



Institute for Security Studies

POLICY BRIEF

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop a post-conflict development and peacebuilding vision and strategy and adapt these to the contexts in which South Africa will intervene. To date, interventions have been ad hoc and unfocussed with little lasting impact.
- South Africa's comparative advantage is its access to government authorities (Africa, Global South, and North). It needs to ascertain how it can effectively leverage this for the future direction and development of SADPA.
- South Africa should plan for the long term to build credibility and trust in its partnerships with post-conflict countries.
- South Africa must build a credible pool of national skills in PCRD and peacebuilding, who are also knowledgeable on Africa, if it is to be a key player in this arena.
- South Africa should increase coordination between government departments, business and NGO's in order to maximise impact, access commercial opportunities and provide sustainable post conflict development and peacebuilding assistance.
- A two-track approach for capacity building, encompassing both state and civil society, should be adopted – to date the focus has been on government departments.
- Innovate! The expectation is for South Africa to do something different from the usual formulaic responses to post-conflict development and peacebuilding.
- South Africa should build on strengths and innovations in certain components of PCRD, for example, SSR and gender mainstreaming.
- There are different roles that South Africa can assume in relation to post-conflict countries and their respective projects. Know when to be lead implementer, facilitator, donor, advisor and spectator.

Burundi

Missed opportunities for South African post-conflict development and peacebuilding?

Cheryl Hendricks and Amanda Lucey

SUMMARY

This policy brief analyses South Africa's post-conflict development and peacebuilding engagements in Burundi and identifies lessons that could inform the policy and programming development of the envisaged South African Development Partnership Agency (SADPA). Burundi is often heralded as a success for South African intervention in African conflict situations and might be expected to provide valuable insights for South Africa's future engagement. South Africa, however, has maintained only a limited presence in the country since the withdrawal of its troops in 2009. Burundi's peace remains fragile as it is one of the poorest states on the continent. It is therefore still in dire need of post-conflict development and peacebuilding. South Africa, the policy brief contends, has missed opportunities to follow up on its earlier involvement and consolidate the gains made through peacemaking and peacekeeping. This marginal post-conflict presence has diminished its overall impact. Its Burundian engagement clearly illustrates the need for a longer-term post-conflict development and peacebuilding vision and strategy.

INTRODUCTION

South Africa has the potential to become a key regional actor in peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding in Africa. It is one of a few African countries potentially able to undertake these types of interventions and, given its own experiences, to come up with innovative ways of dealing with the challenges that post-conflict development and peacebuilding presents. South Africa has established a development agency, the South African Development Partnership Agency (SADPA), to replace the African Renaissance Fund and enable South Africa to strengthen and deepen its engagement in this arena. It is therefore useful to assess South Africa's earlier efforts in the field of post-conflict development and peacebuilding to see whether these can inform the future policy development and programming of SADPA.

This policy brief is one of a series providing country-specific analyses of South Africa's post-conflict development and peacebuilding interventions on the continent. Here the focus is on Burundi, where South Africa's timely

intervention probably saved a vulnerable negotiating process. Much has been written on South African peacemaking and peacekeeping in Burundi. The analysis of this policy brief is focussed on the period after the withdrawal of South Africa's troops. The data was collated through desktop research, interviews with 29 state and non-state actors and a focus group discussion conducted in Burundi in June 2013. The intention is to map the type of post-conflict development initiatives by South Africa, determine their strengths and weaknesses and draw lessons from these for future engagements. This may contribute to future policy coherence, effectiveness and impact in South Africa's post-conflict development and peacebuilding initiatives in Africa.

OVERVIEW OF POST-CONFLICT TRANSITION IN BURUNDI

Burundi's postcolonial history has been marred by decades of political instability and ethnic conflict, both internally and regionally.¹ The Arusha negotiations, in 1995, marked the start of a difficult peace process facilitated by the late President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania. Following Nyerere's death in 1999, South Africa's former President Nelson Mandela was appointed as facilitator.² An initial accord, the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement, was signed in 2000. South Africa's then Deputy President, Jacob Zuma, increasingly took on the role as facilitator and accomplished the signing of three further peace agreements.³ After Zuma's suspension in June 2005, Charles Nqakula continued with the mediation. He was given a limited mandate to negotiate a Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement without reopening political issues.⁴

Viewed overall, South Africa's post-conflict and peacebuilding agenda in Burundi appears ad hoc, piecemeal and without substantive impact

In order to implement the Arusha transitional agreement and in the absence of a ceasefire agreement, which prevented support from the international community, South Africa decided to deploy on a bilateral basis in 2001.⁵ The South African National Defence Force (SANDF) first deployed troops in 2001 (701 soldiers)⁶ to Burundi as a means of providing VIP protection and ensuring the safety and security of political leaders returning to Burundi from exile. These troops became known as the South African Protection Support Detachment (SAPSD). It has been argued that this willingness to deploy troops played a vital role in enabling the peace process to continue.⁷

Nevertheless, there were criticisms about the legality and authorisation process.⁸ As the peace process continued, the number of SANDF peacekeepers serving in Burundi grew from the initial 701 to 1 266.⁹

After two years, the African Union (AU) took the lead, establishing the African Union Mission in Burundi (AMIB), and Mozambique and Ethiopia began to contribute troops (228 and 853 respectively).¹⁰ After a ceasefire agreement was signed, troops came under the United Nations Mission in Burundi (ONUB), in 2004, which later became the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB). South Africa began reducing the number of peacekeepers after the elections in 2004 and by December 2009 all had returned home.¹¹ In 2006 South Africa opened an office at a cost of R10 million to be used by the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism and the Joint Liaison teams.¹²

Burundi has successfully transitioned into a post-conflict country, though it remains very fragile. It is one of the few countries that the UN Peacebuilding Commission has been supporting since 2006. Burundi's Growth and Development Framework¹³ has noted some of the challenges that the country faces: low levels of urbanisation, limited land space, a peasant-based economy, high rates of food insecurity, insufficient electricity production despite hydroelectric potential, and limited and undiversified exports.

There are therefore limited incentives for investors in Burundi, and major infrastructural deterrents. Furthermore, a number of political concerns give cause for anxiety about future stability, such as the amendment of the electoral code, restrictive media laws and the general closing of political space. In addition, human rights violations continue to occur with a measure of impunity, and atrocities have been committed by the police, army and the ruling party's youth league.¹⁴ The functioning of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), socio-economic integration of vulnerable groups, resolution of land disputes and gender inequality remain key peacebuilding challenges.

SOUTH AFRICAN POST-CONFLICT DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS

South Africa's previously assertive peacemaking and peacekeeping interventions in Burundi are in stark contrast to its limited footprint in the country after 2009. South Africa signed a General Cooperation Agreement in 2007 and a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on health in 2008, but these agreements were not acted upon. A state visit by President Zuma in 2011 attempted to reinvigorate relations with Burundi and led to the signing of another five MoUs on defence, education, agriculture, economic cooperation and sports and recreation. According to respondents in Burundi, the MoUs are still in an 'embryonic state'. A mixed commission of South African and Burundian stakeholders has been set up to follow up on the implementation of these agreements.

Viewed overall, South Africa's post-conflict and peacebuilding agenda in Burundi appears ad hoc,

piecemeal and without substantive impact. Some of South Africa's interventions are outlined in Table 1.

Although South Africa continues to portray Burundi as a shining success story of intervention in Africa, Burundians have moved on and other donors have moved in, to engage in post-conflict development. Following the peacekeeping mission, the majority of stakeholders in Burundi believe that South Africa has largely disengaged. The South African government, in turn, seemed to have considered its work completed as it downscaled its presence considerably after 2009. It seems not to have anticipated a longer-term post-conflict development and peacebuilding engagement. Although South Africa saw stability in Burundi as a prerequisite for stability in the Great Lakes region, it believed that countries in the region should be at the forefront of achieving this¹⁵ (handing the Burundi problem back to Tanzania, Rwanda and Uganda, so to speak).

Returning to Burundi four years later we could find little trace of the ten years that South Africa participated in peacemaking and peacekeeping activities, at a relatively substantial cost. Its post-conflict development and peacebuilding interventions have been too few and far between to make a visible and lasting impact. One could certainly state that the fact that there is a democratically elected country in place and that the war has ended is in large part the result of South Africa's conflict management efforts.

However, this raises the question of what South Africa's post-conflict commitments and/or benefits should be. What should South Africa's role be in post-conflict development and peacebuilding? Should it be altruistic and leave the post-conflict space to other donors to occupy and/or to reap economic benefits, or should it use its access to ensure both that post-conflict development

initiatives are adequately pursued and that business opportunities are available to South African companies? How does South Africa wish to position itself in this regard in future? What is the comparative advantage and value-added of South Africa's continued engagement? Clearly, South Africa needs systematically to think through these issues. The SADPA provides a suitable platform for doing this.

Despite South Africa's perceived disengagement, Burundians view their relations with South Africa as good and are hoping to rebuild these through the recent MoUs. Nevertheless, there are a number of challenges for future engagement. For example, on the Burundian side there is limited infrastructure an energy deficit and a small and undiversified market. On the South African side there are bureaucratic inefficiencies: for example, responses to requests for funding have taken so long that other donors have taken over. In addition, Burundian stakeholders reported that they have not had replies to requests sent to South Africa. Previous civil service training programmes have had design flaws, and were perceived either as lacking relevance and credibility or not being context specific. In addition, information exchanges and training have tended to be 'one-off events' that lack sustainability and impact.

It is worth noting that there are now a number of other actors in Burundi, including traditional ones such as the European Union (EU), International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, Holland, France, Norway, the United Kingdom (UK), China and Japan, as well as a range of other non-traditional actors such as Jamaica, Pakistan, the Czech Republic and the Arab Development Bank. South Africa has in some sense forfeited its opportunities in Burundi and as it re-enters it will have to distinguish itself from these actors.

Table 1 Examples of South African post-conflict and peacebuilding engagement in Burundi

Governance	Assistance with the truth and reconciliation law, information-sharing on transitional justice (IJR)
Capacity Building	VIP protection training (SAPSD)
	Training of diplomats (PRAU)
	Work with the land commission; workshops on peace, reconciliation and governance with youth, religious leaders, government (ACCORD – established an office)
	Regional Capacity Building Project for civil service (PALAMA)
Implementation Support	DDR under BINUB
	Support with electoral materials for elections
	Donation to UNDP for HIV/AIDS centre
Economic Development & Trade	Hydropower feasibility studies and possible project by Megatron
	Chrome mining by SAMANCOR
	SAA flights to Bujumbura
	Trade exports to Burundi: mechanical appliances, metal, food, plastics and rubber; investments in the energy sector
	Côte d'Ivoire
Information Sharing	SAWID dialogue in Johannesburg in 2004 on gender mainstreaming and inclusion of women in the political process
	CENI visit to South Africa to observe the national parliamentary elections in April 2009 and the local municipal elections in 2011
	ISS/EAPCCO learning tour to Kenya

Looking ahead, Burundian respondents mentioned that South Africa could assist in a variety of ways. Suggestions ranged from assistance with reconciliation, support for the electoral commission between elections, development of regulatory frameworks, undertaking feasibility studies, university scholarships, tax revenue collection, training of peacekeepers or financial assistance. The mining, energy, agribusiness, transport, engineering and tourism sectors were also seen as opportunities for South Africa.

Rather than having its efforts entirely demand driven, South Africa must engage in a dialogue to determine the type of partnerships it wants to pursue and the areas and modalities of engagement. If it is to be a credible player in the fields of post-conflict development and peacebuilding it will have to come up with a comprehensive strategy, develop the necessary human resource capacity, provide adequate financial resources and be prepared to be in post-conflict countries for extensive periods of time.

The Burundi case study has highlighted a number of general observations that South Africa can take heed of:

- Impact will be achieved only through coherent, coordinated, well-resourced and sustained engagement.
- Credibility will be enhanced by embarking on smaller, higher-impact projects that you can see seen to fruition.
- South Africa's specific 'value-added' must be identified.
- Knowledge management must be maximised for continuity (currently high staff turnover).
- Gender must be mainstreamed in all interventions – walk the talk!

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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NOTES

1. See a discussion on these issues in, for example, The African Centre for Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), *South Africa's Peacekeeping Role in Burundi: Challenges and Opportunities for Future Peace Missions*, 2007, www.accord.org.za (accessed 10 April 2013).
2. H Boshoff, W Very & G Rautenbach, *The Burundi Peace Process: From Civil War to Conditional Peace*, Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2010, www.issafrica.org (accessed 9 April 2013).
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6. *Operation Curriculum – Burundi*. (n.d.), www.dod.mil.za/operations/international/op_curriculum.htm (accessed 12 April 2013).
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8. ACCORD op cit.
9. See http://www.dod.mil.za/operations/international/op_curriculum.htm (accessed 29 August 2013).
10. AP Rodt, *The African Mission in Burundi*, 2011, www.centres.exeter.ac.za. (accessed 15 April 2013).
11. Department of Defence, Operation Curriculum- Burundi, 2013, http://www.dod.mil.za/operations/international/op_curriculum.htm (accessed 14 April 2013).
12. See the Annual Report of the African Renaissance Fund at http://www.dfa.gov.za/department/report_2006-2007/arf%20report.pdf, 4 (accessed 29 August 2013).
13. Republic of Burundi, Growth and Poverty Reduction Framework Summary Report 2012, http://www.burundiconference.org/IMG/pdf/CSLP2_en_web.pdf (accessed 15 July 2013).
14. See the United Nations General Assembly Security Council, Outcome of the fifth review of the implementation of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi, 26 April 2011, http://www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/doc_burundi.shtml (accessed 4 June 2013) and the World Report 2013, Burundi, <http://www.hrw.org/world-report/2013/country-chapters/burundi> (accessed 23 July 2013).
15. A point made by DIRCO representatives.

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