**OPEN SOCIETY INITIATIVE FOR EASTERN AFRICA (OSIEA)**

**2017-2020 STRATEGY**

***[DRAFT FOR BOARD DISCUSSION, MARCH 2016]***

**I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

OSIEA’s areas of programming are expanding to include 3 more countries. The 3 additional ones are Burundi, Rwanda, and Somaliland while the current ones are Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Sudan, and South Sudan. We are now covering all the member states of the East African Community (EAC) which are Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, and South Sudan. This expansion is informed by the significant open society challenges in these countries but also the realization that economic and governance challenges in any of the countries of the region have immediate consequences on the others, as we have seen in Burundi in 2016 and Kenya in 2007/8.

Eastern Africa has in recent years experienced both democratic gains and democratic reversals at the same time. We see both some levels of democratic consolidation as in Tanzania but at the same time significant democratic reversals as in Uganda where electoral outcomes appear pre-determined and in Rwanda and Burundi with recent presidential term extensions. Political calm in some countries like Kenya and Rwanda hide deep seated ethnic and political divisions that can potentially erupt at any time. Simmering civil conflict in Burundi, Sudan, and South Sudan remains unresolved, with huge consequences for human rights. Closing civic space is a real threat in the region, so is reduced donor funding to the civil society sector. The fight against terrorism and insurgency is becoming a convenient pretext for authoritarian rule. Human rights actors and activists are increasingly at risk of being silenced, and there are few that dare to speak out forcefully. Still, the ambition of the citizens of the region for a vibrant open society remains alive. The economies of the region are by and large growing; South Sudan is the exception and Sudan’s modest growth is against a backdrop of 2012 massive economic shocks. The region’s economic growth is not cascading to the citizens; many live under the poverty line.

OSIEA’s vision is **‘**a just, inclusive and vibrant Eastern Africa where all people live in dignity, equality and participate meaningfully in society’. The mission is that ‘OSIEA is committed to supporting and standing in solidarity with those who seek justice, accountability, equitable access to resources, information and public participation; we do this through the tools of grant-making, research, advocacy, and others’.

OSIEA’s is pursuing 4 strategic goals: enhanced promotion, respect, and protection of human rights, the rule of law and equal access to justice; improved promotion, protection and enjoyment of the rights of marginalized individuals, communities and populations; strengthened accountability, fair distribution and sustainable use of resources; and an efficient, healthy, productive, learning and collaborative institutional culture.The strategic goals will be pursued through nine categories of work: democratic practice; human rights movements and institutions; economic governance and advancement; equality and non-discrimination; health rights; journalism; and justice reform and rule of law.

In the short term, the key milestone is to realize effective and vibrant grantees and partners advancing their and OSIEA’s strategic goals. In the long term we aim to see states in the region protect human rights and adhere to the rule of law; the rights of the marginalized embraced by the people and governments; and a fair and sustainable macro-economic policy environment. At the same time, we aim for OSIEA emerging as the regional center of excellence in rights philanthropy.

**II. NOTABLE CHANGES**

**What is New**

**OSIEA’s countries of focus are expanding to eight from five, with the inclusion of Rwanda, Burundi, and Somaliland.** OSIEA is now covering all the 6 member states of the East African Community (EAC). All these countries have significant governance and human rights challenge but also some opportunities. Economic and governance challenges in one of the members of the EAC have huge consequences on others- as seen in the case of Burundi since 2015 and Kenya in 2007/8- and for this reason alone, it is no longer viable to continue to leave Rwanda and Burundi out of OSIEA’s focus. Somaliland’s achievements since its secession from Somalia in 1992 are quite remarkable. The human rights record is much better than that of its neighbors. OSIEA’s engagement in Somaliland may be the basis for open society values to spread in due course to the rest of Somalia. Government officials are accessible and would likely welcome OSIEA due to the country’s search for international legitimacy.

**More focus on economic justice.** OSIEA is scaling engagement on economic justice programming, with a focus on macro-economic policies on tax, trade and investments and how they impact on women, youth, persons with disabilities, pastoralists, and the key populations of drug users, sex workers, and gays and lesbians among others. OSIEA has come to see a clearer nexus between economic governance on the one hand and democracy, human rights, and stability outcomes on the other hand.

**From country based to ‘one strategy’ approach.** Unlike the previous OSIEA strategy that has been country based and country siloed, the current strategy is organization wide, anchored on four strategic goals and several objectives. OSIEA’s program management structure will also shift away from the present primarily country program design to regional level thematic focus.

**New concept on security intelligence services and their adherence to human rights norms and standards:** This new concept aims to build knowledge on the extent to which security intelligence agencies in Eastern Africa operate in a manner consistent with human rights and to pilot interventions that challenge their actions when they are inconsistent with legal and human rights norms.

**What has changed**

**Civic space is fast closing.** New and existing laws and bureaucratic requirements are being enforced to severely restrict civic space. Civil society organizations are increasingly vulnerable to criminal and civil sanctions for a whole range of minor violations. Human rights actors, and activists, are increasingly at risk of being silenced, and there are few that dare to speak out forcefully. Governments and political elites are de-legitimizing human rights work, for example on international justice and grave crimes. Human rights activists and organizations are typified as unpatriotic, pursuing the agenda of their ‘western’ donors, and out of touch. At the same time, civil society, often new and or younger actors, are claiming new spaces for activism, such as the online space, although still facing pushback.

**Rise of the ‘developmental state’**. Even though they are failing to provide development to the citizens, regimes in the region are popularizing the ‘developmental state’; the proposition is that government’s primary focus should be to deliver developmental goods- education, health, security, infrastructure, etc.- and that democracy can come later. Citizens are being asked to prefer ‘development without liberty’. It is autocratic leaders making this argument, not the people, who see it for what it is- a smokescreen for dictatorship.

**What we have dropped**

**We have dropped the concept on complementarity.** The concept focused on promoting national efforts to investigate and prosecute international crimes committed during the 2007 post-election violence in Kenya and in particular to file some cases in the courts. The International Criminal Court was at the same time prosecuting a few high level suspects at The Hague. The ambitions of this concept cannot be realized in the current political environment. Two cases filled in court under this concept, on gender based violence and police shootings, will however continue to be pursued. We will continue to pursue the broader work on grave crimes and international crimes.

**III. FIELD ANALYSIS:**

Eastern Africa has in recent years experienced democratic gains and reversals. Rwanda, Burundi, and Uganda have removed presidential terms limits while Kenya and Tanzania have respected them and experienced transfer of power to new leaders. While corruption is a huge problem in the region, in some countries there is a press that reports on it even though much of the reporting is often uncritical and many media houses practice self-censorship due to government or commercial influence. Relatively stable countries such as Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and Rwanda co-exist in the region with others experiencing forms of civil or armed conflict such as Burundi, South Sudan, and Sudan. Some of the countries have been experiencing growth rates but at the same time these have not significantly impacted on the large number of people living in poverty and income disparities are astronomical.

**Funding for civil society is shrinking.** Funding to civil society groups working on human rights and governance is shrinking. Civil society organizations are beginning to shrink critical programs and staff. In particular, funding by European bilateral donors, the EU, and the US- critical lifelines for civil society in the region- has been diminishing rapidly. Local philanthropy for human rights work remains largely untapped because of the close ties between businesses and governments.

**‘Positive’ and ‘negative’ regional integration.**  The people of Eastern Africa are travelling to countries of the region more often, and more easily. Trade and investments among members of the East African Community continues to rise. The sense of a ‘region’ is gradually deepening. Political leaders in the region are also influencing each other’s governance templates in ways that are negative. The worst leaders’ governance templates are becoming the shared way of doing things. At the same time, the institutions of regional integration, including at the East African Community, lag behind citizen’s pace.

**States are weakening, becoming more authoritarian, and smarter.** States are increasingly losing their monopoly on the use of violence also as terrorism becomes a daily realty and insurgent groups become more active in the region. States are heavily increasing spending on security to the detriment of public goods. The response of the weakening states is increased militarization and surveillance of citizens, clampdown on dissenting voices, economic blackmail of critics, and lack of respect for the rights particularly of suspects accused of security related crimes.Government critics are at higher risk of being labeled supporters of terrorism to silence them. The fight against terrorism is becoming a convenient excuse for authoritarian rule. Regimes are becoming smarter by co-opting civil society language, demanding for evidence base of reports and proposals, accepting without conviction and movement, and managing through public relations. There is more militarization of internal political disputes.

In Annex 1, we examine briefly the social-political situation in each of OSIEA’s countries of focus.

**IV. UNIT POSITIONING**:

OSIEA believes that change can still be achieved in the region, in small steps rather than revolutionary.

In the region, OSIEA is a trusted and respected partner. Its primary approach is amplifying local and regional voices. It has no fixed conception of change or change agents. We see change as nonlinear. The voices for human rights and the rule of law are found in the expected and the unexpected of places. OSIEA engages in both risky and taboo open society issues. At the same time, the preference is to support local knowledge, skills, and actors. We can take risks without being careless and countenances failure without being facetious. We are committed to long-term partnerships, institutional strengthening and capacity building of partners.

Our assumptions are that Eastern Africa will not descend to a completely closed space; the issues that OSIEA works on will remain relevant, however unsavory and disagreeable they may be to regional political elites that would clearly prefer to be opaque and unaccountable; and OSIEA will remain healthy in terms of organizational values and grow in tandem with the proposed expansion of its work.

OSIEA will focus its support on ‘defensive’ holding of the line given the narrowing civic space and shrinking funding to civil society. This approach will probably spotlight OSIEA in the eyes of the authorities. We will focus funding on issues and groups that other donors are not funding, even when we are the only donor. The aim is to keep some civil society actors and activists engaged and active.

**V. CATEGORIES OF WORK AND STRATEGIC GOALS:**

OSIEA has 4 strategic goals. The first strategic goal is promotion, respect, and protection of human rights, the rule of law and equal access to justice. The second strategic goal is improved promotion, protection and enjoyment of the rights of marginalized individuals, communities and populations. The third strategic goal is accountability, fair distribution, and sustainable use of natural and public resources. The fourth strategic goal is an efficient, healthy, productive, learning and collaborative institutional culture at OSIEA.

The strategic goals correspond to severalcategories of work:

* **democratic practice**: field (civic engagement and inclusive participation in governance; democratic institutions reform and innovation; democratic practice under adverse contexts; elections; minority leadership and empowerment; transparency and accountability)
* **economic governance and advancement:** field (anti-corruption; civic engagement and inclusive participation in governance; food security; natural resource and energy governance; public budgets; taxation; transparency and accountability (public sector)) and shared framework (food security)
* **equality and non-discrimination**: field (access to justice; civic engagement and inclusive participation in democratic governance; emerging laws and policy practice; equity and social inclusion; minority leadership and empowerment) and concepts (creating awareness and acceptability of disability rights in curriculums of law schools; displaced Batwa rights in Uganda)
* **health rights**: field (equity and social inclusion; governance of health; government delivery of inclusive services; harm reduction; independent living and community participation; palliative care; sexual and reproductive health rights) and concept (maternal mortality) and shared framework (drug policy reform)
* **human rights movement and institutions:** field (freedom of association and assembly; security and rights; protection of human rights defenders at risk; security and rights)
* **journalism**: field (investigative journalism)
* **Justice reform and the rule of law:** field(access to justice; international justice and grave crimes; security and rights) and concept (security intelligence services and their adherence to human rights).
* **general administration and program administration**

1. **FIELDS**

**Strategic Goal 1: Promotion, respect, and protection of human rights, the rule of law and equal access to justice.**

**FIELD 1: Democratic Practice**

The people of the region have long held aspirations to live in a democratic society. The earlier struggles for independence, the later struggles for multi-democracy, and the continuing struggles for good governance have been driven by this aspiration. The peoples’ aspirations for democracy continue to be held back by a predatory political and economic elite that does not share similar aspirations for democracy and instead seeks and retains political power only for enrichment of self, family, cronies, and tribe. Institutions and processes to support democracy and good governance created by recent new constitutions have not fulfilled their promises because they have been eroded, weakened, and frustrated by the political elites; nothing speaks louder on this than the return of third terms. Still, there are many citizens, some audible and others quieter, that have kept alive their aspirations for better governance and a more democratic society. We amplify these voices and supportive processes.

**FIELD 2: Human Rights Movement and Institutions**

The peak of the human rights movement that came with the wave of multi-party democracy in Eastern Africa, and the new constitutions that accompanied that moment, is rupturing partly due to its own successes of the past. Political elites who feel threatened by the justice, accountability, and transparency agenda of the human rights movement are cracking down hard on it using a wide variety of tools, including delegitimizing human rights work and enforcement of punitive legal and regulatory regimes. The human rights movement itself has not done enough to locate its agenda on the citizens’ aspirations hence a growing failure for their messages to connect and resonate powerfully. These developments are a reason to do more, not less, to strengthen the human rights movement.

**Field 3: Justice reform and rule of law**

Eastern Africa has a big justice and rule of law deficit. The challenges are many and include citizens who are not empowered to claim their rights due to lack of knowledge or the high costs of doing so, judicial infrastructure that in many cases is geographically sparse, judicial corruption, and archaic laws, among others. On the rule of law front, the state is itself in many cases the violator rather than the protector of laws, and official impunity is high, for example in the fight against terrorism. Within this broad field, OSIEA’s initial areas of focus are on access to justice particularly for the marginalized; international justice and grave crimes; and elements of security sector governance.

**Objectives:**

1. **Promotion and protection of civic spaces and democratic institutions enhanced *[Democratic practice>Civic engagement and inclusive participation in democratic governance; democratic practice>elections; Human rights and movement and institutions>protection of human rights defenders at risk; human rights movement and institutions>technologies and data; journalism>investigative journalism]***

Traditional civic spaces are fast closing in the region through enactment of new repressive legislation or rigorous enforcement of similar existing ones. In addition to restrictive laws on non-governmental organizations, the freedoms of assembly, association, and the media- all of which are the foundations of open and independent civic space- are also under attack. The picture is not all negative. Civil society- often new and or younger actors- are claiming new spaces for activism, such as the online space, although frequently facing pushback from government. With varying degrees of success in different countries, there is also push back by traditional media, the opposition, activists, and civil society groups.

OSIEA and its partners will advocate against laws and policies that limit civic space, advocate for laws and policies that expand civic space, push back against such laws and policies through public interest litigation and advocacy, strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations to tell their positive stories to the public and to governments, support protection of human rights defenders at risk (including through bail and strategic litigation funds), explore how technology can be leveraged to advance human rights in non- traditional ways and advance the creative use of social media as an alternative civic space. Ultimately, the response to closing civic space has to be about developing a culture of constitutionalism, in which constitutional promises are respected and realized.

The Human Rights Initiative’s (HRI) work on closing spaces very much converges with this OSIEA objective. OSIEA will at the same time explore partnerships with the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association Mr. Maina Kiai. We will also explore work with Members of Parliaments who in the end are called upon by governments to pass the anti-civic space legislation. Many national civil society organizations in the region are also actively engaged on this issue.

At the same time, democratic processes and constitutional institutions that are crucial to sustaining civic space and democracy are also under threat. The integrity of elections in the region is being seriously questioned. Elections have the risk of becoming periodic routines that erode rather than advance democratic gains. Recent experience is that each electoral cycle leaves the region in a worse off place – politically, economically, and socially- and the citizens more disengaged. Strengthening the integrity of electoral institutions, processes, and systems is a daunting challenge yet one that is central to the future of open societies. The desire by some democracy activists for an alternative to elections is understandable but at the same time probably not realistic in the coming years. A detailed gap analysis of each country situation where elections work is proposed will be undertaken in order to guide specific investments that seek to strengthen the integrity of elections. The elections situation room is a concept that has worked well in some countries in Africa and where the context is right we will support a similar or related model. Beyond this, the field is short of innovations, and we will work with civil society and the AfRO team to generate possibilities.

We will also support some independent constitutional institutions with targeted funding –when they demonstrate their independence- such as national human rights commissions, electoral commissions, ombudspersons, and police oversight bodies.

1. **Tolerance, pluralism and peaceful coexistence promoted and protected  *[Democratic practice>Civic engagement and inclusive participation in democratic governance>; human rights movement and institutions>protection of human rights defenders at risk; justice reform and rule of law>access to justice]***

Violent extremism, manifested as terrorism, and ethnically-motivated, violence linked to religious extremism and tribalism, have become a daily reality in much of Eastern Africa as elsewhere in the world. Beyond addressing the consequences of terrorism and the state’s response, both state and non-state actors have the critical role of addressing the root causes of terrorism and radicalization, particularly marginalization; western bilateral donors such as USAID and DFID are increasingly interested in this particular dimension. OSIEA will support at national and regional level knowledge building and analysis on radicalization, violent extremism and state responses to it. We will also support learning, critiquing, and sharing of experiences among and beyond the Africa foundations by civil society partners and governmental actors on different and successful approaches of addressing the root causes of terrorism, radicalization, and violent extremism. Within OSF, OSIEA will partner with the Open Society Justice Initiative (OSJI) and the Human Rights Initiative.

1. **Prevention of and accountability for human rights violations and violations of international humanitarian law by the state and armed groups increased *[Justice reform and rule of law >international justice and grave crimes; human rights movement and institutions>security and rights; journalism>investigative journalism]***

Massive violations of civil and political rights, economic and social rights, and international humanitarian law are routinely taking place in the region. They are often associated with government responses to security crisis caused by violent extremism, armed insurgencies, or even by constitutional crisis. The situations in Burundi and South Sudan are but recent and current examples that capture global news headlines; there is much else that is not reported elsewhere. Holding those responsible for serious violations to account through judicial and political processes at national, regional, and international platforms is critical, even when there might appear to be no immediate possibility of success.

The response of states in the region in addressing increasing terrorism- racial and religious profiling, mass arrests, extra judicial executions, and extended detentions- is creating fear in many citizens and radicalizing others. States and their institutions need to develop capacities to develop tools and processes that avoid these negative outcomes and do not violate human rights in dealing with terrorism. Civil society organizations play a critical role in documenting and publicizing the state’s response to terrorism. OSIEA will support civil society organizations documenting human rights violations in the fight against terrorism and challenging these through advocacy at national, regional, and international spaces as well as through strategic public interest litigation.

The language of “terrorism” and “support for insurgents” has been used to delegitimize and attack legitimate, critical, alternative voices. Human rights defenders who come to risk as a result of engagement in these areas of work will be linked with human rights defenders protection networks in the region. OSIEA will support civil society actors in the documentation of serious human rights violations and in advocacy for accountability for those responsible. This objective will be pursued with the full realization that presence or absence of political will at the highest levels to pursue accountability for serious human rights violations is perhaps the single most important determinant for success. Still, the absence of political will is not a constant and can be motivated in the long run. At the same time, the ‘peace’ or ‘security’ versus ‘justice’ contestation, often itself a political debate, will always color the pursuit of accountability in the region. Within OSF, OSIEA will partner with OSJI and the African Regional office (AfRO) both of who have similar ambitions.

In Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania there is already a fairly vibrant civil society formation to work with. In South Sudan, Sudan, Burundi, and Somaliland, more efforts in building capacity of civil society organizations in this area of work will be a priority.

**Strategic goal 2: Promotion, protection and enjoyment of the rights of marginalized individuals, communities and populations**

**FIELD 4: Equality and non-discrimination**

While categories of marginalization are wide, and are not closed, OSIEA’s focus will include women, youth, LGBTI persons, men having sex with men, people living with HIV, drug users, sex workers, pastoralists, people with disabilities, economic minorities and ethnic and religious minorities.

**Objectives**

1. **Practices, policies and legislation that secure inclusion and participation of marginalized groups created, adopted and implemented *[Equality and non- discrimination>emerging law and practices, Health & rights>equity and social inclusion, Health &rights>harm reduction, Health & rights>sexual and reproductive health and rights; economic governance and advancement>economic justice]***

OSIEA will support marginalized communities especially women, pastoralists, youth, persons with disabilities, sex workers, and LGBTI, amongst others, to advocate for practices, policies, and legislation that advance their inclusion, participation, and representation. Many of the groups and associations for the marginalized will in the first place be supported to build their capacity on advocacy and engagement. Gradual efforts towards de-criminalization of marginalized groups, such as gays and sex workers, will also be supported since it will advance the possibility for their effective participation and representation in policy spaces. HRI and PHP will be partners.

1. **Representative and meaningful leadership positions for marginalized communities *[Equality and non-discrimination>minority leadership and empowerment]***

Marginalized groups make the most significant gains when they access leadership spaces at all levels. However, this s not only about pushing numbers nor is the ambition only for political leadership, critical as this is. It is also about supporting emerging leaders of organizations for the marginalized, with the first focus being on grantees, to strengthen their leadership capacities through training, fellowships, exchange visits, and mentorship. At least in the case of grantees, this objective will be realized by setting aside a portion of the grant for leadership development.

1. **Human rights for marginalized groups are safeguarded, upheld, promoted and respected *[Equality and non-discrimination>access to justice, Health & rights>harm reduction, Health & rights>sexual and reproductive health and rights]***

Marginalized groups experience serious human rights violations in the region much more than the general population does. Criminalization of sex workers, drug users, and gays; the stigma that society has for example for persons with disabilities; and the cultural biases against women all exacerbates these violations. OSIEA will continue to work with marginalized groups to seek justice for victims of violations and at the same time seek to address the systemic causes of the violations.

1. **Movement building for marginalized groups enhanced *[Equality and non-discrimination>civic engagement and participation in democratic governance, Health & rights>sexual and reproductive health and rights; Health & rights>harm reduction]***

OSIEA will strengthen movements for marginalized groups and communities in the region through organizational development, peer learning, fellowships, etc. in pursuit of this objective. We will prioritize support towards movements of self-advocates speaking on their own behalf but at the same time support cross-movement collaboration and solidarity. We do not seek to institutionalize these movements but rather to support them evolve in the way they imagine their future. OSIEA will partner with different OSF entities on this objective, such as the Women Rights Program on the women’s movement, the Human Rights Initiative on the LGBTI and disability movement, and the Public Health Program on the drug users and sex workers movements.

1. **Equitable distribution of and access to resources and services to marginalized groups enhanced *[Equality and non-discrimination>civic engagement and participation in democratic governance and Health & rights>equity and social inclusion; economic governance and advancement>economic justice]***

OSIEA will support those seeking to improve practice, policy, and laws to promote equitable access to public goods and services by the marginalized populations. Thedevolution of financial development resources to devolved structures of governance opens up opportunities to influence the allocation of those resources in a manner that advances the rights of the marginalized.

**Strategic goal 3: Accountability, fair distribution and sustainable use of resources strengthened.**

**FIELD 5: Economic Governance and Advancement**

This is a field in which OSIEA wants to do more work on than it has in the past. OSIEA’s programming has focused on traditional civil and political rights. While these are important, and remain core to the strategy, more attention does need to be given increasingly to economic and social rights for a number of reasons. First, the nexus between economic governance issues, such as taxation and trade and investments policies, is becoming clearer for human rights groups. Wrong macroeconomic policies have direct and immediate negative outcomes for democracy in general. Second, engagement on economic and social rights will narrow the increasing legitimacy questions on the human rights movement; often the critique is based on the movement’s narrow understanding of rights and focus only on civil and political rights in face of huge poverty and developmental deficits in the region.

As this is an expansive field, OSIEA will focus on: advancing accountability and transparency in natural resource and fiscal governance (with a focus on anti-corruption, and budget monitoring); advancing pro-growth macro-economic policies (with a focus on trade and investment policies and tax justice); and advancing livelihoods through food security programming and economic and social rights claims (with a focus on health rights). Additional areas of focus may be explored in second half of the strategy period.

**Objectives**

1. **Initiatives that demand and promote transparency, accountability, prudence and integrity in public fiscal and financial management supported *[Economic governance and advancement>anti-corruption; economic governance and advancement>public journalism>investigative journalism]***

Corruption, or stealing of public resources as it is now being increasingly referred to, is a huge challenge in Eastern Africa that has grave consequences for realization of human rights, economic growth, and peace and stability. On the last point, the link between terrorism and insecurity on the one hand and corruption has been clearly demonstrated. Corruption’s roots are deep in the country’s political, social, and moral culture. Often times it appears an intractable challenge. Traditional ways of addressing corruption by civil society and governments, including prosecutions and naming and shaming, are increasingly less effective.

OSIEA will support partners on both the supply and demand side to explore new paradigms of addressing the corruption challenge while leveraging technological advances and greater access to social media. One important area of focus will be how to change the citizen’s perception of the corrupt from one of glorification and celebration to vilification and stigmatization. OSIEA will work with Kenya’s anti-corruption expert, John Githongo, who has been thinking and researching a lot about this. Initiatives that monitor and report on budget allocation and expenditures at devolved levels of governance and that are anchored on citizen engagement have continued to demonstrate relevance and will remain an important area of focus.

1. **Social and economic rights claims supported *[Economic governance and advancement>economic justice]***

We will focus on health rights claims in the region to begin with, and in later years identify other areas of focus. Tools for pursuing this work include budget analysis, expenditure tracking, community participation, and strategic litigation.

1. **Natural resource governance that is responsive, sustainable, transparent and accountable enhanced *[Economic governance and advancement>natural resource and energy governance]***

Eastern Africa is endowed with rich natural resources, including oil and gas. These resource findings are recent, and both gas and oil have not reached production stage yet. Despite the decline in prices of oil globally, natural resources exploitation brings much promise for improved livelihoods to the people of Eastern Africa but at the same time there are fears that corruption, theft, environmental degradation, and conflicts among communities, may be a heavy price to pay. The legal and policy regime for oil and gas is still under development. OSIEA will continue to support civil society organizations involved in advocacy for legal and policy regime for transparent and accountable management of the natural resources. As this is a relatively new area of work both for OSIEA and civil society generally, building internal capacity as well as that of partners on natural resource governance will also be prioritized and in this regard, we will work with the OSF affiliated Natural Resources Governance Institute to design and deliver localized courses; the Institute already has a range of activities in Uganda, Tanzania, and South Sudan. We will also work closely with AfRO, OSISA, and OSIWA who have more experiences.

1. **Food security initiatives supported through ways that are ecologically friendly and sustainable *[Economic governance and advancement>food security]***

This is discussed under the shared framework on food security (see page \*\*\*]. OSIEA will continue with its food security body of work beyond the end of the current shared framework on food security.

1. **Selected macroeconomic policies that promote equitable growth, human development and the fair distribution of resources pursued *[Economic governance and advancement>economic justice; economic governance and advancement>taxation; health and rights>governance of health]***

A new learning for OSIEA is that human rights groups in Eastern Africa have to become more engaged on macro-economic governance - especially on taxation, trade and investments - because macro-economic governance has immediate and direct consequences for realization of human rights, particularly for women, LGBTI, pastoralists, persons with disabilities, youth, and other marginalized groups. OSIEA will support partners to develop capacity for, and to engage, on macro-economic analysis and advocacy for policies that advance human rights within existing or renewal grants. We will twin support between organizations that have traditionally worked on macroeconomic policies and the many OSIEA partners that traditionally work on health rights and civil and political issues. Within OSF we will explore partnerships with the Fiscal Governance Program.

**Strategic goal 4: An efficient, healthy, productive, learning and collaborative culture at OSIEA**

**INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Objectives**

1. Efficiency and effectiveness through improved internal structures and processes and strengthening collaboration and connectivity.
2. Recruitment and retention of skilled staff including management of talent, welfare and healthy working environment enhanced.
3. Greater learning, skills building, creative and critical thinking within OSIEA and among grantees supported and enhanced.
4. Efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness of OSIEA governance, management and operations enhanced.
5. **CONCEPTS:**

**CONCEPT 1: Creating awareness and acceptability of disability rights as part of the curriculumin institutions of higher learning *[Equality and non-discrimination>minority leadership and empowerment]***.

This concept has been implemented since 2014. The concept was developed in the context of the training that lawyers go through, the kind of lawyers that are produced, and the important role that lawyers play in advancing human rights as practitioners, law and policy makers, or leaders in society. Legal education in the region leaves lawyers unprepared to address issues of social exclusion.

Legal education is largely dogmatic, involving a formalistic learning methodology emphasizing memorization of legal rules and codes, and the result are uncreative lawyers, educated to apply the rules, maintain the status quo and disinterested in advancing social inclusion and social justice. For these reasons, most lawyers in the region are un-prepared to work on disability rights issues.

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) provides a framework for the development of innovative legal arguments on rights protections that promote equality and inclusion. The CRPD is novel in expressly linking equality with specific positive obligations as a means to overcome the effect of exclusionary practices and achieve the state of full and effective participation and inclusion in society. Its implementation carries profound legal implications across a broad spectrum of rights, intersecting with other substantive fields of law and human rights. Chances for successful implementation of the CRPD are increased when rights are enshrined in law and the law provides remedies for rights violations, but for these legal remedies to be effective, disability rights advocates and actors in the legal profession must be prepared to utilize legal tools to address violations.

To effectively advance disability rights in the region, there is need to introduce the teaching of disability rights in schools, faculties, and colleges of law so as to create a cohort of lawyers that appreciate disability rights as enshrined in the CRPD and other national, regional, and domestic human rights instruments. The teaching of disability rights would also connect the disability rights movement and the academia hence addressing the current gap of scholarly research on disability rights in the region.

OSIEA is currently working with the University of Dodoma (Tanzania), University of Nairobi (Kenya), Makerere University (Uganda) and University of Khartoum (Sudan). The University of Dodoma is already teaching disability rights as a core course in the first year of study while Makerere and Nairobi universities have developed curricula and teaching is expected to begin later in 2016 after respective senate approvals. These two universities are however beginning by teaching disability rights components in other mainstream law modules such as human rights law, criminal law, and labor law among others. The University of Khartoum begun by holding a disability rights conference in 2015 which introduced this idea to the entire disability movement and for the first time made disability rights a subject of scholarly discussion. The faculty is working on a proposal for a curriculum on disability rights. OSIEA hopes that the teaching of the course will begin soon in the three universities where it has not started. The teaching of disability rights will also include academic research and publication, clinical outreach activities, and in Makerere and Dodoma universities, public interest litigation.

In addition, OSIEA is working with Makerere University to organize a short course on disability rights that will attract lawyers in legal practice and disability rights activists in the field.

OSIEA has made great strides towards achieving this concept. OSIEA’s agency has helped to ‘open doors’ of law faculties, provided technical support in developing disability rights curriculum that are consistent with the Convention, and connected the partner universities with other universities teaching disability rights on the continent and beyond and connected the partner universities with the disability movement. OSIEA still has a role to play in moving this work forward. The concept will be pursued up to 2018 by which time the partner universities will have begun teaching disability rights. Thereafter additional work will be pursued through support to the field. OSIEA partners include the Human Rights Initiative (HRI) and the Higher Education Support Program (HESP).

**CONCEPT 2: Displaced Batwa’s rights in Uganda *[Equality and non-discrimination>minority rights and democratic practice]***

The concept has been implemented since 2014 although it had a slow start. The Batwa of south west Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo are former hunter gatherers who have been reduced to virtual servitude and poverty as forest cover has declined or been appropriated for game reserves. The Uganda government has paid little attention to the problem that potentially may lead to the extermination of an ethnic group. Interventionist non-governmental organizations have been seeking to solve the ‘Batwa problem’ for years with few advances.

What OSIEA seeks to achieve with this concept is to begin to change the lens through which Batwa people are viewed by ‘I’ and ‘us’. The proposition is that the ’Batwa problem’ – the perception that they are backward and in need of modernization-is not the problem of the Batwa people but of those looking at them from outside. OSIEA is working with the Batwa community to articulate and document the vision of their world in order to contest and correct the view that ‘outsiders’ have of them. We expect to spark a conversation that seeks to locate the ‘Batwa problem’ in the lens through which the outside world views them; ‘we’ are the ones who have a ‘problem’ and not the Batwa people.

OSIEA has already conducted background research on the issue. A video documentary for self-advocacy purposes has been commissioned and once completed will be used to support self-advocacy missions within Uganda, the region, and beyond. Success will be measured by levels of the community’s self-advocacy. The concept will end in 2017.

**CONCEPT 3: Maternal mortality *[Equality and non-discrimination>equity and social inclusion]***

Maternal health interventions in the region have been mainly focused on service delivery. The model of rights based approach to maternal health is still largely absent. Some governments and service providers consider the rights-based approach as aimed at “witch-hunting” them and are largely resistant to the approach. At the same time, human rights deficits are significant contributing factors to preventable maternal mortality; a human rights based approach has to be at the center of the response. Policies that are animated by human rights, including the right to health, are likely to be more effective, equitable, inclusive, non-discriminatory and participatory. In the context of maternal mortality policies, these human rights dimensions help to empower women.

There are very few actors working on or advocating for the integration of the rights-based approach in the East African region. The maternal health concept focuses on integrating rights-based approach to maternal health services in the region. **The goals of the concept are that the r**ights-based approach is integrated into laws, policies, strategies, programs and interventions at East Africa Community level and national levels and governments are accountable for their policies and pledges to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity in the region. While there are big players in the field of maternal health, mainly bilateral donors, they mainly support governmental institutions on service delivery. There is little support to civil society organizations to implement maternal health right based approach.

Nine grantees have been supported so far to strengthen citizen participation at facility level. Support will be scaled up. The concept has also been instrumental to ensure civil society organizations in Eastern Africa countries are fully part of and impacted on the Integrated East Africa Community Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health Policy 2015-2030.

Expected results are improved accountability in maternal health provision by generating demand for rights and better services. OSIEA will assess the impact of this concept at the end of 2017, focusing on community participation in monitoring and accountability, legal approaches, and budget tracking and analysis. Beyond that, further work will be pursued through support to the field.

CONCEPT 4: **Consistency of the work of security intelligence agencies in Eastern Africa with human rights law and domestic human rights norms *[Justice Reform and rule of law>security and rights]***

Security intelligence agencies in Eastern Africa enjoy extremely broad powers to arbitrarily interfere with a wide variety of human rights with little, if no accountability. For example, they have or assert powers to interfere with the right to freedom of expression and information through acts of censorship (particularly in Sudan and South Sudan); the right to privacy through extensive surveillance (all countries); and the right to liberty and security of persons (Sudan, South Sudan and Uganda, where security agencies are authorized by law to arrest and detain individuals).

Even though security intelligence agencies in all countries in Eastern Africa operate on a statutory basis, they lack independent oversight mechanisms and do not have robust complaints mechanisms. Members of these agencies generally enjoy broad immunity from prosecution for actions committed in the course of their duties, even for serious violations like torture. OSIEA has supported some efforts to support civil society in Eastern Africa to advocate for laws, policies and action by security agencies and their members which are consistent with domestic laws and international and regional human rights standards. We have realized that there is a lack of home-grown talent in the region within organizations focusing on the security intelligence sector and/or human rights to analyze the conduct of security intelligence agencies using a human rights framework and to propose and advocate for appropriate policies. Information available to the public about the conduct of security intelligence agencies remains limited but what does emerge often raises serious human rights concerns.

The goals is to produce analysis of the consistency of legislation regulating security intelligence agencies with human rights standards and support development of a cadre of lawyers across Eastern Africa who are able to undertake research, produce analysis, undertake litigation and craft messages advocating for laws and policies to be consistent with human rights standards.

The time frame is four years. In the first stage, OSIEA will provide operational support for research on laws regulating security intelligence agencies in Eastern Africa and the conduct of these agencies (not necessarily published by OSIEA) and organizing training for a small cadre of lawyers and security sector experts on these issues. In the second stage, OSIEA will provide small grants for pilot projects in this area, including research, litigation and advocacy.

Anticipated outcomes are strong capacity in civil society in Eastern Africa to undertake research on the performance of security intelligence agencies in relation to human rights standards; to analyze laws and policies in this area and to advocate for laws and policies which are consistent with human rights standards and domestic law. Another outcome is increased public awareness of the performance of the security intelligence agencies in relation to human rights.

**C. SHARED FRAMEWORKS:**

**Shared framework on food security [*Economic governance and advancement>food security]:*** OSIEA is supporting initiatives that aim to promote food security in pastoralist areas in the context of climate change. This work is anchored on the Open Society Foundation’s shared framework on food security approved in 2013 with the overarching goal of strengthening food security in Africa in the face of climate change in ways that advance the participation, influence and interests of farmers and marginalized constituencies like women, pastoralists, the urban poor and the elderly.

The OSIEA strategic focus is pastoralism in Eastern Africa through supporting initiatives that a) ensure pastoralist communities generate and share local and scientific knowledge on climate change for increased productivity of pastoralist food systems and b) strengthen pastoral groups and communities to influence and shape laws, policies and governance arrangements supportive of pastoralism livelihoods. OSIEA’s food security programming will be pursued within OSIEA’s economic governance strand of work and will continue beyond the lifetime of the shared framework on food security. Current geographic areas of focus (Karamonja region of Northern East Uganda, the Turkana region of North West Kenya, and the Northern part of Tanzania) will be expanded to include South East South Sudan and possibly Southern Sudan.

**Shared framework on drug policy [*Drug policy>drug policy]*:**  OSIEA has participated in this shared framework since 2014. Participation in this shared framework builds on existing engagement in harm reduction efforts within the health and rights program. OSIEA will scale up additional efforts as well as move towards more policy and rights-focused advocacy. This will include novel engagement with law enforcement, the judiciary, and faith-based organizations. The shared framework will allow OSIEA to take advantage of the resources of the network, including experience and knowledge exchange, to ensure that we have the most impact with this work.

OSIEA’s goals in this shared framework are 1) to influence governments to actively support and speak out in national and UN fora for harm reduction and decriminalization (and neutralize opponents); 2) raise public support in targeted countries through a coordinated communication campaign including new and traditional media, viral campaigns, and media partnerships to expand the reach of the reform message in specific countries; and 3) sharply expand the range of civil society allies who are shaping their national drug policies and calling for a new international consensus on regulation, decriminalization, and harm reduction (e.g. youth organizations, military, faith leaders, treatment community).

**VI. OPTIONAL LAST SECTION:**

OSIEA will realign the current five country programs (Kenya program, Uganda program, Tanzania program, Sudan program, and South Sudan program) and three thematic programmes (disability rights program, food security program, and health and rights program) to [four] thematic programmes. The [proposed] four new programs are:

* **Health and rights program:** harm reduction; palliative care; sexual and reproductive health; and maternal mortality
* **Economic governance [Development and rights]** **program:** natural resource governance; anti-corruption; economic justice; macro- economic policies including taxation, trade and investments; and food security
* **Equality and rule of law program:**  LGBTI rights; women rights; disability rights; international justice and grave crimes; access to justice; right to information/freedom of information; investigative journalism
* **Democratic governance [Governance and constitutionalism] program:** legal and constitutional reforms; electoral reforms.

The consequence of this consolidation of programs is that there will be fewer program budget holders. Each of the four thematic programs will have a program manager, 2-3 program officers, and 1-2 program assistants. All current program staff will be reassigned to the most appropriate program area without loss of position or benefits. At the same time, each country OSIEA operates in will have a designated country specialist/coordinator also doubling as a program officer.

With the approval of the OSF president in 2015, OSIEA is registering a new offshore legal entity in Mauritius. When completed, all local operations in the OSIEA countries will operate as branches of the Mauritius entity; currently, OSIEA is registered in Kenya and operates through branch offices in the other countries. With the new entity, even if OSIEA were to have serious challenges with authorities in one country -and this is always a real risk- this would not necessarily and directly affect operations in the other countries. As we will not have operations in Mauritius, it is unlikely OSIEA would fall into difficulties with local authorities there because of its work.

A recent development is that starting from 2016 the OSIEA board has started to evolve from an advisory board to a full governance board. This evolution will be completed with the registration and operationalization of the new legal entity. OSIEA operations in the three additional countries- Rwanda, Burundi, and Somaliland- will be managed remotely and there are for the time being no plans to have in-country presence. In the Nairobi office, OSIEA will continue officering office space to the American Jewish World Service. In addition, OSIEA will continue hosting OSF co-located staff from the African Regional Office (3) and the Public Health Program (1).

With the expansion in geographic areas of focus, OSIEA is requesting an additional headcount of [3] (two program officers and one program assistant), repurposing of a number of existing positions, and an additional annual budget of USD of [3] million USD.

**VII. BUDGET AND GEOGRAPHIC ALLOCATION:** *[To be finalized]*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Country/Category of Work** | **Total**  **[USD]** | **Kenya** | **Uganda** | **Tanzania** | **Sudan** | **South Sudan** | **Rwanda** | **Burundi** | **Somaliland** | **Eastern Africa operations** |
| Democratic practice |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Economic governance and advancement |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Equality and rights |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Health rights |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Human rights movements and institutions |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Journalism |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Justice reform and rule of law |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Program admin |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| General admin |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Totals:** | **12.9m** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**ANNEX 1: OVERVIEW OF COUNTRIES OF FOCUS**

**Tanzania’s** credentials were bolstered in 2015 following the transfer of power after general elections in October of that year that brought President Magufuli to power; his early days in power have been characterized by populist actions that have the potential to weaken institutions and give rise to benevolent dictatorship. The country has so far avoided the trend in the region of removing presidential term limits. The ruling political party of many years – Chama Cha Mapinduzi/the Revolutionary Party- retained a comfortable majority in parliament but the opposition also increased its presence. Despite fears of violence in what were hotly and closely contested elections, Tanzanians largely maintained peace even in the autonomous island of Zanzibar where the election results were controversially annulled by the island’s electoral commission and the opposition boycotted the rerun. Heavy police and military deployment may have worked to intimidate those who disagreed with the annulment and repeat of the Zanzibar elections. Looking ahead, Tanzania needs to restart the constitutional reform process that stalled in 2015 after disagreements among the main political actors. Zanzibar is likely to experience moments of political tumult due to the wide political divide and simmering disaffection by significant portions of the population. The Tanzania economy has been growing rapidly in recent years at approximately [7%] a year but poverty still remains a big challenge. Tanzanians have much expectation that recent natural resource finds will spur further economic growth. **OSIEA’s programming in Tanzania will mainly focus on [constitutional and legal reforms, electoral reforms, natural resource governance, anti-corruption, right to information, protection of human rights defenders, disability rights, LGBTI, food security, and heath and rights].**

In **Kenya**, the country has a difficult path to 2017 when the next general elections will be held. The incumbent, President Uhuru Kenyatta, in 2015 successfully fought- off crimes against humanity charges at the International Criminal Court based on his alleged role in the 2007/8 post-election violence and he will go all out to retain political power for a second term. The president’s political coalition with the deputy president, William Ruto, will remain shaky as it is not based on any ideological convergences but solely on ethnic political mobilization and power sharing. Ruto himself continues to fight off crimes against humanity charges at the ICC also based on the 2007/8 post-election violence. Overall, trust deficits are very high in the political spaces. The political opposition is fractured, prone to manipulation by the government, and operates in an uneven political field thereby significantly eroding the possibility of winning elections. The country’s politics are as divisive as ever and mainly on ethnic fault lines and the risks of post-election violence following the August 2017 polls are medium to high; it does not help that the electoral management body does not have the confidence of most actors. Previous experiences suggest that the risks of electoral violence increases when there is an incumbent President defending their seat. The economy has been struggling at growth rates of around 4-5 percent in recent years and unfortunately, electoral cycles tend to significantly depress economic growth. Unemployment, especially of the youth, is a big challenge. In the coming years, the country will continue to struggle with responses to terrorism which has become a daily reality. If the 2017 elections are peaceful and the winner enjoys significant legitimacy, the country may in the subsequent years be on a path towards democratic consolidation and economic growth, and vice versa. It is also possible that a new term in 2017 for the current regime would open doors for reversing the progressive 2010 constitution to return the country back to an imperial presidency characterized by wanton corruption and personal rule. **In Kenya, OSIEA’s priorities include [protection of civic space, protection of human rights defenders, anti-corruption, international justice and grave crimes, counter terrorism and countering violent extremism, food security, disability rights, LGBTI rights, and health rights.]**

**Uganda**. [*Rewrite after the elections*][The democratic reversals seen in the country in recent years will continue as the long servicing president Yoweri Museveni in 2016 won another five year term; he has already ruled for 30 years]. A full-blown attack on democracy by Museveni is now expected, he is also expected to assail the constitution to remove the upper-age limit to presidential candidature which currently stands at 75 years. The opposition’s spine seems to be stiffening and they will likely offer a bruising response in terms of mobilizing mass action – whether this will end up being peaceful is highly doubtful. Civil society/academia in Uganda is also expected to be more visible in countering the expected assault by President Museveni. The promises of economic growth linked to oil production in Uganda have been receding in the face of declining world prices. The country’s role as a regional enforcer of peace, as in South Sudan and Somalia, will continue to buy the regime some level of accommodation by the west. **OSIEA’s priorities are [protection of civic space, protection of human rights defenders, anti-corruption, international justice and grave crimes, natural resource governance, counter terrorism and countering violent extremism, food security, disability rights, LGBTI rights, and health rights.]**

**South Sudan**, Africa’s youngest country following independence in 2011 after a referendum that approved seceding from Sudan**,** remains mired in a civil conflict since the December 2013 political crisis which pitted President Salva Kiir’s government against his former deputy, Riek Machar, and his supporters. With the reduction of oil production due to the war and the dramatic decline in the oil price, it also faces an economic crisis. The ensuing conflict, which took on ethnic undertones between the two large communities (Salva Kiir’s Dinkas and Riek Machar’s Nuers), killed thousands of South Sudanese citizens. Various reports have documented crimes against humanity committed by all parties to the conflict. A peace agreement meant to bring the warring partners back together in a shared government will remain shaky, and each side will keep pretending to be implementing the agreement while blaming the other; there will be limited progress as each side hopes to fatigue and outwit the other. Many see the peace agreement as motivated largely by ambitions for power sharing but there is a widespread desire amongst citizens for the conflict to stop and the state to become more democratic and to start delivering services. The peace agreement sets out a roadmap for constitutional, electoral, and institutional reforms ahead of elections targeted for 2018. There are also transitional justice elements in the peace agreements, including a reparations commission, a truth and reconciliation commission and a hybrid court to try the serious crimes that took place. The country’s human rights, governance, and developmental challenges will continue to weigh the country down in the coming years. **OSIEA will focus on [international justice and grave crimes, protection of human rights defenders and journalists, protection of civic space, constitutional and legal reforms, access to justice, food security, and maternal health, etc.].**

**Sudan** continues to face complex governance, human rights, and economic crises. President Bashir’s ambition is to remain in office to avoid the International Criminal Court charges that he faces. Sudan has ambitions to come out of economic and political isolation by demonstrating its ability to act as a regional power broker and stabilizer by leveraging its Islamist connections to assist the West in the fight against terrorism and irregular migration and to be active in an emerging Saudi-led Sunni alliance against Iranian interests in the Middle East.

The so called National Dialogue that President Bashir has advanced, and which has been boycotted by civil society and the opposition, will conclude without succeeding to legitimize Bashir or set an agenda and road map for national rebirth; the national dialogue will only reframe Bashir’s personal ambitions for holding on to power. The wars in [Darfur, Nuba Mountains, and the Blue Nile] will continue in the coming years with huge humanitarian and human rights consequences for the civilian population. At the same time, the economy is in a bad shape with the collapse of oil money and the pursuit of big dams. In the midst of all this, civil society inside and outside the country continues its push for a shared vision of a future democratic Sudan midwifed by a transitional government. **OSIEA will focus on [civic engagement, legal and constitutional reforms, international justice and grave crimes, documentation and advocacy on human rights, protection of civic space, protection of human rights defenders and journalists, disability rights work etc.].**

In **Burundi**, low intensity conflict with grave consequences for human rights will continue to characterize the country following the disputed third term presidential win by President Pierre Nkurunziza in 2015 preceded by a failed coup against him. Mediation efforts by the East African Community and the African Union, focusing on cessation of hostilities and an inclusive dialogue, are already moving at a very slow pace, are unlikely to conclude an agreement soon, and even if this happened, implementation of any eventual agreements will likely be stalled by the government. Regional leaders appear to lack the appetite for decisive action on Burundi, largely because of the shortcomings in their own democratic credentials. An already battered economy can only continue to worsen with negative consequences for provision of basic services such as health and education particularly for the rural population. Prospects for open society are bleak in Burundi. **OSIEA will focus on [protection of civic space, protection of human rights defenders, legal and constitutional reforms, and international justice and grave crimes].**

In **Rwanda**, President Paul Kagame will contest, and almost certainly win, the 2017 elections following constitutional amendments in 2016 that removed terms limits. The character of the Rwanda state-muffling all dissent, closed civic spaces, benevolent dictatorship, denial of Tutsi/Hutu competing ethnic and political differences, stable economic growth etc. - will continue in the coming years. **OSIEA will focus on [support for independent and critical voices, protection of human rights defenders and journalists at risk, documentation and advocacy on human rights, land reform, food security, women rights programming, LGBTI rights, and devolved governance].**

**Somaliland** is relatively stable though the eastern parts of the country are barely under government control. The NGO Law of 2001 is very liberal compared with other parts of the region. Somaliland is extremely proud of the fact that it has held peaceful presidential, parliamentary and local elections, resulting in smooth transfers of power. Despite these significant achievements, there are cracks in the edifice. Somaliland has a very financially and politically demanding electoral timetable where, in principle, presidential parliamentary and local government elections are staggered. Civil society has campaigned vigorously to broaden access to political office for women, youth and minorities, but, with the exception of youth, the achievements have been limited with only woman member of parliament. There is also concern about the increasing influence of religious leaders and institutions influenced by Salafism in urban areas, especially on the education sector. Somaliland’s human rights record is good compared to those of its neighbors. There have been repeated government crackdowns on criticism expressed in demonstrations, by journalists and by human rights activists. Somaliland has not yet internalized the new rights-based culture reflected in the constitution. **We see openings around [promotion of human rights principles, freedom of information and expression, equality and non- discrimination especially for women, media policy, land and oil governance, higher education, protection of human rights defenders, and food security.]**