

Twese for peace National camp

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“Twese” stands for “everyone” in Kirundi, mother tongue of Burundi

The context

Burundi has a long history of ethnic conflicts which have deeply affected the country both socially and economically. Sharing most of his history with the neighboring Rwanda, the population is constituted by the two main ethnicities: Hutu (85%) and Tutsi (14%). Small East African nation of the size of Maryland, 65.5% of the 10, 60 billion total population is under 24. The unemployment rate for university graduates stands around 30%. With such a young population and such a huge unemployment rate, the government has been struggling to create jobs and new opportunities to boost the economy and offer a lasting income source for the multitudes of young people throughout the country. Additionally, with the government's history of being the biggest employer in the whole country, there has been a poor entrepreneurial spirit which is the best alternative to the high unemployment. The civil war that officially ended in 2005 left a big mark on the country's economy which is still trying struggling to recover. There is very little to no discussion about the meaning of ethnicity in Burundi and its meaning in today's Burundi. With a high unemployment rate, a highly young population and a history of ethnic conflict that is has not been digested by the country, the country's peace is in jeopardy on the long run. Soraya Salti, a social entrepreneur, contributed that “those who are unemployed and directionless, often fall prey to fundamentalists and can, down the line, become a threat to national security.”

The problem

The first issue is that the general perception of Burundi's youth is that they will get a job from the government when they will graduate. The government cannot keep up with the growing number of graduates and the small number of jobs created every year. Secondly, the current education system does not emphasize on entrepreneurship and does not provide an adequate skillset for university graduates to shift from their focus on public sector and entrepreneurialism and start up culture. Furthermore, Burundi's young generation has inherited the practices and perceptions of ethnicities in Burundi and thus do not engage in conversation about the meaning of ethnicity in Burundi which could bring the whole country together and sustain the idea of peace making in the whole country.

Twese for Peace defines peace as a state where there is a healthy relationship in the community and where everyone is tolerant about the difference in the community. Peace is generated by active participation in the making of the community and in establishing sustainable relationship between all the community members.

Twese for Peace National Camp is a summer camp that aims to introduce the concept of entrepreneurship and conflict management to students between the age of 17 and 23 from all the corners of the Burundi. The camp's graduates will have on the fundamental skills of starting their own social enterprises and businesses and lead the nation in conflict management and peace building. It will take place in August 2013 in Bujumbura, the capital city of Burundi and it will last for a two weeks of solid training and will end in an innovation challenge where participants will use their skills to create innovative ideas that will respond to their community's issues. The entrepreneurship workshops will be based on Babson college's “From idea's to action: a guide for young entrepreneurs”. Participants will learn about marketing strategies, financial literacy, effective communication and networking. Furthermore, this camp will promote understanding and acceptance through dialogues, storytelling, games and debates. We will be using both the Alternatives to Violence Program (AVP) and the Compass Manual on Human Rights Education with Young People published by the Council of Europe, which was designed to engage, involve and motivate youth to form a positive awareness of human rights in their own ways and in their

own communities. The camp's national dimension ensures the creation of a common learning experience for students from around Burundi.

Our vision

To develop a generation of peace minded entrepreneurs in Burundi

Our mission

Develop an entrepreneurial spirit in our students through exposure to the process of problem identification, problem solving, and idea implementation. Furthermore, establish a conflict management mindset through communication, the art of listening and tolerance

Objectives

Our main target group is high school and university students between the age of 17 and 23 with no previous exposure to education in business. Our objectives can be divided into short, mid, and long-term.

Short term: We plan to train 35 students recruited from different high schools and universities across the country on entrepreneurship skills and conflict management skills and introduction to successful entrepreneurial experiences in Burundi. The innovation challenge that student will take part in at the end of the summer camp which will respond to envisioned opportunity in their communities, pitch these ideas, plan the budget for it and establish a sustainability strategy. Furthermore, we aim to create a safe space for friendship, discussions and debate as participants will be boarding together for two weeks duration of the camp and broaden their horizons for future plans and professional aspirations. Our participants will be peace consolidators in their communities especially in this time when Burundi is expecting national elections in 2015 given the vast history of post conflict violence in Africa and the fragile peace in Burundi.

Mid-term: The participants will receive will start "Twese for peace" chapters in their schools and communities where they will share the values in the camp and reinforce the snowball effect. We aim to move to a more localized training and bring students from the same regions together in order to increase the number of participants. As part of cascade training, the participants from our training will initiate these regional camps.

Long-term: We expect to create a network of peace minded young entrepreneurs who would have started or planning to start their own ventures and be the next generation of job creators.

sustainability

Twese for peace national summer camp works along the idea that you should teach a person how to fish instead of giving him the fish. Furthermore, it will create a generation of educated entrepreneurs who will impact others. Education is a sustainable model of sharing knowledge and a long lasting investment in the nation's welfare. Furthermore, our participants will spread Twese for Peace's values through chapters that will be created in their respective schools and universities. The issue Twese for peace is trying to address is at interest of various stakeholders in the country: the state which needs to address the high unemployment in the country, the various businesses which seek skilled and innovative employees and non-governmental organizations which put forward education as the key solution to a sustainable development. We hope that the project will increasingly be adopted by the education system in Burundi by showing the success of our model.

Our **support network** (includes sponsors of previous initiatives by Twese for Peace- an organization I started in summer of 2013 to promote entrepreneurship and peace building among youth in Bujumbura), The African Leadership Academy, Middlebury center for social entrepreneurship, MiddCore, New Generation Burundi, Center for Justice and Peace building at Eastern Mennonite University, UWC, Karera Resort,