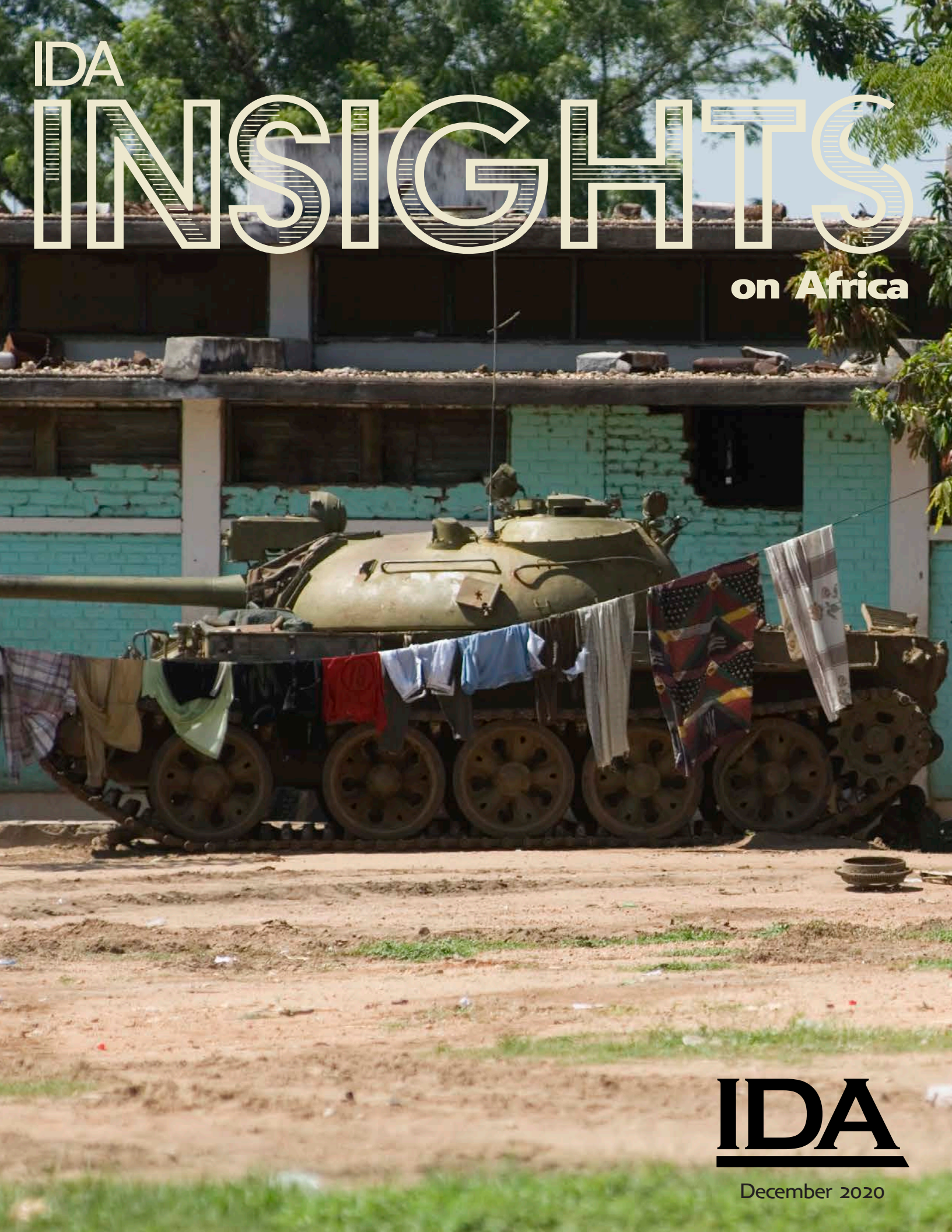


IDA

# INSIGHTS

on Africa



**IDA**

December 2020



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IDA Paper NS P-19438



# CAN EBOLA LESSONS APPLY TO COVID-19?

From 2014 to 2016, West Africa faced the largest known outbreak of the Ebola virus in history. Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone recorded close to 30,000 cases and at least 10,000 deaths over the course of about two years. All three countries were unprepared to respond to the outbreak due to weak health infrastructure; insufficient virus-detection capacity; mistrust in the government; and poor crisis communication. The present COVID-19 pandemic raises questions about whether and how these governments have adopted lessons learned from Ebola to respond to a new, but similar threat.

Both COVID-19 and Ebola are complex pathogens with different modes of transmission. Ebola spreads through close and direct physical contact with infected bodily fluids, while COVID-19 is believed to primarily spread through respiratory droplets produced when infected individuals cough, sneeze, speak, or breathe. The Ebola **fatality rate** is far higher than that of COVID-19, but the latter spreads more easily.

The possibility of asymptomatic COVID-19 cases, especially among **young people**, is especially vexing for African countries, given their large youth populations. In Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea, **about 40 percent** of people are younger than 15 years old. Crafting effective public health interventions is difficult because of limited testing infrastructure and supplies, as well as the potential need to isolate large segments of the population in a region that is so heavily reliant on informal economic and social structures. In putting into practice the lessons learned from the Ebola crisis, these countries face the twin challenges of enduring structural health deficiencies and the unique nature of this new virus.

Major shortcomings were evident in the regional response to the West African Ebola crisis:

Weak prevention and detection capabilities **resulted** in slow government emergency responses, which were hindered by poor governance and limited investment in health infrastructure.

- ◆ **Inadequate detection** also resulted in limited information about the scale of the outbreak, especially in remote areas, which hampered infection control.
- ◆ Treatment centers were **overwhelmed** with patients and faced critical equipment shortages, underlining the importance of early preparation for potential outbreaks.

The most significant lesson from the Ebola crisis, however, may be the impact of public trust on health responses. **Polls** indicate that Guineans, Liberians, and Sierra Leonians overwhelmingly trust religious and traditional leaders more than political leaders. Mistrust in the government, fueled by perceptions of corruption, extends to **public health institutions**. During the **Ebola crisis**, Guinean villagers blocked access to health workers, Liberians attacked such workers, and Sierra Leoneans refused to abide by safe burial procedures, fearing the bodies of their loved ones would be misused. Public confusion led to a **reluctance** to participate in contact-tracing efforts or adhere to quarantines, and, in some cases, it led to popular protests and riots.

Effective communication, therefore, was essential in securing public buy-in to counter the Ebola virus. Engagement with community leaders helped promote **behavior changes** that slowed community transmission. In particular, religious and traditional leaders played a central role in encouraging safer burial practices, demonstrating that communities are **vital partners** in developing locally tailored emergency responses. The extent to which Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Guinea have applied these lessons learned to combat COVID-19 varies, and while imperfect, evidence suggests they are somewhat better prepared after their experiences with Ebola to contend with public health crises.

## About the author

**Elissa F. Miller** is a former research associate in the Intelligence Analyses Division of IDA's Systems and Analyses Center. She holds a master's degree in law and diplomacy from the Fletcher School at Tufts University.



For more information on this topic, see "Drawing on Lessons from West Africa's Experience with Ebola to Tackle COVID-19," E. Miller, *Africa Watch—COVID-19 Edition*, October 2020.



## ADVANCING AFRICA'S PEACE, SECURITY, AND GOVERNANCE

*Africa celebrates significant milestones in 2020. It has been 20 years since Africa's regional and continental institutions adopted the principle of non-indifference, paving the way for African states to intervene in cases of political and military instability. This year also marks 30 years since most African states began to adopt principles of democratic governance. IDA and the Woodrow Wilson Center Africa Program jointly organized Africa Symposium 2020: Advancing Africa's Peace, Security, and Governance to facilitate a forward-looking conversation on peace, security, and governance across the African continent.*

Approximately 120 participants attended Africa Symposium 2020, which was held at the National Press Club in Washington, DC, on March 11, 2020. The symposium featured discussions by leading scholars and practitioners on the state of Africa's democracy; conflict-management reforms; and the role of women, youth, and external actors as stakeholders

in the continent's peace and security. In addition, senior members of the U.S. Government were asked to comment on Africa's role in the U.S. National Defense Strategy. Whitney Baird (Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for West Africa and Security Affairs), Pete Marocco (Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for African Affairs), and Magdalena Bajll

(National Intelligence Manager for Africa) provided insight into how the U.S. Government perceives challenges and opportunities on the African continent and affirmed the U.S. Government's commitment to Africa's security. Major General Christopher Craige, Director of Strategy, Plans, and Programs at the U.S. Africa Command, delivered the keynote address. Major General Craige emphasized



**Whitney Baird**





U.S. objectives in Africa, which are to partner for success; to demonstrate commitment to building African partner nations' capacity; to create space for good governance; and to disrupt networks of malign influences. This summary highlights the major points of the four panels featured at the Africa Symposium.

### **Africa's Democratic Dividend: Looking beyond Elections**

Professor E. Gyimah-Boadi, co-founder and CEO of the Afrobarometer, and Professor Jaimie Bleck, of Notre Dame University, led the discussion on the achievements and challenges of Africa's ongoing democratization process. Jon Temin, Africa Director at Freedom House, moderated the panel. Acknowledging that multiparty elections are the norm across Africa—sustained by civil society, opposition parties, and media—panelists noted continuing citizen dissatisfaction with the supply and delivery of democracy. In some countries, like Ghana, Botswana, and Malawi, democracy is thriving, but Benin, Guinea, Zambia, and Tanzania, among others, have seen dramatic slides. Moreover, results from Afrobarometer surveys reveal that citizens are more likely to judge their countries as democratic when elections are deemed to be free and fair, government is held accountable, *and* economic opportunities increase. Survey results in Mali, which Jaimie Bleck obtained through fieldwork, similarly showed that multiparty elections alone were insufficient to build state capacity to affect the rule of law, protect citizens, and provide services. To citizens in Mali, the state is weak and ineffective. Many feel unprotected and youth generally do not feel engaged or optimistic about the future. To reap the promises of democracy, panelists recommended that national and international bodies should focus on engaging youth and creating sustainable opportunities.



**Keynote speaker Christopher Craig**



**Jaimie Bleck and E. Gyimah-Boadi**



**Stephanie Burchard with Paul Williams**

### **Conflict Management and Reforms**

In 2000, the African Union (AU) underwent a significant change in its posture; the body shifted from a policy of non-interference to one of non-indifference. The AU Constitutive Act took the extraordinary step of allowing member states to intervene in cases of genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. In practice, this resulted in African states

intervening in conflicts, contributing peacekeepers, and authorizing 16 peace-support operations. Professor Paul Williams of The George Washington University led the panel, with IDA's Stephanie Burchard serving as moderator. The panel pointed out that while the AU has made tremendous strides, it still suffers from capacity, financial, and technical challenges. Notably, fewer than 30 of the AU's 55 member states have routinely paid dues, while five member states have not paid at all. Struggling to independently fund peace support operations, the AU depends on "partnership peacekeeping," where the United States provides the primary lethal and equipment support; the EU provides non-lethal support; and other partners contribute financial resources and backstop operations. Initiatives launched in 2016 include financial reforms to increase the support by member states and reduce dependence on outside partners. Equally challenging, the African Standby Force, meant to respond rapidly to crises, has not materialized. Instead, ad hoc and regional economic communities, with troop contributions from member states, have played that role.

### **Stakeholders in Africa's Peace and Security: Women and Youth**

Women and youth are increasingly considered critical to sustaining peace and security in Africa. Panelists in this session, moderated by IDA's Ashley Bybee, were Sandra Pepera, Director for Gender, Women, and Democracy at the National Democratic Institute,



and Marc Sommers, an internationally recognized expert on youth and conflict in Africa, emphasized the strong linkages between women and youth inclusion, democracy, and peace. Sandra Pepera highlighted research demonstrating that women’s engagement leads to more peace agreements and more sustainable peace. Women’s value to peacebuilding lies in their tendency to work across boundaries, faith groups, and ethnicities—building bonds that help maintain a country’s resilience to shocks. Similarly, while societies stereotype youth—males, in particular—as violent, Marc Sommers noted that the overwhelming majority of youth do not join armed groups. Violent extremist organizations counter these realities with gender specific recruitment strategies—such as by appealing to male youth fears of emasculation and failed adulthood, and sometimes, anger at the state.



**Ashley Bybee, Sandra Pepera, and Marc Sommers**

## Africa’s Evolving External Stakeholders

Engagement between Africa and the rest of the world has expanded considerably in the last decade. Judd Devermont, Africa Director at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and Lina Benabdallah, Wake Forest University political science professor, led the panel discussion, moderated by the Wilson Center’s Michael Morrow, on the increasing number of external stakeholders vying for a foothold on the continent. From 2010 to 2015, at least 150 new embassies were built in Africa, and trade and investment have been steadily on the rise over the past decade. In contrast, U.S. engagement is at its lowest level since the Eisenhower administration—only two African heads of states have been accorded state visits during President Donald Trump’s administration. China’s engagement with Africa on trade and political relations is the continent’s most significant. In addition to providing a large market for trade, Africa contributes to China’s foreign policy objectives, providing a solid voting block in the UN and reliable backing for other endeavors requiring diplomatic support. As a result, Africa legitimizes China as a responsible global player. Still, Benabdallah argued that while China has built strong relationships with African governments, its investments in Africa’s human capital are equally important. China



**Michael Morrow and Lina Benabdallah**

has cultivated a positive reputation by offering scholarships and opportunities to African citizens and training to military personnel. Moreover, the initiatives have been ongoing; for example, the Forum for China-Africa Cooperation has taken place regularly every three years since 2000.

## Conclusion

Africa Symposium 2020 highlighted the continent’s advancements in establishing democratic institutions, conflict-management mechanisms, and Africa’s increasingly significant role in the global community. Yet critical challenges remain

in how to increase institutional capacities to address conflict and how to integrate important stakeholders to advance peace, security, and democracy. A cross-cutting message centered on more robust engagement of citizens—in particular, youth and women—by national governments and international bodies, in a bid to increase support for democratic norms and discourage the growth of violent extremist organizations. Panelists also underscored the need for the United States to engage robustly with Africa, building on the advantages of soft power, through diplomatic initiatives, and by developing innovative ways to remain connected.

## About the author

**Dorina A. Bekoe** is a member of the research staff in the Intelligence Analyses Division of IDA’s Systems and Analyses Center. She earned both a doctorate from Harvard University and a master’s degree from Carnegie Mellon University, both in the field of public policy.



For more information about the symposium, see *Africa Symposium 2020: Advancing Africa’s Peace, Security, and Governance—Summary*, D. A. Bekoe, [D-13157](#), March 2020, and *Africa Symposium 2020: Advancing Africa’s Peace, Security, and Governance—Major Themes*, D. A. Bekoe, [D-13217](#), April 2020.

# RUSSIA'S DOUBLE GAME IN LIBYA

Russia's relationship with the State of Libya in the Maghreb region of North Africa points to a double game being played there, with Russia publicly touting one objective while duplicitously pursuing another. This report examines Russian activities in Libya prior to the August 21 ceasefire signed by the leaders of Libya's warring rival governments.

The 2011 civil war that toppled Muammar al-Qaddafi, Libya's long-time dictator, marked the beginning of what has become a protracted conflict. A second civil war erupted in 2014, pitting the UN-backed Government of National Accord and its Tripoli-based military, led by Prime Minister Fayez al-Sarraj, against the Tobruk-based House of Representatives of Libya and its Libyan National Army, led by House of Representatives President Aguila Saleh. That same year, Saleh named the Libyan National Army the country's official armed forces and chose Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar, described as Libya's "most potent warlord," to lead them. Both administrations receive support from foreign allies: Turkey, Italy, and Qatar support the Government of National Accord, while France, Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, and Russia prop up the Libyan National Army.



able to deploy and sustain its forces across the Mediterranean from Syria, where it maintains Tartus naval base and Khmeimim air base. Strengthening its position in Libya through a permanent military presence would provide Russia further access to Africa and the Middle East as well as significant leverage over Europe. According to Anna Borshchevskaya, Senior Fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, in a July 2020 interview, a permanent Russian military base on Libya's coast would also allow Moscow to deploy long-range anti-access/area-denial capabilities. Further, deep-water ports at Darnah and Tobruk would provide Russia's navy with logistical and geostrategic benefits, potentially allowing Moscow to control the flow of oil to southern Europe. Borshchevskaya believes that this control, combined with Russian bases in Syria, would create an "arc of influence" from Tartus in the east to Tripoli in the west with which Russia could project power across a large swath of the Mediterranean—directly on NATO's southern flank. Russia reportedly may seek to establish a military base at al-Jufra, the main logistics and air hub for the Libyan National Army's advances into western Libya, and a naval base in Sirte, a strategic gateway to key oil facilities in the country.

## Russia's Approach

Russia's approach in Libya appears to be focused on establishing a secure foothold from which to reap strategic benefits regardless of which side ultimately emerges victorious. As it has done in the Central African Republic, Algeria, Nigeria, and Sudan, Moscow seems to be pursuing deals that would make it a key player in Libya's energy markets. It also seeks construction contracts and arms agreements to compensate for the tens of billions of dollars in potential revenues that Russia lost following al-Qaddafi's overthrow. Russia stands to earn an estimated \$4 billion from arms sales, \$3.5 billion from energy deals, \$3 billion from railway construction, and \$150 million from construction projects in the country.

Russia's interest in expanding its military reach by securing bases in Libya is of particular concern to the United States and NATO. Russia is already

## Double Game

Officially and publicly, Russia supports a compromise between Libya's power centers in Tripoli and Tobruk, the end of hostilities, and the creation of a government of national unity. Yet mercenaries and military equipment flow into Libya to prop up Haftar and increase Russia's geopolitical influence in oil-rich areas the Libyan National Army controls in the east of the country, securing for Russia lucrative oil, energy, and construction contracts should Haftar prevail. Although Russia has continually denied the presence of Russian forces in Libya, the Wagner



Group, a Russian paramilitary organization, **reportedly deployed** between 800 and 1,200 operatives to strengthen Haftar's forces by early 2020.

At the same time, Moscow has maintained a diplomatic back channel with senior officials in the Government of National Accord. Russia is reported to have established contact with Saif al-Islam Gaddafi, son of the late Libyan leader, either to replace Haftar or to serve as a "parallel force" to him. Leading this effort is Yevgeny Prigozhin, **reported to be a close associate** of Russian President Vladimir Putin and the head of the Wagner Group. Russian diplomats are also believed to have reached out to Saleh in eastern Libya as an alternative to Haftar, whose influence waned following **the collapse of his offensive against Tripoli** in June 2020.

## Some Setbacks

A series of setbacks this year may have dented Russia's ambitions in Libya. In January, Putin and Turkish President Recep Erdogan tried to pressure Haftar and al-Sarraj to sign a ceasefire agreement in Moscow. But according to Borshchevskaya, Putin, who had presented himself as a key diplomatic arbiter in the country, was humiliated when Haftar refused to sign. Haftar's 14-month offensive against Tripoli crumbled in early June as the Government of National Accord, supported by Turkish drones and Syrian mercenaries, **captured the Libyan National Army's last stronghold** in the city of Tarhuna, as **"hundreds" of Wagner Group forces reportedly retreated** to the city of Bani Walid southeast of Tripoli. In July, the **United States imposed sanctions** on five businesses and three individuals with close ties to Prigozhin and the Wagner Group after accusing them of laying landmines in and around Tripoli.

The ceasefire signed on August 21, 2020, by the warring rival governments is unlikely to significantly alter the involvement of the Wagner

Group and other private military companies. Russia sees the Libyan National Army as a "key partner" to achieve its geo-economic and geopolitical interests in Libya, and the use of mercenaries is meant to solidify Haftar's position and strengthen his—and ultimately Moscow's—bargaining power in any negotiations. It is telling that while both the UN-backed government in Tripoli and President Saleh simultaneously announced the ceasefire in coordinated announcements, **neither Haftar nor Russia offered an immediate reaction**. Haftar's military forces, however, rejected the ceasefire as "media propaganda" and insisted **they would not withdraw peacefully** from Sirte or al-Jufra, as required in the agreement. Indeed, just six days after the ceasefire was announced, the **Wagner Group and pro-Haftar forces reportedly deployed** to Sirte and al-Jufra and began targeting the Libyan army with rockets.

Rather than seeking a decisive military victory for either side in Libya's war, which could marginalize Moscow's role or sideline it in negotiations, Russia appears interested in a frozen conflict that would allow it to remain a key player in the country, thus preserving its ability to exert its influence, protect its interests, strengthen its regional presence, and confound the West. So long as Russia continues to employ mercenaries in Libya, it is able to prevent the collapse of its chosen proxy while pursuing other diplomatic efforts to secure its long-term interests in the country. If Haftar fails in his bid to seize control of the country and proves unable to deliver on his promises of access and energy deals, Russia will have positioned itself to maintain influence and reap benefits in Libya regardless.

### About the author

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# 5 QUESTIONS ABOUT SUDAN'S DEMOCRATIC TRANSFORMATION





## 1 WHAT HAPPENED IN 2019 TO BRING DOWN THE SUDANESE GOVERNMENT?

**S**udan is poised to overcome decades of authoritarian rule with a popularly supported democratic transition. The situation remains delicate, though. The balance of power shared by the joint civilian and military government is heavily weighted in favor of the military. Prospects for civilian control over the military and improved accountability are in doubt. Sudan's previous regime split the security forces into multiple competing parts and access to independent sources of wealth: the Sudanese Armed Forces, the Rapid Support Forces, the Popular Defense Forces, the National Intelligence Security Service forces, the police forces, and assorted militias. This arrangement gravely threatens the country's political transition process.

In the spring and summer of 2019, nationwide civil protests in Sudan led by women and youth, forced the ouster of President Omar al-Bashir, who had ruled the country for 30 years. The Transitional Military Council that replaced Bashir was not an acceptable alternative for the Forces for Freedom and Change, a coalition of professional associations, opposition party representatives, and civil society organizations that represented the pro-democracy movement. Eventually, negotiations resulted in a power-sharing agreement that created a governing sovereign council to be headed for 21 months by General Abdul Fattah Al-Burhan of the Sudan Armed Forces, followed by 18 months of civilian leadership culminating in democratic elections. The parties also agreed to a civilian cabinet, now led by Prime Minister Abdullah Hamdok, an economist with UN experience.

## 2 WHAT ROLE DID THE SECURITY FORCES PLAY?

On June 3, 2019, while the coalition of civilian organizations was still negotiating with the transitional military council that had replaced Bashir, **a group of security forces wearing mismatched uniforms brutally massacred protestors conducting a sit-in** near the military's headquarters in Khartoum, killing over 120 and raping or otherwise injuring hundreds more. June 3 immediately became enshrined in Sudan's national consciousness, prompting calls for justice and accountability. The international community immediately condemned the attack, embarrassing the Transitional Military Council, which claimed that it had not ordered the attacks. Eyewitness accounts identified members of the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) among others, but the RSF claimed they were "rogue elements" and **neither the Sudan Armed Forces nor the RSF leadership took**

## 3 ARE SECURITY FORCES PRO-OR ANTI-DEMOCRACY?

**steps to hold any troops accountable.** On October 20, 2019, the new government **established a commission** to investigate the killings at the sit-in, with a mandate to establish who was responsible; the numbers of dead, missing, and wounded; and the total amount of financial losses. Many months overdue, the commission report has stirred its own controversy and is eagerly anticipated.

At least at the rank-and-file level, there were positive signs of national pride and solidarity with some of the Sudan Armed Forces and the police, who had been known to **eat, pray, and sing with the protestors.** But there are significant doubts about whether it is possible to reform the security and intelligence forces into a professional, diverse, and integrated military. Are they so corrupted—from having been created and deployed to inflame ethnic and ideological divisions—that they are **no longer the forces of the people but only of the regime?** The answer depends on whether the transitional government and its international supporters can offer enough incentives and committed support to alter the calculus of the leadership of the security forces.

## 4 WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS THAT SUDAN NEEDS TO TAKE ON ITS PATH TO DEMOCRACY?

Sudan's remarkable transition from autocracy to democracy is well under way, but it struggles with reconciling two core imperatives: security sector reform (SSR) and transitional justice. A key component of transitioning to democracy is civilian control of the armed forces, the condition for transparency and accountability. Holding members of the armed forces accountable for abuses and violations of human rights is one of the purposes of any transitional justice process and is also a component of a disciplined professional military. The tension comes from efforts to build support for SSR, because the security forces are likely to resist any attempt to hold them accountable. Transitional justice processes can, of course, be highly contextualized. They may include amnesty for truth-telling and non-criminal reparations such as community service for perpetrators. But most victims of widespread abuse demand punishment for those who ordered the violence.

The U.S. government has long supported a democratic and prosperous Sudan and some Members of Congress and the Foreign Service have deep knowledge of, and personal interest in, Sudan. Earlier this year, the House of Representatives introduced HR 6094, Sudan Democratic Transition, Accountability, and Fiscal Transparency Act of 2020 [*currently in committee*]. It describes



desired U.S. policy towards Sudan, empowers the executive branch to undertake certain assistance in support of reforms, and articulates steps that should be taken by Sudan in order to restore full U.S. engagement in the country. Although it has not been brought to a vote, the steps listed in HR 6094 point the way for constructive U.S. engagement in Sudan's SSR process.

The most productive approach for supportive external actors will be to offer positive incentives for reform—linking economic development support to foundational reforms that will support the transformation of the security forces and strengthen civilian leadership and civil society. Remaining alert for opportunities to reward progress and to demonstrate the tangible benefits a reformed security sector can receive (international partnerships and skills training, for example) will contribute to shifting the calculus of the armed forces, if not their leadership, until the pull toward reform is stronger than that toward the status quo.

**About the author**

**Linda Bishai** is a member of the research staff in the Intelligence Analyses Division of IDA's Systems and Analyses Center. She holds a PhD in social science, political science, and international relations from the London School of Economics and Political Science as well as a JD from Georgetown University. Bishai has worked on Sudan issues since 2005 and has a background in conflict resolution, election violence, and secessionism and the politics of identity.



For more information on Sudan's transition, see *Sudan's Democratic Transformation Cannot Succeed Unless its Security Forces Reform: Obstacles and Options*, L. S. Bishai, [NS D-18418](#), October 2020.

## HOW CAN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY HELP?



## Crisis in Cabo Delgado and Lessons for Combating Violent Extremism in Africa

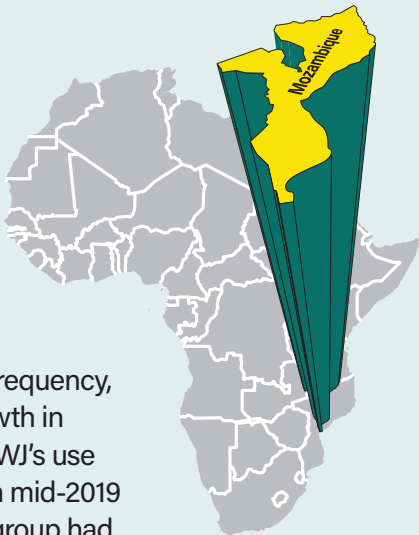




The Islamic extremist group Ahlu Sunna Wa-Jamo has demonstrated a penchant for brutal attacks in Mozambique’s northern province of Cabo Delgado, prompting many to re-examine Mozambique’s social and conflict dynamics. There has been less examination, however, of the causes of violent religious extremism in Mozambique or the impact of the government’s response. To fill this gap, IDA’s Africa Team reviewed on-the-ground interviews with individuals who maintain direct connections to stakeholders in Cabo Delgado to shed light on potential motivations for these Ahlu Sunna Wa-Jamo’s attacks.

An extremist group emerged in Cabo Delgado in the mid-2010s, disturbing the country’s relative security since the 1992 end of its 15-year civil war. The first recorded attacks by Ahlu Sunna Wa-Jamo (ASWJ) in Cabo Delgado took place in April 2017. We analyzed data from the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) to identify trends in ASWJ attacks in Cabo Delgado between January 2016 and the end of July 2020. ASWJ’s brutality was on full display in its earliest attacks, involving beheadings and arson, and fatalities increased exponentially thereafter. ASWJ frequently targeted government installations, but from October 2017 until December 2019, 74 percent of all violence in Cabo Delgado was directed at civilians. The group’s modus operandi after 2017 was largely consistent in targeting government installations like hospitals, administrative outposts, and army bases, as well as villages where activities included

killing civilians, robbing businesses and homes, destroying property, and raping and kidnapping women. Starting in late 2018, ASWJ attacks steadily increased in lethality and frequency, potentially signaling a growth in numbers or resources. ASWJ’s use of improvised explosives in mid-2019 sparked concern that the group had secured more advanced materials, expertise, and other resources. Reported ASWJ ties to the Islamic State—the Mozambican government acknowledged links to ISIS in Cabo Delgado in April 2020—and its increased lethality reflect the group’s continued momentum. The trend in 2020 (see figure on page 19) has been increased engagement with government forces, while continuing to attack civilian targets.

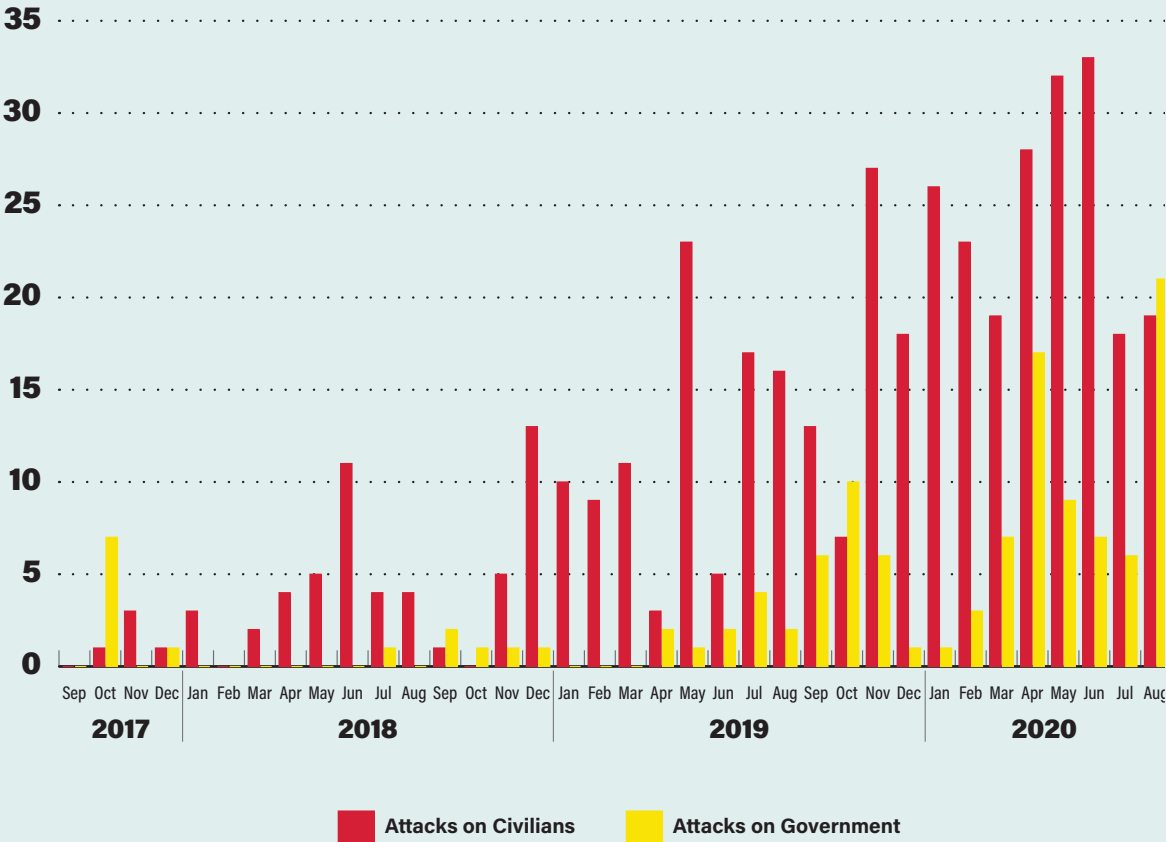


Drivers of Extremism and Violence

The drivers of violent extremism are complex and evolving. There is often no single cogent explanation for the formation of an extremist group. We found that to be the case in Mozambique where extremist violence has overlapping roots in historical grievances, disenfranchisement, and notions of relative deprivation.

Socioeconomic Drivers

The socioeconomic climate in northern Mozambique proved conducive to ASWJ’s extremist message. Cabo Delgado is Mozambique’s most remote region. A lack of central government attention fomented resentment and sentiments of disenfranchisement, while a dearth of employment opportunities left many young men unable to earn livelihoods. Interviews in Mozambique revealed that while



ASWJ Attack Targets, October 2017-July 2020 Data source: ACLED.

a common entry point for ASWJ recruitment was Islam, a major draw was financial rewards like small loans to start businesses or pay bride prices. Socioeconomic challenges persist in Cabo Delgado despite an abundance of natural resources, including oil, minerals, timber, and wildlife. The Mozambican government has granted a number of contracts for extraction, including concessions on land, that displaced entire communities and disrupted the livelihoods of local farmers, fishermen, and artisanal miners. A promised windfall of benefits, including development and improved social services, from international corporations securing rights to liquefied natural gas fields in the region has not materialized.

Political Drivers

Economic inequity has been compounded by long-standing ethno-political cleavages that left large swaths of northern Mozambicans disconnected from the state. Security force and government corruption are high, and public satisfaction in the north is low. Those closely aligned with the ruling party, the Mozambique Liberation Front known as FRELIMO (*Frente de Libertação de Moçambique*), reap the benefit from the extractive industries. At the same time, Cabo Delgado residents enjoy strong cultural, linguistic, social, and economic ties to Tanzania that date back centuries. Although ASWJ is predominantly composed of Cabo Delgado locals, a number of members are believed to be from Tanzania and



Somalia. These social ties, combined with the north's political marginalization, contributed to the spread of antigovernment Islamist ideologies.

### Religious Drivers

ASWJ militarized in 2014 in Cabo Delgado, likely as a breakaway group from mainstream conservative Islam in the region. The 1998 emergence of a fundamentalist sect of Mozambican Muslims—an estimated 19 percent of Mozambicans are Muslim—helped create a fertile environment for extremism. Additionally, three known leaders of ASWJ promoted a brand of Islamist extremism popularized by deceased Kenyan cleric Aboud Rogo Mohammed, who is believed to have contributed to the 1998 U.S. embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania and allegedly provided support to al-Shabaab in Somalia. Rogo was killed in Mombasa in 2012, but recordings of his sermons continued to circulate along the Swahili coast and gained popularity in northern Mozambique. His radical teachings and anti-state

rhetoric condemned the enrichment of elites and corporations at the expense of local populations. It is not surprising that his sermons gained traction in the north's economic and political context and that ASWJ capitalized on these narratives of local disaffection.

## Lessons for Africa

The Mozambican government's approach to ASWJ's threat was largely Janus-faced between 2016 and 2019. It publicly denied the presence of an organized threat while heavily retaliating against ASWJ attacks. In an effort to downplay the threat, the government arrested and detained journalists reporting on the situation, and the subsequent lack of information mired Mozambique in confusion. The government also refused to acknowledge the growing humanitarian crisis despite reports of more than 65,000 internally displaced people. Rather, the government exacerbated anti-state sentiment by sanctioning security force abuses in the north in the name of countering ASWJ. In 2018, the government began collaborating with Russia to address the ASWJ threat. In August 2019, the Russian private military company Wagner Group deployed 203 soldiers to Cabo Delgado. This move failed to dissuade ASWJ from continued violence and threatened to internationalize a conflict whose roots lie in local grievances.

Our findings surrounding Maputo's response to Islamist extremism in Cabo Delgado offer lessons for African countries facing similar threats. Weak institutional methods of identifying and approaching the root causes—rather than the symptoms—of these crises stymie efforts to address local grievances and secure communities from attack. A failure to acknowledge and act on information about extremism also allows for the spread of violent threats, particularly in environments where historical

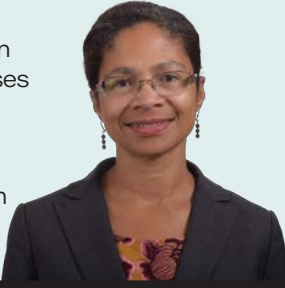


EOD conducts class (DVIDS)

political, economic, and social marginalization coalesce with extremist narratives. Alternatively, understanding whether an extremist group relies on community sources for support could offer insights into strategies to disrupt the group. Efforts to leverage community ties and civil society organizations could also help with early identification of at-risk areas. An effective response requires sufficient space to dissect extremist motivations, drivers, and interests, which can lay the groundwork for meaningful steps that address popular grievances at their root.

### About the authors

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For more on this topic, see *Extremism in Mozambique: Interpreting Group Tactics and the Role of the Government's Response in the Crisis in Cabo Delgado*, D. A. Bekoe, S. M. Burchard, and S. A. Daly, [NS D-13156](#), March 2020.





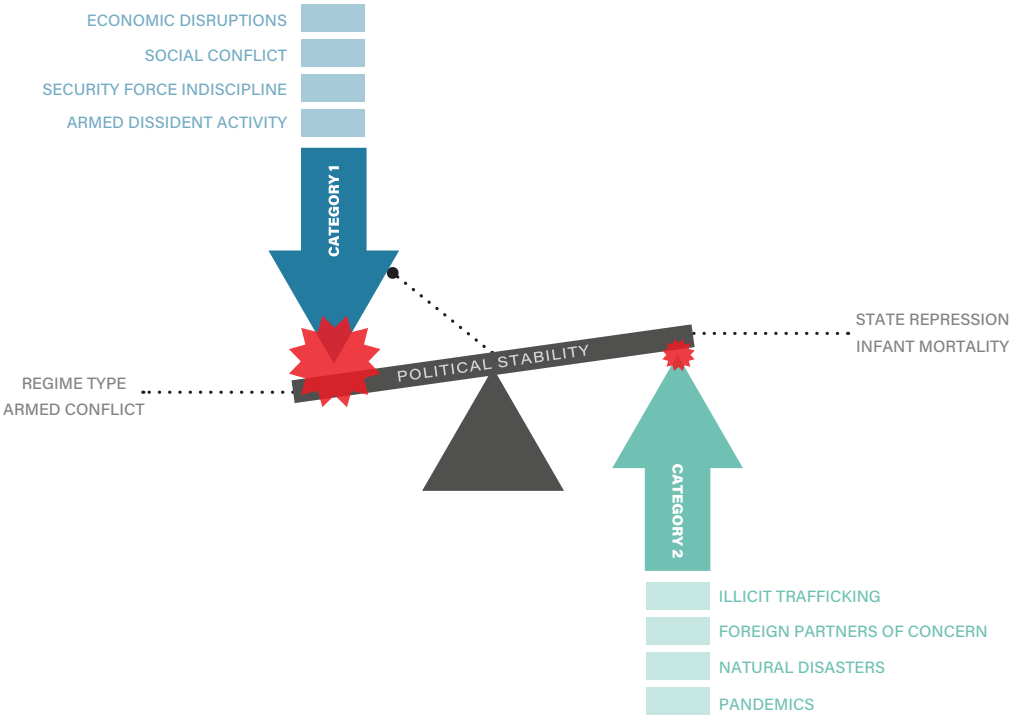
# DYNAMIC RISK OF INSTABILITY ESTIMATION MODEL (DRIEM)

Africa hosts a wide range of security threats affecting the United States, its allies, and its strategic partners. To prioritize resources, policy makers need the best and most up-to-date information so they can preempt, manage, and respond to crises. With this in mind, IDA's Africa Team developed the Dynamic Risk of Instability Estimation Model (DRIEM), a tool designed to assess a country's near-term risk of political instability. Although designed for tracking African countries' instability, the DRIEM methodology can easily be adapted for use with other countries or regions.

A variety of analytical frameworks and instruments have been developed to measure different dimensions of political instability—used here to mean a country's inability to respond to disturbances and return to its steady state. Some of these tools have been criticized for failing to be objective, capture nuance, or account for variation in state capacity across government functions within countries. To avoid these shortcomings, DRIEM relies on a transparent, systematic, and reproducible framework; includes information on potential triggers of instability; and compares each country to itself to detect deviations over time.

The work of researchers with the Political Instability Task Force (PITF) is the basis of DRIEM's methodology. Relying on annual data, PITF used global data to model political stability. In their analysis, PITF researchers examined hundreds of cases to predict five distinct types of state failure: ethnic wars, revolutions, regime changes, coups, and genocides. They found regime type to be the most powerful predictor of the onset of political instability, while serious conflict in neighboring countries, state repression, and infant mortality were also significant indicators.

Our method uses the PITF model to estimate whether a country has low, medium, or high vulnerability to instability. Next, it tracks potential stressors, or precipitating events, in several key areas that have been linked to destabilization. DRIEM divides stressors into two categories based on their potential effect on stability. The first category assumes a greater effect and includes economic disturbances, social conflict, security force indiscipline, and armed dissident activity. The second category includes illicit trafficking, foreign partners of concern, natural disasters, and pandemics.



DRIEM Method



The second category of stressor has a lesser effect on stability than the first. It includes illicit trafficking, pandemics, natural disasters, and (malign) foreign influence. The following figure depicts the relationship between stability and the different categories of stressors.

DRIEM uses a mixed methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data on vulnerability and stressors. Data are from a variety of open sources, including the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, ACAPS, World Bank Open Data, and targeted news site queries. All of the data on stressors can be collected in real time. Some of the data on vulnerability are annual scores, some are quarterly indicators, and some daily events.

The model assigns vulnerability and stressor scores and identifies risk of instability using the matrix below. At the intersection of vulnerability and stressor scores on the matrix is the risk of instability rating, ranging from *very low* to *extreme*. We can track changes in risk in a country over time by comparing a country to itself. A country that outwardly appears to be very unstable may in fact have found an internal balance that outsiders do not observe. We believe these deviations in perceived and actual risk can be the most noteworthy outcome in a DRIEM analysis.

Predicting rare events, such as coups and civil wars, is notoriously difficult, due in no small part to the lack of data and the uniqueness of events. Even the most sophisticated models, such as that created by PITF, have only **about an 85 percent accuracy rate**. DRIEM is designed to help policymakers get ahead of events, to the extent possible. By combining PITF's underlying predictive model with real-time data on stressors, IDA has been able to produce detailed instability analyses. These analyses can help decision makers

	No Stressors	Low Impact Stressors	Moderate Impact Stressors	High Impact Stressors	Extreme Impact Stressors
Low Vulnerability	Very Low Risk	Low Risk	Low to Moderate Risk	Moderate Risk	Moderate to High Risk
Moderate Vulnerability	Low Risk	Low to Moderate Risk	Moderate Risk	Moderate to High Risk	High Risk
High Vulnerability	Low to Moderate Risk	Moderate Risk	Moderate to High Risk	High Risk	Extreme Risk (State Failure)

understand a country's potential for instability and the stressors that trigger it, so that strategies can be in place before or as crises unfold.

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