

BTI 2016 | Burkina Faso Country Report

Status Index	1-10	4.71	# 92 of 129	
Political Transformation	1-10	4.73	# 80 of 129	↘
Economic Transformation	1-10	4.68	# 88 of 129	→
Management Index	1-10	4.92	# 66 of 129	
	scale	score	rank	trend

This report is part of the Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index (BTI) 2016. It covers the period from 1 February 2013 to 31 January 2015. The BTI assesses the transformation toward democracy and a market economy as well as the quality of political management in 129 countries. More on the BTI at <http://www.bti-project.org>.

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Key Indicators

Population	M	17.6	HDI	0.388	GDP p.c., PPP \$	1667.6
Pop. growth ¹	% p.a.	2.9	HDI rank of 187	181	Gini Index	39.8
Life expectancy	years	56.3	UN Education Index	0.250	Poverty ³	% 80.5
Urban population	%	29.0	Gender inequality ²	0.607	Aid per capita \$	60.9

Sources (as of October 2015): The World Bank, World Development Indicators 2015 | UNDP, Human Development Report 2014. Footnotes: (1) Average annual growth rate. (2) Gender Inequality Index (GII). (3) Percentage of population living on less than \$3.10 a day at 2011 international prices.

Executive Summary

The most important political development during the period under review was the resignation of President Blaise Compaoré. Compaoré was forced to resign after massive protests by opposition parties and civil society against his intention to change the constitution in order to enable himself to run for another term in the 2015 presidential elections. Compaoré resigned on 31 October 2014; after two weeks of interim military rule, a broad range of political, military, and civil society actors, including traditional authorities, agreed upon a transitional charter and appointed Michel Kafando as interim president. For the first time in almost 50 years, Burkina Faso's highest office belongs to a civilian.

The end of Compaoré's presidency as such does not remove the country's political, social, and economic challenges. Democratic institutions are weak; this is hardly surprising given the history of the state, which has been characterized by coups and military rule since independence. The party system does not sufficiently represent the different groups and interests of society. Public administration is in many respects ineffective due to lacking financial, technical and human resources. Corruption and clientelism are widespread. Numerous cases of human rights violations, including the killing of political adversaries and civil society activists, remain to be investigated and prosecuted.

Burkina Faso has a vibrant civil society that has proven its potential to advance democratization. Social cohesion is relatively high. Social and cultural institutions of conflict mediation are effective on the local level, whereas government and state authorities are mainly concerned with the political and military conflicts at the national level and have mostly failed to effectively manage local conflicts.

Notwithstanding Burkina Faso's difficult national, regional and international context, the country experiences relatively dynamic economic growth, mainly due to the expansion of the extractive sector. The mining sector, especially gold production, has become the major driver of growth. Inflation remains under 3%.

However, socioeconomic development has not significantly improved. The vast majority of the population does not benefit from the macroeconomic growth. Indeed, poverty and social exclusion are quantitatively and qualitatively extensive and structurally ingrained. Inequality is high. Social welfare varies drastically by territory, social group and sector. Physical and institutional infrastructures are weak. Public health and education services are poor in quality. School enrollment is low, even in regional comparison. Despite some progress, Burkina Faso remains one of the world's poorest countries and is unlikely to meet the UN's Millennium Development Goals.

History and Characteristics of Transformation

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

In 1992, Burkina Faso held its first multiparty parliamentary elections. Facing weak opposition, Compaoré's Organisation pour la Démocratie Populaire/Mouvement du Travail (ODP/MT) achieved a two-thirds majority. The president's party, renamed the Congrès pour la Démocratie et le Progrès (CDP) in 1996, repeated its success with an even bigger landslide victory in legislative elections five years later. The dominance of the ruling party and the weakness of the opposition turned out to be one of the largest obstacles to democratization during this period. The National Assembly's ability to govern was theoretical at best, and lawmaking was reduced to a one-party affair. Political opposition began to form outside parliament. Institutions of representative democracy began losing credibility among the population. Human rights violations, notably by security forces, occurred frequently. A culture of impunity and a weak rule of law prevailed. This became most obvious when

Norbert Zongo was killed in December 1998. Zongo, the editor of the weekly newspaper *L'Indépendant*, had investigated the death of David Ouédraogo, who was a chauffeur of President

Blaise Compaoré's brother, François Compaoré. Ouédraogo was accused of theft, and instead of being brought to trial in the normal way, he was arrested by the presidential guard and ultimately died in the presidential palace infirmary. The death of Norbert Zongo triggered mass protests by trade unions, students, and human rights groups. Consistent political pressure forced Compaoré to make concessions. Numerous institutional and electoral reforms represented a qualitative improvement over the previous system.

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

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

In 2013 and 2014, tens of thousands of people took to the streets on a number of occasions to protest Compaoré's attempt to revise article 37 of the Burkinabe constitution in order to enable him to run for another term. When the proposal for the constitutional revision was passed in the national assembly on 21 October 2014, students and workers went on strike. When the proposal was finally to be adopted on October 30, protesters stormed into the parliament building. Security forces made use of tear gas, truncheons and firearms; at least 30 people were killed. Compaoré withdrew the request for the constitutional revision and suspended the government. On October 31, he was forced by the military to resign from the presidency. The army commander-in-chief seized power for the transition. After two weeks of military control with Commander Yacouba Isaac Zida as president, a transitional charter was signed by political parties, the military, civil society groups and traditional authorities on 16 November 2014. For the first time in Burkina Faso's history, a civilian was appointed (transitional) president, former diplomat Michel Kafando. Kafando nominated Zida as prime minister. By the time of writing, national elections are scheduled for November 2015.

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

Transformation Status

I. Political Transformation

1 | Stateness

The state's monopoly on the use of force is established nationwide in principle, but showed worrying signs of erosion during the period under review. In 2011, police revolts and soldiers' mutinies broke out in many towns and were marked by heavy violence, terror against civilians, widespread looting, and the destruction of the homes of military officers and representatives of the government and the ruling party. Compaoré made concessions to some of the demands and shuffled leading personnel (including the army commander and chief of staff). In this way the government managed to substantially restore law and order and to bring the armed forces back under control. However, serious problems remained within the security sector, threatening to weaken the state's monopoly on violence to an extent that could destabilize the regime at any time. Extensive economic grievances (poor pay, housing, etc.) among the security forces persist despite the government's efforts to meet their demands. The political aspects of the incidents have not been addressed at all. These include deep anger toward the state's authorities, including the president. This became most obvious on 31 October 2014, when Compaoré was forced by the military to resign from the presidency and the army commander-in-chief seized transitional power.

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

Question
Score

Monopoly on the
use of force

6

State identity

10

The state is defined as secular. Religious dogmas have no relevant influence on politics or legal order. Nevertheless, the religious authorities (Catholic, Muslim, and traditional religious authorities) play an important role in Burkinabè society and often times speak up. They frequently act as mediators in local and national political and social conflicts. Leaders of the influential Catholic Church have taken a clear official position against the elimination of presidential term limits as well as against general amnesty for the president. Numerous religious leaders signed the transitional charter in November 2014. A variety of religious authorities have also been represented in the governmental body that appointed Michel Kafando transitional president (also in November 2014). The government estimates that about 15% of the population have traditional African (animist) beliefs; 61% practice Islam, with the majority being Sunni; 19% are Catholics; and 4% are Protestants. There are no tensions between religious groups. So far, Islamic fundamentalists have not exercised any noteworthy influence. Since the outbreak of the crisis in Mali, the risk has been growing considerably of operations of the terrorist group Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) spilling over into Burkina Faso. However, up to now, no attacks by AQIM or other terrorist groups have taken place on Burkinabè territory.

No interference of religious dogmas
8

The state administration suffers from politicization and extensive corruption on all levels. As a consequence, the existing structures provide most basic public services, but they show functional deficiencies and lack capacity in many areas. In particular, the population complains about shortcomings in basic infrastructure such as water, education (particularly regarding secondary schools and universities) and health care. Apart from main thoroughfares (Ouagadougou via Bobo-Dioulasso to the Ivorian border; Ouagadougou-Koudougou, etc.), roads and bridges are frequently in bad condition or non-existent. Officially, decentralization was designed to devolve some political decision-making to local authorities and to bring social services and basic administration closer to the people of the country's 309 rural communes. In practice, however, thin financial, technical and human resources limited the extent to which this autonomy could be exercised and local administration could be strengthened.

Basic administration
6

2 | Political Participation

At the time of writing, after the ouster of Blaise Compaoré, the top political representatives do not gain legitimacy through elections. Before the fall of Compaoré, elections were held regularly.

Free and fair elections
2

Generally, the constitution guarantees all citizens the right to vote in direct, general, uniform and free elections, as well as the right to run for political office. General elections were regularly conducted at the national level and universal suffrage with secret ballots is ensured. The national parliament (national assembly) was last elected on 2 December 2012 with more than 3,000 candidates from 74 political parties contesting 127 seats. 13 Parties won seats; 70 out of 127 were taken by the ruling

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

The interim government is not democratically elected.

Effective power to govern

1

While the interim government generally has the power to govern, both the military and civil opposition groups have significant veto potential. This became most evident in the uprisings of October 2014, which ended Compaoré's presidency and led to the military seizing transitional power. The extent to which army officers influence political decisions or exercise veto power is unclear, but there are signs that imply significant relationships between the military, the CDP and Compaoré in particular. Compaoré showed clear reluctance to officially criticize the army that had brought him to power. The president's massive patronage machinery, the wealthy business elite, has the capacity to exercise veto powers.

Freedoms of assembly and association are constitutionally guaranteed and exercised extensively by opposition political parties and civil society groups (in particular, trade unions, students and human rights groups). However, in 2013 and 2014 (particularly in the October 2014 protests) the government restricted the freedom of assembly in numerous cases. Police forces tried to disperse several protests and demonstrations by using extreme violence that caused the death of several demonstrators. At least 30 protesters were killed in October 2014 alone.

Association / assembly rights

6

In the past, the government has tried to dissuade foreign donors from supporting civil society organizations by describing these organizations as instruments of opposition political parties.

Freedom of the press and freedom of speech are now relatively secure. Radio is the most important media and there are numerous broadcasting stations. Staff of the state-owned media complain about excessive interference by the ministry of communication. Most journalists working for state-owned media avoid politically controversial issues. The private media are relatively independent and often critical of the government. Occasionally, journalists face jail time or financial penalties for offenses such as officeholder insult. In general, the Information Code grants journalists free access to sources of information. According to Freedom House, there are exceptions for information pertaining to the internal or external security of the state, military secrets, strategic economic interests, ongoing investigations or legal proceedings, and anything that threatens people's dignity and privacy. In practice,

Freedom of expression

7

officials cite these exceptions frequently and access to government information remains difficult. There are no government restrictions on the Internet, to which only a small percentage of the population has access. Internet access is growing but is mostly still limited to urban areas. While in the Global Press Freedom 2014 survey by Freedom House, Burkina Faso ranked 87th, one position more favorable than in 2012, on the Reporters Without Borders World Press Freedom Index, it lost 6 positions and was ranked 52nd in 2014 (2013: 46).

3 | Rule of Law

After the fall of Compaoré, the interim government promises a partial de facto return to constitutional rule, although it is difficult to assess how the separation of powers works within the present government. Generally, the institutional separation of powers between the executive, legislative and judicial branches is guaranteed in the constitution, but has been significantly limited in practical terms. The former president's broad powers and the ruling party's overwhelming majority had guaranteed the executive a legally secure monopoly on power. The unicameral National Assembly's authority and involvement in decision-making is notoriously ineffective and its mechanisms of oversight are severely limited. A new legislative institution, the Senate, was approved in May 2013. The opposition claimed that it was in fact a tool for Compaoré to extend his hold on power. In late July 2013, thousands of opposition supporters protested in Ouagadougou against the president's power to appoint senators.

Separation of powers

3

The judiciary is formally independent and institutionally distinct but dominated and politicized in practice by the executive branch. The executive orchestrates judicial appointments and promotions, and prosecutors are part of a hierarchy headed by the justice minister; because of this, the executive interferes in judicial decisions. The judicial system suffers from corruption at all levels, which stems from an overall system that is inefficient, poorly trained and poorly equipped. The economic vulnerability of its members makes them susceptible to exploitation, and they operate under extreme political pressure. Efficient court proceedings are only conducted when critics of the government are put on trial, but rarely when politically or economically powerful people are concerned. Legal processes also accelerate when they serve the government's political purposes. Fighting government officials' impunity has ranked among the population's main demands since the murder of journalist Norbert Zongo, but the judiciary has thus far not made any moves toward solving this or other crimes with suspected government involvement.

Independent judiciary

4

At the time of writing, the national Council of Transition plans to examine a bill submitted by government in order to fight corruption. The adoption of this law may assist judges in performing their functions.

Public officials can be sued for the abuse of power or for other inappropriate actions. The leading figures of the former government and the former ruling party, however, were rarely subject to such measures. In general, lawsuits against public officials are only conducted in cases of disloyalty, or if public pressure requires the government to offer up a political scapegoat. Most politicians enjoy de facto immunity from prosecution. Fighting rampant political and bureaucratic corruption, including the criminal prosecution of corrupt officeholders, has been one of the public's main demands for many years and that demand continued during the period under review. Isolated cases of corruption are prosecuted, but often without consequence. Violent acts by members of the presidential guard, gendarmerie, army and police are only investigated when public pressure is high. In almost all cases, only lower ranking figures are charged, if at all. Political and military elites are not held accountable for human rights violations. According to the authorities, an ad hoc committee had been set up to assess the human rights violations committed following the protests from 30 October to 2 November 2014; however, the committee did not conduct any investigations. The new transitional authorities must now decide whether to establish a commission of inquiry. The Prosecutor of Faso stated that two judicial investigations had been opened on the deaths in MACO prison. It remains to be seen how interim rule and future rulers will handle the issue of abuse of office.

Prosecution of
office abuse
4

The constitution forbids torture, but, in practice, security forces often subject citizens to torture and inhumane and degrading treatment. During the period under review, repeated acts of brutality by security forces have inflamed the social and political situation.

Civil rights
5

During the protests between 30 October and 2 November 2014, the gendarmerie, the Presidential Security Regiment, other sectors of the national army and the police were deployed at various times and at different locations. Though the majority of protests were peaceful, the security forces reacted quickly using violent means. An investigation by Amnesty International, published in January 2015, revealed that security forces gave no warning before using deadly force, and in some cases, shots were fired at protesters who had raised their arms in an attempt to reassure the security forces that they were unarmed. There were reports of hundreds of wounded protesters and several deaths. The uprising also affected MACO Prison in Ouagadougou, with some disturbances occurring among prisoners. On the night of 30 October 2014, while protests continued in the city center and on the roads leading to the presidential palace, five prisoners at MACO are confirmed to have died. In MACO, evidence obtained by Amnesty International, and confirmed by the Prosecutor of Faso, indicates that three prisoners were shot dead following unrest and an escape attempt on the evening of 30 October. Two other prisoners died – probably as a result of dehydration and a lack of ventilation – in the cell where they were held during a lockdown following the unrest. The Amnesty International investigation reports that prison guards have used excessive force against unarmed detainees. The prisoners

were also beaten and ill-treated by prison guards as punishment for involvement in the unrest and the escape attempt. Some prisoners were subsequently locked in their cells for several days and were denied sufficient water during this period.

In general, prison conditions are harsh and at times life-threatening. Cases of long-term detention without trial or access to legal counsel are widespread. Equality before the law and due process under the law exist in theory, but, in practice, it is often only citizens with financial means who can secure a fair or speedy trial. In addition, the right to fair trial is limited by popular ignorance of the law and a continuing shortage of magistrates. Protected by a corrupt and easily swayed judiciary, the Compaoré government cultivated a culture of impunity. Freedom of religion and a ban on discrimination, both guaranteed by the constitution, are generally respected. A law condemns all kinds of discrimination, including gender discrimination, but the government does not effectively enforce it. Homosexuals, persons with disabilities and persons with HIV/AIDS are often confronted with social and economic discrimination, and women's rights are not always guaranteed in practice.

4 | Stability of Democratic Institutions

The interim government is not democratically elected. In that sense, democratic institutions do not exist at the moment, yet they are expected to be re-instated in the near future. During the Compaoré government, democratic institutions existed but were functional only to a limited degree and did not have intra- or inter-organizational stability. At the national, regional and local levels, stability suffered greatly from shortcomings in the rule of law and a dysfunctional, politicized and often corrupt administration that had lacked both materials and qualified personnel. The National Assembly has been weak and has never been much more than a rubber stamp for the government's legislative propositions. From top to bottom, institutions suffer from corruption, which limits their performance.

Acceptance and support for democratic institutions is relatively low both among the government and large segments of the population; national institutions are deemed nearly irrelevant to the rural population. However, the contestation related to the constitutional referendum in 2013 and 2014 revealed that the viable democratic institutions are highly relevant, at least for the urban-based civil society organizations such as the trade unions and the human rights movement. Once again, the army is proving to be more of a risk for destabilization than a guarantor of stability or security.

Performance of
democratic
institutions

2

Commitment to
democratic
institutions

3

5 | Political and Social Integration

At the beginning of 2012, more than 160 parties had gained official ministerial recognition, while the election commission approved 74 parties or party alliances to field candidates for the December elections. The CDP's decades of hegemony have led to a semi-authoritarian, dominant-party system. However, in January 2013, numerous influential CDP politicians resigned from the party due to the conflict over Compaoré's presidential candidacy. Except for the CDP, the party system is highly fragmented, has weak social roots and the level of organizational stability is low. The parties' fragmentation and the inability of the opposition parties' representatives to build stable coalitions have been two of the main obstacles to the country's democratization process for the last 20 years. Before the last national elections, there had been only one significant party merger, of four leftist parties into the Parti pour la Démocratie et le Socialisme (PDS/Metba). The elections were also marked by the emergence of the Union for Progress and Change (UPC), created by Zephirin Diabre, a former minister of finance and former United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) associate director. Just two years after its formation, UPC became the leading opposition party, with 19 seats out of 127. However, such efforts do not go far enough to pose a serious challenge to the CDP. The opposition has failed to profit from either the party's evident unpopularity or its internal problems (factional conflicts, demoralization, dissatisfaction with the leadership, etc.), which again surfaced during the period under review, although oppositional parties marched jointly against the constitutional referendum in 2013 and 2014. In February 2014, municipal elections were held in which 14 parties won seats.

Party system
4

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

Some civil society organizations have been created by political parties and share the same weaknesses.

Numerous non-parliamentary groups and an active civil society exist in Burkina Faso. Most important are the trade unions, student associations and human rights organizations. However, other interests, in particular those of rural groups or people living with disability, are underrepresented. Yet the quality of representation is high. Interest groups, cooperative associations or civil society organizations are able to cooperate better than political parties when pursuing a common goal. In 2013 and 2014, trade unions and civil society organizations played a central role when tens of thousands of people took to the streets on a number of occasions to protest

Interest groups
7

Compaoré's attempt to revise article 37 of the constitution. The civil society alliance, Coalition Against the High Cost of Living, organized mass demonstrations on 20 July 2013 and 29 October 2014. A trade union alliance announced a 24-hour strike for 11 November 2014 and, in the event that the government did not agree to its substantial terms, another 48-hour strike on 25-26 November. However, the strike was suspended when Blaise Compaoré was removed from the presidency on 31 October. Interest groups are part of the interim government.

At the moment, Burkina Faso is not governed by elected officials. Statistical data is available on the former government from the Afrobarometer's Round 5 survey, whose preliminary results were published in 2013. According to the results, in 2012, a strong majority (72%) of Burkinabè preferred democracy over any other kind of government. Only 5% of the respondents supported the idea that sometimes a nondemocratic regime might be preferable. More than 60% reject military rule as a system of government. According to the survey conducted in 2012, two-thirds favor a two-term limit on presidential mandates.

Approval of
democracy
n/a

Regarding the actual functioning of democracy in Burkina Faso, the survey showed increased but still limited esteem: Only 24% see the country as a full democracy while 31% see some problems, 24% see major problems, and 8% hold the view that it is no democracy at all.

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

Social capital
6

II. Economic Transformation

6 | Level of Socioeconomic Development

Poverty and social exclusion are quantitatively and qualitatively extensive and structurally ingrained. The 2014 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report (HDR) ranks Burkina Faso 181 out of 187 countries (2013: 183), despite steady but minor improvements in the country's Human Development Index since 1975. According to the World Bank World Development Indicators 2013, GNI per capita was \$670 in 2013 (2011: \$570), placing Burkina Faso well below the average for sub-Saharan Africa (\$1,657), but nearly on the average level of that of the group of low-income countries (\$709). In the context of extreme poverty and widespread inequalities, social exclusion is severe and structurally reinforced, especially in rural areas and for women. Despite some minor improvements in the education sector, literacy and school enrollment rates remain extremely low with an average literacy rate of around 29% of the population age 15 and above. In 2012, gross enrollment ratio in primary education improved to 85% (2011: 79%) and at secondary level to 26%. Access to education is constrained by large disparities from province to province and between urban and rural areas. Gender disparity has decreased; in 2013, Burkina Faso occupied a rank of 97 out of 187 countries on the UNDP's Gender-related Development Index (GDI) with 0.607 points (2011: 121, 0.596 points). Despite recent improvements, social indicators remain weak and Burkina Faso is unlikely to meet the UN's Millennium Development Goals. The incidence of poverty is estimated to have increased, notably in urban areas, partly reflecting the impact of shocks between 2007 and 2011 that affected vulnerable groups. Still 63.77% of the population live in severe poverty; 81.1% have to make their living with less than \$2 a day, according to the UNDP HDR 2014. (1)

Question
Score

Socioeconomic
barriers
1

Economic indicators		2005	2010	2013	2014
GDP	\$ M	5462.7	8980.0	12126.3	12543.0
GDP growth	%	8.7	8.4	6.7	4.0
Inflation (CPI)	%	6.4	-0.8	0.5	-0.2
Unemployment	%	2.7	3.3	3.1	-

Economic indicators		2005	2010	2013	2014
Foreign direct investment	% of GDP	1.0	0.4	3.1	-
Export growth	%	2.8	64.0	10.6	2.6
Import growth	%	10.3	25.7	3.1	-2.5
Current account balance	\$ M	-634.3	-181.4	-	-
Public debt	% of GDP	44.1	29.3	28.7	28.5
External debt	\$ M	2000.2	2148.4	2564.1	-
Total debt service	\$ M	45.4	49.0	78.7	-
Cash surplus or deficit	% of GDP	-5.4	-4.5	-	-
Tax revenue	% of GDP	11.8	12.7	-	-
Government consumption	% of GDP	19.8	20.6	20.8	21.0
Public expnd. on education	% of GDP	4.4	3.9	4.3	-
Public expnd. on health	% of GDP	4.1	4.0	3.7	-
R&D expenditure	% of GDP	0.17	-	-	-
Military expenditure	% of GDP	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.3

Sources (as of October 2015): The World Bank, World Development Indicators 2015 | International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Economic Outlook, October 2015 | Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Military Expenditure Database 2015.

7 | Organization of the Market and Competition

The institutional framework for market competition remains weak, with significant entry and exit barriers, pervasive corruption, a weak judicial system, a lack of access to financing for small and medium-sized enterprises. The informal sector is large. The Heritage Foundation's Index of Economic Freedom 2015 describes Burkina Faso's economy as "mostly unfree," ranks it 102 out of 178 (2013: 86 out of 177), and records a decrease of 0.3 point compared to 2014. With an overall score of 58.6, Burkina Faso is above the sub-Saharan African average (54.6) and slightly below the world average (60.4). Similarly, the World Bank Doing Business 2015 survey noted a slight cooling of the business climate in Burkina Faso with a drop in 8 out of 10 indicators compared with the 2014 survey, ranking the country 167 (6 positions lower than the previous year) out of 189 economies. Despite some improvement in the last years and the successful implementation of recent reforms, Burkina Faso has made little progress in some areas of economic freedom, such as the simplification of the business start-up process, the set-up of two commercial courts in the two major cities, and ongoing tax administration reforms.

Market-based
competition

5

The formation of monopolies and oligopolies is not regulated consistently. No clear and comprehensive legal provisions exist. Moreover, the government maintains a quasi-monopoly in a number of areas. The government's privatization program has been delayed due to the strong performance of remaining state-owned enterprises, coupled with opposition from workers and unions. Further anticompetitive practices, such as price-fixing, persist. The government took the national water and power utilities off its privatization roster and nationalized the beverage producer, Brafaso, after the company ran into financial problems.

Anti-monopoly
policy
6

Public companies are not well managed, and served the interests of the ruling party during the Compaoré regime. It seems that the public monopolies were aimed at reinforcing political power rather than fomenting development. Thus, the choice not to fight monopolies was more political than economic.

The government is in the process of reforming its tax and customs administration system with the aim of spending more on poverty reduction. While foreign trade officially follows nondiscrimination principles, supplementary taxes on imports, targeted import bans, as well as significant non-tariff barriers such as inadequate infrastructure and corruption, all limit foreign trade. As a member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Burkina Faso's objective is to adapt national regulations according to the Treaty on the Harmonization of Business Law in Africa (OHADA). Despite the harmonization of the majority of trade policy instruments, mainly import measures, the implementation is far from complete in all areas. A landlocked country, Burkina Faso depends heavily on its neighbors, especially Côte d'Ivoire, for non-regional trade. According to a 2010 WTO report, Burkina Faso has improved its institutional and regulatory framework since the previous review of the country's trade policy, in 2004. Burkina Faso is a member of the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes and hence participates in the peer review process, which encourages all countries to adopt an effective exchange of information in tax matters. The review is scheduled for the second half of 2015. Corruption is becoming more and more pervasive. Since 2007, the surveys of the Burkinabè NGO Réseau National de Lutte Anti-corruption (REN-LAC) have ranked the customs service as the most corrupt institution.

Liberalization of
foreign trade
6

Burkina Faso's banking system is supervised by the regional central bank, the Banque Centrale des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (BCEAO), which serves all members of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU). Previously regulated and controlled by the government, the banking system continues to undergo restructuring to promote competition and improve the microfinance sector. Despite some progress in terms of diversification and increased access to financial services offered by banks, the overall healthy system has limited ability to finance the economy. Besides general weaknesses in the judicial and regulatory system, the sector lacks innovative financial instruments, notably access to credit for small to medium-sized enterprises. The banking sector is composed of 12 commercial banks

Banking system
6

and five specialized credit institutions. The IMF reports that, at the end of June 2011, three of the 12 banks held almost 50% of the total banking systems' assets. According to the IMF and the BCEAO, at the end of June 2011, the majority of banks met the new regional minimum capital requirement of CFA franc 5 billion. Further, they continued to be dynamic on the regional bond market and the sector was not adversely affected by the post-election crisis in Côte d'Ivoire. The Heritage Foundation acknowledges that the government has pursued banking liberalization and restructuring, encouraging competition in the financial sector. However, according to this source, the banking sector remained underdeveloped, providing a low level of access to banking services in general.

8 | Currency and Price Stability

Burkina Faso benefits from its membership in the CFA franc zone. The common currency has a fixed parity with the euro, which is guaranteed by the French Treasury. The exchange rate policy is heavily influenced by that of the European Central Bank (ECB) and thus it felt the effects of the depreciation and the crisis in the euro zone. According to the World Bank, consumer prices increased 0.5% in 2013. Despite a decrease in world market gold prices, Burkina Faso experienced relatively dynamic economic growth. After substantial pressure from civil society, the government has taken some measures to control increases in staple food price and prevent the wage-price gap from further widening. Inflation is expected to remain under 3% in 2014 and 2015, below the average for West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) member states.

Anti-inflation /
forex policy

8

The government's fiscal and debt policies generally promote macroeconomic stability, but there remains a moderate risk of debt distress due to Burkina Faso's excessive dependence on commodity exports, low diversification of the export sector and its reliance on external financing for most of its public investment programs. Foreign debt accounted for 71.0% of public debt in 2013. The government is pursuing an IMF-sponsored Extended Credit Facility (ECF), which seeks to bolster macroeconomic stability and boost real GDP growth per capita by 6.5% in 2013. Growth for 2014 and 2015 is expected to be similar. Also, the government's goal is to reduce the percentage of the population living in poverty to less than 35% by 2015. The latest IMF reviews acknowledged strong performance under the program. Despite the increase of public expenditure due to the emergency measures the country had to take, the fiscal policy remained prudent reflecting significant improvements in Burkina Faso's debt dynamic. The World Bank and IMF lowered Burkina Faso's risk of debt distress from "high" to "moderate," reflecting the country's enhanced debt management capacity in recent years. This shift comes in response to the rapid development of Burkina Faso's gold mining sector, coupled with notable improvements in underlying macroeconomic fundamentals. During the period under

Macrostability

7

review, revenue collection improved significantly following reforms in tax policies and tax administration that led to higher corporate income taxes and mining royalties.

According to the African Economic Outlook, tax revenue is about 15% of GDP. Taxes on goods and services make up 51.1% of fiscal receipts, with 30% coming from taxes on revenues and profits. Taxes from the mining sector account for 2.4% of GDP. Donor finance amounted to 5.5% of GDP in 2013, compared to 4.9% in 2012. According to the IMF, revenue performance was weaker than expected for the first quarter of 2014 with collection at 88% and spending at 63% of slated levels, which resulted in a temporary budget surplus. Hoping to compensate for shortfalls in revenue, the government reversed in early 2014 its decision to forego a portion of its take of fuel excise taxes.

9 | Private Property

Property rights and rules regarding the acquisition of property are adequately defined under the law, but weaknesses in the judicial system complicate or prevent their protection or implementation. The International Property Rights Index (IPRI) for 2014 scores Burkina Faso 71 among 97 countries. In 2014, Burkina Faso saw its IPRI score weaken by 0.3 points. According to Doing Business 2015, it takes about 45 days to register a property and four procedures are involved. Burkina Faso law permits private ownership. However, traditional systems and traditional authorities (chiefs) play an important role in allocating and protecting rights to land and, in practice, agricultural land is mostly governed by customary tenure systems. Land tenure insecurity is a serious and increasing problem. Structural deficiencies remain in enforcing property rights, including the arbitrary removal of land titles.

Property rights
6

The exercise of privatizing state-owned enterprises has been delayed. Private companies can, in principle, act freely but they may encounter economic, political and social barriers to development, such as a lack of financing. According to the Doing Business 2015, it takes about 13 days on average to start a new business and three procedures are involved. Burkina Faso ranks 153 among 189 economies on the ease of starting a business. One government measure aimed at making it easier to start a business replaced the requirement for a copy of the founders' criminal records with that of a sworn declaration at the time of the company's registration.

Private enterprise
6

Generally, the state does not appear to be the chief decision-maker in the privatization process, because the economic elite supporting the ruling party under the Compaoré regime had great influence on the government's economic agenda.

10 | Welfare Regime

Rudimentary measures to preserve social welfare do exist but are extremely diverse in terms of territory, social strata and sector. The country cannot systematically combat poverty on its own. More than 75% of non-agricultural employment exists in the informal sector of the economy; thus only a very small group of salaried workers, including state employees, benefits from the country's modest social security system. Existing social welfare laws provide pensions, disability insurance, occupational injury insurance and health insurance. Workers and unions have demanded improved social welfare networks for years and continued to make this a key issue during strikes. The government, in cooperation with donors, has continued its efforts to increase access to education and health care, in addition to basic needs such as clean water and sanitation services, and to promote income-generating activities for vulnerable social groups. The poorest households will benefit from subsidies and school nutrition programs, reduced fees for health services and the introduction of cash transfer schemes. The main target of the new development policy *Strategie de Croissance Accélérée pour un Développement Durable (SCADD)* is to combat poverty and improve people's well-being based on an enforced stimulation of the annual GDP growth. These efforts have shown minor success; the gross enrollment rate for primary education increased from 79% in 2011 to 85% in 2012 and from 3% in 2011 to 26% in 2012, at the secondary level, according to the World Bank; overall, these are still low levels even for regional standards. Due to the persistent protests against the high cost of living, which began in early 2008 and continued in the period under review, the government continued to issue subsidies to keep staples such as rice and fuel at an affordable price.

Social safety nets
3

Burkina Faso has a Gender Inequality Index value of 0.609, ranking it 131 out of 148 countries in the 2012 index. The World Economic Forum Gender Gap Report of 2013 ranks it 102 out of 134 countries (2012: 103). This is low even by regional standards and compared with other low-income countries.

Equal opportunity
3

Only 0.9% of adult women have reached a secondary or higher level of education compared to 3.2% of their male counterparts. For every 100,000 live births, 300 women die from pregnancy-related causes; the adolescent fertility rate is 117.4 births per 1000 live births. Female participation in the labor market is 77.5% compared to 90.4% for men. Inequalities and disparities remain widespread across the sectors. Even though ethnicity is not a reason for the denial of equal opportunity, women and members of other vulnerable social groups have limited access to education, social services, public office and so on. In the agricultural sector, women have less access to micro-credits, land rights, technology and know-how.

In the current transition government, young adults and women are underrepresented. There is no person in the government under 35 years of age, even though the transition charter called for such age diversity; there are only four women in a government of 25 members; and the transition parliament has only 12 women among 90 members. Other groups, such as disabled persons, face discrimination. For instance, elections include no special measures to assist them.

11 | Economic Performance

The economic performance of Burkina Faso during the period under review was relatively positive despite the difficult national, regional and international context. The country saw relatively dynamic economic growth in 2013 despite a fall in gold prices on international markets. According to the African Economic Outlook, real GDP growth was 6.9% in 2013, after a 9% leap in 2012. The four most dynamic sub-sectors accounted for almost half of the country's GDP: agriculture (19%), extractive industries (13.1%), commerce (11.8%) and livestock farming (11%). Agriculture's contribution to overall growth fell to 1.9% in 2013 from 4.6% in 2012, which can be explained by poor rainfall in many areas. Cereal production reached about 5.2 million tons, a rise of 4.6% after growth of 33.6% in 2012. The cotton industry, which concentrates on the more resistant BT variety, was not affected by the weather. The 2013 production of 703,000 tons was a rise of 17.7% over the previous season (2012-13). Producers have been given incentives in the form of subsidized inputs, price policies and the payment of arrears to growers. The agriculture sector is expected to maintain its dynamism in coming years through measures aimed at making rapid gains, which include greater access to inputs and agricultural equipment. The livestock farming sub-sector saw growth of 4.2% in 2013. However, Burkina Faso's economy remains exposed to fluctuations in prices for commodities such as oil, gold and cotton. Climatic shocks will also remain among the main challenges of maintaining the sustained growth rate.

Investment driven by gross fixed-capital formation rose by 12.7% in 2013. Private and public capital formation rose by 11.9% and 13.6% respectively. The increase in public spending is due to major investment projects such as Ouagadougou-Donsin airport, the Bagre Growth Pole and new road and energy projects.

Inflation is expected to remain under 3% in 2014 and 2015, below the average for West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) member states. The global budget deficit (including committed donor money) remained stable at 3.2% of GDP in 2013 compared to 3.1% in 2012. The government has tried to maintain balanced budgets. Current spending, as a proportion of GDP, rose only slightly to 14.8% in 2013 after 14.7% in 2012.

Output strength
6

12 | Sustainability

In general, environmental awareness is rather weak among public servants and political actors. Among the political parties, only the (rather weak) green parties discuss the environment. Environmental issues are considered only when external donors demand it. Nevertheless, awareness of environmental issues and sustainable development of the economy have improved over the past few years. To ensure environmental sustainability is one of the eight most important objectives of the SCADD. However, environmental policies issues remain subordinated to other economic considerations. Burkina Faso relies heavily on natural resources and encounters severe climate problems such as droughts and floods. In the SCADD from June 2011, the IMF and the World Bank state that land degradation is a severe problem and that 34% of the territory (9,234,500 ha of agricultural land) is degraded due to anthropogenic (agriculture, livestock, land tenure, fuel wood, etc.) and climatic reasons, with an annual estimated increase in land degradation of 105,000 to 250,000 ha. The mining industry, in particular, is causing severe damage by using archaic mining techniques. Slash-and-burn agriculture is a current technique in the agricultural sector. Burkina Faso is one of the pilot countries of the Forest Investment Program (FIP). The Investment Plan was endorsed in June 2011. The FIP is an initiative of a group of donors within the framework of the Climate Investment Fund with the goal of reducing deforestation and promoting sustainable forest management.

Environmental
policy
5

The state's system of primary, secondary and tertiary education remains inadequate despite increased investment and some improvements, such as the expansion of the free school program for all children from three to 16 years under the new Strategic Development Program for Basic Education (PDSEB) running from 2012 to 2021. According to the HDI 2014, the average years of schooling reached only 1.3 in 2012 and the expected years of schooling only 7.5, low figures even by regional standards. The gross enrollment rate in primary education increased slightly, from 79% in 2011 to 85% in 2012, and from 23% in 2011 to 25.9% in 2012, at the secondary level, (World Bank figures), but remains low due to weak infrastructure and the low quality of education. The education systems, as outlined in indicator 6, are also imbalanced with regard to gender. Permanent infrastructure and investment in science as well as research and development remain underdeveloped, despite increased government expenditure in education and rising donor assistance over the years. According to the World Bank, research and development expenditure was at 3.4% of GDP in 2011, a significant increase compared to 0.21% in 2009, but this ratio remains extremely low. Recent data for spending on the education sector is not available (3.4% of GDP in 2011).

Education policy /
R&D
2

Transformation Management

I. Level of Difficulty

The structural constraints on effective governance in Burkina Faso are still massive. Chief among them is the extremely high poverty rate, as reflected in all common indicators such as the low GDP per capita and Burkina Faso's bottom ranking in the Human Development Index (181 out of 187 countries in 2014). Other constraints include a weak infrastructure, in both physical and institutional terms; vulnerability to weather risks (floods and droughts), which regularly affects the country's ability to produce staples as well as part of its main export commodities (cotton and livestock); the low diversification of the economy; its high dependency on imported fuel and food; and its concomitant exposure to world market developments as well as unstable terms of trade for its main export products. The country's landlocked situation adds a further level of difficulty. Despite the recent recovery of the cotton sector and the booming mining sector, Burkina Faso's current account balance remains negative and is characterized by high imports of services and capital goods imports. The country lacks an educated labor force due to a rudimentary education system and a low literacy rate.

Structural
constraints
9

A good example of how structural constraints are affecting politics is the way illiterate and poor people in rural areas are manipulated during election campaigns. According to the 2008 Afrobarometer Survey, 78% of voters claimed to be influenced primarily by the financial capacity of candidates, a figure most likely resulting from poverty and lack of education. In such a context, democracy is difficult to achieve.

Burkina Faso has considerable civil society traditions by sub-Saharan standards. Civil society played a vital role in the history of Burkina Faso since the colonial era. One example is the role of trade unions during the colonial and post-colonial eras. Even before colonial rule, civic associations existed in different communities. Numerous organizations and associations, which partially have their roots in pre-colonial society, constitute one of the society's key strengths. These organizations include "groupement villageois" (village groups) and youth associations, which were originally self-help groups or traditional warrior associations. Trade unions, student unions, human rights groups and a wide spectrum of literacy, environmental and women's advocacy groups, such as trade and professional organizations, are vital to civil society in Burkina Faso. Members of interest groups are represented in the current interim government. However, one should not mistake the relative strength of civil society with a particularly strong political influence during the country's recent history.

Civil society
traditions
4

Social cohesion in Burkina Faso is relatively high. However, social unrest and popular dissatisfaction with the government and the president have steadily grown over the last couple of years, and reached a peak with the 2014 protests and the overthrow of Blaise Compaoré. Almost all different groups of society demonstrated, some in quite a violent manner. Among them were marginalized urban youths (unemployed, informal sector, petty traders etc.) students, teachers, workers, judiciary personnel, security personnel and merchants. The growing gap between a small circle of wealthy, powerful figures and the poor masses has widened dangerously, mainly as a result of the government's policies, which are predominantly oriented toward maintaining power rather than the well-being of the population. Therefore, the potential for conflict has grown over the years and violence intensified during the period under review. The security forces (army, gendarmerie, presidential guard) were once again central players, yet often proved more of a risk to than a guarantee of security. Numerous such disputes, often about land issues, were reported during the period under review, and an increasing number seems to follow ethnic lines. However, the deep split between Burkinabè society and the political elite arises not along ethnic or religious lines, but rather along social lines. As such, radical political actors occasionally have success in mobilizing groups and protest movements.

Conflict intensity
6

II. Management Performance

14 | Steering Capability

The government has, by and large, adequately pursued strategic economic priorities that correspond with the normative framework in terms of striving for a market economy. The social turmoil in the period under review had only a marginal impact on the main sectors of economic growth, and measures to reduce prices of key consumer goods contained inflationary pressures. However, with regard to the political system and democratization, Compaoré's main priority seemed to be staying in power by enabling himself to have another presidential term. During the period under review, the government's and specifically the president's activities and strategies have followed two main objectives: first, to maintain the preconditions for perpetuating the president's or his family's hold on power; and second, to calm the dissatisfied population and critics with some reform plans, which are far-reaching enough to re-establish the regime's stability. While in previous crises this strategy more or less succeeded, in 2014 it finally failed. As the government currently in place is a transitional one, its priority is to avoid another crisis and to prepare for presidential elections to be held in November 2015. This presents an enormous challenge given the high degrees of social and political grievance and the small amount of time before elections; yet, thus far the transitional government has managed its priorities fairly well.

Question
Score

Prioritization
5

Overall, it is too early to judge the steering quality of the interim government in terms of its economic (and other) policies.

Implementation
5

The Compaoré government had made some progress in the implementation of its new poverty reduction strategy paper (SCADD), supported by the IMF and the World Bank. Yet the country remains extremely sensitive to developments in the global markets and dependent on the goodwill of donors, a situation that is aggravated by the structural constraints facing the country. Despite positive steps, reforms are sometimes implemented superficially or incompletely, as shown by the limited progress of privatization in the past two years. Improvements in conditions are not expected in the short or medium term. Although reforms are properly prepared and legally enacted, they often fail to become fully implemented. In many cases, the government simply does not have the required capacity to monitor results. Poverty reduction measures have not been effective, and poverty levels remain high. Furthermore, decentralization and a culture of self-help mean implementation of measures is typically left to local institutions or organizations. Often, organizations' financial support is dependent on foreign donors, which relieves fiscal pressure on the state budget. All in all, the effective impact of reforms is subject to the constraints of a global market economy. The government continues to successfully pursue its primary objective of maintaining its hold on power. It is doubtful that Compaoré's resignation has seriously challenged the existing power structure. The CDP's machinery of power, which includes unlimited access to state resources, is still in place, and overrides actors who might try to hinder the effective implementation of this political objective.

Burkina Faso's path of transformation has long been characterized by partial and shortsighted democratic reforms that only go as far as necessary to address instances of social unrest and intense popular pressure. During the period under review, the president did not prove able or willing to learn from past experiences; indeed, despite previous and ongoing social turmoil, he desperately clung to power. None of the policies implemented by the government have fundamentally touched the underlying problem that blocks substantial democratization in Burkina Faso: the continued grip on power exerted by Compaoré and his family, together with a small elite unwilling to give up any of its enormous power or to be held accountable for the abuses, corruption and mismanagement that had marked Compaoré's rule since 1987. For the most part, reforms reflect the Compaoré administration's self-serving and power-maintaining strategies rather than any long-term aim to strengthen democracy. Pushing for highly unpopular constitutional reform shows a glaring lack of learning ability, which eventually resulted in Compaoré's fall. After just two months in office, it is too early to judge the learning ability of the transitional government.

Policy learning
4

15 | Resource Efficiency

Available human, financial and organizational resources are utilized efficiently in very few areas. Huge amounts of resources are wasted due to corruption, clientelism, favoritism, poor coordination, and the country's lack of infrastructure and official monitoring. Two reports, by a special parliamentary commission and by the government's anti-corruption body, ACSE, both investigated public contracting and health services. They revealed many cases of overspending, misused funds, irregular bidding and tardy work, missing funds from the Ministry of Health, illegal land transactions by a mayor's office, customs fraud and other misdeeds. The fillings of jobs or dismissals of public servants often serve favoritism or political motivations, hindering effective management. Thin financial resources limit the autonomy of the local state administration. The country's youth, who as a whole are economically disenfranchised and lack adequate education and employment, have become increasingly frustrated with the selfish behavior of the political leadership and are essentially being ignored en masse as a valuable resource. In the period under review, this became particularly visible in frequent student protests. Many citizens respond with caution or even distrust to government appeals for help in contributing human or economic resources to meet development objectives. The fruits of public goodwill have been too often harvested. Consequently, directed reforms are often met with skepticism. The country cannot manage the level of state debt on its own and has benefited and will continue to benefit from debt relief under the IMF and World Bank's Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative. As a result of improved capacities for debt management, Burkina Faso's ranking shifted from "high" to "moderate," opening the door to new financing opportunities besides grants. Burkina Faso's fiscal policy is subject to requirements established by the IMF-sponsored Extended Credit Facility. Recent reviews commended Burkina Faso's strong performance under the program despite the continuing challenges. According to the 2014 IMF review, all quantitative performance criteria and structural benchmarks had been met and crisis-lending programs had been implemented in line with expectations. Thanks to improved revenue collection, mainly through the increase of tax revenues and reduction of fuel subsidies, the authorities put the public finances on a more stable footing. The global budget deficit (including committed donor money) remained stable at 3.2% of GDP in 2013 compared to 3.1% in 2012.

Efficient use of
assets

3

The former government partially failed to coordinate between conflicting objectives, which resulted in dire consequences for its own survival. The population's skepticism about reforms helps to explain the government's conflicting objectives, even in cases where it may show foresight in seeking necessary change. Too many times, the authorities have made vast promises of far-reaching political reforms, but have mostly failed to deliver. Peasants and urban laborers fear, with good reason, that their efforts are misused to benefit only a small group of elites. Although the government does try to coordinate conflicting objectives and interests, it is not always successful. Self-interests of powerful individuals and elites have had a particularly detrimental effect on policy coordination.

Policy
coordination
5

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

Anti-corruption
policy
4

16 | Consensus-Building

A consensus on the tenets of democracy is driven by opportunism rather than a deep conviction of the benefits of such a system. Consequently, further democratization has, so far, always been carried out only with reluctance and in response to civil society and foreign pressure. This became particularly obvious in the period under review, when the pressure from opposition parties, civil society organizations and trade unions forced Compaoré to resign. The relatively broad range of actors that quickly agreed to the transitional charter demonstrates a principal consensus on goals such as strengthening democratic institutions. It is worth noting, however, that a section of civil society – especially the Mouvement burkinabè des droits de l’homme et des peuples (MBDHP) – is said to implicitly favor communism over democracy (and a market economy), which is underscored by the fact that they did not sign the charter.

Consensus on goals
6

Major political actors agree on the tenets of a market economy. The majority of the population, however, has yet to benefit from a socially responsible market economy; it continues to suffer from the negative effects of privatization, restructuring and liberalization. Nonetheless, a broader range of actors shares consensus on democratic institutions than on a market economy.

In general, Burkina Faso is a neopatrimonial state, where politics is dominated by clientelism and political patronage. Within such a system, maintaining power becomes the primary or only objective for the political elite, and democratic reforms that could undermine this strategy will be circumvented by any means, which include exclusive access to the state’s machinery and its financial resources. In such a system, real reformers are rare. Against this background, the members of the ruling class, in particular the wider Compaoré clan, are the main anti-democratic veto actors. Wealthy businessmen are an integral part of the ruling elite. While their exact influence on policymaking is unknown, it must be assumed that they do have some degree of veto power. Traditional authorities (i.e., chiefs) also played an important role within the power structure. In the period under review, the army proved to have pronounced anti-democratic potential when it dominated the civil uprising and forced the president to resign; civilian authorities were unable to maintain effective control over the potentially anti-democratic soldiers.

Anti-democratic
actors
5

It remains to be seen in how far the transitional government, and the soon-to-be-elected president, will be able to push democratization forward and fight impunity, corruption and human rights violations.

In Burkina Faso, societal cleavages along socioeconomic and politico-ideological lines are manifested in social conflicts or tensions. Political aspects of discontent have increasingly figured in demonstrators' social and economic grievances. The period under review revealed unprecedented anger against the government, which reached its peak in late October 2014 with the forced resignation of Blaise Compaoré and his government. At the local level, political conflicts reflecting those at the national level as well as social tensions – such as those related to land use and tenure between autochthon and migrant land users or farmers (Mossi, Bissa etc.) and herders (Fulani/Peul) – are frequent. In the period under review, government and state authorities were mainly concerned with political and military conflicts at the national level and for the most part failed to manage local conflicts effectively. The erosion of state authority in recent years has made it harder still to contain localized conflicts. All in all, the political leadership repeatedly failed to prevent cleavage-based conflicts from escalating.

Cleavage /
conflict
management
4

While civil society participation is permitted in general, organizations' influence on the political leadership's democratization efforts becomes apparent only in situations when ignoring civil society would seriously endanger the government's power. This was clearly the case during the period under review, when protests and violent uprisings jeopardized the regime's survival and the government security forces reacted violently. However, the massive protests that resulted in Compaoré's resignation demonstrated clearly that civil society groups are intimidated by such shows of force. Within this context, the government and the parliamentary or extra-parliamentary opposition partly showed an increased willingness to cooperate with one another. Political and economic reforms were actually the result of pressure from opposition parties and different civil society actors, primarily trade unions, student associations and human rights organizations, that gave the impetus for the government's reform approach. In this way, all these groups exerted considerable influence over the political agenda. This influence touched not only economic and social welfare policy, but also, to a limited extent, issues such as impunity, the judiciary, corruption and others.

Civil society
participation
6

As a result of the protests that resulted in the resignation of Compaoré in late October 2014, the terms of the transitional charter task the interim Prime Minister with putting in place a National Reconciliation and Reform Commission. An ad hoc committee with a limited mandate was established by the interim authorities to investigate the events of the protests. The committee made four recommendations, including one that called for the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission to consider the committee's findings. All in all, a straightforward strategy to deal with historical acts of injustice in Burkina Faso remains one of the most important steps toward further democratization and reconciliation of society. The political leadership, however, has yet to develop such a strategy. The former government interpreted the country's history in a self-serving way that neglected some relevant historical facts, specifically

Reconciliation
4

those regarding the military coup against the former president, Thomas Sankara, and Compaoré's takeover in 1987. As a result, Burkina Faso has yet to establish anything resembling a truth and reconciliation commission, for example, to examine past human rights violations and, in particular, the circumstances of Norbert Zongo's assassination. Initiating a serious process of coming to terms with the past will be one important task for the new government elected in 2015.

17 | International Cooperation

Burkina Faso has made progress in implementing its development programs supported by the international community. A December 2013 IMF report states that the program performance remains strong. Revenues remain on target; economic activity continued to grow at a brisk pace in 2013; and inflation continued to decline. Almost all program targets were met, including those on net domestic financing and the fiscal balance. All structural benchmarks slated for completion in June and September 2013 were met. Burkina Faso's authorities are requesting a successor 3-year ECF arrangement to meet the projected balance of payments. The requested successor ECF-supported program aims to address long-term structural issues while preserving stability in the potentially more challenging macroeconomic environment going forward. Structural reforms are articulated around four key themes: managing the use of revenue from natural resources; improving the quality and pace of investment spending; supporting efforts to transform high growth into more inclusive growth; and, in the energy sector, improving supply while ensuring financial sustainability.

Burkina Faso's economic policy remains strongly dependent on international aid. In 2012, Burkina Faso received, according to the World Bank, \$1.259 billion (\$70 per capita) of net Official Donor Assistance (ODA). ODA remains at a very high level. Burkina Faso has benefited and will continue to benefit from debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative. The political leadership seems to follow clear aims of internationally assisted development, based on a roadmap that specifies necessary steps and required inputs.

The government's efforts in regard to the economy and security cooperation, along with Compaoré's numerous diplomatic interventions in the region, seem to create enough confidence within the international community to make it largely overlook the lack of commitment to implementing democratic reforms. Criticism is usually made in a restrained manner and without confronting the regime with clear consequences in the case of noncompliance. While the international community is claiming a stronger commitment to combat human rights abuses and corruption, it comments only very cautiously on other difficult issues. A more rigorous international position toward the Compaoré government would have been desirable. The crisis in Mali, the upheavals in Libya and other North African countries in 2011,

Effective use of support

7

Credibility

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and the international fight against terrorism in the region further strengthened security cooperation with important actors like France and the United States during the period under review. Recognition of Burkina Faso as a good development performer increased when it became one of the first countries to prepare a full poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP) in 2000, to which donors have progressively aligned their support. In June 2010, the country was awarded a three-year IMF-sponsored Extended Credit Facility covering the period 2010 – 2013, and it faces a new Strategy for Accelerated Growth and Sustainable Development for the period of 2011 – 2015. The main pillars of the new strategy include economic consolidation and accelerated growth, private sector promotion, development of human capital and economic infrastructure, and good governance promotion.

Working within a regional context is a key element of Burkina Faso's statehood. More than 60 ethnic groups in the country have cross-border settlements; nomads and migrant workers depend on pastures and jobs in neighboring countries; the fight against desertification and trafficking is impossible without regional collaboration; seaport access for landlocked Burkina Faso is dependent upon agreements with neighbors to the south; the country is member of the West African Monetary Union (as well as the ECOWAS); and the CFA franc pegs the country to other states with the same currency. Compaoré had gathered an acceptable standing among regional and international partners due to his several successful mediation efforts in West African countries. With each new mediation engagement, some critics voiced their doubts as to whether a former coup plotter like Compaoré could be the right person to negotiate in crises, most of which stem from military coups. The crisis in Côte d'Ivoire has dominated Burkina Faso's foreign policy agenda for the last decade, and Compaoré was involved in regional mediation efforts until its resolution in 2011. The ongoing crisis in adjoining Mali has led to new challenges, which have shaken the authorities in Burkina Faso. As the situation in Mali slightly improved, the majority of refugees turned back; however, by the end of 2014, still more than 30,000 Malian refugees lived in Burkina Faso. At the same time, the fragmentation of the Malian state and its consequences pose a major threat to the stability of the whole region and increase the risk that Islamist terrorist groups such as AQIM will rise in influence in the Sahelian countries, including Burkina Faso.

Regional
cooperation
8

Strategic Outlook

After the end of the “era Blaise Compaoré,” Burkina Faso’s transition is moving forward in an uncertain context. This is all the more true after a new military coup in September 2015 that happened after the end of the BTI’s period under investigation. The provisional government has enormous and challenging tasks to fulfill in order to ensure that the planned national elections will allow for peaceful and democratic change. Elections both for presidency and the national assembly must be accurately prepared, a particularly challenging task given the limited financial, institutional and human resources. Burkina Faso’s international partners should provide material and organizational support to revise voter rolls and to organize the elections.

It remains to be seen how far the transitional government, and the to-be-elected president, will be able to push democratization forward and to fight impunity, corruption and human rights violations. The transitional government and its elected successor will have to reform the security forces in order to guarantee that democratic institutions have sustainable control over them. Human rights violations and crimes committed by members of the army and police must be effectively prosecuted at all levels.

With respect to the protests from 30 October to 2 November 2014, an independent and impartial commission of inquiry should be established to investigate the human rights violations alleged to have been committed by members of the army, law enforcement and prison officials. The findings of this investigation should be made public. External bodies such as the UN and African Commission Special Rapporteurs, which can provide expert advice on particular areas of concern, should be invited to participate in the process.

Since the “2014 revolution,” many citizens have confidence in their ability to influence government and are keen to participate in political processes, but only a few of them know their rights and duties. Thus, the government and civil society must reinforce civil and democratic education so as to facilitate citizens’ qualitative participation in the political process.

Regarding social and human development, efforts should be further strengthened to improve the education and health system, both in quantity and quality. Employment opportunities for youths should be created. Moreover, strong emphasis should be placed on social protection and gender policies in order to achieve a certain level of socioeconomic development. Corruption hinders economic and democratic development. The government must increase transparency and accountability in all areas through serious anti-corruption measures, including effective and deterrent sanctioning procedures.

Economically, Burkina Faso should enforce the diversification of its main sectors and increase public spending to further support agricultural sector development, and it should invest in public works to reduce high vulnerability to external shocks and to provide employment opportunities. Inequality not only hinders sustainable human development but also feeds social tensions and

conflict. Strong emphasis should be placed on guaranteeing that the benefits from macroeconomic growth reach the poor and other vulnerable groups, which account for the vast majority of Burkina Faso's population. This is particularly important for the mining sector, which is not only one of the main drivers of economic growth, but also a potentially significant cause of ecological damage and social conflict.