

Voices from Congo

Report 15 – September 2018

Peacebuilding and Reconstruction Polls

(June-July 2018 data)

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ABOUT THE POLL

This poll is the fifteenth in a series of surveys to provide reliable data and analysis on peace, security, justice and reconstruction in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The project is a joint initiative of the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative (HHI) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), in collaboration with MONUSCO Civil Affairs. HHI is responsible for data collection, independent data analysis, and report writing, in collaboration with the Free University of the Great Lakes Countries, Catholic University of Bukavu and University of Bunia. The results are based on 5,951 interviews conducted in June and July 2018 with randomly selected adults in the following cities and territories:

North Kivu (n=2158)

- Goma (220)
- Beni - city (300)
- Butembo (300)
- Beni (221)*
- Lubero (216)
- Masisi (242)
- Nyiragongo (220)
- Rutshuru (223)
- Walikale (216)

South Kivu (n=2403)

- Bukavu (300)
- Fizi (219)
- Idjwi (216)
- Kabare (216)
- Kalehe (236)
- Mwenga (216)
- Shabunda (216)
- Uvira - city (300)
- Uvira (288)
- Walungu (216)

Ituri (n=1390)

- Bunia (290)
- Aru (217)
- Djugu (216)
- Irumu (236)
- Mahagi (216)
- Mambasa (215)

** 7 villages replaced due to insecurity*

Additional interviews were conducted to obtain representative data for six priority areas: 1 - South Irumu (n=463); 2 - Ruzizi (n= 804); 3 - Kitchanga (n=408); 4 - Kalehe (n=440); 5 - Mambasa (n=433) ; et Beni (n=485)

PREVIOUS PUBLICATIONS

- Baseline, May 2014 (Data from December 2013)
- Poll Report #1, March 2015 (Data from December 2014)
- Poll Report #2, June 2015 (Data from March-May 2015)
- Poll Report #3, August 2015 (Data from June-July 2015)
- Poll Report #4, November 2015 (Data from September - October 2015)
- Poll Report #5, January 2016 (Data from December 2015)
- Poll Report #6, June 2016 (Data from March 2016)
- Poll Report # 7, August 2016 (Data from June 2016)
- Poll Report # 8, November 2016 (Data from September 2016)
- Poll Report # 9, March 2017 (Data from December 2016)
- Poll Report # 10, June 2017 (Data from March April 2017)
- Poll Report # 11 – FOCUS ON SECURITY, September 2017 (Data from July 2017)
- Poll Report # 12 – FOCUS ON GOMA, November 2017 (Data from October 2017)
- Poll Report #13, March 2018 (Data from December 2017)
- Poll Report #14, May 2018 (Data from March-April 2018)
- Ebola Rapid Survey, October 2018 (Data from September 2018)

For more information, visit www.peacebuildingdata.org/drc or contact info@peacebuilding.org

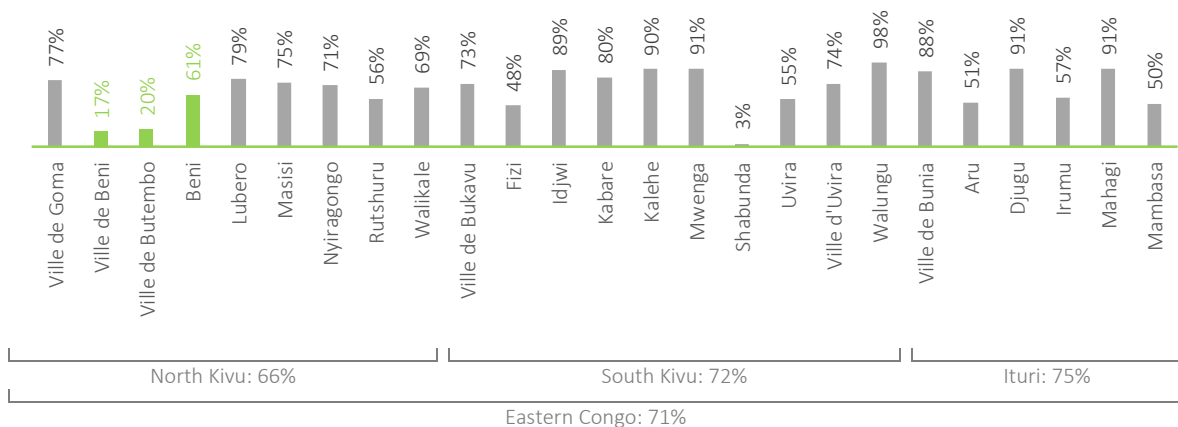
CONTEXT OF A CRISIS: BENI, BUTEMBO AND THE EBOLA OUTBREAK

On August 1, 2018, the Democratic Republic of the Congo declared its tenth Ebola outbreak in forty years. This epidemic is the first to take place in the context of ongoing armed conflict. The Beni territory - located at the epicenter of the Ebola outbreak - has been the scene of recurring violence and killings that have claimed hundreds of civilian lives in the past four years. This situation complicates the response to the epidemic. This fifteenth report offers an analysis of the social and security factors that must be considered in the response to the epidemic. It is based on the analysis of a poll conducted in June-July 2018, just before the announcement of the Ebola outbreak in the region. This report is also based on the information collected during the first 14 polls between December 2013 and March 2018 to provide context to the current outbreak.

Security:

Insecurity in the territory of Beni is a recurring problem. For several years the population has been facing waves of kidnappings, forced recruitment and massacres of the civilian population by armed groups. The Congolese army is accused of participating in the violence. Polls show that the region at the center of the epidemic is among the most insecure in eastern Congo. For example, in the cities of Beni and Butembo, less than one in five (17% and 20%, respectively) say they are safe in their daily activities, which is well below the provincial average (North Kivu 66%) and regional (Eastern Congo: 71%). The percentage of people who say they are safe in daily activities in the Beni territory is higher (61%) but remains below the provincial average and does not reflect the most insecure areas that, for the first time, were not accessible. In the previous poll, the feeling of security was 39% in this territory.

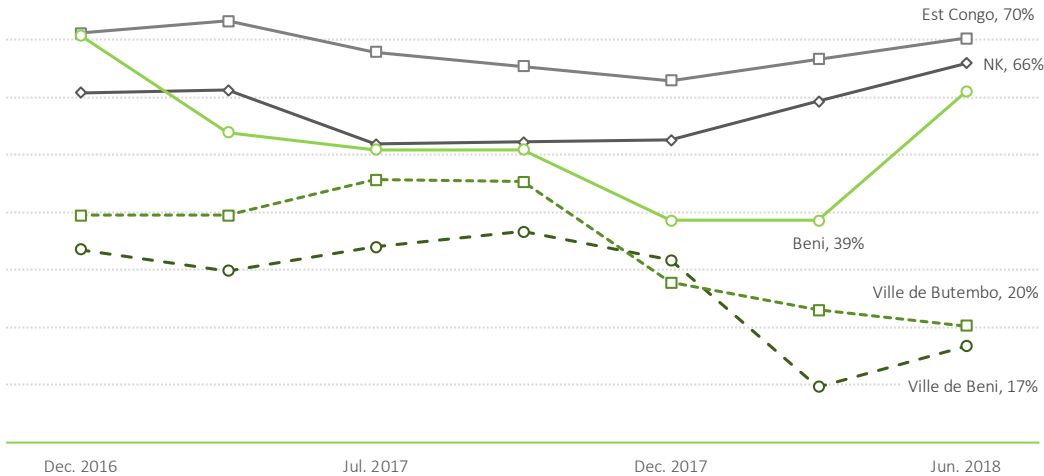
Feeling of security (% safe for daily activities)



Data from July 2018

The sense of security in the cities of Beni and Butembo is not only infrequent, it is also declining rapidly, while the trend in perceived security is relatively stable or improving at the provincial and regional levels. For the city of Butembo, the percentage of people safe in their daily activities has increased from 45% in September 2017 to 20% in June 2018. For the city of Beni, the percentage in safety has increased from 37% to 17% in during the same period. For the Beni territory, the latest survey suggests a rapid improvement in the feeling of security. Rather, it reflects a sample change due to insecurity. Previously, the trend was towards a steady decline in the sense of security in the territory.

Sense of security over time (% safe for daily activities)



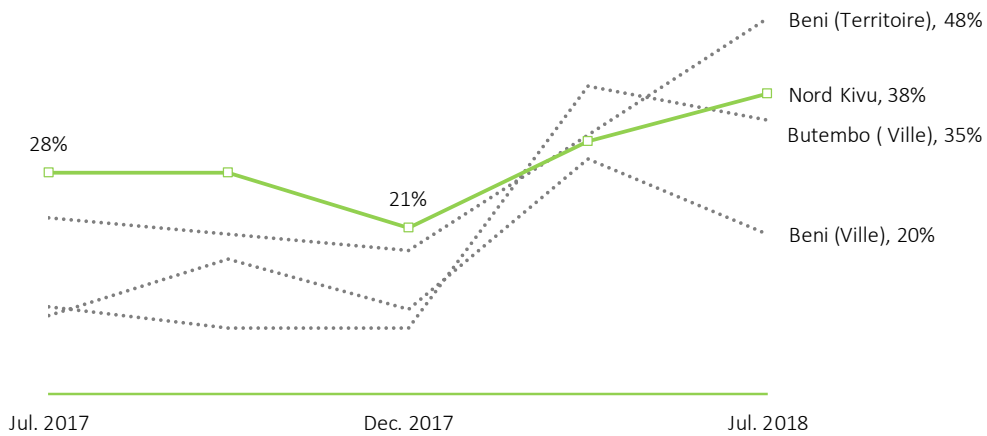
* For Beni, 7 villages were replaced for the last survey due to insecurity.

Insecurity has a direct effect on the possibilities of displacement of the population and humanitarian workers. Survey data suggest a direct association between perceived safety and perceived access to health care. Insecurity also has an effect on social cohesion, including the existence of a climate of mistrust towards outsiders and towards the institutions that are supposed to serve the population. This has recently resulted in demonstrations and stone-throwing against humanitarian workers responding to the Ebola outbreak.

Governance

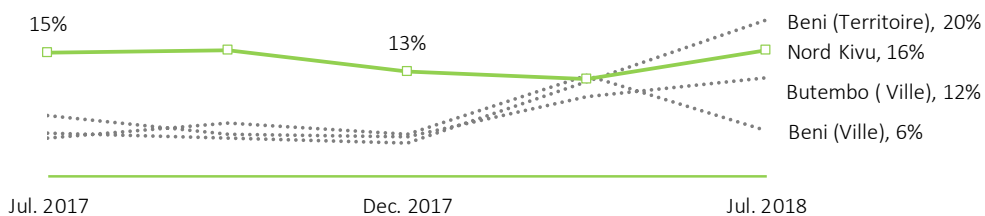
In the context of a public health epidemic such as that currently affecting the Far North region in North Kivu province, the trust that the population has in the authorities, whether local, provincial or national, is extremely relevant to the implementation of implementation and good management of health services. This is a key factor that implementing partners will need to consider when developing Ebola treatment and prevention interventions in the region. On the other hand, the provision of health services in the context of a crisis will certainly put the authorities to the test: a good management of the crisis could allow the populations to improve their perception of the authorities. In the region affected by the epidemic, less than half of the population considers that local authorities represent well or very well the interests of the population. Although this is a minority in absolute terms, it should be noted that there has been an improvement over the past year, particularly in the Beni territory.

Representation of the interests and opinions of the population by the local authorities (% positive)



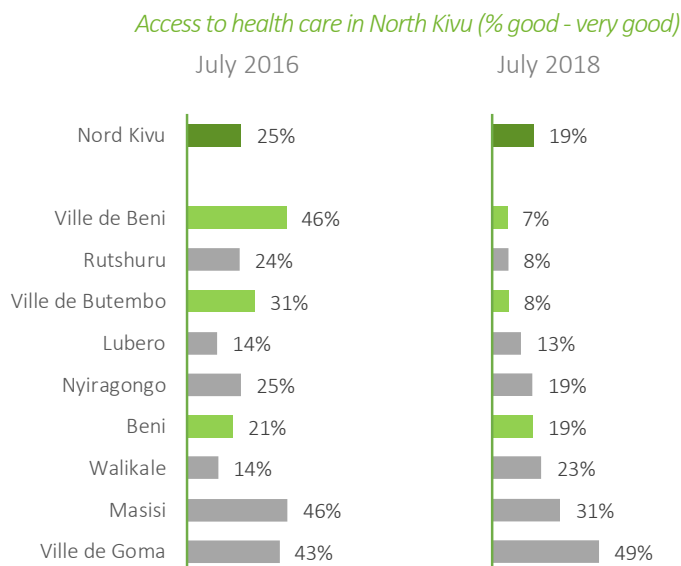
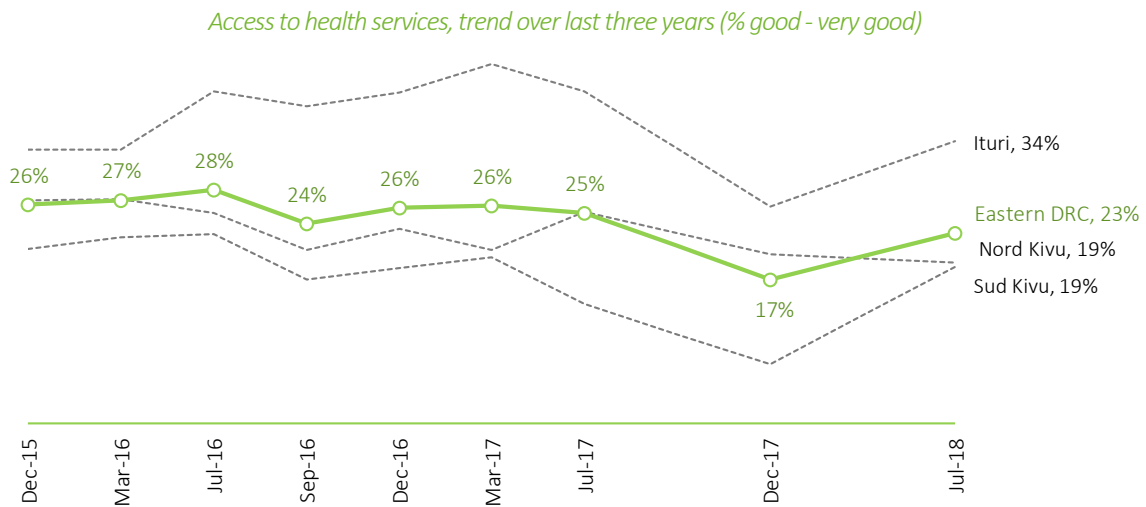
The perception of the population towards the territorial authorities is much less frequently positive: no more than one in five thinks that the territorial administration represents the interests of the population well or very well. These data would indicate that local authorities, possibly because of their proximity to the population, are better placed to lead efforts to combat Ebola because people perceive them more often favorably. Similar findings emerge concerning national authorities, with just 6% and 3% judging positively the representation by provincial authorities and the national government, respectively

Representation of the interests of the population by the territorial administration (% positive)



Access to health care

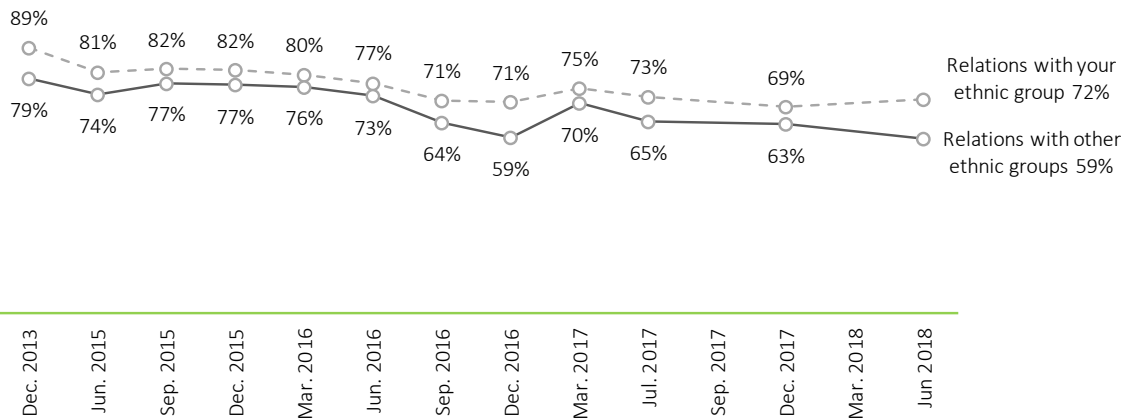
Over the past two years, access to health care has remained stable throughout eastern DRC, although it is a minority of those interviewed who rate their access to health care as being good or very good. The city of Beni, which is not far from the epicenter of the current Ebola outbreak, is the area where there is the largest drop in respondents' satisfaction with their access to health care in the last two years. In July 2016, 46% of respondents rated their access to health services as good or very good, compared to only 7% in the last survey. Significant deterioration is also observed in the town of Butembo, where a first case of Ebola was detected in early September 2018. However, there is an improvement in the percentage of people who are satisfied with their access to health care in the territory of Beni. There are no significant differences in the perception of access to health care between men and women. However, across Eastern Congo, people who feel little or not safe are half as often satisfied with their access to health care compared to those who claim to be safe (14% vs. 24% in July 2018).



Social Cohesion

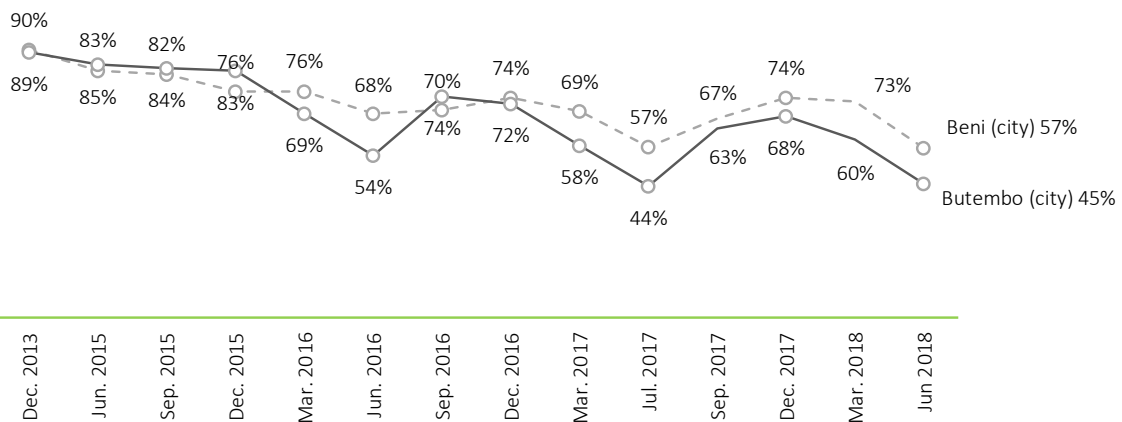
Results from the last 15 polls suggest a continued decline in the quality of relations within and across ethnic groups in eastern Congo. In 2013, 89% judged positively their relations with individuals from their own ethnic groups compared to 72% in June-July 2018. Concerning relations with other ethnic groups, the percentages of positive views declined from 79% in 2013 to 59% in June-July 2018.

Perception of relations within and across ethnic groups (% judging relation positively)



An analysis at the level of the cities of Beni and Butembo show a more volatile trend but nevertheless overall decline of perception of relations between groups. This suggests that external events including episodes of violence, and possibly the Ebola outbreak, can quickly and negatively affect social cohesion, creating further tensions and increasing the risk of violence.

Perception of relations across ethnic groups in Beni and Butembo (% judging relation positively)

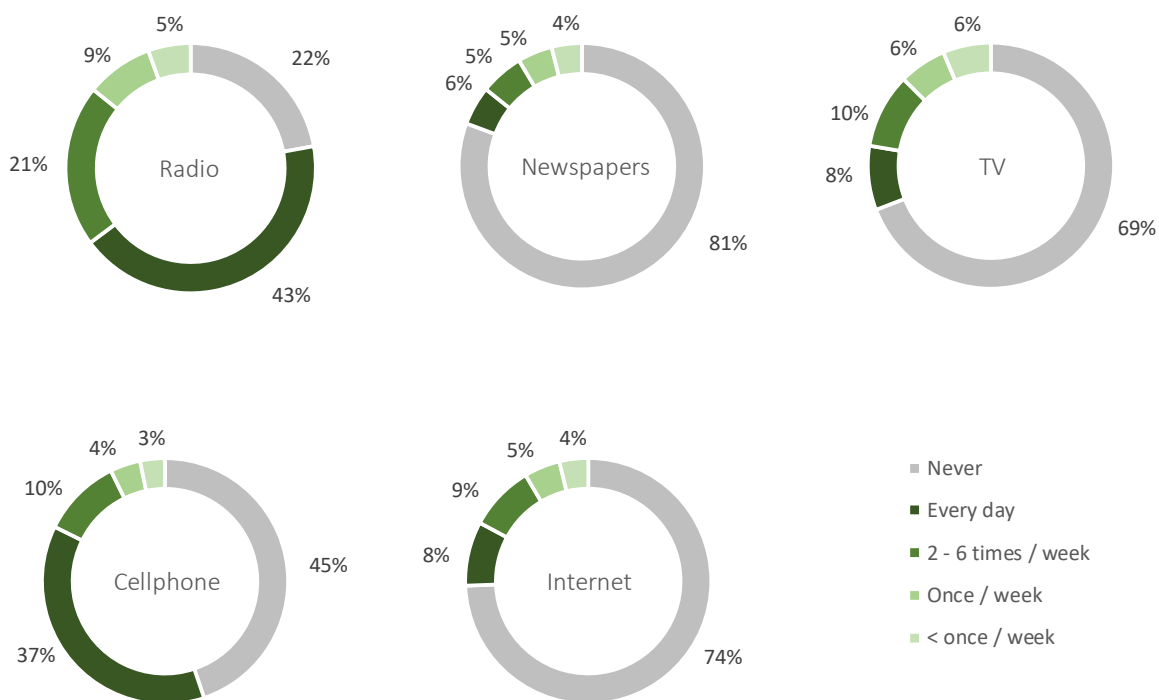


Information

Effective information flows and communication through media and other means will be essential to control the Ebola epidemics. This 15th poll included several questions to examine respondents use of media and levels of information. The results show that 78% of the population listens to the radio at least occasionally and 43% daily. It is the most commonly accessed media, with just 31% watching the television at least occasionally, and 19% reading newspapers at least occasionally. Just above half the population used a cellphone at least occasionally (55%), with one in three (37%) using a cellphone daily. The percentage using internet on a cellphone or elsewhere is much lower, with 26% connecting at least occasionally, and just 8% using internet daily.

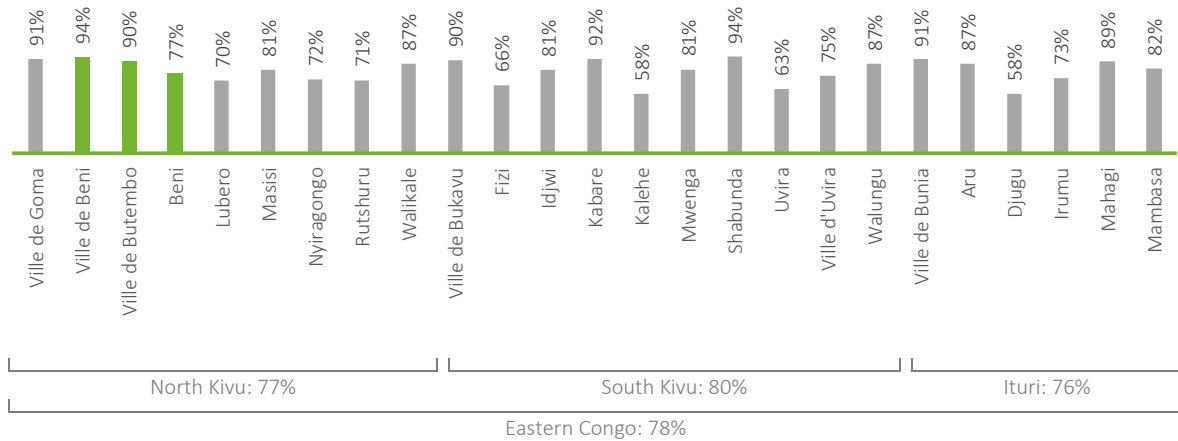
Women consume media significantly less frequently than men: For example, just 69% of women listen to the radio at least occasionally compared to 87% of men; 44% of women use a cellphone occasionally compared to 67% of men, and 35% of men connect at least occasionally to Internet, compared to 17% of women.

Media consumption and connectivity in Eastern DRC (% of respondents)

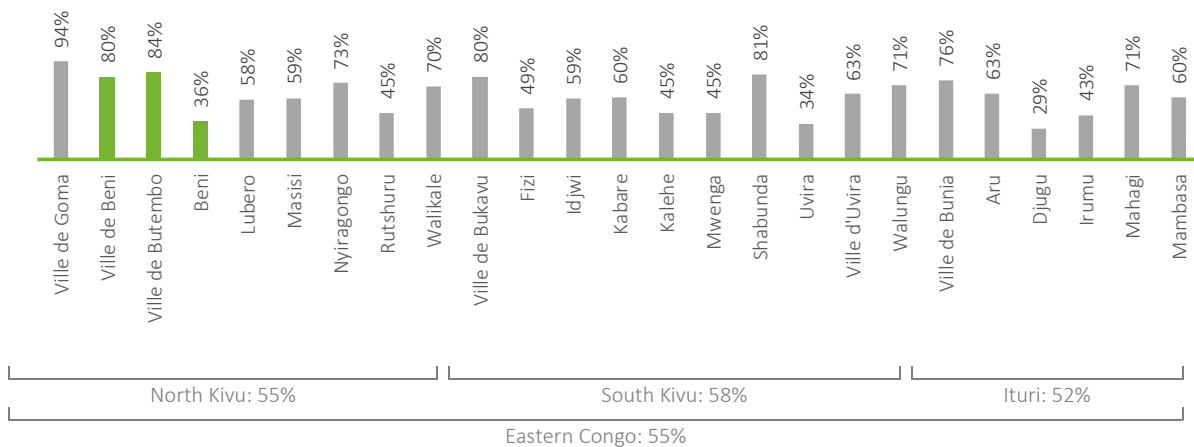


There are important differences across territoires. Not surprisingly media consumption is especially high in urban areas. More than 90% of respondents in Goma, Beni or Butembo, for example, report listening to the radio at least occasionally. On the other hand, radio consumption was significantly lower in selected territoires, including Kalehe (58%) and Uvira (63%) in South Kivu and Djugu in Ituri (58%). Inequalities in access to media and communication is even more marked when considering usage of cellphone or internet access.

Radio consumption (% listening to radio at least occasionally)



Cellphone usage (% using a cellphone at least occasionally)

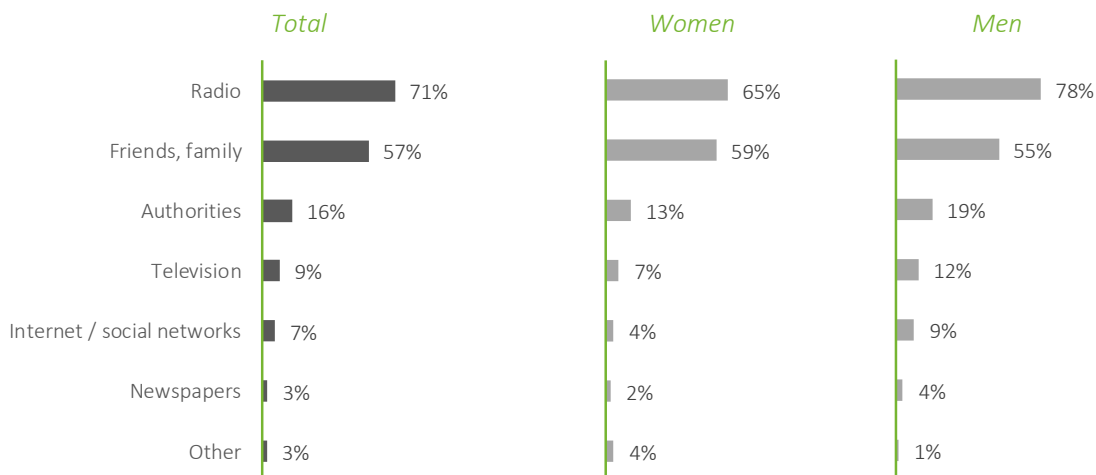


Data from July 2018

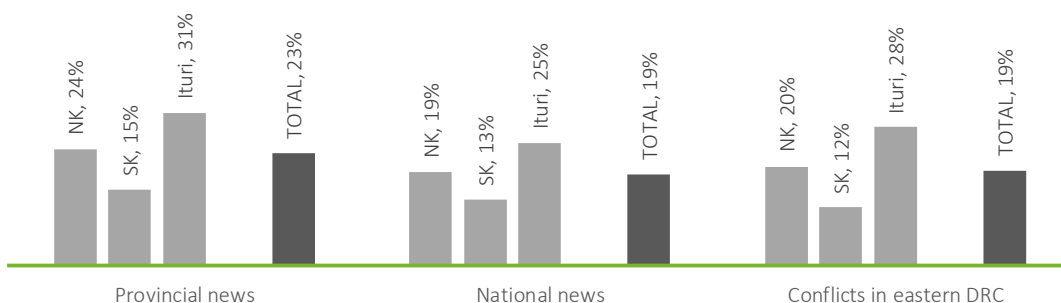
The frequent access to radio likely explains why it is the most frequent source of information for a majority of respondents (71%). However, many also relied on friends and family as a main source of information (57%), either as the only source of information or alongside radio and other sources. Women were less likely than men to rely on radio as a source of information, which reflects their less frequent use of a radio. Qualitative information suggests that when a radio is available in the household, it is usually controlled by the male head of household.

Despite the relatively frequent access to radio, less than one in four respondents feel informed about provincial news (23%), national news (19%) or more generally about conflicts in eastern DRC (19%). There are gender differences. For example, 19% of women feel informed about provincial news compared to 27% of men.

Main source of information (% of respondents)



Level of information (% reporting being well informed on selected topic)



Humanitarian response

In June 2017, poll 10 explored the perception of humanitarian actors. Results showed that half of the population interviewed in Eastern DRC considered “inexistent” the contribution of humanitarians to improving the local situation and only 6% judged the contribution of humanitarian actors to improvements of the local situation as being significant or highly significant, although results were significantly influenced by the presence of humanitarians in the respondents’ locality. Perception of humanitarians, however, was generally poor: 9% believed that humanitarian actors address important issues, and even fewer believed that these actors respect the local customs and traditions. Few judged positively the capacity of humanitarian actors to respond quickly (13%) and to identify the most vulnerable populations (15%).

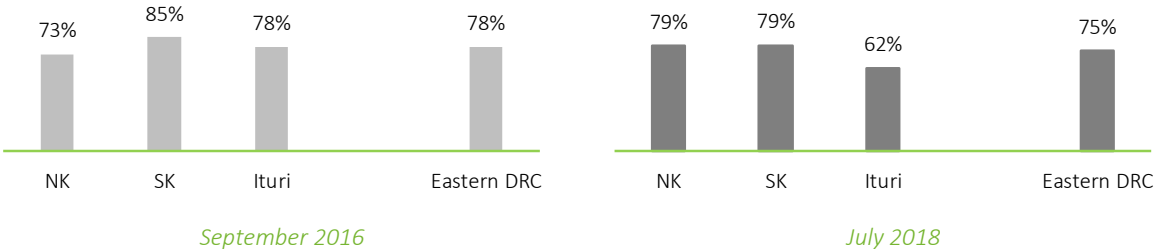
Poll 15 did not revisit in detail these indicators. However, results for selected indicators show little to no difference: Compared to June 2017, in June-July 2018, similar low percentages of respondents judged positively the capacity of humanitarian actors to respond quickly (15%) and to identify the most vulnerable populations (14%).

These results reflect the perception of the population and do not necessarily reflect actual contributions made by humanitarian actors. However, they highlight potential significant hurdle for the Ebola response in terms of trust and engagement with the population.

ELECTIONS: Intentions to vote are high, although almost half the population is uncertain that elections will happen, and few see elections as credible. Perceived risk of violence decreases.

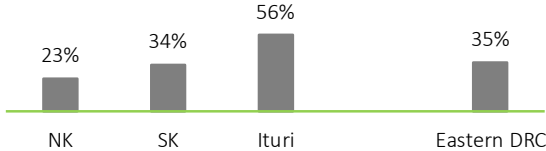
Prior to the elections scheduled for December 2018, the July 2018 poll included questions about people's perceptions of this issue. Despite the significant delay in announcing these elections, a majority of the population is planning to participate in the elections. In all three provinces, about seventy-five percent of those polled replied that they will vote in the next elections. Before the elections were postponed in 2016, the project also surveyed the population on their intention to vote in September 2016. There is a slight decrease in the intention to vote, especially in Ituri (62% in 2018 v. 78% in 2016). At the territoire level, some differences are more notable. It is in the territories of Beni (73% in 2016 v. 90% in 2018) and Lubero (57% v. 92%) that the intention to vote has increased the most in the last two years. Inversely, intentions to vote decreased most significantly in Mahagi, Ituri (83% in 2016 v. 41% in 2018) and Walikale (85% in 2016 v. 59% in 2018).

Plan to vote in presidential elections (% yes)



As noted, the presidential elections originally scheduled to be held in 2016 have been delayed multiple times. Following the publication of the election calendar (in November 2017), only eleven percent of those interviewed in the December 2017 poll thought that the electoral calendar would be respected. However, in July 2018, more than half of respondents (56%) thought that the elections would take place in 2018. This could well be explained by the fact that a large majority of respondents (82% in all three provinces) claims to have been registered for the next elections. While most respondents plan to vote and believe elections will take place, only a minority believe the elections will be credible. One in three respondents believe the elections will be credible. Lack of credibility is most frequently perceived in North Kivu and South Kivu.

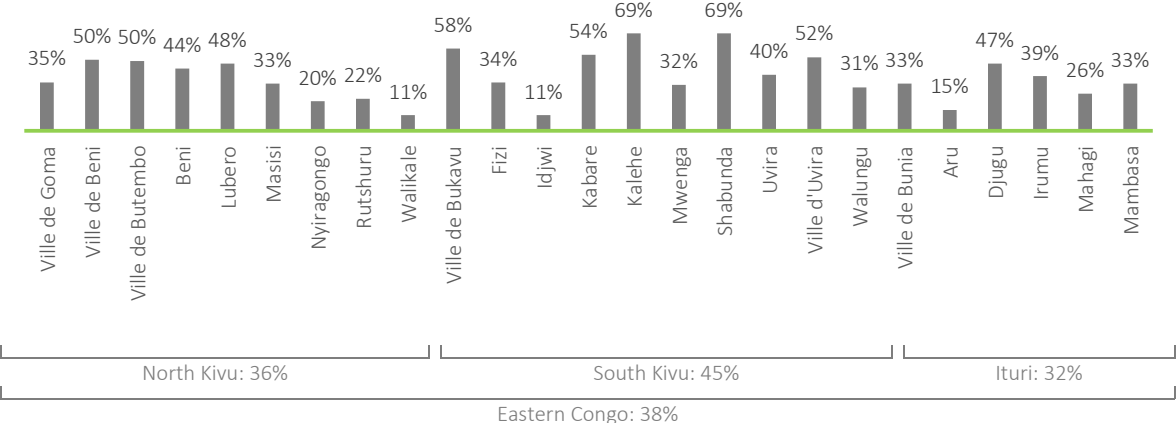
Believe elections will be credible (% yes)



Regarding the possibility of outbreaks of violence during the elections, just over one in three thinks that there is a lot or a lot of risk of this happening (38%). Although consistent, these data are lower than the proportion of respondents who felt a high probability of electoral violence in June and September 2016 (47% Eastern DRC). At the provincial level, people in South Kivu (45%) more frequently perceived a high risk of violence compared to North Kivu (36%) and Ituri (32%). For South Kivu, the frequency of perceived risk of violence in 2018 was like 2016 (45%). The most significant change was in North Kivu where 61% judged the risk of violence as high in 2016, compared to 45% in 2018. In Ituri, the percentage was unchanged (31% in 2016, 32% in 2018).

At the territorial level, in 2018, there were six areas where more than half of the interviewees believe that there is a strong possibility of electoral violence: the cities of Beni (50%) and Butembo (50%) in North Kivu and, Bukavu (58%), Kalehe (69%), Shabunda (69%) and the City of Uvira (52%) in South Kivu.

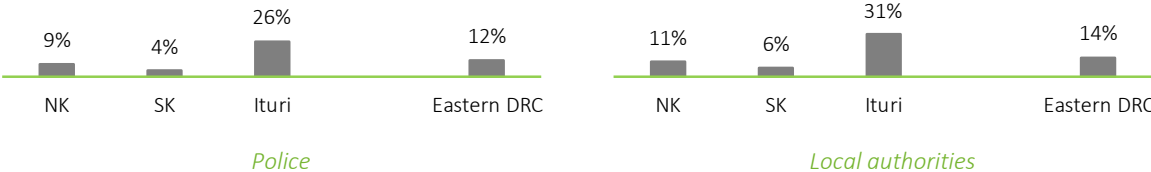
Perceived risk of electoral violence (% high risk)



Data from July 2018

Few people are optimistic that authorities are prepared to deal with electoral violence. In all three provinces, only 12 percent believe that the police are capable of handling electoral violence and only 14 percent believe that local authorities have the same capacity. There are significant differences between provinces: respondents in Ituri are more likely to be positive in their assessment of police and local authority capacities, and respondents in South Kivu are less frequently positive.

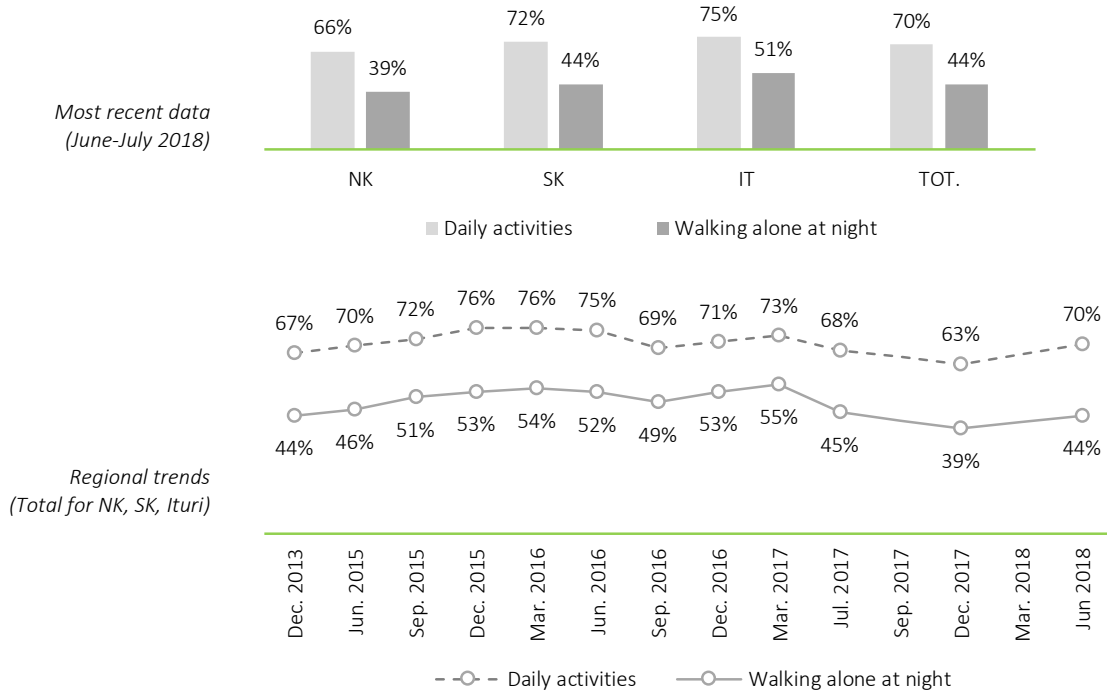
Capacity of the authorities to handle election-related violence (% capable)



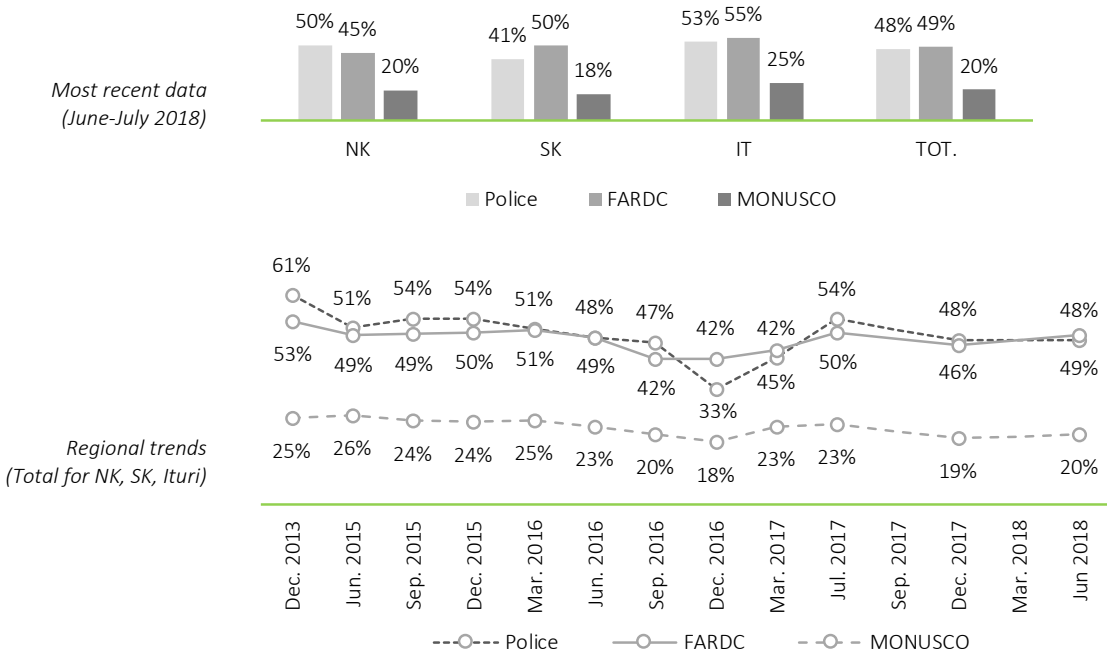
GLOBAL KEY INDICATORS (June-July 2018)

The following indicators are presented in all surveys. Provincial averages may mask significant differences by territoire - detailed results by territory are available on the website www.peacebuildingdata.org/drc. Aggregate data are based on the latest surveys available for each territoire.

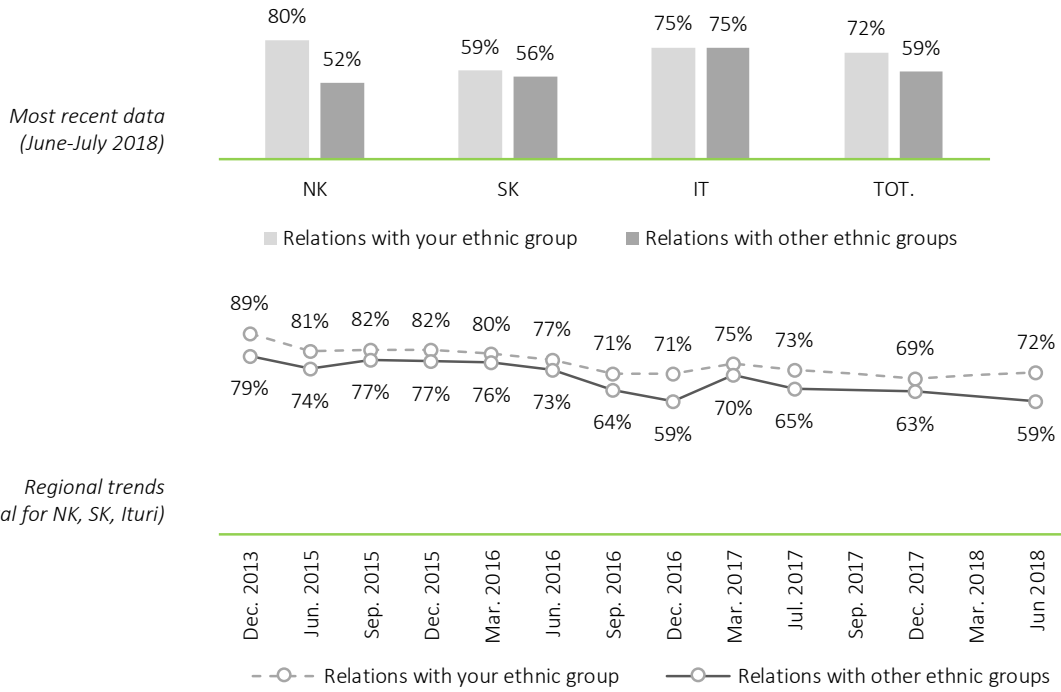
SENSE OF SECURITY (% safe – very safe)



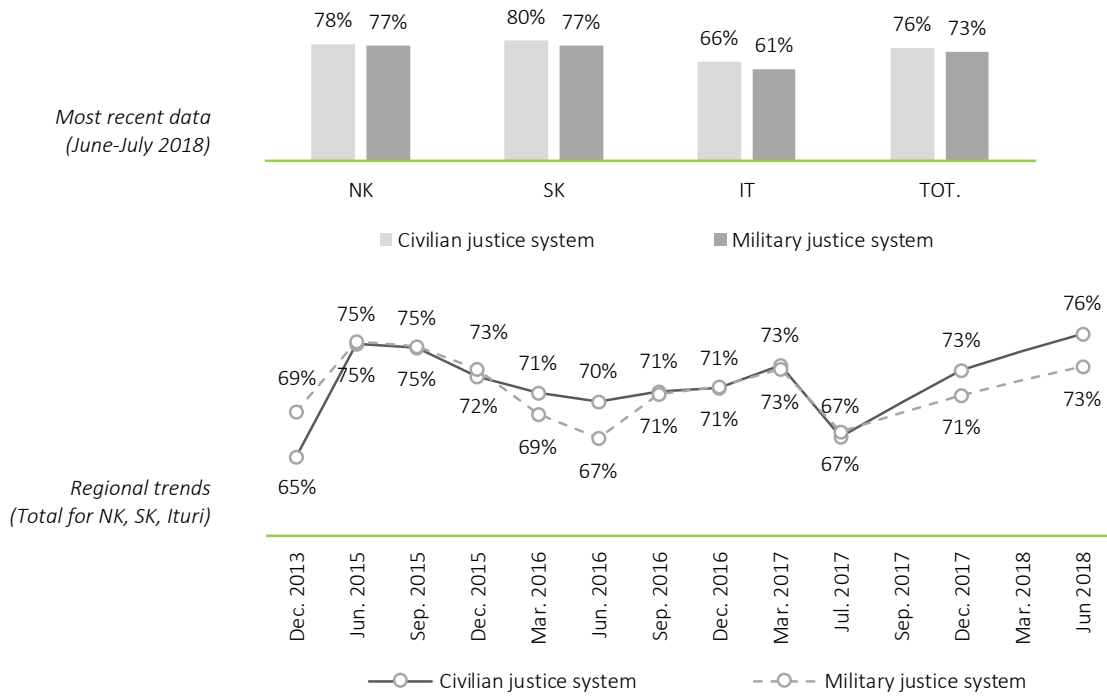
PERCEPTION OF SECURITY ACTORS (% trust for assuring security)

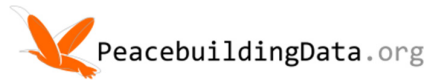


PERCEPTION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN ETHNIC GROUPS (% good– very good)



TRUST IN JUSTICE (% little – none)





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