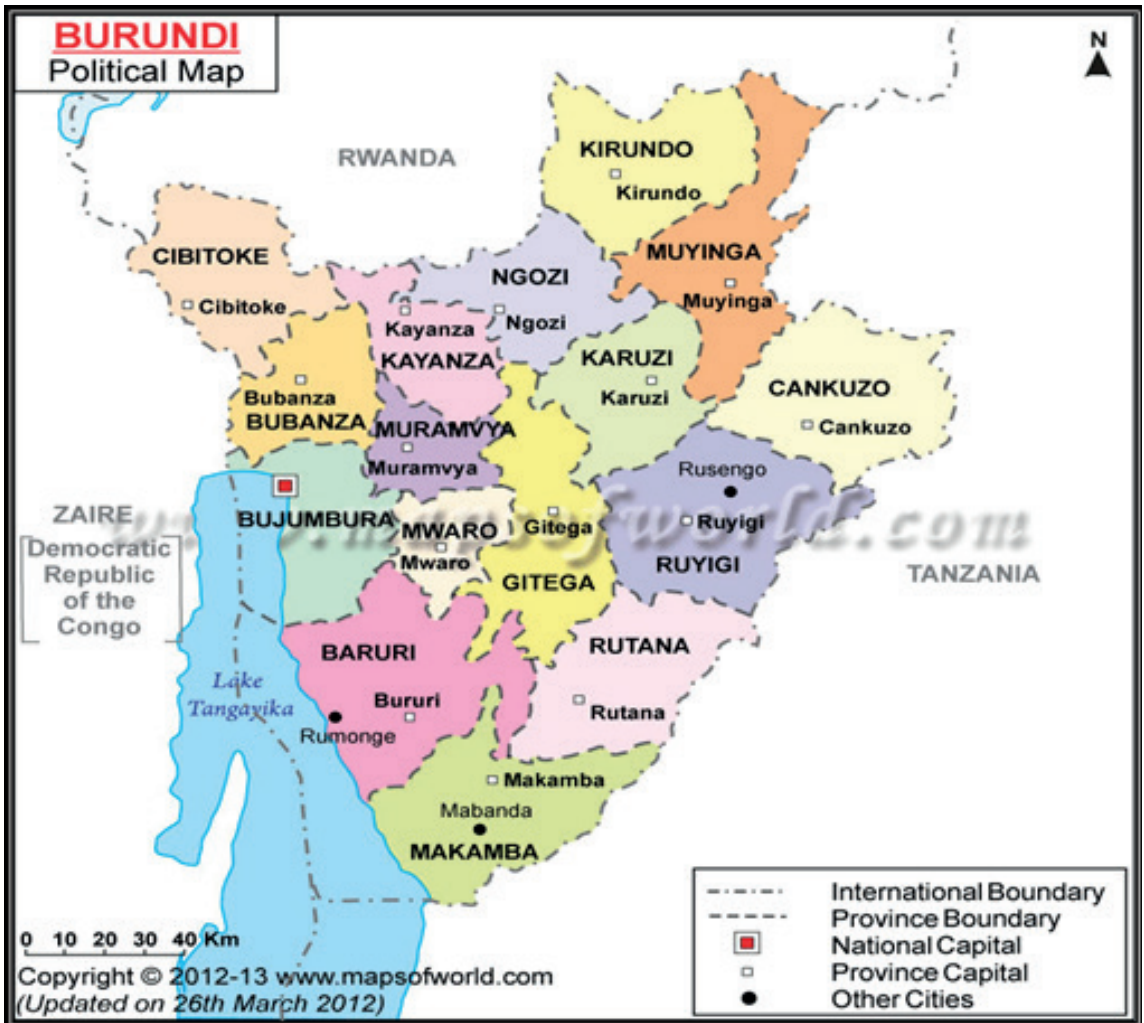
The 2015 crisis reversed the gains made over the years and the situation has been deteriorating due to the proliferation of illicit SALW and widespread violence - particularly in Bujumbura. For example, there were numerous reports of grenade attacks in the country indicating the presence of arms.³ Increasing cases of human rights violation, displacement, insecurity and an attempted military coup in May 2015 have not only left Burundi more fragile but also aggravated the humanitarian crisis.

¹Thierry Vircoulon, 2015. "The political and security crisis in Burundi." International Crisis Group (ICG).available at: <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/publication-type/speeches/2015/vircoulon-the-political-and-security-crisis-in-burundi.aspx> (Accessed on 2/02/2016).

²Ibid.

³Elsa Buchanaan, 2015. "Burundi: Civilians being disarmed ahead of possible refugee returns, claims government." International Business Times. Available at: <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/burundi-civilian-militias-being-disarmed-ahead-possible-refugee-returns-1507718> (Accessed on 2/2/2016)

Figure 1: Political Map of Burundi (Source: Maps of World⁴)



⁴Maps of World, "Political Map of Burundi." Available at: <http://www.mapsofworld.com/burundi/burundi-political-map.html> (Accessed on 2/20/2016)

1.2 Conceptualizing fragility and illicit SALW Proliferation in Burundi

Due to the diverse experiences of countries in fragile situations, scholars have noted the absence of a generally accepted definition of fragility.⁵ The African Development Bank defines fragility as “low capacity and poor state performance with respect to security and development” which is exemplified in a state’s inability to provide for the security and development of its citizens.⁶ In a similar perspective, this report, conceptualizes fragility in its broadest form as a situation where states exhibit vulnerabilities in their authority, capacity and legitimacy mandates.⁷ This concept is hereafter abbreviated as ACL and constitutes the model to be used in the conceptualisation of fragility situations and the proliferation of illicit SALW. The model helps explain the extent of the state’s authority, capacity and legitimacy to its citizens; in delivering good governance, ensuring security, guaranteeing inclusivity through citizen participation in social organization and providing basic services like health, education, roads and employment. Fragile states show weakness in delivering these core functions of human security and consequently fail to attain sustainable development for most of their population.

Authority is the capability of the state to protect its citizens from any form of violence and criminality including provision of security for their lives and property. Within the hierarchy of public goods delivered by states, the most important public good that modern states are required to provide to the citizenry is security, and most importantly human security, which holistically address the basic requirement of the citizens. It also involves having in place judicial systems that dispense justice fairly while prosecuting against breaking of the law. In Burundi, the protracted conflicts over the year have contributed to deny the country stability and security to the citizens. Polarized armed forces, ethnicized politics and lack of inclusive governments have shown lack of effective authority and hence increased fragility situations. Despite a successful disarmament process⁸, the recent political upheaval has also exposed Burundi extent of illicit SALW ownership and use by local populations. Authority of the state is also derived from having a functional army and police force that maintains law and order while securing the country’s borders.

Capacity refers to the ability of a state to effectively provide basic services such as health, education, food, water, and sanitation as well as basic communication and transport. In other words, the state needs to guarantee the basic needs of its citizens. This is through provision of infrastructural support, partnership with public and private sectors and encouragement of community initiatives. Fragile states often struggle to realize these basic needs to their citizens and in some cases; this space is filled by NGOs and international development agencies. Burundi has failed to provide for its budget and economic needs over the years. In 2014 foreign aid accounted for 42% of the national income, the second highest rate in Sub-Saharan Africa.⁹ At the same time, more than 50% of the budget was financed by external aid.¹⁰

Legitimacy refers to the ability of the state to influence public loyalty to its government as well as garner support for government’s institutions of governance, legislations and policies. Governments need functional institutions, but at the same time require effective legislations and legislative structures like the judiciary, parliament and presidency or the executive, which are critical for the implementation of policies. Fragile situations tend to weaken state institutions often leading to a state of lawlessness further diminishing state legitimacy. While conflict affected states are by definition more susceptible to fragility situations, some but not all fragile states are marred in deep-rooted conflicts and violent transitions that have postponed peace. Their inability to control high levels of corruption and their propensity to revert to conflicts and political instability after periods of peace is also higher. The possibility of populations acquiring and using illicit SALW to protect themselves is also remarkably high. The protracted conflicts in Burundi have over the years weakened state institutions, diminished the appreciation for law and order and reinforced the use of force as a means of conflict resolution.

⁵Finn Stepputat and Lars Engberg-Pedersen, 2008. “Fragile States: Definitions, Measurements and Processes.” Available at: http://www.dcis.dk/graphics/Publications/Reports%202008/R2008_11_Fragile_States_%20Definitions_Measurements_Processes.pdf (Accessed on 2/02/2016).

⁶African Development Bank. *Africa Development Bank Group strategy for addressing Fragility and building resilience in Africa*. Abidjan: Africa Development Bank, 2014.

⁷This conceptualization is borrowed from David Carment, Stewart Prest and Yiagadeesen Samy. 2007. “Assessing fragility: theory, evidence and policy”. *Revue Trimestrielle De Politique Etrangère*, p. 14

⁸Elsa Buchanaan, 2015. “Burundi: Civilians being disarmed ahead of possible refugee returns, claims government.” *International Business Times*. Available at: <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/burundi-civilian-militias-being-disarmed-ahead-possible-refugee-returns-1507718> (Accessed on 2/2/2016)

Fragile states can thus be defined as those that are caught up in any or all of the following traps: conflict, natural resource competition, poor governance, weak institution, violence and poverty. The World Bank notes that such states fell behind other states in meeting most of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) such as mortality, literacy, poverty, and malnutrition rates, which remain higher than in other low-income countries.¹¹

This study, therefore, sought to establish the nexus between fragility situations and proliferation of illicit SALW in Burundi. Objectives of the Study

The overall goal of this study was to establish the link between fragility situations and illicit SALW proliferation in Burundi and show how this correlation impacts on sustainable development. The study pursued the following objectives:

- i. To document manifestations of fragility situations and illicit SALW proliferation in Burundi;
- ii. To identify drivers of fragility situations in Burundi;
- iii. To explain the impact of fragility situations and illicit SALW proliferation on development and livelihoods in Burundi; and

⁹Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), 2016. "Burundi." <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/by.html> (Accessed on 28/03/2016).
¹⁰Daniel Finnan, 2015. "Business as usual in Burundi, until the money runs out." *Rfi*. available at: <http://en.rfi.fr/africa/20151103-business-usual-burundi-until-money-runs-out> (Accessed on 2/2/2016)

iv. To identify existing national and regional interventions mechanisms to address fragility situations and proliferation illicit SALW in Burundi.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

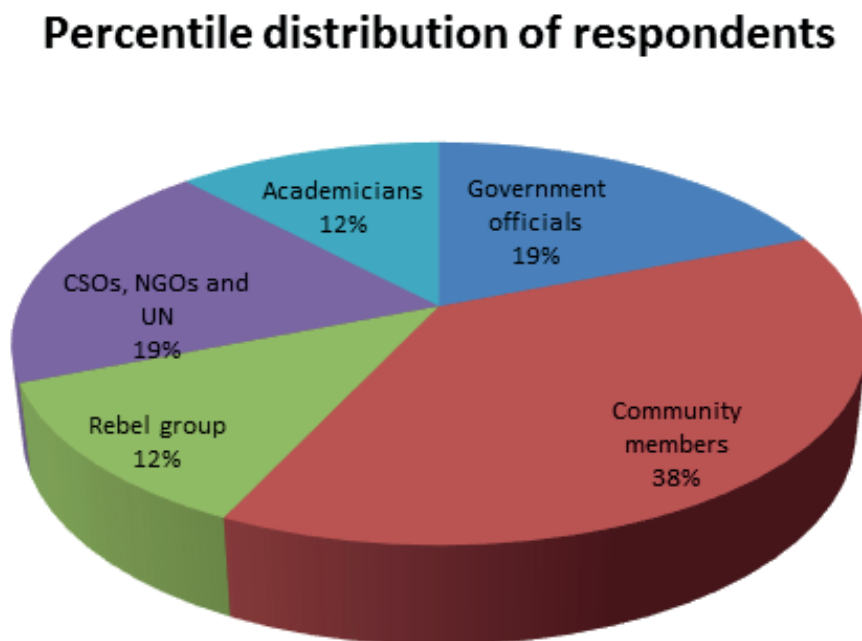
2.1 Study design and sampling techniques

This study utilised a cross-sectional study design, which involved triangulating opinions and perceptions from different sectors of the community in order to establish the nexus between fragility situations and proliferation of SALW. To realize this, the study used a mix-method approach, which entailed a combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods in an exploratory and inclusive manner.

Purposive sampling was used to ensure that specific key informants were reached. The key informants were identified based on their roles in the society on matters touching on fragility situations, their level of knowledge, and organizational representation. They included officials from government officials, peace missions, religious leaders, rebel groups, community leaders, and ordinary citizens. The figure below represents categories and percentages of study participants that were included in the study:

¹¹World Bank, 2016. "Fragility Violence and Conflict." Available at: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/fragilityconflictviolence/overview#1> (Accessed on 2/3/2016).

Figure 2: Population composition of study participants



2.2 Data Collection and Management

Primary data collection was carried out through one –on-one in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and by use of key informants. The questionnaire contained both open-ended and closed questions. Secondary data was collected from published books and journals, reports from government and national focal point on small arms databases, online reports from the Small Arms Survey, International Crisis Group, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF), and from other publically available materials.

Collected data was stored in notebooks and files. Databases were created for each of the groups interviewed. Copies of questionnaire were sorted and stored in databases for ease of reference and to avoid loss. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained through the removal of names where they had been indicated, unless otherwise allowed by the respondents. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the variables.

Both quantitative and qualitative data were generated. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics (means, percentages) while qualitative data was analysed by use of content analysis. Data was presented in figures, tables, and narratives while guided by the thematic representation of the objectives of the study.

2.3 Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

Studies on fragility and illicit SALW proliferation are delicate and sensitive due to their association with security issues. Consequently, the participants were initially hesitant to speak out. Majority of the respondents requested that neither their names nor organizations should be revealed. NGOs were particularly concerned that they could be blacklisted if they were seen speaking against the government. With time, the respondents gained confidence and opened up to share their views.

The researchers used gatekeepers and local research assistants to gain more confidence of the respondents. Given the tensed security situation on the ground, the researchers also consulted with security agents,

civil society representatives and religious leaders to make sure that there was a safe environment for the research.

3.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Fragility situations in Burundi have to be understood within the context of Burundi’s history of political crisis and the conflicts in the Great Lakes region. The conflicts have created a fertile ground for the proliferation of illicit SALW and multiplied the rebel activities that destabilize countries within the region. Both the Democratic Republic of Cong (DRC) and Rwanda, which neighbour Burundi, have had histories of conflicts whose spill-over effects have been felt in Burundi. The eastern part of the DRC continues to be a hub for rebel activities. Burundi’s fragility situations equally ought to be understood in the context of its historical conflicts, which were largely based on inter-ethnic competition for social-political power and resource-control.

3.1 Manifestations of fragility situations and illicit SALW proliferation in Burundi

The fragility situations in Burundi have manifested themselves in three broad dimensions: protracted conflicts; increased poverty and consecutive unstable governments. These are discussed below:

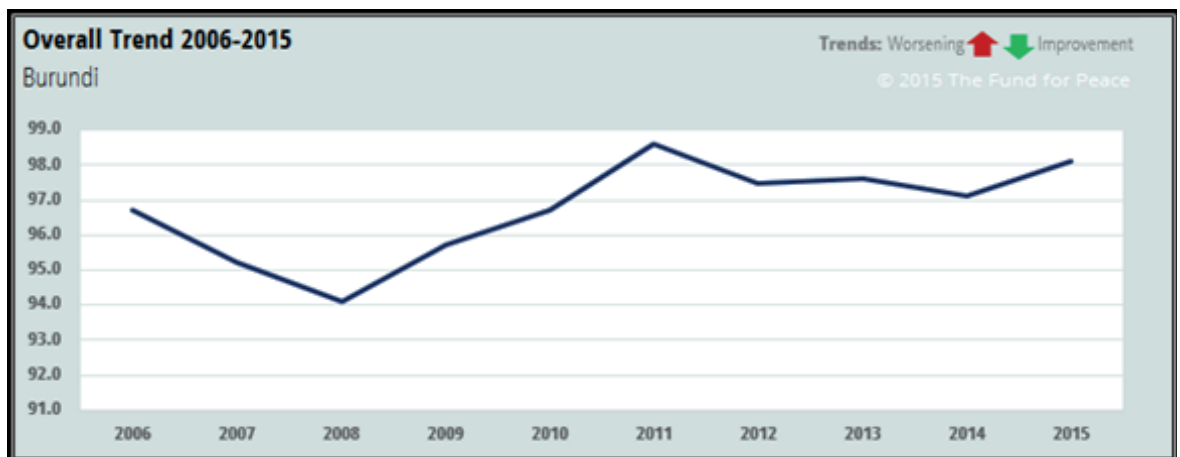
Protracted conflicts: Between 1972 to 2015, Burundi has experienced several violent conflicts. Many of these have largely been ethnic based between the Tutsi and the Hutu. The 12-year civil conflict between 1993 and 2005 was the most devastating in terms deaths and/or displaced.¹² The 1972 conflict between the Hutu and Tutsi led to mass killings of the Hutus, while the 1993 conflict following the killing of the first democratically elected president, Melchior Ndadaye, witnessed a mass massacre of the Tutsis.¹³ The 2015 political crisis provoked by political differences led to further violence. During all these conflicts, armed civilians who were sympathetic to the government were accused of violent acts against government critics. These intermittent conflicts have been sustained by the proliferation of illicit SALW and subsequently weakened the infrastructures of governance in Burundi and heightened fragility situations.

Poverty: Burundi is the fifth poorest country in the world¹⁴ with about 90 % of its population dependant

on agriculture. Burundi's per capita gross domestic product (GDP) in December 2015 was \$158. This is despite the fact that it is rich in mineral deposits and other resources. The Human Development Index for Burundi was at 0.400 between 2014 and 2015, which is well below the average of the 0.505 for countries in the low human development group.¹⁵ In addition, 81.8% of the population is multidimensional poor while an additional 12% live near multidimensional poverty. Poverty¹⁶ is further enhanced by unemployment. The unemployed youth are not only susceptible to recruitment to armed militia groups, but also in the business of illicit SALW trade.

Weak governments: Since independence in 1962, Burundi has experienced several military coups many of them being bloody. Presidents have also been deposed unceremoniously and others assassinated in unclear circumstances. This has resulted in newly appointed or self-imposed leaders tightening their grip onto power through force and subsequently repressing majority of their critics.¹⁷ The instability has in turn left vacuums in some regions where locals have often taken up illicit SALW to protect themselves against the predatory and repressive state. The figure below presents the fragility situation in Burundi;

Figure 3: Fragility Index Score:



Source: Fund for Peace, 2015.

Figure 3 above demonstrates Burundi's long-term trend of fragility situations, from 2006-2015. The graph highlights a worsening fragility trend in the recent past after a period of peace, between 2005 to 2008 that can be attributed to peace agreement brokered in 2005. However, the fragility index rose to 98.6 in 2011 following the hotly contested 2010 election, which created tension and confrontation between the government and opposition leaders that led sporadic armed violence in the country.¹⁸ However, the situation eased following international community intervention.

Population displacements: Fragility situations in Burundi have been characterized by displacements during the various periods of conflict. There was a large refugee influx into Tanzania and DRC during the 1993-2005 conflict. The recent conflicts since 2015 has led to displacements of more than 250,000¹⁹ people who have fled as refugees to neighbouring countries

and over 25,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs). According to the UNHCR, since 2015 there has been a continuous flow of refugees with weekly average estimated at "more than 1,000 in Tanzania, 500 in Uganda, 230 in Rwanda and 200 in Democratic Republic of the Congo."²⁰ The number of IDPs in Burundi stood at 79,200 as of August 2015 spread across Makamba and Bujumbura.²¹ Other provinces reported to host IDPs are Kirundo, Rutana and the provinces neighbouring Rwanda.²²

¹²The Atlantic, 2010. "The 15 highest unemployment rates in the world." Available at: <http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2010/06/the-15-highest-unemployment-rates-in-the-world/58706/> (Accessed on 2/03/2016)

¹³Jean-Pierre Chrétien and Jean-François Dupaquier, *Burundi 1972, au bord des génocides*. Paris: Karthala, 2007.

¹⁴The Human Development Report of 2015 ranks the country at 184 out of 188 placing it at the low human development category. UNDP, *Human development Report 2015: Work for Human Development*. New York: United Nation Development Program, 2015.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Peter Uvin, "Ethnicity and Power in Burundi and Rwanda: Different Paths to Mass Violence." *Comparative Politics*. Vol. 31, No. 3 (April, 1999), pp. 253-271.

¹⁸Human Rights Watch, 2011. "World Report 2011: Burundi Events of 2010." Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2011/country-chapters/burundi> (Accessed on 10/05/2016)

3.2 Drivers of Fragility situations in Burundi

A number of factors have been identified as the drivers for the fragility situations in Burundi. These include:

3.2.1 Proliferation of illicit SALW

The trail of proliferation of illicit SALW into Burundi over time is both internal and external. As already noted, the various periods of armed conflict in the country largely contributed to the proliferation of illicit SALW. Internally, there have been cases where communities have seized and broken into armouries to steal arms.²³ Illicit SALW proliferation has also been attributed to the porous borders and political instability in the Great Lakes region. The instability in the region, particularly in the DRC in the last 20 years has significantly contributed to illegal flow of SALW into the country.

Since 2015, there have been increased cases of armed violence and grenade attacks especially in Bujumbura, although armed crimes have also been reported in other parts of the country.²⁴ The Small Arms Survey notes that in 2015 “more than one-third of all incidents of armed violence involve the use of small arms.”²⁵

3.2.2 Weak governance

The fragility situations in Burundi have equally been blamed on inept and corrupt governance institutions. Consecutive presidents in Burundi have been accused of clientele tendencies and some leaders have been blamed for favouring and pitting one community against the other for their selfish political interests.²⁶ Systematic exclusion of the various social sectors of the society, whether ethnic or political have also contributed to fragility situations and weakened national cohesion. While the 2005 peace deal allowed for ethnic power sharing of 60-40% between Hutu and Tutsi, respectively, this has not held over the years.

¹⁹International Organization for Migration, 2016. “Burundi: Displacement Tracking Matrix | DTM – Report # 2, January 2016.” Available at: <http://reliefweb.int/report/burundi/burundi-displacement-tracking-matrix-dtm-report-2-january-2016> (Accesses on 15/03/2016).

²⁰UNHCR, 2016. “Number of Burundian refugees tops 250,000 since April.” Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/56d97f2d9.html> (Accessed on 15/03/2016).

²¹Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2015. “Burundi IDPs figures Analysis 2015.” Available at: <http://www.internal-displacement.org/sub-saharan-africa/burundi/figures-analysis> (Accessed on 15/03/2016).

²²International Organization for Migration, 2016. “Burundi: Displacement Tracking Matrix | DTM – Report # 2, January 2016.” Available at: <http://reliefweb.int/report/burundi/burundi-displacement-tracking-matrix-dtm-report-2-january-2016> (Accesses on 15/03/2016).

The 2015 political crisis has seen mistrust of the electoral commission and the Judiciary following the two institutions’ approval of President Nkurunziza’s third term.²⁷ The executive has also been criticized by citizens for being heavy handed in the manner in which it dealt with the opposition on the third term issue. Equally, the fourth estate, media and civil society have faced repressive force of the police and some of them have been closed down (The government has recently (March 2016) withdrawn its ban on some of the media houses).

The attempted coup of 2015 left cracks in the military demonstrating the underlying undertone of military mutiny. Government illegitimacy and inability to protect its citizens has driven populations into seeking alternative means for self-protection, creating militias and contributing to further fragility.

3.2.3 Poverty, social and economic exclusions

Burundi is one of the poorest countries in the world, currently ranked at 184/187 in the 2015 Human Development Index.²⁸ The figure below shows the level of poverty in the country in three dimensions: health, education and living standards. Figure 4: Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI): Censored Deprivation (Source: Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, 2015)

²³Rene Lemarchand, *The Dynamic of Violence in Central Africa*. Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009.

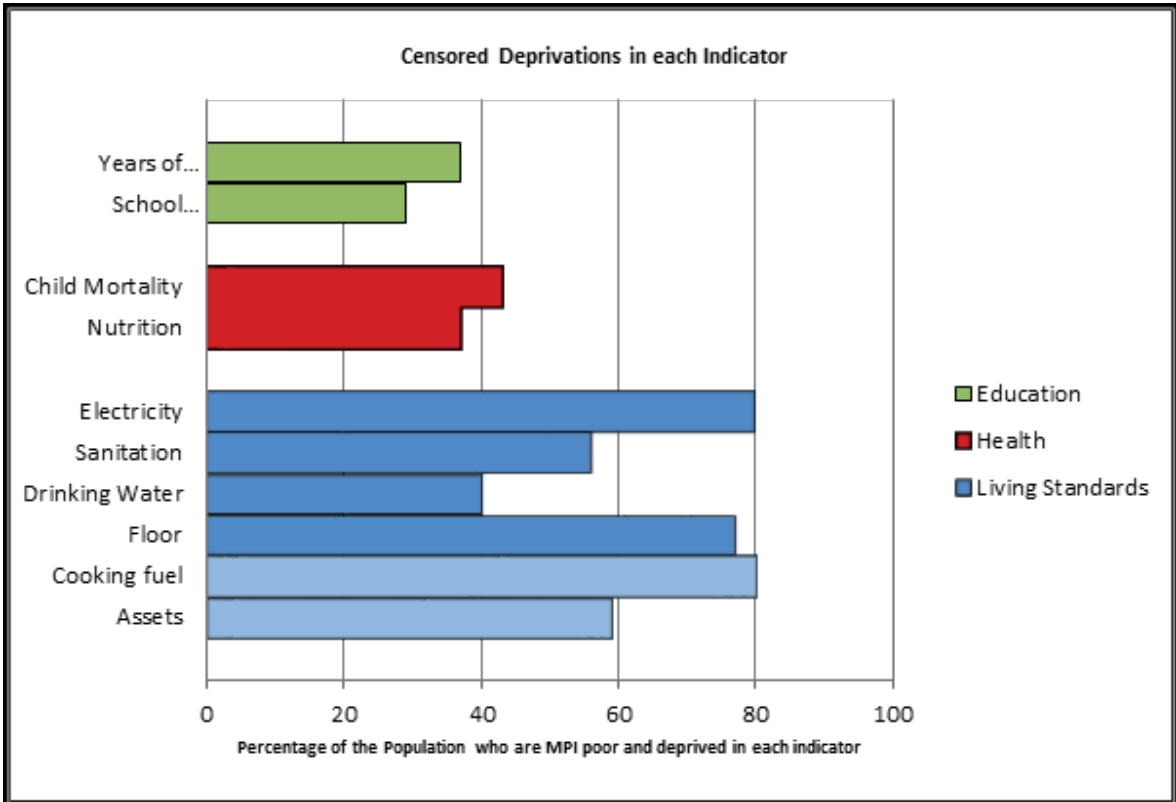
²⁴Thierry Vircoulon, 2015. “The political and security crisis in Burundi.” International Crisis Group (ICG). Available at: <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/publication-type/speeches/2015/vircoulon-the-political-and-security-crisis-in-burundi.aspx> (Accessed on 2/02/2016).

²⁵Small Arms Survey, 2015. “Young People and Political Crisis in Burundi.” Available at: <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/about-us/highlights/highlights-2015/young-people-burundi.html> (Accessed on 12/03/2016).

²⁶Ibid René (2009) Op Cit.

²⁷Elsa Buchanan, 2015. “Burundi constitutional court approves President Nkurunziza controversial third-term bid.” International Business Times. Available at: <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/burundi-constitutional-court-approves-president-nkurunziza-controversial-third-term-bid-1499687> (Accessed on 10/05/2016)

²⁸UNDP, Human development Report 2015: Work for Human Development. New York: United Nation Development Program, 2015.



The figure above indicates that 40% of the population lack access to safe and clean drinking water and the child mortality rate affects 45% of that population that is MPI poor, whereas 38% of the population are MPI poor in relation to nutrition. The figure also indicates that 30% of the population are MPI poor and therefore deprived of access to education. Further, living standards have greatly deteriorated with 80% of the population that is MPI poor lacking sufficient access to cooking fuel and 58% to sanitation. However, through donor support, the country maintained a growth ranging between 4.0-4.7% between 2010 and 2015, but this is expected to slump down to -7% in 2016 due to the current political crisis.²⁹

The economic challenges in Burundi equally include the marginalization of the rural population, which has no access to piped water, electricity and an efficient health system. While the current government has increased the number of primary schools in the country, illiteracy rates remain high.

²⁹Trading Economics, 2016. "Burundi Annual Growth Rate." Available at: <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/burundi/gdp-growth-annual> (Accessed on 27/03/2016).

Another major challenge is the aid cut that has been imposed by donor countries. For instance, the aid on education and health from the international donors has reduced. In March 2016, the European Union announced that it was cutting down its direct funding to the government. The EU funds close to 50% of the annual budget of Burundi. In the current financial projection 2014-2020, EU earmarked €432m mostly for projects in "energy, rural development, public finances, health and justice reform."³⁰ This means that the aid cut will have serious repercussions on the functioning of the government. Besides, many businesses have closed down, prices of commodities have increased and the economic purchasing power gone down given that a quarter of a million people have fled the country.³¹ With such levels of unemployment and poverty, populations become more vulnerable to manipulation and recruitment into armed groups in turn heightening fragility situations.

3.2.4 Lack of implementation of Existing National Strategies on the control and management of arms

Between 2006 and 2011, Burundi had developed a number of interventions against illicit SALW proliferation. These include the National Strategy

Against the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons developed in 2006; a legislation governing SALW in 2009; and National Action Plan (2011-2015) on the control and management of SALW on 7th April, 2011. However, despite these interventions, Burundi continues to face the challenge of proliferation of illicit SALW. This implies that the challenge lies in the implementation of these laws, the capacity of the law enforcement organs to affect the control of illicit SALW, and effective response to political crisis through impartial disarmament of civilians.

³⁰The Guardian, 2016. "EU suspends aid to Burundi's government." Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2016/mar/15/eu-suspends-aid-to-burundi-government> (Accessed on 27/03/2016).

³¹Désiré Nimubona, 2016. "How Burundi's political crisis has crippled its economy." Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN). Available at: <http://www.irinnews.org/analysis/2016/02/12/how-burundi%E2%80%99s-political-crisis-has-crippled-its-economy> (Accessed on 14/03/2016).

Figure 5: Burundi's corruption ranking



Source: Trading Economics

Figure 5 above indicates that Burundi's Corruption Rank between 2005 and 2016 averaged 153.64, with the highest ranking recorded in 2011 at 172/175 and lowest in 2006 just after the peace agreement.³³

³²Transparency International, 2015. "Burundi." Available at: <https://www.transparency.org/country/#BDI> (Accessed on 23/03/2016)

³³Trading Economics, 2016. "Burundi Corruption Rank." Available at: <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/burundi/corruption-rank>. (Accessed on 23/03/2016).

3.2.5 Corruption

According to Transparency International's (TI) Corruption Perception Index 2015, Burundi was ranked 150 out of 168 countries surveyed with a score of 21.³² Corruption perception index (CPI) ranks countries by perceived levels of public sector corruption, mainly evaluating the government based on its performance in service delivery. A country's score is measured on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean or hardly corrupt). A country's ranking indicates the position in relation to the other countries rated in the index. This therefore means that with a score of 21 and ranking at 150, Burundi's corruption levels are very high. The figure below shows the corruption trend in Burundi:

3.3 The Impact of Fragility Situations and the Proliferation of Illicit SALW on Livelihoods and Development

3.3.1 Social impact

The 2015 crisis led to displacement of people. Some people have fled to neighbouring countries such as Rwanda and Democratic Republic of Congo,³⁴ while some have become internally displaced persons (IDPs). According to UNHCR, by May 2015 following the attempted coup more than 105,000 had fled the country with 70,187 in Tanzania, 9,183 in DRC and 26,300 in Rwanda.³⁵

The influx of refugees in the neighbouring states led overcrowding in the refugee camps. This has led to outbreak of diseases due to deplorable leaving conditions. For instance, there was outbreak of cholera among Burundian refugees in Tanzania, resulting to 31 deaths and more than 3,000 reported incidences of people suffering from acute diarrhoea cases.³⁶

3.3.2 Economic impact

The intermittent conflicts have left the economy of the country shuttered for many decades. The state of fragility in the Burundi has affected the various sector of economy. For example, following the 2015 crisis, the country’s tax revenue fell one third below the target in May.³⁷ The implication of this is reduction of quality or quantity of services provided by the government. The country was further hit by the European Union suspension of financial and budget support to the administration.³⁸ Yet foreign aid accounts for a half of the country national budget. The crisis also affected the business operation within the capital as almost business across the capital Bujumbura remained closed. Nonetheless, insecurity due to the political crisis directly affects projects that are financed by donors due to reduction of disbursement and raises the cost of investment. This has dire consequences for a country that exports very little, notwithstanding, producing less than enough to feed itself due to its reliance on the agricultural sector.

3.3.3 Political impact

The country has been purged into conflicts since independence of which has left the country divided along ethnic lines. The intermittent conflicts have weakened the authority of the state in managing conflicts. This has led to dwindling of government legitimacy among the population leading to widespread public discontent, violence, and an attempted coup.³⁹

4.0 KEY FINDINGS

4.1 Manifestations Of Fragility Situations And Salw Proliferation In Burundi

The figure below indicates the various ways in which the fragility situations are manifested in Burundi:

³⁴International Coalition for Responsibility to Protect, 2016. “Crisis in Burundi.” Available at: <http://www.responsibilitytoprotect.org/index.php/crises/crisis-in-burundi> (Accessed on 18/03/2016)

³⁵UNHCR, 2015. “UNHCR says more than 105,000 refugees have fled violence in Burundi.” Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/search?page=search&docid=5555f62a6&query=burundi> (Accessed on 18/03/2016)

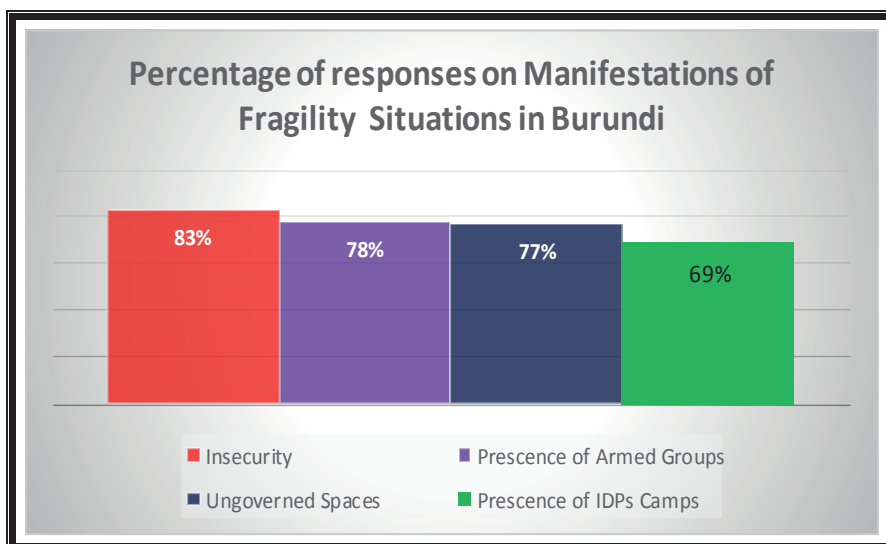
³⁶Medecins Sans Frontieres, 2015 “Tanzania: Cholera outbreak among Burundian refugees.” Available at: <http://www.msf.org/article/tanzania-cholera-outbreak-among-burundian-refugees> (Accessed on 18/02/2016)

³⁷Clement Maniraburusha, 2015. “Burundi tax revenues slide as unrest bites into businesses.” Reuters. Available at: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-burundi-politics-economy-idUSKBN0OL0ZY20150605> (Accessed on 15/04/2016)

³⁸Council of the European Union, 2016. “Burundi: EU closes consultations under Article 96 of the Cotonou agreement.” Available at: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/14-burundi-eu-closes-consultations-cotonou-agreement/?utm_source=dsms-auto&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Burundi%3a+EU+closes+consultations+under+Article+96+of+the+Cotonou+agreement (Accessed on 15/5/2016)

³⁹Amadou Sy and Radhika Goyal, 2015. “Third term-ism: Is Burundi a serious threat to the region?” Brookings. Available at: <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2015/05/29/third-term-ism-is-burundi-a-serious-threat-to-the-region/> (Accessed on 18/03/2016)

Figure 6: Percentage of responses on manifestation of fragility situations in Burundi



Source: Research Findings

Insecurity: According to 83% of the respondents, Burundi has experienced a number of insecurity situations over the years. In a focus group, discussion in Bujumbura respondents identified the 1993-2005 conflict to have been the worst that the country has experienced. The April 2015 crisis, however, almost returned the country into political limbo. The opposition and government factions competed over political influence leaving the populace in a state of uncertainty.

The respondents were of the view that the current political crisis in Burundi had greatly increased fragility situations in the country. The majority (72%) of the respondents were of the view that lack of substantive dialogue between the government and those opposing the legitimacy of the government had exacerbated the political impasse. The political crisis had engendered major concerns over security. The respondents identified different levels of insecurity: criminal offenses committed by armed groups, which may fall into criminal activities; regular exchange of fire between civilians and the police at night, especially in the quarters of Musaga, Cibitoke and Mutakura. Insecurity was mostly associated with the proliferation of illicit SALW in the country.

Presence of armed groups: The existence of rebel groups in a country is a clear manifestation of fragility. According to 78% of responses, armed groups are operational in Bujumbura and its environs including, Musaga, Cibitoke, Mujeruru Karuzi and Kamenge areas where they have been engaged in fighting government forces. Respondents identified the Resistance for the Rule of Law in Burundi (RED-Tabara), Republican Forces for Burundi (FOREBU) the National Forces of Liberation (FNL) Movement for Popular Resistance (MPR) and the Union of patriots for the revolution (UPR). Some locals and respondents working with international NGOs in Bujumbura also accused the government of arming the imbonerakure (translated from Kirundi as 'those that see far'), youth wingers that were affiliated with the ruling party to counter the opposition.

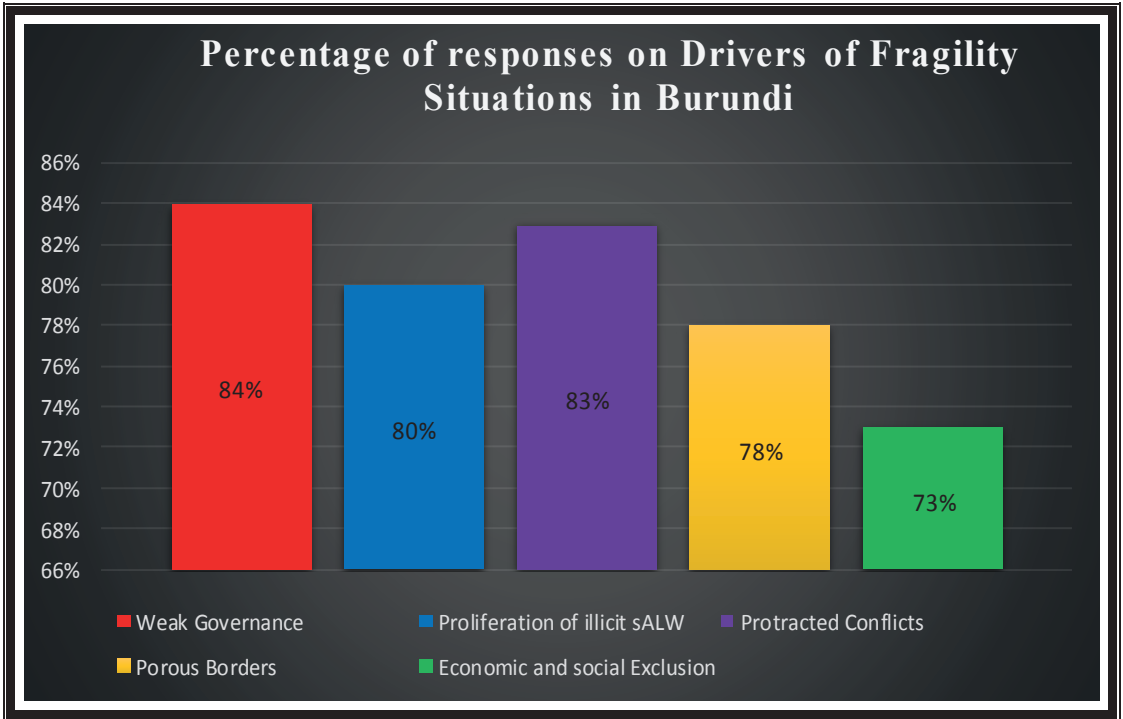
Ungoverned Spaces: Rural Burundians complained of neglect and marginalisation by consecutive governments. They argued that while many urban dwellers enjoyed clean water, good roads and electricity, those living in the margins of Bujumbura

and in the rural areas have been left behind. This according to 77% of the responses has seen many people become vulnerable to armed groups who capitalise on their miseries and inadequate government presence. In areas neighbouring Rwanda and Eastern DRC respondents complained of armed groups taking over the administration of their villages and taxing them for such services as security provision.

Presence of Displacement Camps: the findings revealed that 69% of responses were concerned about the increase in IDP camps in Burundi after the 2015 political crisis. In two focus group discussions in Bujumbura with academicians and UNHCR officials, respectively, respondents pointed out that close to 20,000 displaced people were living in Rutana, Makamba and Kirundo. Many of the camps were in deplorable conditions with the health workers in nearby towns concerned about increased cases of health risks due to poor sanitation and water in the camps. The respondents noted that many more had sought refuge in neighbouring countries in the DRC, Rwanda and Tanzania. A UNHCR respondent estimated the number of those who have left the country at more than 200,000.

4.2 Drivers Of Fragility Situations In Burundi

The figure below highlights the drivers of fragility situations in Burundi:
 Figure 7: Percentage of responses on drivers of fragility Situations in Burundi



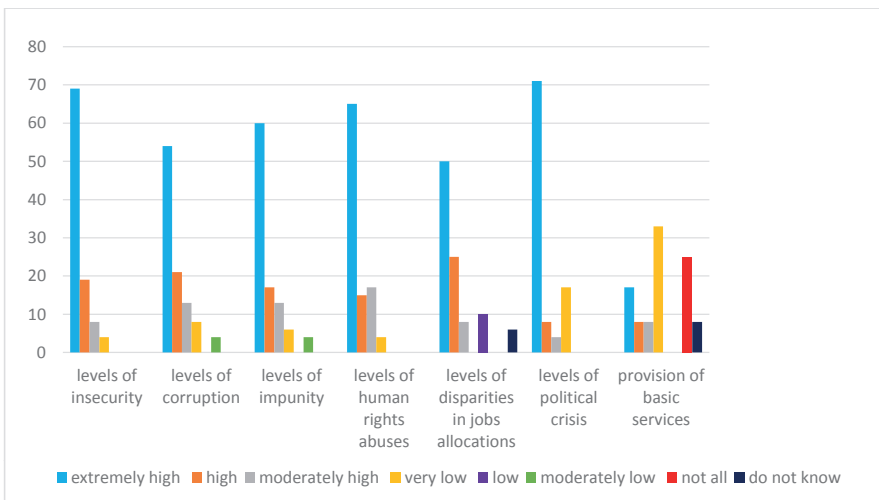
Source: Research Findings

4.2.1 Weak governance

According to 84% of the responses, weak governance was the major driver of fragility situations in Burundi. The current political crisis, rising insecurity,

disappearances of individuals without trace and the muzzling of dissenting voices using brutal force have weakened the trust of institutions in governance. Figure 8 below shows how respondents viewed the governance situation of the country:

Figure 8: Respondents' evaluation of governance status



Source: Research Findings

The major concern for the majority (71%) of the respondents was the current political crisis, which has compromised the government’s capacity to deliver on its basic services provision mandates. On further probing respondents held the view that the government had failed to initiate a national dialogue on resolving the current political crisis. On the other hand, 69% of the respondents were concerned about the insecurity situation. The population felt that they were sandwiched between the armed gangs committing violent acts in Bujumbura and the police’s excessive use of force, which has sometimes been brutal.

As shown in Figure 8 above, 65% of the respondents were concerned about the high levels of human rights abuses, which in most cases were carried out with impunity. This corroborates with the Human Rights Watch Report released on 25th February 2016, which accused the government of “killing, abducting, torturing, and arbitrarily arresting scores of people at an alarming rate.”⁴⁰

Respondents were dissatisfied with the government’s provision of basic services such as water, electricity, road network and health care. Hence, 33% of the respondents identified such provisions as very low while 25% observed that the services were not being provided at all. Some of these respondents noted that the need to possess arms is necessitated by the absence of government security personnel. In other instances, respondents alleged that the government had armed members of militias affiliated to the

state to fill gaps where government forces were not present. While these claims could not be confirmed, respondents in a University in Bujumbura were emphatic that young members of imbonerakure had continued to terrorise residents of the suburbs of Bujumbura who were considered opposition members. In return, the residents had no option but to also arm themselves to protect their property. This vicious cycle has thus played a significant role in escalating the crisis in Burundi.

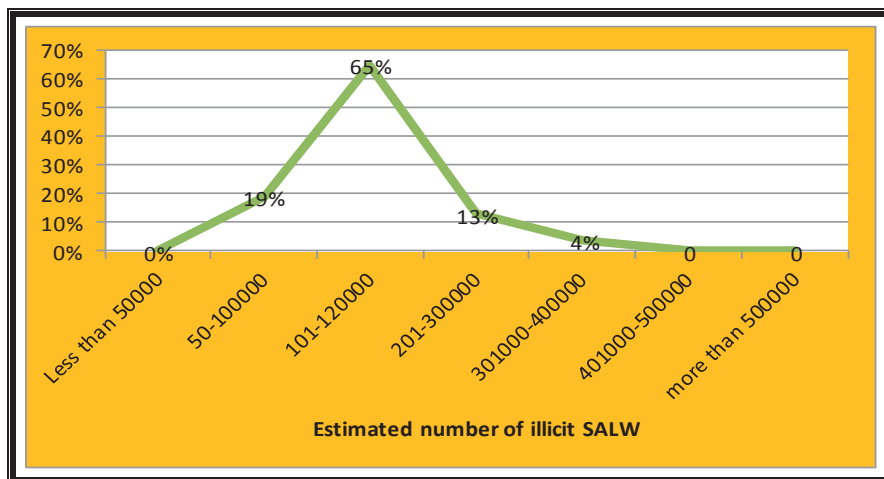
4.2.2 Protracted conflicts

The state of fragility in Burundi is also stimulated by the long history of conflicts in the country. As noted by 83% of the responses the conflicts were ranked as the second major driver of fragility situations. The respondents stressed that Burundi had fundamentally remained unstable since independence. Historical grievances and suspicions were cited as fuelling conflicts and proliferation of illicit SALW in Burundi. Addressing the current political crisis is therefore crucial to moving the country forward towards stability.

4.2.3 Proliferation of illicit SALW

Proliferation of illicit SALW was cited by participants as the third driver of fragility situations by 80% of the responses. The amplified circulation of SALW in Burundi is manifested in the increased number of SALW in the regions despite the government disarmament efforts that began in 2005. The figure below shows the estimates of illicit SALW in the country as noted by the respondents:

Figure 9: Respondents Estimation of the Number of Illicit SALW in the country



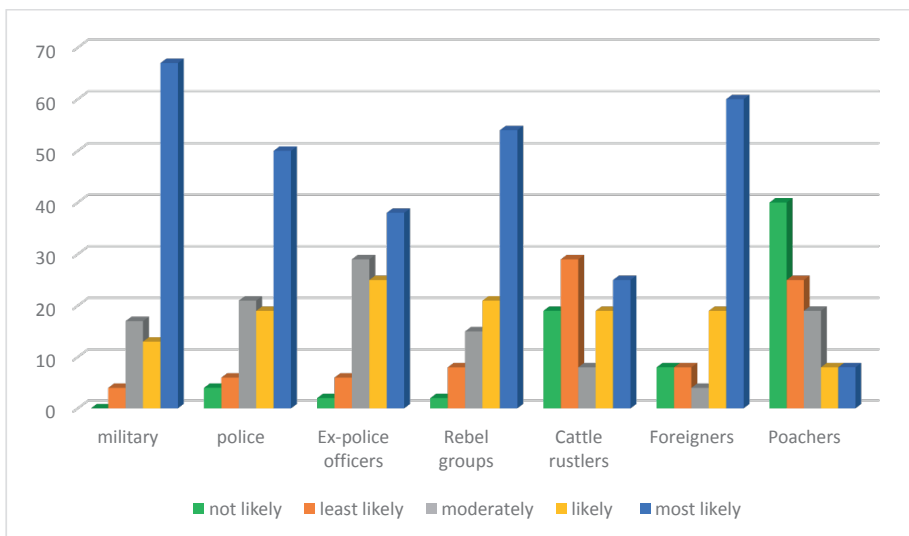
Source: Research Findings

Figure 9 above indicates that 72% of the respondents were of the view that there were more than 101,000 illicit SALW circulating in the country. This is corroborated by Small Arms Survey 2015 report, which noted that by March 2015 the illicit SALW in the country had increased to over 100,000.⁴¹ These are used for diverse activities including self-protection and criminal acts. On further probing in a focus group discussion in Bujumbura with individuals handicapped by arms assaults, an illicit AK47 was estimated to cost \$150-200 depending on the quality

and capacity. The respondents added that an illicit pistol costs between \$350-700 depending on the make, quality and level of efficiency. Respondents were, however, unanimous that the AK-47 was the preferred illicit small arm by civilians. Interestingly, despite the high cost of arms the research established that citizens still purchase illicit SALW in the black market. The respondents were asked to identify the main actors responsible for the circulation and flow of illicit SALW. The responses varied as shown in the figure 10 below:

⁴¹Small Arms Survey, 2015. Small Arms Survey 2015: Weapons and the World. Geneva: Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies.

Figure 10: Respondents Perception on the Common Actors in SALW (licit and illicit) flows



Source: Research Findings

As indicated in figure 10 above, more than 60% of the respondents were of the view that the military and foreigners were the most probable source of illicit SALW, respectively. On the other hand, 53% of the respondents suspected rebel groups to be the most likely actors in the supply of illicit SALW. On the other hand, a total 63% of the respondents held that ex-police officers were also a source of SALW. Further probing revealed that some of the heavily armed residences in Bujumbura were under the control of the ex-police and ex-military officers who had joined rebel groups.

4.2.4 Porous Borders

Burundi's borders are largely un-policed. Respondent (78%) identified porosity of the borders as the fourth major driver of fragility in the country. Respondents

noted that the unpoliced borders largely contribute to illicit SALW flows and that even in cases where security officers are present their numbers are few, far removed and many a time corrupt. In a focus group discussion with university lecturers, demobilized former combatants, NGOs and community members, 77% of the respondents were thus emphatic that the porosity coupled with corruption are largely responsible for the proliferation of illicit SALW. The respondents identified the DRC borders with Burundi as the main arms corridor.

University students were emphatic that there were many activities of armed groups along this border where arms trade and exchange was common. They asserted that trafficking of illicit SALW was intensive along the River Rusizi between Burundi and DRC. The participants explained that Lake Tanganyika had also been used by armed groups to ferry illicit SALW coming from the neighbouring countries.

The porous Rwanda-Burundi border was identified as another corridor of illicit SALW circulation. SALW flows also existed between the borders of Burundi and Tanzania, especially given the movement of refugees. However, this was among the least viable corridor. Respondents from NGOs, however, pointed out that arms coming from Tanzania were from the forests where former Burundi rebels of National Council for the Defense of Democracy–Forces for the Defense of Democracy (CNDD/FDD) who are members of the current ruling party were living before the year 2005.

4.2.5 Economic and Social Exclusion

Poverty was identified by 73% of the responses as the fifth major driver of fragility in Burundi. An NGO respondent and an opposition politician held similar ideas that poverty, unemployment and poor governance had torn Burundi apart. In a focus group discussion in Bujumbura, participants noted that

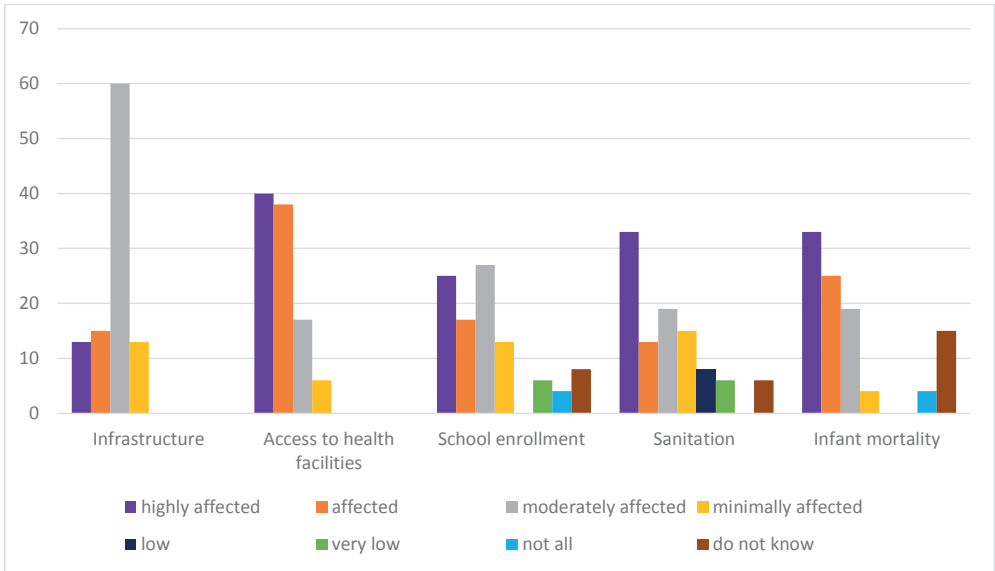
many people were poor and the current political crisis had augmented it since some people had lost their jobs or livelihood opportunities. They added that unemployment tends to render populations susceptible to political manipulation, and recruitment into militia and rebel groups. They are often given illicit SALW to either destabilise the government or harass government critics.

4.3 Impact Of Fragility Situations And Proliferation Of Illicit Salw On Human Development And Livelihoods

4.3.1 Impact on Livelihoods

The respondents were asked to give their views on how the various aspects of their lives had been affected by conflict and proliferation of illicit SALW. The figure below shows the responses:

Figure 11: Respondents’ Perceptions on Impact of Fragility Situations on Livelihoods



Source: Research Findings

According to the figure above 40% of the respondents were of the view that health facilities had been highly affected whereas 38% indicated that access to health sector had indeed been affected, giving a total of 78% of the respondents, which is significant. The respondents complained of inadequate services in hospitals because health providers had fled conflict zones. Others noted that transportation of facilities to hospitals had been hampered by the conflicts and the sick continued to suffer at home.

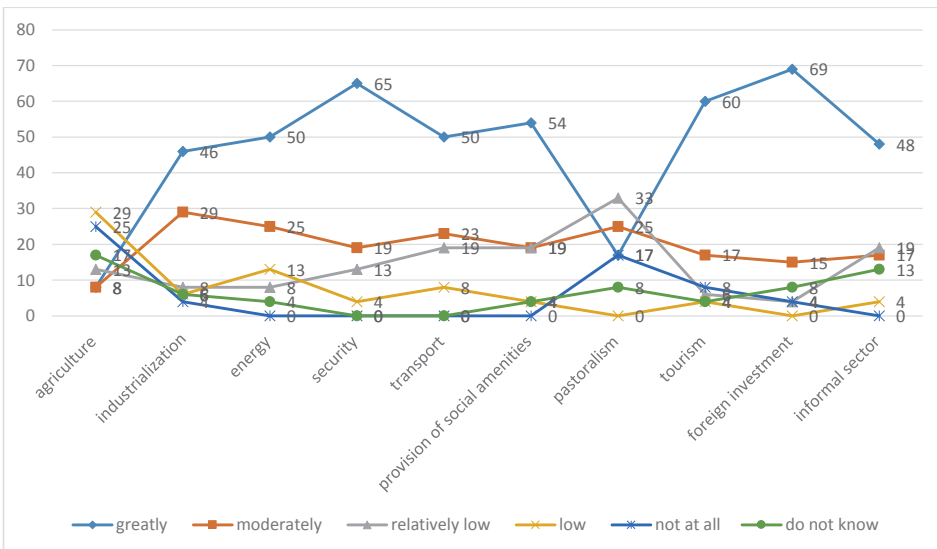
In this regard, sanitation and infant mortality rates had increased due to conflicts and proliferation of illicit SALW, as pointed out by 34% and 33% of the respondents, respectively. The 2015 mortality rate in Burundi stood at 89 deaths under 5 years for every 1000 live births.⁴² This is significantly high. In a focus group discussion with respondents in Bujumbura, there were concerns over the inadequate provision of basic facilities like health, sanitation, school materials like books and chalks, among others.

⁴²World Bank, 2016. “Burundi: Mortality Rate Under 5.” Available at: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.DYN.MORT> (Accessed on 27/03/2016).

4.3.2 Impact on development sectors

On the extent to which the various development sectors had been impacted by the fragility situations, the opinions varied as shown in the figure 12 below:

Figure 12: Impact of political instability on development sectors



Source: Research Findings

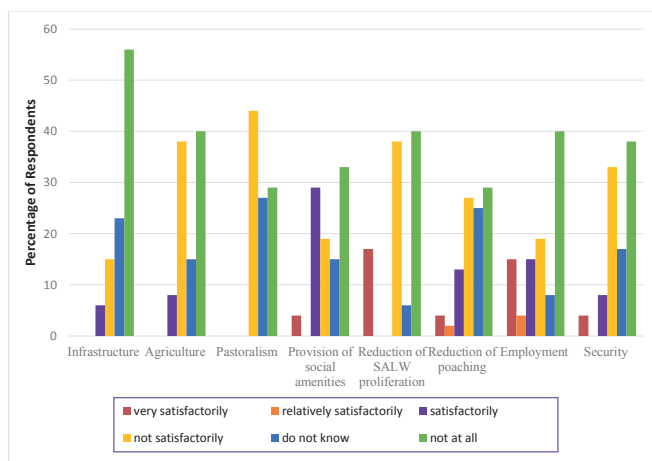
According to the figure above foreign investments, tourism and security emerged as the most affected sectors. Thus, 69% of the respondents held the view that foreign investment had gone down due to the current political instability. As already discussed above, a number of donor agencies have cut down on their aid to Burundi.

In figure 10 above, 65% of the respondents pointed out that the security situation had deteriorated in the urban areas with cases of disappearances of young people and arbitrary arrests by the police.

4.3.3 Impact of Fragility Situations and Illicit SALW Proliferation on Governance

The current political crisis has negatively affected the public’s confidence on the government’s legitimacy, authority and capacity to address key development concerns. For example, when asked how the government had performed in administering funds for development projects, the respondents’ ratings were not impressive. The results of this finding are indicated in figure 11 below:

Figure 13: Perceptions on the extent to which the donor funds had been used in the various sectors



Source: Research Findings

On infrastructural development in roads, electricity and communication, 58% of the respondents pointed out that there was insufficient development in this sector and that the government had hardly made any progress. The World Bank, in March 2015, launched a five year Infrastructure Resilience Emergency Project for Burundi, which aimed at improving road network and drainage systems; increasing the capacity for disaster risk management; and technical support in project management and implementation.⁴³

The Africa Development Bank's Country Strategy Paper for Burundi 2012-2016 puts emphasis on strengthening state institutions and improving the infrastructure.⁴⁴ Respondents were however, emphatic that such projects had not received adequate attention from the government due to the current political upheaval.

While the Agricultural sector has had major improvements over the years accounting for 43% of the GDP, in a focus group discussion at the University of Bujumbura, 38% of the respondents were of the opinion that development funds had not been adequately used to improve this sector. Interestingly, 40% held the view that no funds had been used to improve the agricultural sector. On further probing, the respondents noted that most rural farmers did not have access to credit facilities and that the road network was also poor making it difficult to transport perishable products to town markets.

While noting that the participants did not have sufficient information on how much donor funds were disbursed and how they were used, the views were purely based on perceptions and daily experiences. On unemployment, 40% of the respondents, as shown in the figure above, pointed out that unemployment rates were high and that the government had not committed financial resources to improve on this situation. With unemployment rate at 7.7%, there is a general desperation for jobs, especially among the youth. The current political crisis had worsened the situation with a number of businesses closing down. On security, 38% of the respondents were concerned that resources had not been committed to improve the security of the citizens and that the security situation had worsened in the last one year.

While the government had made positive efforts to reduce the illicit SALW, 40% of the respondents observed that there were insufficient funds put into place for disarmament of armed groups and civilians. A similar view was presented by a senior government respondent who stated that the earlier disarmament exercises had been funded by the international and regional actors. The official, however, noted that with the realisation that the disarmament exercise had not fully succeeded, the government required more funds to further help reduce the proliferation of SALW due to the current political situation.

The current political crisis had been further worsened by the cutting down of economic aid to Burundi. A government official in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs asserted that aid cuts were hurting the country's economy. He was however assertive that rather than over-rely on donors, African countries need to seek alternative means to fund government's programs. Burundi is however in a tight economic situation. The tax revenue has reduced by 5% while external grants have declined by 44%. This has seen public spending reduced from 1.5 trillion Burundi francs to 1.2 trillion Burundi francs.⁴⁵ The 2016 projection according to the government is to cut public spending by 16% while external funding will also go down by 44%.⁴⁶

4.4 Existing Interventions

Various efforts aimed at building resilience have been put in place by Burundi's government, regional and international players to deal with the fragility situations and reduce proliferation of illicit SALW. These efforts are aimed at poverty reduction, disarmament and consensus building. While some have been effective, the current political crisis has left many doubts regarding the holistic and comprehensive nature and extent of the interventions. These mechanisms are discussed below:

4.4.1 National Interventions

i) Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) Process

⁴³World Bank, 2015. "Burundi- Infrastructure Resilience Emergency Project." Available at: <http://www.worldbank.org/projects/P1509229?lang=en> (Accessed on 27/03/2016).

⁴⁴Africa Development Bank, Burundi Country Strategy Paper 2012-2016. Tunis: Africa Development Bank, 2011.

⁴⁵TRT world, 2015. "Tensions high in Burundi after 87 people killed in clashes." Available at: <http://www.trtworld.com/mea/tensions-high-in-burundi-after-87-people-killed-in-clashes-12795> (Accessed on 26/03/2016)

⁴⁶Ibid.

To curb the fragility levels in Burundi several strategies have been put in place by both the government and regional organizations. In response to Nairobi Protocol for the Prevention, Control and Reduction of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States, Burundi established a strong institution responsible for civilian disarmament and SALW control. In collaboration with commission for control of proliferation of illicit SALW, the body has been implementing a project of curbing the proliferation of illicit SALW in the country. There are also efforts to mark arms belonging to the police while the Army has not begun the marking process. In relation to disarmament efforts, the Permanent National Commission (CNAP) against proliferation of illicit SALW have been actively involved in awareness, creation and actual collection and destruction of illicit SALW from regions that are most affected.

In this regard, the Commission has conducted a number of disarmament activities. These include: “*Weapon in exchange for tools of social community reintegration*” from 19 to 28 October, 2009 which was the first voluntary disarmament activity; “*Eliminate violence, cultivate peace*” from June 26 to July 16, 2010 which was a campaign against violence during the 2010 general elections; “*Weapon in exchange of social and community development*” of November 6, 2013 to February 6, 2014 which was a second voluntary national disarmament campaign. In 2011 and 2012, the Commission also conducted an awareness raising campaign on gender and SALW.⁴⁷ Therefore, the current situation would have been worse if the above had not been done. It has however, reversed the gains that had been achieved because there is new flow of illicit SALW among the population. The number of illicit SALW is still unknown despite efforts by CNAP to disarm the populations.

Since 2006, Burundi has developed a National Strategy against the proliferation of SALW, as well as support of civilian disarmament. On 28th August 2009, the President promulgated a law governing SALW to fulfil commitment to the Nairobi Protocol. The law covers a wide range of issues required by the Nairobi Protocol. Additionally, on 7th April 2011, the government also adopted a National Action Plan (2011-2015) on the control and management of SALW as well as civilian disarmament.

⁴⁷Commission Nationale Permanente de lutte contre la prolifération des armes légères et de petit calibre (CNAP), “Activities carried out.” Available at: <http://www.cnapburundi.bi/index.php/en/activities> (Accessed on 20/03/2016).

This plan promoted continued marking and registration of arms of the security forces.

4.4.2 Regional interventions

There have been efforts by the government to join and/or ratify a number of regional instruments on control and management of SALW. These include: Nairobi Declaration and Protocol, Bamako Declaration and Central African Convention for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, their Ammunition, Parts and Components that can be used for their Manufacture, Repair or Assembly, known as Kinshasa Convention.

Burundi has been marking its SALW with the support of RECSA, which provided equipment for marking of the SALW. According to a senior official at CNAP, the marking of police arms is almost complete.

Burundi also works with Rwanda and DRC through the Economic Community of Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL) to conduct investigations and inquiries into illicit trade and proliferation of illicit SALW.

4.4.3 International Interventions

There have been concerted efforts by diverse players to curb the current political crisis in Burundi. The African Union had raised concerns over human rights abuse and proposed to send a peacekeeping force, but this suggestion was strongly opposed by Burundi and did not therefore take place. The Burundi government, however, agreed to increase the 100 African Union human rights observers to 200, as well as an additional 100 AU military experts. By April 2016 30 human rights observers and 15 military observers had been deployed. The UN Security Council (UNSC) on April 1st 2016, in Resolution 2279 (2016), also approved the deployment of the UN police to Burundi. However, in a fast reaction, the Burundi government welcomed the resolution, but warned that they could only accept a small number of the UN police and that the country’s sovereignty ought to be respected. Currently, Burundi seems to be silently suffering the effects of fragility situations and illicit SALW proliferation with limited attempts at dialogue from both the government and opposition.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Despite the efforts by several actors, addressing fragility situations and illicit SALW proliferation in Burundi remains a mirage. In order to build resilience the study offers the following recommendations:

a) Strengthening of governance institutions:

to effectively address fragility in Burundi the establishment of effective governance institutions is critical for political and economic stability. The lack of effective coordination and information sharing between the various government departments and agencies that have a role to play in building resilience is often a significant barrier in tackling fragility situations. It is therefore necessary to strengthen the capacity of various governance institutions for improved service delivery.

b) Address proliferation of illicit SALW:

The government should strengthen the National Commission on SALW control to implement the following interventions; arms marking and electronic record keeping, improvement of safe storage for government stocks, training of law enforcement officers, destruction of obsolete and surplus stocks and practical disarmament. This should be done through provision of appropriate resources to the National Commission.

c) Security sector reforms: the long history of armed conflicts in Burundi coupled with security sector institutional dilapidation calls for comprehensive security sector reforms. This should involve establishment of appropriate security sector management policies, and laws, recruitment of sufficient law enforcement personnel, training and provision of appropriate equipment for security providers.

d) Sensitization and awareness creations:

protracted conflicts in Burundi have left the population heavily armed despite efforts at disarmament. To deal with this long-term behaviour and attitude change programs need to be put in place , to dissuade the population from gun culture. This could be done using various disarmament practical options.

e) Post conflict reconstruction:

the many years of conflict has left the socio-economic sector of Burundi shuttered. Majority of the people are poor,

illiterate and cannot access the basic social services. To remedy the situation the government and development partners should undertake comprehensive security sector reforms, engage in return and re-integration of refugees and IDPs as well as increasing government presence in all parts of the country.

f) Provision of Alternative Livelihoods:

The government, in partnership with development partners need to initiate and finance development projects in the country that can generate employment opportunities.

g) Regional cooperation:

there is need for a concerted effort and political support among the regional and international actors for a lasting solution in Burundi.

CONCLUSION

The study established a strong nexus between fragility situations and the widespread proliferation of illicit SALW in Burundi. The situation has been attributed to years of weak governance, protracted conflicts, porous border and economic exclusion, which are manifested in the presence of armed groups, insecurity, ungoverned spaces and the presence of IDP camps in the country.

The impact of fragility situations is far-reaching in terms of effects on people's livelihoods and overall development of the country. Insecurity has affected several sectors such as agriculture and employment resulting in high levels of poverty in the country. This has in turn provided a fertile ground for existence and breeding of armed groups and continued proliferation of illicit SALW, further undermining the authority, capacity and legitimacy of the existing government and society resilience to socio-economic challenges.

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