

Experiences of ordinary people during the conflict in the Great Lakes Region.

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STRUCTURE

- Objectives
- The conflict dynamic in Burundi
- Impact on economic and social life
- Conclusion

Objectives

- To provide background on the region;
- To point out the relation between the regional contexte and the dynamic of internal conflict in Burundi and the region;
- To brief the current situation and the main challenge ahead

The conflict dynamic in Burundi

Geographical situation:

- Great Lakes Region: Three countries (Rwanda, Buundi and Uganda); western parts of Tanzania, Eastern part of DR Congo
- That means: the GLR comprises both three countries, Tanzania, Kenya and DR Congo (and Kenya)

The conflict dynamic in Burundi

- Physically and culturally, eastwards oriented;
- But Rwanda and Burundi were parts of the so-called Belgian Congo during the colonial period;

Population:

- Majority Hutu, minority Tutsi and Twa
- Large parts of the population outside the country in Tanzania, Uganda and DR Congo

The conflict dynamic in Burundi

Two colonial era,

- German presence 1890-1916
- Belgian colonisation: 1922-1962

One colonial politics: The indirect rule

- Support to the local authorities;
- Elite to bridge between the colonial authority and the local population
- Impact: difficult to implement the colonial politics , no responsibility for the outcome

The conflict dynamic in Burundi

- **Access to independence (01 July 1962)**
 - Panafrican movement, nationalist leaders on power;
 - Strategic importance of Rwanda and Burundi (they share borders with DR Congo);
 - The «*Rwanda social revolution*» in 1959
 - Ideology: Hutu majority (excluded), Tutsi minority since centuries on power;

The conflict dynamic in Burundi

- Outset of Kingdom, flow for thousands of Tutsi to neighboring countries;
- Fear from parts of Tutsi and Hope for some Hutu elite in Burundi
- Beginning of friction between the main two groups without settlement;
- Assassination of strong leaders;
- Lack of leadership

The conflict dynamic in Burundi

Escalation: from elite struggle to mass killings

- Impossibility to keep the political and legal heritage;
- Constitution of 1962: «*the King reigns but doesn't govern*», participation of both groups in the political life
- At State's level: unconstitutional power shift, military coup in 1966, 1976, 1987, 1996

The conflict dynamic in Burundi

- At social and group's level: civil war and judiciary trials, in 1965, 1969, 1971, 1972, 1988, 1993-2003
- Attack (stricke first) and repression
- All victims are not obviously actors, but one died because of his/her ethnic belonging

The conflict dynamic in Burundi

How to end the cycle of violence?

In addressing two main questions:

- ✓ Legitimacy of the power and
- ✓ To ensure the end of political violence
(to address key issues related to economy, education, poverty, health care, decentralization etc would be the function of the State)

The conflict dynamic in Burundi

- **Democratization process in June 1993 (Burundi):**
 - Context of civil war in Rwanda between former Tutsi refugees and the Hutu-dominated government;
 - Outside pressure to democratize the country;
 - Fair elections and as outcome power shift to Hutu;
 - without transition and accommodation after decades of fear and hatred discourses;
 - Military coup on 21 October 1993 and escalation
 - Fight between government troops (seen as Tutsi) and different rebels groups (seen mainly Hutu)

The conflict dynamic in Burundi

- Beginn of the a long civil war within the country: 1993-2009
- 1993-1998: Civil war, on going dialogue
- 1998-2000: Peace negotiations in Arusha
- 2000-2005: Implementation and ownership
- 2005 and 2010: General elections
- 2010-2015: Set of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission; Special Tribunal for Burundi (?); land issue;

Impact of conflict

Context:

- Conflict in the vicinity: between neighbours, relations between teachers and pupils, in «mixed» couples, split in families!!!!;
- From elite struggle to mass killings: violence instead of power-sharing and accommodation;
- Impact of violence on relationships between ordinary people;
- Social context: illetrism, poverty, lack of political culture, alternatives to shape one's live etc.

Impact of conflict

Consequences of the war:

➤ **Material destructions:** schools, health care centres, administration, infrastructures

Possible to be rebuild, however cultural lose for people who are suddently uprooted from their origin, direct environment and roots (this can not be rebuild)

Impact of conflict

Human loss:

- More the 1.000.000 refugees in the neighbouring countries
- A presence of refugees abroad: fixation, hardliners, sending and receiving country;
- More physicians abroad than within the country
- Ca. 600.000 deaths
- Widows, orphans, teenagers as family chiefs

Impact of conflict

- Internal displaced people;
- Enrollement of children and women in rebel groups;
- Instrumentalisation of youth, students, for political motive
- Subséquent poverty and vulnerability;
- Kids on/in the street, between 30 and 50.000;

Impact of conflict

Psychological consequences:

- ✓ Unhappiness about such ethnic and political, and social situation;
- ✓ Self-fulfilling prophecy;
- ✓ 1993-1999: shrinking situation, civil wars, (from ordinary people);
- ✓ People get acquainted with the war situation: travel through the country despite the war

Impact of conflict

Deterioration of economic situation:

- Illegal trafficking (no tax, then)
- no good public service delivery: Education, housing, health care, infrastructure,
- Corruption;
- Trade in and outside the country;
- ! !!!!Difficulty for the country to recover;
- Need of strong leadership, then

- **!!!! CONFLICT PREVENTION !!!!**

Before they repeat you that
«*conflict is normal*» Even if in front of your
door!!!!

THANK YOU!!!

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