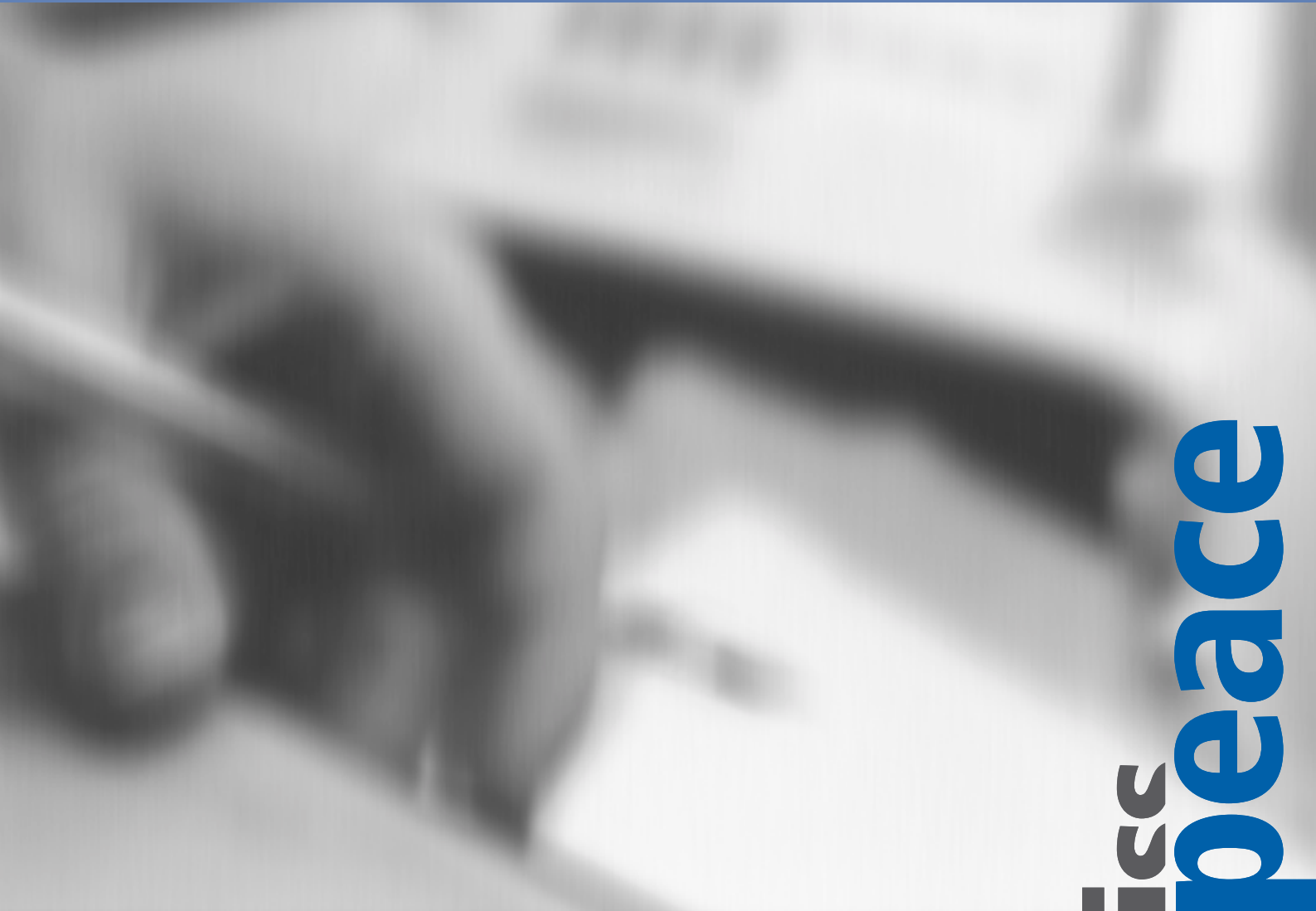


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The Role of Tourism in Post-Conflict Peacebuilding in Rwanda

Rina M. Alluri

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Abstract/Zusammenfassung/Résumé

In a post-conflict country, tourism has the potential to not only contribute to economic growth and physical reconstruction, but also to sustainable development, affirmative action and the protection of vulnerable groups. In Rwanda, the presence of rare mountain gorillas, rolling green hills and pristine lakes make it a very attractive tourism destination. However the perception of insecurity since the civil war and genocide in 1994 has been a strong deterrent for visitors. Nevertheless, the tourism industry became the country's highest foreign currency earner in 2007 by focusing on niche markets such as eco-, pro-poor and community-based tourism development. This paper seeks to analyze how tourism can also foster the ongoing peacebuilding process in post-conflict Rwanda. As few studies have examined this potential role of tourism, this paper positions itself within the broader discussion on corporate engagement in peace promotion. Specifically, it examines how current tourism activities in Rwanda contribute to two overarching dimensions of peacebuilding: reconciliation and justice; and socio-economic foundations.

In Postkonfliktländern kann der Tourismussektor einen zentralen Beitrag zu wirtschaftlichem Wachstum und Wiederaufbau leisten. Gleichzeitig verfügt er aber auch über das Potential, nachhaltige Entwicklung, die aktive Förderung von Minderheiten und den Schutz von besonders verletzlichen Gruppen zu fördern. Die seltenen Berggorillas, die hügeligen Landschaften und unberührten Seen in Ruanda ziehen viele TouristInnen an. Doch ist Ruanda seit dem Bürgerkrieg und dem Genozid 1994 immer noch mit einem negativen Sicherheitsempfinden belastet und stellt eine grosse Hemmschwelle für potentielle TouristInnen dar. Trotzdem ist die Tourismusindustrie 2007 zum wichtigsten Sektor für Devisen aufgestiegen. Dies ist vor allem dank der Spezialisierung des Sektors auf Nischenmärkte wie Ökotourismus, „community-based“-Tourismus und auf Tourismusaktivitäten mit und für wirtschaftlich Benachteiligte. Das vorliegende Paper analysiert, wie der Tourismus die laufenden Friedensbemühungen in Ruanda nach dem Konflikt unterstützen kann. Bisher haben nur wenige Studien die potenzielle Rolle von Tourismus in der Unterstützung von Friedensprozessen untersucht. Deshalb positioniert sich vorliegendes Paper in einem breiteren Diskussionsrahmen zu friedensfördernden Aktivitäten von Unternehmen. Insbesondere betrachtet die Studie, wie derzeitige Tourismusaktivitäten in Ruanda folgende zwei Aspekte der Friedensförderung unterstützen: Versöhnung und Gerechtigkeit sowie sozioökonomische Grundlagen.

Dans un pays sortant d'un conflit armé, le tourisme peut concourir non seulement à la croissance économique et la reconstruction, mais peut également contribuer au développement durable, à la discrimination positive et à la protection de groupes vulnérables. Au Ruanda, la présence de gorilles de montagne rares, le paysage vallonné et des lacs vierges constituent des attractions touristiques majeures. Par contre, la perception de l'insécurité depuis la guerre civile et le génocide en 1994 a été fortement dissuasive pour les touristes. Pourtant, l'industrie du tourisme, en se focalisant sur des marchés de niche tels que l'écotourisme, le tourisme «pro-pauvre» et le tourisme communautaire, est devenue la principale source de devises étrangères en 2007. Cette étude analyse comment le tourisme peut également soutenir le processus de promotion de la paix en cours depuis la fin du conflit au Ruanda. Puisque peu de recherches ont examiné le rôle de soutien potentiel du tourisme dans les processus de paix, cette étude se positionne dans le cadre plus large de discussions sur l'engagement entrepreneurial pour la promotion de la paix. En particulier, elle examine comment les activités touristiques actuelles au Ruanda contribuent à deux dimensions de la promotion de la paix: la réconciliation et la justice, ainsi que les fondations socio-économiques.

Acronyms

CBOs	Community-based organizations
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
FAR	Forces Armées Rwandaises / Rwandan Armed Forces
ICTR	International Criminal Tribunal of Rwanda
ICCN	Institute for the Conservation of Nature, DRC
IDPs	Internally displaced persons
IGCP	International Gorilla Conservation Programme
MRND	Mouvement républicain national pour la démocratie et le développement / National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development
ORTPN	Office Rwandais du Tourisme et des Parcs Nationaux / Rwandan Office of Tourism and National Parks
RPF/A	Rwanda Patriotic Front/Army
RTL	Radio-Télévision Libre des Milles Collines
RWF	Rwandan Francs
SACOLA	Sabyinyo Community Lodge Association
UNAMIR	United Nations Mission to Rwanda
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar

Rwandan Terms

Agaseke	Hand-woven Rwandan baskets made of papyrus reeds and grass
Akazu	The 'little hut', Hutu elite linked to President Habyarimana and his wife Agathe Kanziga
Amahoro	Peace
Génocidaires	People suspected of committing crimes of genocide in 1994
Ibyitso	'Accomplices' and supporters of the RPF (singular icyitso)
Interahamwe	Youth militia trained and armed by the MRND party
Inyenzi	Literal translation, cockroaches, a pejorative term used by Hutu extremists to describe members of the RPF and later, Tutsi in general.
Les collines	Literally, the hills, it is a pejorative term which refers to the masses that inhabit the rural areas of Rwanda
Mwami	A chiefly title, usually translated as King
Pangas	Home made nail studded clubs used in the genocide
Umuganda	Mandatory communal work imposed on by different regimes
Ubugake	A highly stratified system of land and cattle clientelism
Uburetwa	An unequal division of labour imposed by King Kigeri Rwabugiri (1867-97)

Map of Rwanda¹



¹ Map copyright: Expert Africa - a specialist tour operator to Rwanda. www.expertafrica.com.

Introduction

Despite being one of the world's largest industries, tourism is extremely susceptible to the direct and indirect effects of violence. As tourism tends to be more prosperous in peacetime rather than in war time, it is assumed that it would have self-interest in supporting a 'peace dividend'. However, few empirical cases of tourism's contribution to peacebuilding have been explored.

This working paper emerges from the premise that the private sector, and specifically the tourism industry has a role to play in peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction through both core tourism activities and specific peace-related efforts. The paper seeks to add to a general understanding of corporate engagement in peace promotion. Specifically, it analyzes the historical development, characteristics, and activities of the Rwandan tourism sector to better understand how tourism may be instrumental in long term peacebuilding.

Although tourism came to a complete halt during the Rwandan 1994 genocide, the tourism sector was able to recover relatively quickly, making the Rwanda case relevant to explore. The tourism sector took risks and made investments that led to a quick revival of tourist arrival numbers and a restructuring of the sector as a whole. The government-run Rwandan Office of Tourism and National Parks (ORTPN) has been an integral actor behind the transformation of the tourism sector so soon after the conflict. In addition, the engagement of independent tourism actors in diversifying tourism attractions has also been conducive to promoting peace. The paper identifies how the tourism sector in Rwanda has the potential to be an agent of change by supporting peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction efforts. In particular, it analyzes:

1. How did the Rwandan tourism sector recover so quickly and what were the key reasons behind its accomplishments and failures? Who are the actors involved?
2. How can the tourism sector contribute to post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding in Rwanda whilst carrying out its core business activities?
3. What are the lessons learned of the Rwandan civil war and genocide that could help other post-conflict countries in analyzing whether tourism could be used as a tool in the reconstruction of their nation?

This paper is structured into five sections. The first section attempts to provide an overview of some theoretical currents relevant to understanding how tourism can contribute to peace promotion. Smith's 'peacebuilding palette' will be used as a guiding tool to provide a working definition of peacebuilding activities. As few studies have focused on how tourism can play a role in peace promotion, this paper places itself within a broader discussion on how private actors can reinforce post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding. The second section provides background information on the Rwandan civil war and genocide in order to highlight some of the root causes of conflict that should be addressed by in the post-conflict context. The third section briefly explains the impacts of the civil war and then outlines the development of tourism in the country. The fourth section analyzes both the potentials and challenges of tourism activities in Rwanda that are directly and indirectly contributing to peacebuilding. It analyzes how tourism activities support two of the four dimensions of peacebuilding drawn-out by Smith, namely: (1) reconciliation and justice and (2) socio-economic foundations. While security and political framework will be mentioned, these are not areas where the tourism sector appears to have made many contributions. The fifth section reflects on lessons learned from Rwanda in order to examine how to establish a peacebuilding-sensitive tourism strategy in Rwanda and other post-conflict countries.

Research was conducted for this paper using qualitative research methods. It consisted of 67 semi-structured interviews, the majority of them carried out in the capital of Rwanda, Kigali, and in the north of the country, in Musanze in June 2008. Some pre- and post-field research interviews were also administered, in person in Switzerland, via e-mail and telephone. All except four of the interviewees are based in Rwanda. The following types of actors were interviewed: Representatives

from the tourism sector in the capital city (13) and in Musanze, northern Rwanda (8); Conflict and Peace Experts (15); General experts on the tourism industry (9); Government Officials National (9) and Government Officials International (5); and others (8).²

This working paper was developed as part of the joint research project between swisspeace and the Cologne Business School/COMPASS entitled "Tourism and Peace: How far does self-interest carry?" and was funded by the German Foundation for Peace Research / Deutsche Stiftung Friedensforschung (DSF). The Tourism and Peace project aimed to examine the inter-linkages between private sector activities, violent conflicts and peacebuilding, with a specific focus on the role of the tourism sectors in Croatia, Rwanda and Sri Lanka. The author conducted research on the Rwanda case study while Ulrike Joras³ and Karsten Palme carried out research in Sri Lanka and Croatia respectively.

² The „others“ consisted of five conservation specialists, one tourist, one church representative and one international NGO representative based outside of Rwanda but with local projects.

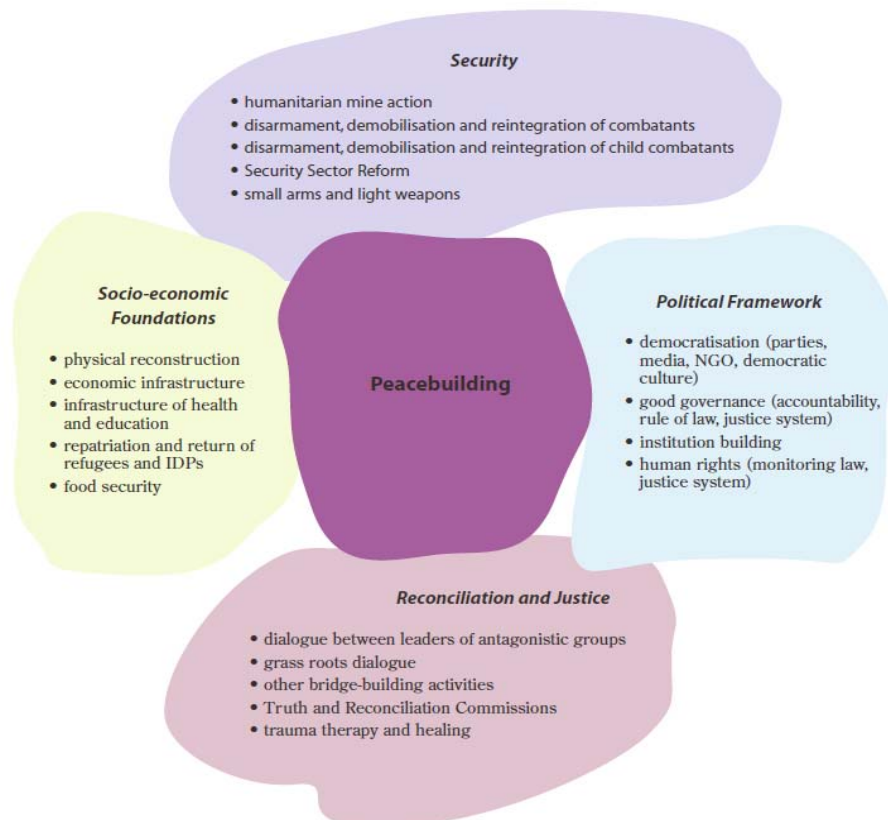
³ Please refer to Joras 2009 for an overview of the three case study results.

1 Corporate engagement in peacebuilding

1.1 Understanding 'peacebuilding' and post-conflict reconstruction

According to Boutros-Ghali in the 'Agenda for Peace', post-conflict peacebuilding is an "action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict" (1995). This understanding places an emphasis on the immediate post-conflict phase that focuses on issues of capacity building, reconciliation processes and social transformation. Smith breaks down and categorizes peacebuilding activities even further, into four main goals: "to provide security; to establish the socio-economic foundations of long-term peace; to establish the political framework of long-term peace; to generate reconciliation, a healing of the wounds of war and justice" (2004:10). Smith illustrates his definition through a 'peacebuilding palette' which incorporates specific, yet overlapping activities within the four issue areas. Figure 1.1 below will be used in this paper to show the complex interrelationship between different dimensions of peacebuilding and to help identify how specific efforts make a contribution to long term goals of peace.

Figure 1.1: The Peacebuilding Palette. Adapted from Smith 2004:28.



Post-conflict reconstruction is strongly interlinked with peacebuilding activities, and tends to focus on issues related to physical reconstruction, economic recovery, institution building and social integration, falling mostly into issue areas of socio-economic foundations and political framework. The World Bank defines post-conflict reconstruction as "the rebuilding of socio-economic frameworks of society" and "the reconstruction of the enabling conditions for a functioning peacetime society, explicitly including governance and rule of law as essential components" (1998, in UNDP 2006:4). Both peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction are important in supporting

socio-economic, political, security and reconciliation processes whilst helping to reduce the risk of conflict recurrence. For the purpose of this paper, the term 'peacebuilding' will be used to describe efforts that support both peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction.

1.2 The role of business in peace promotion

Traditionally perceived as the responsibility of the state and UN peacekeeping operations, peacebuilding activities are now being taken up by a range of actors including development and humanitarian agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations. Further, private sector actors also have the potential to support peacebuilding activities. The negative impact of conflict on private sector activities and its specific capacities that enable it to help rebuild a country after conflict place the private sector in a position to support peace processes.

Literature that has focused on the role of the domestic private sector in conflict zones has emerged from three main currents of thought. The first emerges from the assumption that businesses are integral in supporting economic development in the aftermath of a conflict. This perspective which has mostly been promoted by international development agencies places an "emphasis on a critical role for both foreign and domestic private sector investment as the engine of development and poverty reduction" (Banfield, J.; C. Gündüz *et al.* 2006:1). It however tends to overemphasize the private sector's economic role, ignoring its potential capacities in contributing to other issue areas. This also tends to assume that private actors are merely motivated to engage when there is the opportunity for financial benefit, which simplifies the motivations and impediments of private sector actors when engaging in peace promotion.⁴

The second perspective on private actors in conflict zones has mostly stressed the impact of companies in 'war economies' and extractive industries (Hauffler 2002, 2004; Nelson 2000; Ballentine and Nietschke 2005; Banfield *et al.* 2003, 2006). In response to this research, a number of initiatives and projects have emerged such as the United Nations Global Compact, the Corporate Engagement Project and the Red Flags Initiative. These projects have been involved in providing best practice guidelines for companies in order to ensure that they act responsibly and that their business does not cause or exacerbate conflict.⁵

The war economies literature has provided the impetus for a small but growing third current that champions private sector engagement as having the potential to strengthen peace in conflict zones (Barbara 2006:581). This third novice discourse takes a more 'positive' approach to the role of companies in conflict zones by identifying the private sector as an agent of change which has the potential to engage in corporate governance (Feil, Fischer *et al.* 2008), conflict management (Morrison 2006; Nelson 2000), peacebuilding (Joras 2008; Banfield *et al.* 2006; Gerson 2001) and post-conflict reconstruction (Bray 2009; Sweeney 2008; UNDP 2008; Bhatia 2005). This third perspective represents the most relevant body of literature for this paper, which analyzes the potential of the domestic private sector, particularly tourism, in supporting long-term peace.

⁴ For an extensive analysis on the motivations and impediments of private sector engagement, particularly in the tourism sector, see Joras 2009.

⁵ See: <http://www.unglobalcompact.org/>, <http://www.cdainc.com/cdawww/default.php> and <http://www.redflags.info/>

1.3 The changing face of tourism

Tourism development can boost economic stability, expand infrastructure and services, increase foreign currency earnings, generate both direct and indirect employment and enhance a multiplier effect to primary and secondary sectors. In addition, "it is being seen as a route to broader development and shared growth, no longer just a generator of foreign exchange" (Overseas Development Institute 2007:1). Thus, the realization and acknowledgement that tourism can have both a positive and negative impact on local populations, conflicts and the environment has led to more research on how tourism can act not only as a source of economic development, but also as an actor that affects social change (Ashley, De Brine *et al.* 2007; Nicolau 2008). This perspective has been expanded to address the problem that while governments and elite have benefited from tourism, locals and the poor have often been excluded from any livelihood gains. This pushed efforts to establish sustainable tourism development, which places an emphasis on optimizing overall benefits of tourism and trying to limit negative repercussions (World Tourism Organization, 2002:1).

An emerging emphasis on tourism's role in environmental protection, sustainable development and poverty reduction has translated into an increased awareness amongst tourists and travellers. The tourism sector has thus been challenged to respond to the high demand to develop 'eco-' 'responsible', 'pro-poor', 'volun-' and 'community-based' tourism initiatives and policies which take social issues into consideration. Further, tourism companies have been urged to develop corporate social responsibility policies that ensure their rhetoric is also accompanied by practical guidelines (Lovelock 2008; SNV-Rwanda and RSM Erasmus University 2008; ODI 2007; Milne *et al.* 2001; Brohman 1996).

Despite these developments within the tourism sector to be more socially responsible, there have not been many concrete efforts to make tourism companies more aware of their impact on conflict. This is despite the fact that tourism is highly vulnerable to conflict as violence can impede tourism activities, cause damage to necessary infrastructure and influence travel warnings that decrease tourist arrival numbers. Tourism destinations are likely to have fewer options and be less appealing to tourists if they are insecure or close to a conflict. Thus, the tourism industry tends to thrive more in peace rather than conflict (Richter in Burns and Novelli 2006). While this 'peace dividend' would appear to provide tourism actors with the motivation to engage in peace promotion, few cases of tourism engagement have been explored. Insight into how tourism could engage in conflict prevention, conflict settlement or post-conflict peacebuilding via 'peace through tourism', has only been analyzed by a few scholars to date (Richter 1992, 1999; Richter and Waugh 1986; Strong-Cvetich 2007; Feil, Fischer *et al.* 2008).⁶

A form of tourism that focuses on showing tourists how the impacts of violence and conflict have impacted society is 'dark tourism'.⁷ However, this form of tourism is highly controversial as it is perceived as supporting the commoditization of tragedy and human death. It is also commonly known as 'genocide tourism' or 'war tourism'. Despite some analysis on what 'dark tourism' actually means (Lennon *et al.* 2000; Pizam and Mansfield 1996; Stone and Sharpeley 2008), the definition and activities that fall into such a category have a wide range, from institutionalized museums or memorial sites to former prisons or torture chambers etc. The example of concentration camps in Auschwitz, Poland is the most prominent case used to illustrate a form of 'dark tourism'.

⁶ Some authors have explored tourism and political stability. See: Pizam and Mansfield 1996; Richter 1999.

⁷ 'Dark tourism' refers to the visitation of tourist attractions which are related to the exposure of death, disaster, tragedy and suffering. It refers to the act and desire of persons to witness places where tragic occurrences have taken place. Please see: Stone and Sharpeley 2008; Lennon and Foley 2000.

1.4 The bridging of theories

Three different areas of research have been highlighted above: peacebuilding, the role of companies in conflict zones and the changing role of tourism. While literature on the role of private actors in peacebuilding represents an emerging perspective in peace and conflict studies, tourism as a specific sector of engagement has not been extensively explored. This study aims to contribute to the bridging of these three streams of thought by exploring how the tourism sector has developed peacebuilding activities in post-conflict Rwanda. It is important to understand the overlap of tourism and peace to provide insight into how they complement one another. An emphasis is placed on how tourism has contributed both directly and indirectly to the four areas of peacebuilding, namely: socio-economic foundations, reconciliation, security and political dimensions. These will be further explored in relation to the Rwanda case in the fourth section. Due to the few studies which have been conducted on how specific sectors such as tourism have engaged in peace promotion, the study remains mostly exploratory, and uses the empirical findings of the field research in Rwanda as an added value.

2 A history of conflict: The Rwandan civil war and genocide

The Rwandan civil war and genocide represents a manifestation of deeply rooted class divisions and social stratifications often expressed and manipulated through constructed identities of Tutsi, Hutu and Twa. Socio-economic class divisions, high levels of poverty, population density, scarce arable land, and centralized governance are some of the main factors that led to the civil war and genocide. This section provides an overview of the main root causes of the civil war and genocide⁸ and the actors involved.

First introduced by the Tutsi *Mwami*, or King, in the 1800s and further institutionalized by Belgian colonizers, enforced labour systems and stereotypes of physical beauty⁹ contributed to a society divided along perceptions of ethnicity. Such structures ensured that Tutsi had higher access to employment opportunities, power, land and resources such as cattle, whilst Hutu were mostly confined to physical labour and agricultural cultivation, and the Twa were isolated in forests for hunting and pottery (Newbury 1988:82, 140; Des Forges 1999:31-34).¹⁰ Through these embedded patron-client relationships, ethnic identities were formulated and reproduced by the local elite. The monopolization of power within a small elite ruling class led to the 1959 social revolution as rural grievances from both Hutu and Tutsi were expressed. The revolution caused the abolition of the Tutsi monarchy and the inter-ethnic killing and expulsion of hundreds of thousands of (mostly, but not exclusively) Tutsi to neighbouring countries (Human Rights Watch 2006; Pottier 2002:16). Both post-colonial governments of Gregoire Kayibanda (1960-1973) and Juvénal Habyarimana (1973-1994) established one-party states which discriminated against Tutsi and retained power within regional and kinship groups (Des Forges 1999:41).¹¹ While both the first and second republics used ethnic rhetoric to maintain power and control, underlying regional and class power politics within ethnicities were often the main sources of competition.

In October 1990, a group of elite, high ranking (predominantly) Tutsi officers in Uganda formed the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) and invaded Rwanda to reclaim their homeland. This sparked the civil war between the RPF and the President Habyarimana's government army, the Rwandan Armed Forces (Forces Armées Rwandaises, FAR). In the face of increased landlessness, unemployment, population growth, poverty and the RPF threat, Habyarimana used the vulnerability of the rural population to push Hutu extremist ideologies that blamed Tutsi dominance for Hutu suffering: "the [market] collapse sentenced many poor to unprecedented levels of despair, making them vulnerable to manipulation by politicians in search of extreme solutions to their country's (and to their own) growing insecurity" (Pottier 2002:21). Meanwhile, predominantly Hutu private actors linked to the

⁸ For a more detailed analytical framework on the causes of the conflict, see: Prunier 1995; Wyss 2007.

⁹ Human Rights Watch argues that European favouritism towards Tutsi were based on their colonial perception of them as a superior, 'Caucasoid' race from north eastern Africa which was responsible for the civilization in 'Black' Africa. After initial resistance to share information with the colonizers, Rwandans in the late 1920s and 30s, began to feed into this European preference for Tutsi by inventing stories that would continue to benefit Tutsi and validate European assumptions of race. These contributed to the first written works about Rwanda and were immersed in the Rwandan education system. Thus, Rwandans were taught a distorted version of history that remained unchallenged by scholars until the 1960s and laid the backbone for discrimination against the 'other'. Des Forges 1999. Also see: Thomson 2009a; Pottier 2002; Newbury 1988.

¹⁰ For an extensive analysis of the development of the identities of 'Hutu', 'Tutsi' and 'Twa' and the 'Hamitic hypothesis', see: Newbury 1988.

¹¹ The monopolization of power by southern Hutu under Kayibanda caused tensions with northern Hutu who felt their demands were not being adequately represented. Just as during the civil war 20 years later, Hutu attempted to reconcile with one another by blaming their divisions on Tutsi, causing violent campaigns against them in 1973 (Des Forges 1999:40). After overthrowing Kayibanda, however, Habyarimana was swift to purge the army high command of Gitarama Hutu (who represented the circle of the former President Kayibanda) and replace them with northern Hutu.

*Akazu*¹² were able to use their businesses to economically benefit from the anti-Tutsi campaign through the selling of arms, the provision of hotel grounds for secret meetings and militia trainings and the use of company resources such as cars for the transportation of kidnapped and killed persons. The financing of the civil war and the genocide was ensured as "Rich Hutu businessmen provided enough capital to import one machete for every third Rwandan male. In the absence of a ready supply of guns and ammunition, these machetes and homemade *pangas*, or nail studded clubs, became the weapons of choice for the *Interahamwe*¹³ and other militias" (USAID 2008:8). Radio-Télévision Libre des Milles Collines (RTLM) and the Kangura newspaper were owned by Hutu businessmen and used as the mouthpiece of Hutu extremists to demonize all Tutsi as the 'principal enemy', calling them *inyenzi*, 'cockroaches', while the 'partisan enemy' was anyone who supported the former in any way (Des Forges 1999:62-3).

After two years of continuous fighting between the FAR and the RPF, the Arusha Peace talks were initiated in June 1992 in order to end the civil war through the consolidation of rule of law, a power-sharing agreement, repatriation and resettlement of (mostly Tutsi) refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), the integration of the armed forces and other provisions (Wage and Haigh 2004:5-10). Habyarimana's concession to the Arusha Peace talks and the subsequent creation of 15 new political parties instigated fierce rivalries between parties and the use of 'youth militia' which normalized the use of violence for political ends. During the civil war, the 'Hutu Power' movement gained momentum in the country, recruiting thousands of civilians into the *Interahamwe* militia, distributing arms throughout the population, spreading ideologies of genocide and pulling the wool over the eyes of international observers. They instilled fear amongst those who had land and power to lose, "Every day Hutu farmers and businessmen were called upon to protect themselves against the Tutsi 'foreign invaders' [...] who would threaten to take their properties and once again cast them into servitude; resurrecting the historical narrative of the social revolution" (Baines 2004:134-135). The elite politicization of ethnicity remained a strategy used to ensure a popular rural support base (Wyss 2007). Despite the initiation of the Arusha Peace Accords, the civil war lasted four years, killed approximately 10,000 people and set the stage for the 1994 genocide.

On April 6, 1994, after finalizing power sharing talks with the RPF in Arusha, Tanzania the plane carrying President Juvénal Habyarimana and Burundian President Cyprien Ntaryamira was shot down by unknown assailants. Their deaths sparked the beginning of the Rwandan genocide. RTLM airwaves immediately accused the RPF and its supporters of the murder of the two Presidents, calling on the population to seek revenge. Within hours of the shooting down of the plane, moderate political opponents who had been lenient in the Arusha negotiations were targeted and killed on April 7: "politicians who were not 'for' the massacre, were then massacred themselves" (Interview, Representative of the tourism sector, Kigali, 9 June 2008, Author translation). The genocide was organized methodologically, and instigated strategically by the highest ranks of the ruling elite, who feared losing their power to the RPF. The *génocidaires*¹⁴ mostly originated from Hutu extremist political parties, *Akazu* members, and military officials. Under the new 'Hutu power' government of Prime Minister Jean Kambanda, the citizen 'self-defense plan' was formalized. This entailed the selection, training and mobilization of ordinary citizens in different administrative units to follow the elite groups of the *Interahamwe* in hunting down and killing Tutsi with machetes and

¹² The *Akazu*, or little hut, was a tight-knit group of powerful, elite Hutu who originated from the same northern prefectures of Gisenyi, Ruhengeri (now Musanze) and Byumba as President Habyarimana and who were extended relatives of his wife Agathe Kanza. President Habyarimana himself came from a modest upbringing and achieved power through his wife's network.

¹³ The *Interahamwe* recruited and trained youth males in military warfare. They have been accused of being the main perpetrators who promoted, conducted and incited genocide in 1994.

¹⁴ *Génocidaires* is the term used to describe people who are suspected of crimes of genocide. The planners of the 1994 genocide are locally known as 'the big fish'.

other farming tools (Human Rights Watch 2006:16). The genocide must thus be understood as more than an 'African tribal war', but rather as the desperate result of plans created by a small, self-interested Hutu elite who saw the killing of 'the other' as more acceptable than having to share its power with Tutsi and moderate Hutu (Newbury 1995, 1998).

The failure of the broader international community to respond to the genocide and the rejection by the United Nations Assistance Mission to Rwanda (UNAMIR) of the RPFs proposal to stop the genocide in a joint operation caused the RPF to react unilaterally. The RPF advanced through weaker regions in the east and south, then redirected towards the west and northwest, finally stopping the violence in July 1994 (Des Forges 1999:692-8). Between 6 April and 19 July 1994, approximately 100 days, an estimated 800,000 ethnic Tutsi, Twa¹⁵ and politically moderate Hutu were killed in the name of 'cleansing the nation'. Although the RPF halted the *génocidaires* by August 1994 and Rwanda set up a transitional government, many genocide perpetrators fled to then Zaire, causing a spill over of the conflict and eventually, the Zairian civil war.¹⁶ While diplomatic relations have improved between the two countries recently, the continued presence of armed *Interahamwe* militias in the now Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) remains a source of conflict.¹⁷

The socio-economic factors that led to the civil war and genocide are complex and diverse, having deep roots in the history of the country. Historically, the country was ruled by a small group of elite, whether through a colonial power, or independently (and consecutively) by Hutu elite or Tutsi elite. This concentration of power in a few hands was inherently linked to the competitive access to land, resources and opportunities in a small country, with a dependency on agriculture within limited arable land and the highest population density in Africa. The politicization of ethnicity and manipulation of the rural masses served to protect the interests of a few while affecting the livelihoods of many. The next section outlines the impacts of the conflict on tourism and its re-emergence in the aftermath of the conflict.

¹⁵ As very little literature focuses on the role and impact of the Twa, they are considered to be the forgotten victims of the Rwandan civil war and genocide. According to a provincial census carried out by the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization in late 1994, approximately 10,000 Twa died during the genocide, another 8,000 to 10,000 fled, resulting in a remaining population of only 10,000 to 20,000 people. As an apolitical minority which represented less than 1% of the population, the Twa were manipulated by both sides of the conflict and acted as both killers and victims. In post-genocide Rwanda, the Twa remain vulnerable and invisible as they continue to rely predominantly on pottery, remain geographically isolated and have less access to land rights and support services. See: UNPO 2009; Thomson 2009b.

¹⁶ For a detailed analysis of the relationship of the Rwandan Genocide and the Zaire civil war, see Prunier 2009.

¹⁷ After over a decade of regional conflict and political instability, diplomatic relations resumed between Rwanda and the DRC in 2009, marking an important step towards peace and cooperation between the two countries.

3 Tourism development in Rwanda

This section first provides a background to the tourism sector in Rwanda and how it was affected by the civil war and genocide. Then an overview of its development after the conflict is outlined in order to understand how it recovered so quickly and who were the main actors involved.

3.1 Gorillas in the mist

Gorilla tourism¹⁸ emerged in the 1980s as a strategy to help ensure the protection of the Volcanoes National Park, the monitoring of the gorillas and the generation of foreign currency. It reached its peak in 1984 with tourist arrivals at 39,000, with numbers decreasing to 17,000 at the beginning of the civil war in 1990, and dropping to almost zero with the outbreak of the genocide in 1994¹⁹ (Plumptre *et al.* 2001:12).

Only one gorilla was reported to have been targeted, killed and eaten by rebels during the civil war and genocide (Interview, Conservation Specialist, 17 June 2008). The low number of gorilla deaths during the conflict may be attributed to several factors such as: gorilla migration; a reduction in poachers due to the presence of militia and government forces in the parks; the continuous monitoring and removal of snares by some park staff despite security risks (Plumptre *et al.* 2001:13), and the commitment of both the RPF and the FAR to protect the gorillas despite heavy warfare. However, approximately 15 to 18 gorillas were killed in the first years after the genocide due to insurgencies being conducted by *Interahamwe* militia based in the DRC Virunga National Park. These gorillas were likely to have died in crossfire, through poacher snares or through human diseases contracted from the militias, armies and refugees living in their habitat. The overall Virunga gorilla population nevertheless increased from 309 gorillas in 1989 to 359 in 2000. Table 3.1 presents more detailed information on the changing patterns of the gorilla population in the Virunga region.

Table 3.1: Mountain gorilla populations of the Virungas (1971-2003). Adapted from Caldecotte and Miles 2005:140.

Census years	Total gorillas counted	Estimated population size	Number of social groups	Mean group size
1971-1972	261	274	31	7.9
1976-1978	252	268	28	8.8
1981	242	254	28	8.5
1986	279	293	29	9.2
1989	309	324	32	9.2
2000	359	359-395	32	10.9
2003	380	-	-	-

The protected areas generally and the wildlife in particular were affected more immediately following the conflict than actually during the conflict. As the RPF advanced and the former regime fled, the parks became battlefields, temporary refugee and IDP camps, and the source of food and resources for militias, government, IDPs and refugees. Much of the infrastructure in all three parks was destroyed, buildings were looted, forest areas were cleared for firewood, and wildlife was killed to sell or consume.

¹⁸ The mountain gorillas are distributed in two populations within three countries. The first population is located in the Virunga Volcanoes region, which consists of about 425 square kilometres of forest and open parkland on the borders of Rwanda (Volcanoes National Park), Uganda (Mgahinga Gorilla National Park) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Virunga National Park). The second population is in Bwindi Impenetrable Park in southwest Uganda.

¹⁹ Please refer to Table 3.2 for an overview of tourist arrival numbers from 1980-2008.

3.2 Hotel Rwanda

There were only a handful of hotels in Rwanda at the outbreak of the civil war and they were used by both the organizers of the genocide for meetings and training purposes, and later on by the fleeing population as safe havens. For example, the Hotel des Milles Collines was used as a safe haven for some 1,200 people, as portrayed in the film, 'Hotel Rwanda'.²⁰ It is considered, by some, to be an exceptional case of success as: "None of the people who took shelter at the hotel was killed during the genocide and none was killed at a small number of other sights [...] Perhaps these sanctuaries could not have been replicated so successfully elsewhere. But certainly it would have been right to try" (Des Forges 1999:633-4). During the genocide, many hotels were targeted by Interahamwe militia who attacked them, set them alight and looted them in their search for Tutsi (Interview, Representative of the tourism sector, Kigali, 24 June 2008). Most of the hotels in the country were sold to new owners and underwent renovations in the aftermath of the conflict.

3.3 Tourism emerging from the ashes

In the aftermath of the conflict, the new RPF-led government was faced with many pressing responsibilities such as the reintegration of refugees and former rebels into the society, the development of a justice system, resolution of societal divisions based on constructions of ethnicity and the loss of a highly skilled and educated work force. Amidst these problems, the development of tourism was not one of the top of priorities. However, tourism was nevertheless able to re-start its activities fairly quickly for several reasons.

National park staff survivors returned promptly to their posts and worked together with organizations such as the International Gorilla Conservation Programme (IGCP)²¹ to carry out the de-mining process. This helped to establish security in the national park regions for tourists, local Rwandese and the new government. Despite the difficult process of refugee and IDP resettlement, the national parks were able to maintain their size. As it remained difficult to attract tourists so soon after the genocide, the rebirth of gorilla tourism was possible due to the presence of humanitarian and development workers, donor representatives and conservationists who were based in the country. Aid money and investments into infrastructure development were made possible by the return of 'genocide guilt' ridden international donors who had fled Rwanda during the genocide (Reyntjens 2004; Pottier 2002). Also, 'new' donors who had not been present in Rwanda prior to the civil war and genocide developed partnerships with the RPF government. However, it was the restructuring of the government-run Rwanda Office of Tourism and National Parks (ORTPN) in 2001, which was the main reason behind the tourism sector's quick recovery despite its lack of infrastructure and services prior to the conflict.

The ORTPN underwent a strategic shift after a government-hired consultancy firm recommended that tourism become a priority focus which could help promote economic development. The development of a new National Tourism Strategy was carried out in 2001 by the consultancy firm, the ORTPN and the Tourism Working Group, which was made up of tourism representatives from the

²⁰ The Manager of the Hotel des Milles Collines, Paul Rusesabagina was portrayed as a hero in the film for saving the lives of so many Tutsi elite during the genocide. However, a smear campaign was launched against the actual Mr. Rusesabagina in 2005 for being a 'manufactured hero' who actually bribed the guests and kicked out those who couldn't pay. The campaign against him is likely to have come about due to Mr. Rusesabagina's increasingly vocal criticisms of the current Kagame government. For more, see editorials by Job Jabiro in *The New Times*, Kigali 2005-2007; Thomson 2009a.

²¹ The IGCP is a regional initiative supported by the African Wildlife Foundation, Fauna and Flora International, the World Wildlife Fund, and the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund to protect mountain gorillas in the DRC, Rwanda and Uganda.

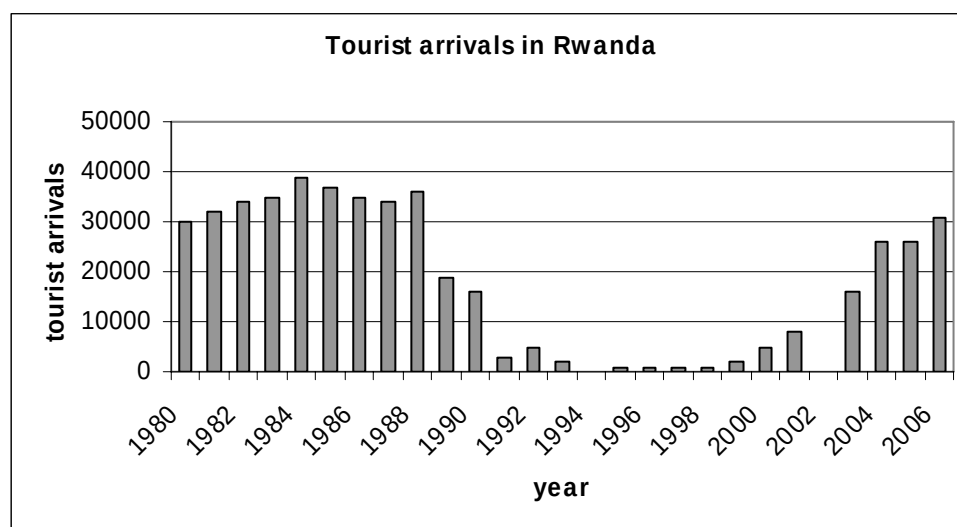
private and public sector (Telephone interview, General Expert on Tourism, 13 August 2008). The Strategy aimed to create high-value and low environmental impact experiences for eco-travellers, explorers and individual business travellers (Government of Rwanda 2007:1). To accomplish this, major targets were set to accomplish: "70,000 visitors, USD 100 million in receipts, visitor spending per day of USD 200, and a seven-day length of stay" (USAID 2008:15). The ORTPN was able to benefit from high park fees, government subsidies and grants from partners and donors to restructure itself, development new tourism infrastructure and market Rwanda as a destination.²² An ORTPN international marketing campaign and the development of partnerships with international tour operators were fundamental to promoting a positive image of the country and improving its reputation. Specifically, the ORTPN targeted tourists from 'new donor countries' such as the United Kingdom and Sweden who had not been present in the country prior to the conflict. The establishment of the Rwanda Private Sector Federation (RPSF) in 1999 aided the process of privatization where hotels, restaurants and other businesses were sold to new management who were able to renovate, refurbish and re-launch them.

The investments into tourism infrastructure and facilities translated into higher tourism arrivals and receipts for the country. The table below demonstrates how tourism arrival numbers have developed from the period 1980 to 2006.²³ In 2004, the country was receiving USD 14 million in tourism receipts. This increased to USD 26 million in 2005, USD 33 million in 2006 and USD 42.3 million in 2007. In 2007, tourism became the top foreign currency earner in the country, contributing to about 3.7 percent to the national gross domestic product (GDP), above coffee (USD 35.7 million) and tea (USD 31.5 million) (Government of Rwanda 2008).²⁴ Investments in the sector have led to more accommodation facilities as well as an increase in standards that attracts a different type of tourist. Rwanda had approximately 650 rooms available countrywide in 2004, and as of the end of 2008, it had 163 hotels with 3,552 rooms available (Government of Rwanda 2009a). Marketing campaigns and investments have also boosted accomplishments such as winning first prize for best African exhibit at the annual International Tourism Exchange (ITB) in Berlin in 2007 and 2008 and being identified by a leading travel guide, Lonely Planet, as one of the top ten countries to visit in its annual 'Best in Travel 2009'.

²² Currently, the ORTPN is composed of two principal agencies, the Rwanda Wildlife Authority (RWA) which protects wild flora and fauna and monitors and plans park management and the Rwanda Tourism Authority (RTA) which develops and implements policies and practices to enhance the tourism sector profile and generate revenue.

²³ There is a lack of reliable data on the development of the tourism industry, which makes it very difficult to provide official tourist arrival numbers from the 1970s until present. Varying sources differ from each other in the tens of thousands. This is could be due to the loss of former data as well as several changes to the tabulation methods of the government in recent years. For the sake of consistency, this report uses data collected and published by the ORTPN.

²⁴ In 2007 and 2008, Rwanda adopted a new UN tabulation method which no longer looks only at holiday visitors and some business travellers but includes all business visitors, visitors to friends and relatives as well as transit and other purposes. This raised numbers extensively from 826,374 visitors in 2007 to 1 million visitors in 2008 (Government of Rwanda 2009a). During the first semester of 2009, almost 440,000 international visitors arrived in Rwanda. This has translated into higher tourism receipts.

Table 3.2: Tourist Arrivals in Rwanda 1980-2008²⁵

One would expect that the restructuring of a tourism sector after the conflict would require a large role on the part of the private sector. However, the Rwandan case shows that without government support, it probably would have been very difficult to have kick-started tourism in the first place. The dedication of the government generally and the ORTPN specifically should be recognized for having developed a strong foundation for tourism development which has allowed the sector to earn significant foreign currency and attract tourists back into the country so soon after the civil war and genocide. The role of independent tour operators emerged with the creation of the Tourism Working Group however remains limited under the shadow of the ORTPN. The following section will analyze the ORTPN and other private tourism companies more closely to understand how they have contributed to peacebuilding activities.

²⁵ It is unknown to the author why data from 2003 appears to be unavailable from statistical sources.

4 The tourism sector as a tool for post-conflict peacebuilding in Rwanda

The field research study in Rwanda demonstrated that there are a number of activities carried out by independent tourism actors and the ORTPN which contribute to peacebuilding. The dimensions of the 'peacebuilding palette' of Figure 1.1 will be used to outline how specific undertakings of tourism actors contribute to broader peacebuilding efforts.²⁶ However, the challenges and negative repercussions of establishing such programs will also be outlined as the results are not always positive. Most tourism efforts tend to contribute to the areas of Reconciliation & Justice and Socio-economic Foundations, and less so on Security and Political Framework. Thus an emphasis will be placed on the first two issues.

4.1 Socio-economic Foundations

Tourism actors can directly contribute to peacebuilding while supporting their core business activities by focusing on revitalizing socio-economic foundations. As the tourism sector is a labour intensive industry that markets the country in order to attract foreign visitors and international investment, it could play a role in peace promotion by: developing inclusive business models, providing financial and in-kind contributions, promoting environmental conservation, reconstructing infrastructure, creating employment, supporting women's initiatives and addressing socio-economic exclusion.

4.1.1 Inclusive business models

The prospect of the tourism sector to create inclusive business models ideally affords local economic opportunities to the poor as "employees, entrepreneurs, suppliers, distributors, retailers, customers or sources of innovation, in ways that further their human development are that are financially, environmentally and socially sustainable" (Ashley, De Brine *et al.* 2007:16). For example, the establishment of joint venture projects between tourism companies and local communities have the opportunity to encompass conflict vulnerable groups into a business initiative.

Example of business engagement:

The Sabyinyo Silverback Lodge in Volcanoes National Park was built and is operated by a wildlife safari company but owned by the Sabyinyo Community Lodge Association (SACOLA) community trust. The trust represents 6,000 low-income Rwandans from a nearby village and aims to "create an income source for impoverished Rwandans so that poaching, cutting down trees, or extracting resources (such as minerals and charcoal) from gorilla habitat is no longer necessary" (Marshall 2008). Revenue generated between 2007 and 2008 was used to construct 26 houses for vulnerable families living around Volcanoes National Park. To date, it is the only one of its kind in Rwanda and represents an important model for joint venture projects. In addition, it has been constructed with eco-friendly materials, thereby following the tourism strategy towards developing Rwanda as a luxury eco-destination.

Challenges:

While joint venture projects enable individuals who may not be eligible for employment in the tourism industry to benefit, such projects "can be challenging to establish, especially when it comes to determining appropriate profit-sharing structures and fair allocation of funds within the commu-

²⁶ See: Banfield, J., C. Gündüz *et al.* 2006:6, for an adapted version of Smith's figure into a model for 'peace entrepreneurship'.

nity itself" (Ashley, De Brine *et al.* 2007:18). There is the risk that historical and socio-economic cleavages within the society emerge through these ventures as the access and selection of local community group beneficiaries is often based on ethnicity and relationships with local officials.

4.1.2 Monetary donations

One approach to contributing towards socio-economic foundations in a peacebuilding process is to provide financial and in-kind contributions. This can be, for example through philanthropic donations, physical reconstruction or economic infrastructure. The provision of financial resources to communities that have been greatly affected by conflict helps to establish a cooperative business relationship and provides wider access to resources and opportunities that can support alternative livelihood strategies.

Example of business engagement:

The ORTPN's Revenue Sharing Scheme disburses 5% of its revenues towards community projects in the close vicinity of the national park territories. Most of these communities were displaced to accommodate protected areas and restricted from accessing the local resources such as water and firewood. Thus, monetary and in-kind contributions provide them with other means of affording the resources they require for their livelihoods and prevent them from having to enter the park illegally. In the long term this also creates a positive relationship between the nearby communities and actors of the tourism sector as the local population can benefit from the "provision of water from the catchment. They also receive employment opportunities in conservation and tourism, which enhance livelihood security, promote a culture of peace in the region, and halt biodiversity loss" (Kameri-Mbote 2007:19). According to the ORTPN, over 54 community development projects have been financed since 2005 and total support given in 2008 to community projects²⁷ (including the revenue sharing scheme) was approximately USD 840,016 (Government of Rwanda 2009a). In addition to ORTPN financial and in-kind contributions, partnerships with tour operators have led to the building of houses, wells and water reserves and the provision of firewood to communities to prevent them from illegally entering the park and to enable them to still benefit from tourism revenue.

Challenges:

One interviewee within the tourism industry in Rwanda questioned whether the ORTPN revenue sharing process always gave five per cent of its earnings in a systematic manner. Further the interviewee emphasized the need to better develop implementation mechanisms so that corruption and financial mismanagement would become less likely (Interview, Representative of the tourism industry, Musanze, 16 June 2008).

Since the ORTPN scheme and tourism companies focus on developing partnerships with those communities living in the near vicinity of the national parks, many other vulnerable communities in the same region which may have been more affected by the civil war and genocide remain unattended to (Interview, Government official (International), Kigali, 23 June 2008). In the long-term, this could cause tensions and conflicts if some groups feel that they are unable to access the benefits of tourism.

²⁷ Projects included: the support for 11 schools and 2600 students, development of health centers accessible by 30,000 community members around Nyungwe National Park, construction of water tanks and taps for communities of about 5,800 families around Nyungwe and Volcanoe National Parks (ORTPN 2009).

4.1.3 Conservation as an economic incentive

The reliance of the tourism sector on the mountain gorillas and other wildlife and parks makes the shared management of natural resources/land a promising entry point for arousing a sense of common natural heritage and shared purpose between former conflicting parties. In this respect, eco-tourism is the marriage of development and conservation which serves as an economic component that strengthens the cooperative and peacebuilding effect of conservation efforts (Strong-Cvetich 2007). Further, it is argued that "by helping to integrate protected areas into local and national economies, tourism can provide economic incentives and justifications for supporting species and habitats" (Kameri-Mbote 2007:19).

Example of business engagement:

In the last decade, the gorilla population have grown by more than 10 percent which can be attributed to the investments made into conservation agencies and the ORTPN. These have materialized into more intense monitoring by park staff, enforced imprisonment of poachers, as well as projects that have reintegrated former poachers into the tourism industry as porters and guides.

Challenges:

In order to sustain conservation and prevent the transmission of disease from humans to gorillas, visitors are only allowed to spend one hour with the gorilla groups and they must remain approximately seven metres away at all times. There are seven groups of habituated gorillas who are available to be seen by tourists. In order to minimize gorilla-human interaction so as to protect the gorillas from disease and allow them to retain their privacy, only eight people are allowed in each group which spends a maximum of one hour with the gorillas. These place a restriction of 56 available permits a day which constrains the tourism sector as a whole. To optimize the sector, Rwanda needs to further develop other tourism attractions and broaden the spectrum of available options and activities.

Although the sector is very focused on advancing ecotourism facilities, there is the risk that construction of hotel facilities, parks, restaurants and bars to meet the growing needs of more tourists could lead to environmental degradation and competition over land as a scarce resource. The political control of land represents a current conflict line, particularly in an agricultural-based country with the highest population density in Africa. The use of local materials to build tourism facilities provides employment but also raises the prices of the products for the local population. Ecotourism and conservation efforts negatively impact peace if socio-economic inequalities amongst the population are reinforced. This can be done unintentionally by benefiting some groups (cultural, ethnic, socio-political, socio-economic, gender etc) more than others. Or by setting standards that protect the environment and wildlife but lead the population to have to displace or prevent them from accessing the same resources as before.

4.1.4 Physical reconstruction

There are numerous examples of how the tourism sector has been involved in post-conflict reconstruction through the renovation or (re)construction of houses, schools, infrastructure, access to resources and hotel facilities. By making efforts towards providing access to roads, water, electricity and communication technologies that benefit both tourists and residents alike, the sector has the opportunity to prevent future conflicts (Ashley, De Brine *et al.* 2005:8). Generally, the construction and maintenance of roads are particularly relevant for the tourism industry as bad roads restrict access to markets and reduce income from tourism (World Bank 2005:19).

Example of business engagement:

One tour operator used income gained from tourism to hire local staff to build and renovate several homes, and construct and operate a pre-school for orphans: "We couldn't have come this far without tourism" (Interview, Representative of the tourism sector, Musanze, 16 June 2008). The tour operator works with the local Mayor and his government to identify poor families and orphans within one community area who can attend the school. This interaction between the tour operator and the local government also contributes to the political framework of peacebuilding as they are held accountable to one another.

Challenges:

Large investments into tourism infrastructure remain highly dependent on foreign investors. This increases the likelihood that company ownership and control tends to be from abroad (Richter 1999:44) as most large private businesses are owned by foreigners in Rwanda. Once considered to be the tourism sector's largest investor, Dubai World Africa announced in 2009 that it would only go ahead with two of the eight projects initially planned for Rwanda. The news that it will no longer invest USD 230 million in Rwandan tourism has been a blow to the country, which envisioned tourism investment as being a key opportunity to creating jobs, developing infrastructure as well as reducing its foreign aid dependency. While President Kagame insists on relieving Rwanda of foreign aid dependence, the underdeveloped private sector and limited industries make this a difficult goal to achieve.

4.1.5 Employment creation

According to statistics provided by the Rwanda Office of Tourism and National Parks (ORTPN), by end of 2008, tourism had generated approximated 413,000 direct jobs. The tourism sector also leads to indirect employment to other supporting industries such as customs and immigration services, food and beverage production, transportation, construction or retail supply and the handicraft industry. This has caused small businesses in communities to emerge and start up micro-finance or income-generating projects. These communities benefit through tour guide fees, the buying of their local products or provision of services which support the tourist's experience. This motivates local communities to establish businesses and marketable products which can provide them with livelihood opportunities.

Example of business engagement:

The employment of former poachers as trekking porters has been an important step for wildlife conservation and tourism in the country. Such jobs provide poachers with an alternate source of income and the opportunity to learn new skills. Also, in the Iby'Iwacu Cultural Village, former poachers live and act as tourist guides, presenting visitors with Intore dancing, techniques in making traditional food such as millet and sorghum, or arts and crafts such as knitting. Funds raised go towards sustaining the community and its needs such as buying seeds for agriculture, school materials for children or investing into local business ventures.

Challenges:

At the moment employment and income-generating activities tend to remain solely in the capital or around the national parks, preventing people in other parts of the country to feel the positive impacts of tourism. As argued by Bray, when the social benefits are slow or invisible, then the likelihood of a recurrence of conflict becomes higher (2009:2).

Moreover, there are no concrete affirmative action policies in Rwanda that ensure that people of different ethnicities and backgrounds have equal access to employment and education opportunities in tourism. It also proved very difficult to find out whether tourism companies and the ORTPN were making attempts to ensure that persons from different classes and ethnicities were being recruited

through affirmative action policies. This is due to the 2003 revised Constitution which make the public references of ethnic identity illegal (article 33), alongside the criminalization of 'ethnic divisionism' and 'trivializing genocide' (article 13) (Thomson 2009a:75). While the abolition of the identification of ethnicities is an attempt to erase old divisions and conflict lines, it also prevents the establishment of affirmative action policies from being implemented which aim to target certain ethnicities that might have been discriminated under former regimes. This poses limitations in accomplishing reconciliation within ethnicities in post-genocide Rwanda (Reyntjens 2004).

While the development of tourism in Rwanda offers many employment opportunities, training remains a huge challenge as there are only a handful of tourism training programs in the country. Many tourism company owners consist of persons of Rwandan origin who were raised and educated in Kenya, Uganda and the UK and who have recently returned to the country to pursue their career. While the tourism sector thus offers interesting opportunities for Diaspora to return to Rwanda, this poses a risk as tourism companies preferentially hire educated and skilled Diaspora and elites, ignoring the local population who were likely to have been more affected by the conflict (Milne *et al.* 2001:374-6). The need for more capacity building training in Rwanda in order to develop highly skilled professionals has sparked the emergence of tourism programmes and schools in the country, but their expertise remains limited.

4.1.6 Role of women entrepreneurs in peacebuilding

The civil war and the genocide caused significant loss of the male population and a subsequent rise in female and child-headed households. Thus initiatives that target women as a vulnerable group but also as an important economic actor are integral to addressing this repercussion of conflict.

Example of business engagement:

One non-profit women's organization *Association de Solidarité des Femmes Rwandaises* (ASOFERWA) purchased the Kinigi Guest House at the foothill of Volcanoes National Park: "With the resources collected from the services rendered, Kinigi Guest house seeks to ensure that its development goals are achieved by assisting the constructive engagement of vulnerable children. Women and child-headed households in the district are supported through the development of knowledge, sustainability and empowerment at all levels" (ASOFERWA, Kinigi Guest house brochure).

There are other initiatives that promote joint economic activities across conflict divides such as the making and selling of arts and crafts by both Tutsi and Hutu survivors and widows through AVEGA-AGAHIZA. These activities tend to come from cooperatives and associations that have developed relationships with the Private Sector Federation's Chamber of Crafts, Artists & Artisans and Chamber of Women Entrepreneurs. By providing vulnerable women, each of whom were affected by the 1994 genocide differently, a venue to earn money, learn new skills and discuss their different problems, such projects support reconciliation and women's economic progress in the country.

Challenges:

Despite these strides towards forgiveness, it has also proven difficult in post-genocide Rwanda to reconcile Hutu and Tutsi widows due to suspicion amongst Tutsi that the Hutu woman's husband was a genocide perpetrator. The lack of trust amongst some women prevents them from having the opportunity to take part in initiatives such as the ones mentioned above. Other organizations even maintain an ethnic division of membership and there have been cases wherein Hutu women were prevented from joining a widows association due to their ethnicity (Prunier 2009:3).

4.1.7 Socio-economic exclusion

While peacebuilding programmes tend to focus on Tutsi victims and survivors, the Twa remain the forgotten victims of the Rwandan civil war and genocide. Often choosing to remain in rural and

forest areas of the country and making their income through pottery, the Twa are often neglected and segregated from the society.

Example of business engagement:

The Kinigi Cultural Village in Musanze is one tourism initiative that aims to teach visitors about Twa traditions and practices, while providing the Twa with a source of income. Although the ethnic terms of Hutu, Tutsi and Twa have been banned from lingua franca in the country, some tour operators still target the Twa in order to help them overcome discrimination. Such project assistance and capacity building training to previously excluded or marginalized groups helps address conflict lines by strengthening the indigenous drivers of post-conflict recovery, thus reducing the likelihood of the use of violence in the future (Ashley, De Brine *et al.* 2007:16-22).

Challenges:

Tour operators are not, however, allowed to mention in their tourism brochures that tours to Kinigi Cultural Village have been designed to help the Twa to benefit economically from tourism as ethnic identities are not accorded with special protection under the Constitution²⁸ (Interview, Representative of tourism sector, Kigali, 13 June 2008).

4.2 Reconciliation & Justice

4.2.1 Healing through memorials

The creation of initiatives that support dialogue and awareness-raising on the history of conflict allow people to engage with others who have undergone similar traumas. This is an important process of healing and reconciling with one's demons and former conflict enemies.

Example of business engagement:

Tourism companies have, in recent years, supported the inclusion of a visit to the Gisozi Memorial Centre. Opened on the 10th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide, the Centre is a mass grave site for over 250,000 people, and also houses a museum and documentation centre as a tribute to the victims of the Rwandan genocide. When asked what kind of role genocide sites can play in tourism and peacebuilding, one interviewee expressed:

I think that they play an important role but it's a bit of a double-edged sword. (Hesitates) I don't think it's wrong to add the genocide sites as an experience as it gives people the opportunity to see the history. I don't see it as dark tourism²⁹ or genocide tourism, but more as historical tourism. It would be better for the country to label it as the latter, otherwise they're sort of shooting themselves in the foot if people continue to only associate the country with the genocide and nothing else (Telephone interview, General expert on tourism industry, 13 August 2008).

The Gisozi Memorial Centre represents the one venue where tourists are explicitly confronted with the history of genocide. One peace and conflict expert argued that realistic aspects of Rwandan life should be better included in tourism strategies: "The ORTPN is pushing for a lot of programs to attract tourists to make the most money as possible. But in my opinion, they are neglecting the aspect of 'humanitarian tourism'. I would like people to come to Rwanda, not only to see the gorillas or *les collines*, but to come for a humanitarian experience. Something like what they have developed

²⁸ See above 4.1.5 on the Constitution and the banning of ethnic terminology.

²⁹ See Chapter 1 for definition of 'dark tourism'.

in Auschwitz or other countries. But I don't want to only focus on sadness, death and tragedy, but I also want people to see the hope, creativity and diversity of the country." (Informal discussion, Peace and conflict expert, Switzerland, October 2009, Author translation).

Challenges:

Some critical local and foreign interviewees stated that they felt that the Gisozi Memorial Centre only told 'one (Tutsi) side' of the story of the Rwandan genocide and that visiting foreigners were likely to leave the centre with a simplistic 'Tutsi=good, Hutu=bad' understanding of the country which would not reflect the roots of the conflict nor how the role of victim and perpetrator in Rwanda has changed sides several times (Interviews, Conflict and Peace Experts, Rwanda, 9-27 June 2008). This historical revisionism also prevents the tourist from being able to develop an objective perspective to also be open to critiques of Paul Kagame and the Rwanda Patriotic Front as they are only envisioned within the role of hero.

4.2.2 History and truth-telling

As tourism attractions currently focus on eco-experiences such as primate trekking, bird watching and forest hiking, the role of tour operators and guides has a large influence over the perception that tourists have of the country.

Example of business engagement:

Tour guides take the role of historians in the country as they become responsible for educating tourists about the history of the country. This provides tourists an important insight into how individuals have been personally affected by the genocide and allows them to put a face to the tragedy. This dialogue engagement helps tourism actors to also come to terms with their own history and trauma as they have to formulate their experiences to foreigners.

Challenges:

The interpretation of the history of genocide remains highly sensitive and in some cases contested. When requested to give me an overview of what information on the genocide is provided to tourists, one tour operator regurgitated the government discourse that argues that ethnic divisions began with the Belgian colonizers and was then used by post-colonial governments in their quest for more power. There was no reference made to the role that the Tutsi *Mwami* may have played in setting the scene of ethnic difference in pre-colonial Rwanda:

Segregation did not exist under the former King. People lived together in harmony. With the arrival of colonization, the separation of people was created in order to control them. They were divided along the lines of the royal court, number of cattle owned, ethnicity and cultivation. Through this principle, the population was divided into three: Hutu as the cultivators, Tutsi as the cattle farmers and Twa as the hunters (Interview, Representative of the tourism sector, Kigali, 9 June 2008, author's translation).

This is one indication of how the government has an influence, not only on the ORTPN, but also on independent tour operators and guides as they become government mouthpieces to convey the history to tourists and visitors while shouldering the responsibility of truth-telling.

4.2.3 Traditional justice mechanisms

After the establishment of a new government in Rwanda under the Rwanda Patriotic Front, the country was faced with the arduous task of bringing the perpetrators of the genocide to justice. At the international level, the International Criminal Tribunal of Rwanda (ICTR) was established in Arusha, Tanzania to try the high profile cases of the main organizers of the genocide, many of them members of the *Akazu*. However, at the local level, the traditional *gacaca* courts were revived in order to provide a source of community justice and reconciliation. This process brought communities

and villages together in a setting where witnesses and survivors of genocide could give their testimonies of what they experienced and saw, whilst bringing forward accused perpetrators who could defend themselves or admit to the crimes.

Example of business engagement:

The *gacaca* proceedings also attracted a lot of international attention as it represented a rare case where communities could take justice into their own hands. After the peace process, there was an emphasis on *gacaca* tourism which would give people the opportunity to learn about the *gacaca* law process; however this form of 'research tourism' didn't really work:

In the end it didn't work out because it is basically easier for the tour operators to make money off of gorilla permits. If you compare it is just not as lucrative since you already have, for example, gorilla tourism that is so well established, it is just easier to get tourists involved in the experience. I mean it could happen, but operators would really have to work hard to make it happen, explain the background of gacaca, set up a timetable system as you don't always know when they are being held, there are basically a lot more complications with it. Gorillas are an easier business model. But it is not that there is not money to be made through gacaca, but it is just a lot easier to promote existing gorilla product (Telephone interview, General expert on the tourism industry, 2 September 2008).

Challenges:

The above observation demonstrates how, despite efforts made to diversify tourism attractions and promote, for example, research tourism, gorillas as a tourism product continue to take centre stage. This puts into question how successful tourism activities that promote peacebuilding can be, if they always have to compete with gorilla tourism.

4.2.4 Cultural tours to local communities

In order to diversify from nature tourism and market cultural tourism, most tour operators in Rwanda have developed at least one tour that gives tourists the opportunity to go to a community, interact with the people and learn about their traditional practices. According to one study on the village income from cultural visits near national parks, USD8-12 can be earned per visitor (SNV-Rwanda and ODI 2008:2). The developments of 'community-based' or 'pro-poor' tourism activities amplify interaction between tourists and locals and give poor communities the opportunity to gain some income from tourism.

Example of business engagement:

One independent tour operator takes tourists to visit and volunteer at an education centre the company has built for orphan children. The company has also taken donations from tourists and NGOs to build small huts so that widows of the genocide with no family of their own can live and raise other orphans (Fieldnotes, Rwanda, June 2008).

Challenges:

It is unclear how communities, widows and orphans are selected by tour operators to benefit from these tours. It is likely that they are identified and chosen by the tour operator according to their ethnicity, geographical location and personal networks. This shows that the personal identity, geographic origin and ethnicity of an individual tour operator representative can play a large role in the selection of community beneficiaries.

4.2.5 Dialogue between leaders of antagonist groups

The establishment of transboundary peace parks is one way to implement regional cooperation between former warring parties. The acknowledgement of an area or resource as a common asset provides the motivation for engagement.

Example of business engagement:

The common interest in conservation of the remaining 720 gorillas and the national parks in the Virunga-Bwindi region of Uganda, Rwanda and the DRC have proven to be an incentive for these former enemies to work together towards establishing a transboundary peace park. The Transboundary Executive Secretariat is trying to engage with representatives from the four regional national parks and tourism representatives to establish common standards. These are: Virunga National Park (DRC), Volcanoes National Park (Rwanda), the Mgahinga Gorilla National Park and Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park (both in Uganda). By setting up regional circuits of gorilla tourism based on a cooperative management of natural resources and a revenue-sharing scheme, the three countries could reduce costs and investments in the parks, establish a sense of economic interdependence based on trust and have the opportunity to offer tourists the possibility to explore the whole region easier (Interview, Conservation specialist, Kigali, 25 June 2008).

Challenges:

The continued instability in the DRC however, prevents the possibility of a three-country regional circuit and the full implementation of transboundary cooperation between the countries.

4.3 Security

4.3.1 Environmental conservation

Conservation in Rwanda has played a historic role as agencies dedicated to the protection of wildlife and the environment in general, and the gorillas in particular have made great sacrifices to carry out monitoring activities even during the genocide which were intertwined with security dimensions.

Example of business engagement:

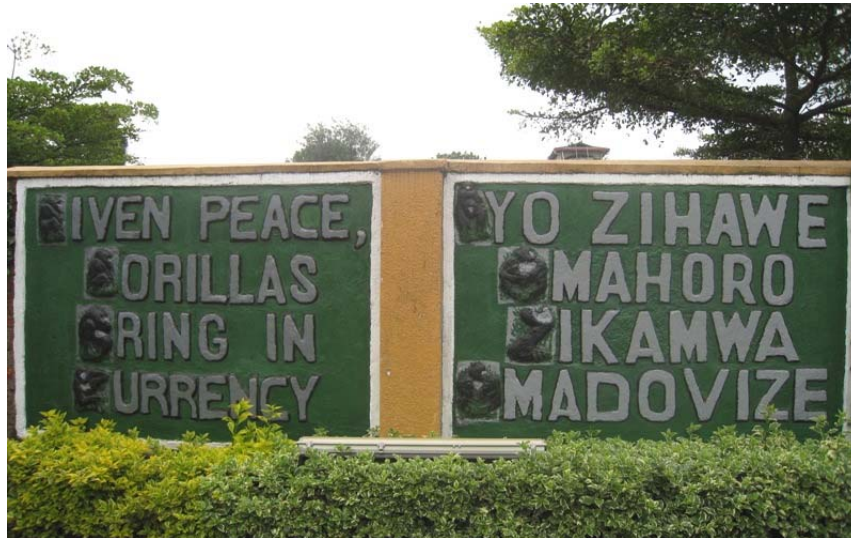
In the aftermath of the conflict, it was the conservation agencies who conducted the demining process in the national parks and who lobbied to the government to maintain the size and protection of the parks, despite the need of land to accommodate returning refugees. Now, fifteen years after the genocide, it is these efforts by conservation groups that have helped to ensure that tourism is a sector that can flourish in the country while also contributing, albeit indirectly, to peacebuilding.

The below picture which was taken at the entrance of the Muhabura Hotel in Musanze (close to the Volcanoes National Park in northern Rwanda) portrays a direct link between the importance of peace and security and gorilla tourism. The sign suggests that it is only during peacetime that gorilla tourism can flourish financially.

Challenges:

Gorillas are value laden in Rwandan society, placing them at the top of the hierarchy, sometimes even above humans themselves. While the de-mining of the national parks became top priority due to the need to provide security for tourists and the mountain gorillas, the de-mining process in rural areas where local people have been the victim to landmine explosions, took until late 2009. Further, while the preservation of the national park borders after the conflict have been integral for tourism, the displacement and homelessness of thousands of returning refugees after the conflict were the payment.

Image 4.1: Sign outside Muhabura Hotel, Musanze: Given Peace, Gorillas Bring in Currency.



4.4 Political framework

4.4.1 Accountability measures

Example of business engagement:

Some tour operators work together with their local government to identify vulnerable communities that could benefit from community-based tourism projects. This ensures a certain level of accountability between the two actors and promotes information-sharing.

Challenges:

Corruption is a problem linked to community-based tourism projects. One tour operator had difficulties when it teamed up with an international NGO to give a rural orphanage medical supplies, food and money to improve the living conditions of the orphans. While the orphanage was receiving supplies from the NGO and visiting tourists, the head nun was carrying out corrupt activities and financial mismanagement by using the donations for other purposes and selling the supplies to villagers (Interview, Representative of the tourism sector, Musanze, 16 June 2008). Another tour operator exclaimed:

They're selling these children... [The nun] made money from tourists, NGOs, the Church. The orphanage isn't even registered. Even though everyone knows what has happened, it is tough for Catholics to give other Catholics a problem. Money is coming in so quickly through tourism and everyone wants a piece of it (Interview, Representative of the tourism sector, Musanze, 16 June 2008).

This represents one example of how tourism can contribute negatively to corruption within local communities. Instead of benefitting orphans and providing them with educational resources, competition over tourism revenue leads to corruption. Further, orphans are treated as 'money makers' with 'tourist attractions' without the opportunity to receive any advantages.

There is also the risk that the tour operator does not provide the orphanage or the visited community with a fair share of the tourism profits. While one tour operator defended that they always paid the community leaders in cash, in front of the tourists during the visit, the lack of operational procedure

and oversight makes this difficult to ensure (Fieldnotes, Rwanda, June 2008). Corruption and the exploitation and exoticization of communities in the name of tourism are detrimental to the communities in the long run. At the moment, companies are not maintaining records of how much they earn and how much they give to the community leaders. Everything still tends to be paid in untraceable cash: “Everything to do with tourism nowadays is community based, but how much are they pocketing and how much are they paying back?” (Interview, Representative of the tourism sector, Musanze, 16 June 2008). These examples demonstrate that the lack of accountability measures in community tours make it difficult to prevent corrupt practices. Thus one tour operator called for the establishment of verifiable disbursement measures and record keeping ensuring that conflict-affected and vulnerable groups do in fact reap the benefits of tourism (*Ibid*).

4.5 Overview

This section has provided specific examples of how tourism is engaging in activities that contribute to the four main pillars of peacebuilding. Overall, the tourism sector in Rwanda has been more engaged in establishing socio-economic foundations after the conflict and in reconciliation and justice efforts than in security and political framework. This is likely due to the capacities of tourism sectors, their interest and motivations, and the opportunities that they are provided with. The section has also highlighted some of the challenges that tourism actors face in their business engagement in peacebuilding. The following section will provide some recommendations and concluding remarks.

5 Recommendations

5.1 Recommendations for the tourism sector

Mapping the potentials and challenges:

Efforts should be made to discuss and debate how tourism can support peacebuilding activities. A mapping of relevant actors, possible entry points and negative effects of tourism should also be acknowledged.

Employment and training:

Develop a process of affirmative action that enables community members of different classes, ethnicities and backgrounds the opportunity to have employment. Develop in-house mandatory training as well as external centres which provide service training alongside conflict sensitivity practices. The focus should be placed on being able to offer high quality service while reiterating what conflict factors to be aware of. This is particularly important if Rwanda wants to further enhance its domestic tourism market.

Image-building:

In order to market Rwanda as an attractive, safe destination, while acknowledging the remaining challenges of post-conflict reconciliation, marketing strategies should try to emphasize a tourism sector that not only offers luxury destination, but also aims to advance peace promoting activities. It is important for tourism actors to not only focus on activities that are high-income generators, but are also taking the population and reconstruction processes into consideration.

Promote community development and cultural tourism:

There are numerous ways in which tourism companies can enhance their relationships with communities. In addition to employment, financial and in-kind contributions, inclusive business models, guided tours, joint-venture projects need to be further developed in Rwanda so that they are transparent and they foster entrepreneurship. A move away from purely charitable donations would be an important step to the development of a work force that is independent and motivated to work for more than hand outs. Further, activities that emphasize cultural experiences would improve interaction, awareness and help diversify tourism.

Targeting vulnerable groups:

In order to target groups such as women, orphans, youth, ethnic minorities and former soldiers who have been each highly affected by the civil war and genocide, tourism companies can develop activities that cater to the needs and capacities of the specific groups. For example, in order to engage in the rehabilitation process of former soldiers, tourism companies could hire them as national park porters such as they have done with former poachers.

Cooperation with other actors:

In order for tourism companies in Rwanda to become more independent from the ORTPN and to have the capacity to promote peace more directly and effectively, cooperation with other actors should be strengthened. The involvement of other actors in building a conflict sensitive tourism strategy would be one way to benefit from the ORTPN's power and resources, whilst engaging with other actors for the development of a diverse tourism sector that incorporates peace promotion within its core strategies. While the tourism sector has been successful under the leadership of the government-run ORTPN, the diversification of the sector towards private actors becomes imperative in order to enable competition, high standards and independence from government processes. The development of the Chamber of Tourism and other private actors will become more decisive in the long-term. Also, the tourism sector can benefit from the expertise and knowledge of other business sectors and organizations which can create awareness on how to advance peace whilst maintaining their current activities. Tourism companies focused on conservation can make efforts to work more closely with their Ugandan and Congolese counterparts to help peace and stability in the region.

5.2 Recommendations for the Government

Developing an enabling environment:

In order to prevent elite individuals from having superior access to contracts and tourism licences, efforts should be made to distribute information and strengthen the legalization process, while removing bureaucratic barriers. The development of new businesses within the tourism sector could help improve competition and efficiency and also relieve the government from carrying the torch for all tourism activities. It is however, also worth mentioning that the privatization of the tourism sector in Rwanda could also lead to negative consequences as “private sector interests might run counter to the negotiation of new social contracts as a basis for enduring peace” (Barbara 2006: 582). Therefore the creation of an enabling environment would also require the inclusion of access to communities and conflict-affected societies.

Opening up of critical space for interaction:

An engagement in dialogue between tourism companies and the government in general (not only through the ORTPN) could help understand some of the parallel challenges of post-conflict Rwanda that could be integrated into the business practices of the private and tourism sector. By identifying key problems in the country together and analyzing how the tourism sector could make a contribution, the government could help enable the private sector to be more involved in the process of reconciliation and reconstruction in more than just a monetary way.

Developing an independent tourism sector:

While there are proactive, independent tourism actors in Rwanda, the industry is still predominantly front lined by the government-run ORTPN. Although the government’s involvement in tourism has contributed greatly to its success, this could lead, in the long term, to corruption or manipulation of the sector as it plays an important economic role as the main foreign currency earner. The current interdependence between the sector and the government could be counterproductive to overarching peacebuilding and reconciliation processes as underlying struggles may be swept underneath the carpet in order to provide more ‘positive images’ of the country.³⁰ The government would have the power to use the industry to manipulate external perceptions that everything in the country is glorious, despite more destitute realities. Thus, a long term goal to making the tourism sector in the country more independent from the government would be essential to ensuring effectiveness, but also for its ability to contribute to peace promotion.

³⁰ For criticisms on the current government’s approach to reconciliation, see Reyntjens 2004 and Ansom 2009.

6 Concluding remarks

While the tourism industry should not be assumed to be the only sector in Rwanda which can support peacebuilding processes, it holds a lot of potential due to its ability to contribute to building socio-economic foundations and reconciliation and justice mechanisms.

Tourism companies have the opportunity to incorporate peacebuilding factors into their present activities by working together with other actors such as humanitarian agencies, donors and peace and conflict experts. By acknowledging the factors that led to former conflicts, companies have the opportunity to address these cleavages by targeting vulnerable groups, promoting affirmative action policies and developing practical and transparent guidelines. These efforts can lead to intentional, indirect peacebuilding as tourism helps in building trust, cooperation and development among people who have been former conflict parties. However, the Rwanda case is particular due to several elements.

The role of the government in investing into the promotion of tourism is a key factor that has led to the rapid recovery and transformation of the sector. The monitoring and lobbying efforts of conservation groups during and after the conflict were integral in helping to protect the gorillas and maintaining the country's environmental attractions. Without them, the country could have been left without any reason for tourists to visit. The promotion of *amahoro*, or peace is a buzzword in Rwanda as the country struggles to recover from its tragic past. Thus, the promotion of peace is an effort that many companies, donors and agencies are willing to endorse. If Rwandan tour companies would commit towards developing strategies that strengthen economic development whilst also contributing to peacebuilding, prospective investors and supporters are likely to follow.

In order to make this research relevant for other countries, further analysis of other case studies where tourism has been used for post-conflict peacebuilding is worthwhile. It would also be relevant to then identify common characteristics of tourism actors that engaged in peace promotion and their successes and failures. Tourism may have more promise than we assume for peace promotion as the Rwanda case has shown that the tourism sector had the capacity to bounce back relatively quickly after the conflict, despite there not being a strong history of tourism prior to the civil war and genocide.

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