

Photos and details of teens killed in Bujumbura are posted on the bulletin board at the Kamenge Youth Center. June 2006.  
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# Armed Violence in Burundi

## CONFLICT AND POST-CONFLICT BUJUMBURA

### INTRODUCTION

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On 24 July 2006 the remaining rebel group in Burundi, the Parti de libération du peuple hutu-Forces nationales de libération (Palipehutu-FNL), launched a mortar attack on the capital, Bujumbura, injuring one person (Reuters, 2006a).<sup>1</sup> A week later, a particularly brutal attack was carried out with small arms and hand grenades in two bars in Bujumbura, killing 4 people and injuring 17 (Reuters, 2006b). These incidents are among the latest in a series of attacks that have targeted the capital since the beginning of the civil war in 1993 and continued after the November 2003 ceasefire agreement signed between the transitional government of Burundi and the main rebel group, the Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie-Forces pour la défense de la démocratie (CNDD-FDD). In spite of the adoption of a new constitution, the reform of the armed forces, the demobilization of combatants, and the holding of relatively peaceful elections, armed violence still plagues the daily life of Bujumbura's inhabitants.

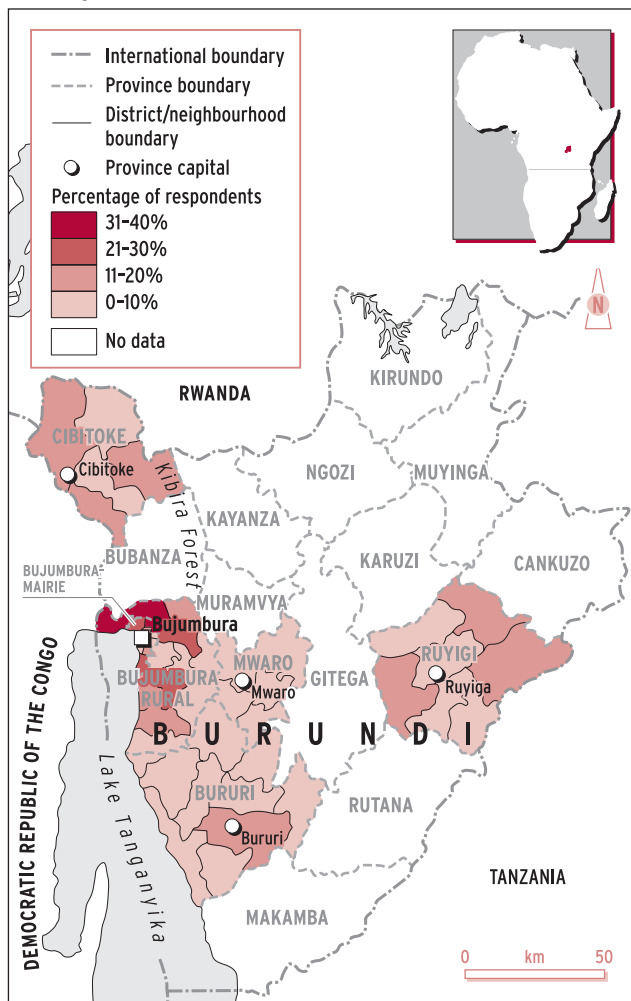
Through the specific example of Bujumbura, this chapter tackles the issue of armed violence in cities, and in particular capital cities, during and after war. The chapter hypothesizes that the war period poses certain challenges to capital cities, which are home to most state institutions and represent, in this regard, a target of choice for rebel movements. Even after the guns have been silenced, wars leave a legacy of arms proliferation and residual armed violence that seem to particularly affect urban settings. This chapter examines the case of Burundi, which has recently emerged from a long and bloody civil war. The questions examined in the chapter include:

- How did violence during the civil war affect Bujumbura compared with the rest of the country?
- How has insecurity changed since the end of the conflict, both in the country as a whole and in the capital?
- What is the role of small arms and light weapons in post-conflict insecurity in the country?
- Who are the main perpetrators of armed violence in the post-conflict period?

The chapter draws on research carried out by the Small Arms Survey between September 2005 and June 2006 in Burundi. The study was commissioned by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and NOVIB/Oxfam International, and was undertaken in partnership with Ligue Iteka, a Burundian human rights NGO. It relied on the following research methods and sources: a survey of 3,060 households covering 6 out of the 17 provinces, a two-day workshop with ex-combatants representing 6 different former rebel movements, key informant interviews, and analysis of data gathered from national institutions and international organizations present in Burundi.<sup>2</sup>

The chapter first examines how the civil war that raged in Burundi between 1993 and 2006 affected its main centre, Bujumbura, and then provides a quick demographic overview of the country. It then assesses levels of armed violence in Bujumbura and the rest of the country in order to understand who commits acts of violence and with what means. The main conclusions include:

Map 6.1 Percentage of respondents whose households include at least one victim of an act of violence between May and November 2005, by district



- During the war, Bujumbura was the theatre of armed violence among increasingly segregated—and armed—neighbourhoods, which caused many residents to flee the city.
- Rebel attacks on Bujumbura continued after the 2003 ceasefire and became a means for the last active rebel group to assert its bargaining power.
- Although the security situation in the country has improved markedly since 2003, this progress has been weaker in Bujumbura than in most other regions of Burundi.
- Small arms left over from the conflict—particularly grenades and assault rifles—are weapons of choice for those perpetrating post-conflict violence in Burundi, including in the capital city.
- The disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) process and civilian disarmament initiatives have produced mixed results. An estimated 100,000 small arms and grenades are still at large in the country.
- Ex-combatants, few of whom decided to settle in Bujumbura, are generally not identified by the population as a source of insecurity.
- Post-conflict urban violence leads many residents of Bujumbura to keep defensive types of small arms—i.e. handguns—for self-protection.

## ARMED VIOLENCE IN BURUNDI: THE SOCIAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

### A historical account of conflict in Burundi

Burundi is a small country (about two-thirds the size of Switzerland) in the Great Lakes region, on the shores of Lake Tanganyika. It borders on the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Rwanda, and Tanzania. A German protectorate as of 1903, Burundi fell under Belgian influence during World War I and became a League of Nations (later UN) trusteeship administered by Belgium in 1926. It gained independence in 1962 (UNHCHR, 1999).

Burundi's population is composed of a large Hutu majority (85 per cent) and a Tutsi minority (14 per cent); the remaining 1 per cent are Twas.<sup>3</sup> Ethnicity—though to a large extent socially constructed—underpins the country's 'rigid . . . stratification and unequal distribution of power' (Ndikumana, 1998, p. 30).<sup>4</sup> In the past, Tutsis largely dominated the army and police, as well as the political institutions and the economy. In addition to the ethnic factor, social hierarchy depends on an individual's region of origin: military and political actors (the former having often dominated the latter) usually come from Bururi and Makamba provinces, in the south of the country (Ndikumana, 1998, pp. 36–37).<sup>5</sup> This differential treatment of Burundian citizens has been particularly flagrant in the area of access to education (Ndikumana, 1998, pp. 38–39; Ngaruko and Nkurunziza, 2000, p. 382).

This power and economic imbalance explains in part why Burundi's history since independence has been marked by numerous episodes of violence and political instability (Ndikumana, 1998, pp. 30–31). The country experienced five successful military coups between 1966 and 1996, and a large number of failed ones (BBC, 2007). In 1972, a Hutu rebellion and its ensuing repression resulted in 200,000 deaths and a flow of 300,000 Hutu refugees leaving the country—a particularly bloody and traumatic episode that is still present in most Burundians' memories (Ndikumana, 2000, pp. 433–34; Ngaruko and Nkurunziza, 2000, p. 375; ICG, 2003, p. 2). According to Ngaruko and

### Box 6.1 The civil war in Burundi: a chronology of key events, 1993–2006

**June 1993:** Melchior Ndadaye wins the elections, ending the military regime of Pierre Buyoya. Ndadaye is the first Hutu president in the history of Burundi.

**21 October 1993:** President Ndadaye is killed in a coup led by Tutsi army officers, which is followed by massacres of Hutu and Tutsi civilians. This marks the beginning of a civil war between the Burundian army (the majority of the personnel of which at the time are Tutsi) and Hutu armed groups.

**5 February 1994:** Cyprien Ntaryamira, a Hutu, is named interim president by the parliament.

**6 April 1994:** President Ntaryamira and Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana die when their aircraft is shot down near Kigali, Rwanda. This event causes more ethnic violence in Burundi and ignites the Rwandan genocide (April–July 1994).

**July 1996:** Buyoya leads a successful coup against President Sylvestre Ntibantunganya (who had succeeded Ntaryamira).

**1999:** Peace talks begin under the mediation of the former Tanzanian president, Julius Nyerere.

**28 August 2000:** The government and several armed groups sign the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement. The two main Hutu-dominated rebel groups, CNDD-FDD and Palipehutu-FNL, refuse to sign.

**October 2001:** Under the auspices of South Africa's Nelson Mandela, who replaced Nyerere after the latter's death in 1999, further talks lead to the setting up of a transitional government in which Hutus and Tutsis share power. Non-signatory rebel groups intensify their fighting.

**16 November 2003:** Signing of the Global Ceasefire Agreement between the Government of Burundi and the Hutu rebel group CNDD-FDD in Dar es Salaam (Tanzania). Only the Palipehutu-FNL remains outside the peace process.

**June 2004:** Beginning of the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB), succeeding the African Union mission.

**December 2004:** Beginning of the DDR process.

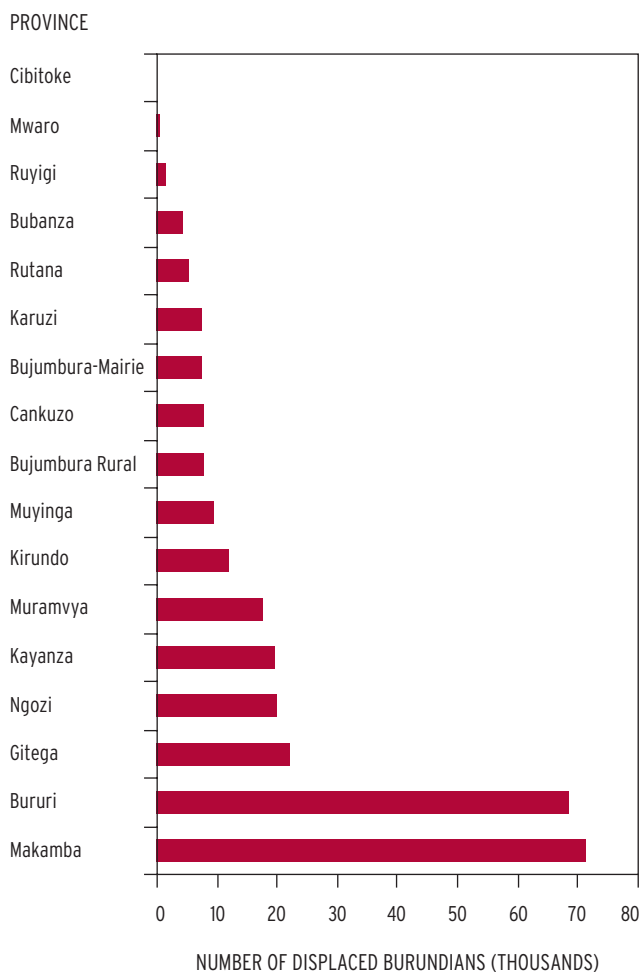
**March 2005:** Voters approve a power-sharing constitution by referendum.

**August 2005:** Pierre Nkurunziza, leader of the CNDD-FDD, is elected president.

**April 2006:** The curfew that had been enforced in the whole country since the early 1970s is lifted.

**8 September 2006:** The government and the Palipehutu-FNL sign a ceasefire agreement in Dar es Salaam (Tanzania).

**Figure 6.1 Number of displaced Burundians by province, September 2002**



Note: See endnote 1 for an explanation of the name 'Bujumbura-Mairie'.

Source: ICG (2003, p. 3, using 2002 UN Population Fund figures)

the early 1970s. In 2003 it was estimated that 300,000 Burundians were internally displaced, while Tanzania was home to another 800,000 refugees (ICG, 2003, p. 1). Burundians principally fled from the south (Bururi and Makamba), centre (Gitega and Muramvya), north (Ngozi, Kayanza, Kirundo, and Muyinga), and west (Bujumbura Rural) of the country, which were generally the areas most affected by the conflict (ICG, 2003, p. 3). In comparison with other provinces, relatively few displaced people relocated to Bujumbura (see Figure 6.1).<sup>7</sup> This can possibly be explained by the fact that acts of ethnic cleansing were widespread in Bujumbura, a fact that did not make it a very attractive destination for displaced people, but instead pushed a number of residents of the city to seek refuge in other provinces (Barahinduka, 2006).

Burundi itself is home to a large number of refugees, mainly from the DRC. About 30,000 Congolese refugees live in Burundi, the majority (18,000) of whom live in urban areas, where they often survive in precarious conditions.

Nkurunziza, '[t]he 1972 events have crystallized ethnic tension in Burundi in such a way that all subsequent crises have been, in one way or another, their consequence' (Ngaruko and Nkurunziza, 2000, p. 375).

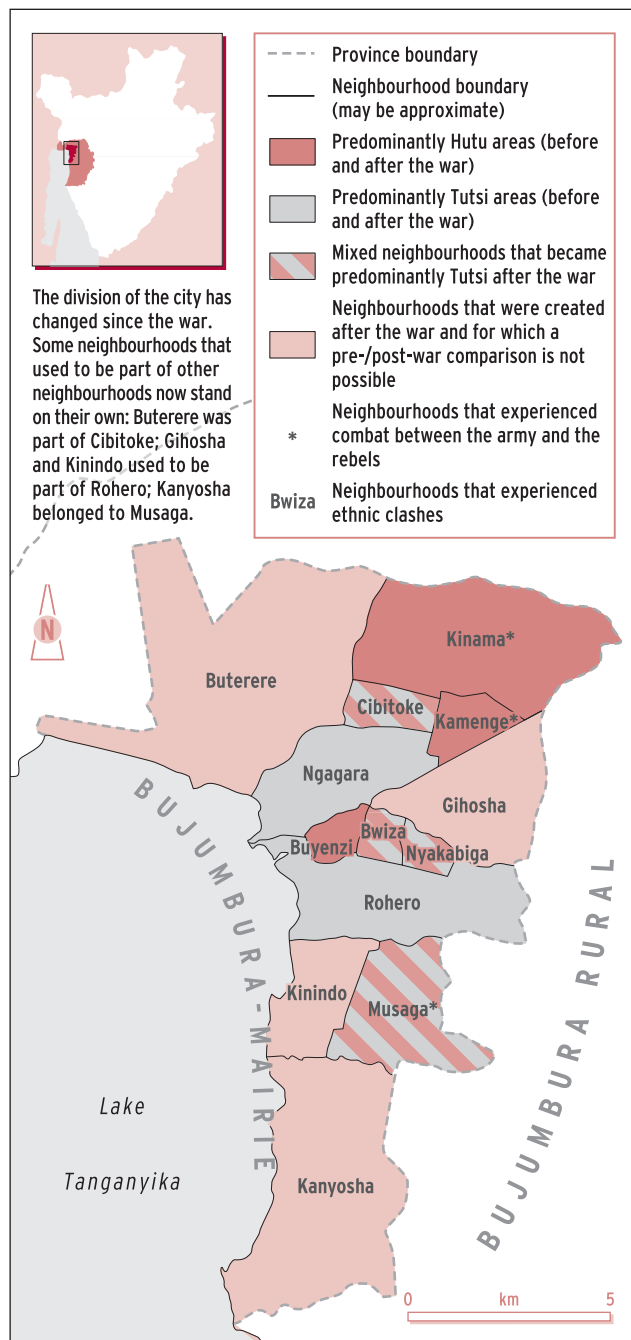
In 1993 violence flared up again. It led to a fully fledged civil war between the army and Hutu-dominated rebel groups that resulted in large-scale massacres on both sides (Ndikumana, 1998, p. 36).<sup>6</sup> Ndikumana notes that '[u]nlike earlier ethnic conflicts (in 1965, 1969, 1972, 1988, and 1991), the crisis that followed the October 1993 military coup has been longer, bloodier, and has affected the entire country' (Ndikumana, 1998, p. 36). A first peace agreement brokered by regional leaders with the international community was reached in 2000, but the main rebel groups refused to sign it and fighting continued until 2003 (see Box 6.1).

In late 2005, when the Small Arms Survey–Ligue Iteka survey was conducted, only one armed group, the Palipehutu-FNL, remained active. It operated mainly from the province of Bujumbura Rural, which surrounds the capital Bujumbura, and allegedly launched mortar attacks until the September 2006 ceasefire with the Burundian government.

Political violence has caused the displacement of a large number of Burundians since

In May 2006 a first group of 67 refugees was relocated by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) from Bujumbura to a refugee camp where they would receive more assistance. More urban refugees were expected to follow (UNHCR, 2006).<sup>8</sup>

Map 6.2 The pre- and post-war ethnic composition of Bujumbura neighbourhoods



### Bujumbura: a city at war<sup>9</sup>

Bujumbura played an important role during the war. The government, the parliament, the army and police headquarters, the national radio and television, the international airport, and many other national institutions are located in the city, which represented a very attractive target for the rebels, as seizing Bujumbura would be synonymous with victory. However, it is curious to note that the crises that preceded the 1990s never took place in Bujumbura. The first attack against the capital occurred in 1991, and this also represented a shift from the use of traditional weapons to the use of small arms and light weapons:

*This marked a change from previous attacks where rebels had struck in remote areas of the country using mainly traditional weapons such as machetes, arrows and spears. Combat casualties were limited but the rebels had sent the message that they could strike anywhere (Ngaruko and Nkurunziza, 2000, p. 380).*

During the civil war, rebels tried to blockade Bujumbura by cutting the surrounding roads, and launched isolated attacks against its peripheral neighbourhoods. The neighbourhood<sup>10</sup> of Kamenge was the theatre of fierce combat between the army and the rebels between December 1993 and April 1994.<sup>11</sup>

Bujumbura was also the target of smaller, sporadic attacks or reprisals: Hutu individuals

### Box 6.2 Bujumbura: a segregated city

Even before the war, some neighbourhoods of Bujumbura were mainly 'Tutsi' or 'Hutu'. Between 1993 and 2003, however, the massacres carried out in most areas of the city intensified this separation (see Map 6.2).

In 1993-94 Hutus were driven out of the predominantly Tutsi neighbourhoods of Musaga, Nyakabiga, Ngagara, and Cibitoke, while Tutsis were driven out of the predominantly Hutu areas of Kamenge and Kinama in the north of the city, as well as part of Kanyosha in the south.

Expelled Hutus and Tutsis found shelter in improvised refugee camps within neighbourhoods of their ethnicity, or in 'neutral' places, such as churches. Some Hutus also moved into neighbourhoods of relatively mixed ethnicity, such as Bwiza, or in which ethnic groups cohabited peacefully, such as Buyenzi. Others left for the surrounding province of Bujumbura Rural or crossed the border into the DRC, settling mainly in Uvira (South Kivu province). Some Hutus even commuted between Bujumbura, where they still worked, and Uvira, to where they returned at night.

In 1994-95 the 'mixed' neighbourhoods of Bwiza and Buyenzi were the theatre of combat between Hutu and Tutsi militias. In March 1995 Tutsi militias, with the support of the military, eventually prevailed, causing the Hutu population to flee towards Gatumba (on the DRC border) and into the DRC.

With Buyoya's return to power in 1996, and increasingly after 2003, some displaced persons came back to their areas of origin. Some were relocated by the government to sites on the northern outskirts of the city, in Buterere and Carama. As of 15 July 2006, 506 (out of an expected total of 519) Gardiens de la paix and 13 (out of an expected total of 35) Militants combattants had been demobilized in Bujumbura-Mairie. Many sources indicate, however, that a number of both militias and ordinary citizens have kept the weapons they had obtained during the war, and that there are considerable holdings of assault rifles, pistols, and grenades hidden in Bujumbura's households. It also seems that the areas where there was the most fighting and where the presence of militias was strongest remain among the most heavily armed today.<sup>12</sup>

Ex-combatants who settled in Bujumbura after the war chose neighbourhoods based on their ethnicity. Demobilized (mainly Tutsi) military personnel went to Ngagara, Nyakabiga, Musaga, or Cibitoke. Former members of rebel groups (mainly Hutus) went to Kamenge, Kinama, Buterere, Buyenzi, or Kanyosha. Hutu neighbourhoods are also attractive for ex-combatants because they are poorer, which means that they have cheap rents and offer the possibility of engaging in small jobs, such as bike- or moto-taxi drivers, welders, carpenters, or street vendors.

Sources: Barahinduka (2006); CNDRR (2006a)

or families were killed or abducted as early as November 1993 in Bujumbura, mainly in the central market area. Peripheral areas were also particularly at risk from mortar attacks launched from the nearby hills. In this regard, it is worth noting that the Kibira forest, which served as a base for rebel groups during most of the war, is only 30 km away from Bujumbura (Ngaruko and Nkurunziza, 2000, p. 379). Rebels occupied the heights around the city and sent in spies or recruiters, who blended with the urban population. The capital turned out to be a place of recruitment for both sides. Newly enrolled combatants were rapidly trained and sent to the battlefields outside the city.

In spite of this, it seems that rebel groups never considered the capital to be a realistic target for an attempt to take over the city. The lack of faith in their ability to take control of Bujumbura can be explained in part by the fact that the city was well defended by the army and the population, some of whom were armed by the government to form a loose (mainly Tutsi) militia known as the Gardiens de la paix (Peace Guardians). On the rebel side, the CNDD-FDD formed its own militia, the Militants combattants. Both militias recruited heavily in Bujumbura, where the existing segregation dramatically worsened during the war (see Box 6.2).

The level of violence in Bujumbura varied over time. It decreased in 1996 after Buyoya's coup, before increasing again in 1998-99, with rebels launching attacks not just in Bujumbura, but across the whole country. A rebel attack on Bujumbura's international airport on 1 January 1998 caused more than 200 civilian deaths (UNHCR, 2005, p. 37). In 2001 rebels attacked the Kinama area, probably because they expected to find a lot of support within the population in that particular location. Located in the northern outskirts of Bujumbura, this neighbourhood was mainly

populated by Hutus, and the war only amplified this situation. This did not, however, prove sufficient to guarantee the rebels military victory.

Areas mainly populated by Tutsis were as exposed to violence as those mainly populated by Hutus. In July 2003 the predominantly Tutsi neighbourhood of Musaga, located in the southern periphery of the capital, found itself under heavy attack, causing the displacement of large numbers of people towards more central areas of the city. The location of the prison, as well as a number of military installations, among which were the headquarters of the army's logistics unit (the Brigade logistique) and the training centre for army officers (Institut supérieur des cadres militaires), in Musaga may explain why rebels chose this neighbourhood as a target. Another likely reason is the fact that Musaga is a peripheral neighbourhood of Bujumbura, located close to the hills that served as a refuge for the rebels, who may have seen it as an 'easy' target.

## ARMED ACTORS IN BURUNDI

### Armament and disarmament of armed groups: armed parties and political movements

The Hutu-dominated rebel groups who attempted to seize power during the civil war experienced a number of divisions and rivalries. Six groups eventually took part in the 2001 peace process: the Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie (CNDD, also called the CNDD-Nyangoma), the CNDD-FDD, the Front national de libération Icanzo (FNL-Icanzo), the Front pour la libération nationale (FROLINA), the Kaze-Forces pour la défense de la démocratie (Kaze-FDD), and the Palipe-Agakiza. They are known under the generic name of armed parties and political movements (PMPAs).

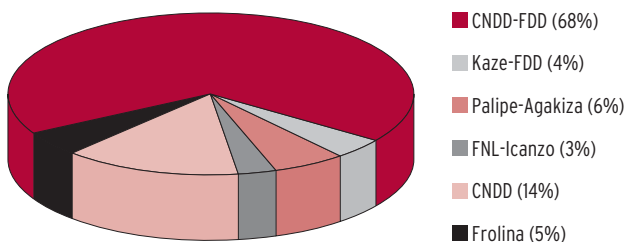
Members of PMPAs were demobilized within a DDR programme carried out by the Commission nationale chargée de la démobilisation, de la réinsertion et de la réintégration (CNDRR) and financed by the World Bank's Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Programme (MDRP). Members of the PMPAs could choose between integration into the new army and police or demobilization. Demobilized combatants received a benefit equivalent to 18 months' salary, calculated on the basis of the pay given by the Force de défense nationale (FDN), the new army that replaced the old, Tutsi-dominated Forces armées burundaises (FAB), for the corresponding army rank. They also received in-kind support for their socioeconomic reintegration (CNDRR, 2004).

As of July 2006, 10,134 former combatants from the PMPAs had been demobilized, 4.75 per cent of whom were women and a little more than 7 per cent children (CNDRR, 2006a). The distribution of these combatants according

to their PMPA provides a good indication of the groups' relative strengths, with the CNDD-FDD being the largest by far (see Figure 6.2).

A specific programme was put into place by the MDRP and the United Nations Children's Fund for the demobilization of child soldiers. For a year and a half, demobilized children received the equivalent of USD 20 each month in various goods, as

Figure 6.2 Group membership of demobilized PMPAs



Source: CNDRR (2006a)



**Table 6.1 Small arms and light weapons used by Burundian rebel groups during the war**

Type of small arm	Model and country of manufacture
Pistols	Browning 1903 (Belgium); Glock 17 (Austria); Makarov, Tokarev (Russian Federation); Mauser HSc (Germany)
Automatic rifles	AKSU-74, Dragunov SVD, Kalashnikov AK-47, Kalashnikov AK-74, Simonov SKS (Russian Federation); Type 56 (China); CZ58 (Czechoslovakia); FN FAL (Belgium); G3 (Germany); M4, M16 (United States); R1, R4, R5 (South Africa)
Sub-machine guns	Ruger Mp-9, M3 (United States); Uzi (Israel)
Machine guns	Browning (model unspecified, United States); FN MAG, FN Minimi (Belgium); Goryunov SG43, PK, RPK, 7.62 mm RPD (Russian Federation)
Mortars	60 mm, 81 mm, 82 mm, 120 mm
Rocket-propelled grenade launcher	RPG-7

Note: Table 6.1 lists some of the weapons that were held by the PMPAs, but does not pretend to be exhaustive.

Sources: Interviews between the authors and ex-combatants from the CNDD, CNDD-FDD, FNL-Icanzo, FROLINA, and Kaze-FDD, Bujumbura, 1-2 February 2006; interviews between Eric Niragira of the Centre d'encadrement et de développement des anciens combattants (CEDAC) and ex-combatants, Bujumbura, Muramvya, and Cibitoke, July-August 2006; confidential document, March 2006

well as food assistance from the World Food Programme. In addition, children willing to receive professional training received a 'starter kit'. A total of 3,015 children benefitted from this programme, which was completed in June 2006 (MDRP, 2006).

The number of weapons held by each group was taken into account to assess how many of their members would be integrated into the new Burundi army. A total of 5,404 weapons were handed in during the process (Info-Burundi.net, 2005) and went into army stockpiles.<sup>13</sup> ONUB collected 326 weapons and 45,433 rounds of ammunition.<sup>14</sup> Weapons collected by ONUB include mainly AK-47s, G3s, and South African R1s and R4s, but it seems that many more types of weapons were in the hands of rebel groups (see Table 6.1). Also, combatants used some craft weapons known as *mugobore* (see Box 6.3).

As the DDR process continued, the initial requirement of one weapon handed in per demobilized combatant was less and less strictly enforced. This explains why relatively few weapons were collected in comparison with the number of individuals demobilized. This was justified, to some extent, by the fact that not all combatants carried a weapon: interviews conducted among ex-combatants tend to indicate that the CNDD-FDD had an average of one weapon for one or two fighters, and that the CNDD had only one weapon for three fighters.<sup>15</sup> These different ratios of weapons per combatant show that rebel groups were unequally successful in their arms procurement. In addition, not all members of the groups were combatants. Former CNDD-FDD members interviewed estimated that only 50–70 per cent of the group members were fighters.<sup>16</sup>

A large number of the weapons handed in were in bad condition: it is estimated that about a third of the weapons collected by the army were unusable.<sup>17</sup> Understandably, most unusable weapons seem to have been handed in at the beginning of the disarmament process, when it had yet to gain the participants' trust. For instance, up to 80 per cent of the weapons handed in during the first phase of integration in Bururi turned out to be unusable.<sup>18</sup> This figure seems to have decreased over time, since only one-fifth of the weapons collected by ONUB over the whole disarmament period were classified as unserviceable.

### Box 6.3 Craft production of weapons in Burundi

Some craft weapons are produced in Burundi, where they are known under the generic name of *mugobore*. These locally made rifles consist of a metal barrel inserted in a piece of wood. The design is particularly crude, with a metal stick held by a rubber band that serves as a firing pin, and another metal stick used to eject the spent cartridge. The effective range of such rifles, which are usually heavy and cumbersome, does not exceed ten metres. They can function with cartridges for automatic rifles, such as Kalashnikovs. The main areas of production are the provinces of Bujumbura Rural, Bubanza, and Cibitoke, in the north-western corner of the country.

The number of such weapons currently in circulation is difficult to assess. *Mugobore* seem to have been widely used during the war, and they tend to be over-represented in arms collection ceremonies, such as those organized by ex-combatants. This is not, however, indicative of the actual proportion of *mugobore* in the armed groups' arsenals, since former combatants are more inclined to give these poorly performing weapons away than more efficient and expensive industrial models. No conclusion can therefore be drawn as to the ratio between craft and industrial weapons possessed by ex-combatants or the general population.

The number of *mugobore* in circulation is likely to be relatively high, however, since their fabrication is quite easy: almost anyone who can find a metal barrel can put one together. Particular attention should therefore be given to the processes by which collected or surplus weapons are destroyed in Burundi, for they must ensure the complete destruction of the weapons' barrels. At the moment, such weapons are simply burnt, running the risk that some elements of the weapons will survive the destruction process and be used to make *mugobore*.

Sources: Interviews between the authors and ex-combatants from the CNDD, CNDD-FDD, FNL-Icanzo, FROLINA, and Kaze-FDD, Bujumbura, 1-2 February 2006; interviews between the authors and the director of a private security company based in Bujumbura, 31 January 2006; interview between the authors and an official FDN source, Bujumbura, 2 February 2006



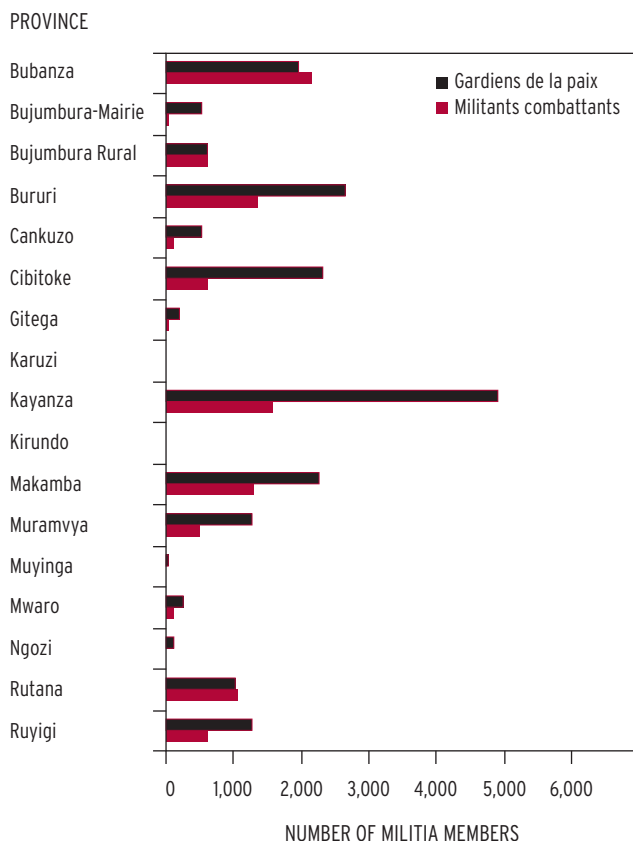
Examples of *mugobore* handed in during a weapons collection ceremony, Muramvya province, May 2006. © Pézard and Florquin

### Armament and disarmament of armed groups: militias

During the conflict, the warring parties armed a number of civilian supporters. The FAB issued weapons to the Gardiens de la paix, who were of several different types. Some were young men recruited, under the army's advice, by local administrators for personal protection against rebel attacks. At first, they were unarmed, and two soldiers supervised them. Increasingly, however, they armed themselves with supplies from army stockpiles, with apparently little oversight from the army. Other Gardiens de la paix were youth who provided logistical assistance to the army; after the war, a number kept the weapons that the military had given them for their personal protection.<sup>19</sup> A smaller group of armed civilians were the 'Groupes pour l'autodéfense civile', which consisted of civil servants armed by the government in order to defend their neighbourhoods from potential attacks.

Another militia provided assistance to the main rebel group, the CNDD-FDD. These civilians were known as the Militants combattants. According to several sources, they were generally not armed, since the CNDD-FDD kept the available weapons—which were in short supply—for its combatants. Militants combattants assisted the CNDD-FDD by providing intelligence about military positions, supplying the combatants with food, or carrying wounded combatants.<sup>20</sup>

Figure 6.3 Numbers of Gardiens de la paix and Militants combattants expected to be demobilized, by province, 2006



Source: CNDRR (2006a)

The disarmament of Gardiens de la paix and Militants combattants was completed in June 2006. Each demobilized individual received FBU 100,000 (approximately USD 100) to assist with reintegration into civilian life. A number of difficulties arose, however, when the lists of Gardiens de la paix and Militants combattants who could claim these benefits turned out to be inaccurate. Some names were forgotten; others were falsely added: a list with 500 names of supposed Gardiens de la paix was published in the Kirundo province, in spite of the fact that this region apparently never had a single Gardien de la paix during the war (ONUB, 2005a, p. 1). In October 2005, 176 persons claiming to be Gardiens de la paix found out that they were not on the lists; they protested through demonstrations and the erection of barricades in Bujumbura (IRIN, 2005a; 2005b).

A total of 18,709 Gardiens de la paix and 9,674 Militants combattants were demobilized.<sup>21</sup> This represents, overall, 95 per cent of the total number of militia members who

were meant to go through the process (CNDRR, 2006a). Militias do not appear to have been particularly strong in Bujumbura in comparison with the rest of the country; some provinces, such as Kayanza, Bururi, Cibitoke, Makamba, and Bubanza, had a much higher number of militia members on their territory (see Figure 6.3).<sup>22</sup>

The total number of arms collected from the militias was 1,255 rifles—mainly AK-47s and Simonovs (ONUB, 2006b, p. 2)—245 grenades, 2 mines, and 68 *mugobore*.<sup>23</sup> This gives the very low ratio of 1 weapon (or grenade or mine) for 18 combatants. It is difficult to assess how closely this ratio conforms to actual armament levels. Clearly, not all Gardiens de la paix and Militants combattants were armed: some were only providing logistical support or information, especially among the ranks of the Militants combattants (see above). Even those who were fighting sometimes had to share their weapon with one or more other combatants. Sources interviewed on this question range from an estimation of anywhere from 1 firearm for 1–15 combatants, and show major differences among provinces.<sup>24</sup> The disarmament process shows some anomalies, such as, for instance, 2,006 Gardiens de la paix and Militants combattants being demobilized in November 2005 without handing in a single weapon (ONUB, 2005b, p. 1).

### Restructuring the army and police

Adopted in August 2000, the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi defined the principles for reforming the Burundian national army and police (Arusha Agreement, 2000, Protocol III, ch. II). The FDN, the new army, replaced the old FAB in order to incorporate members of both the FAB and PMPAs. The main purpose of this reform was to ensure a balanced composition of state forces, which had previously been dominated by Tutsis.

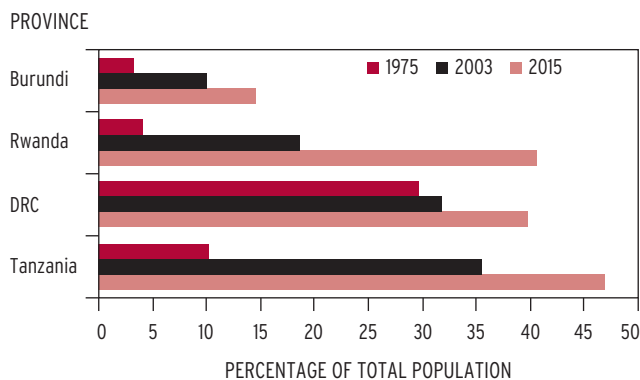
The FDN was officially created in December 2004 (UNHCR, 2005, p. 50). It integrated former members of the FAB and of the PMPAs in order to reach a total of 30,000 members (15,000 Hutus and 15,000 Tutsis). Each PMPA was assigned a certain number of positions in the FDN, calculated on the basis of the number of combatants and weapons each group had declared. The main rebel group, the CNDD-FDD, received the largest share of positions among all the PMPAs (Info-Burundi.net, 2005). The integration of former combatants into the new army is complete, but the restructuring of this institution is still ongoing. Not all former combatants joined the FDN: 9,605 former FAB soldiers and 10,134 members of the PMPAs were demobilized (CNDRR, 2006a).

The new police force—the Police nationale du Burundi or National Police of Burundi—follows the opposite trend and will grow from previously 3,000 to 18,000–20,000 members. Here again, former members of the PMPAs will join former police members, with special attention being given to ethnic balance (Arusha Agreement, 2000, Protocol III, ch. II, art. 14). Since all police personnel are equipped with a weapon (usually a Kalashnikov rifle), except for officers, who have two (a Kalashnikov and a handgun), such an increase in the size of the police suggests that there may not be sufficient stocks of weapons for the new recruits, and purchase orders have been placed.<sup>25</sup> Weapons for both army and police are stockpiled at the Brigade logistique in Bujumbura.<sup>26</sup> During the war, weapons were taken from government stockpiles to be distributed to Gardiens de la paix. As mentioned above, it is still unclear how many of these weapons were distributed and what proportion was returned after the war during the militia demobilization process.

## BURUNDI'S URBAN LANDSCAPE

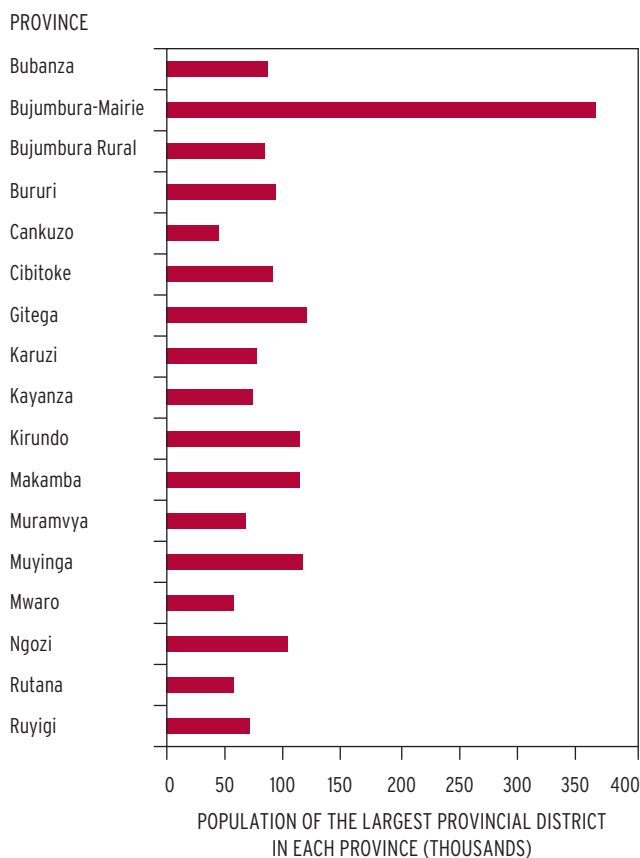
Urban centres are generally not particularly attractive to the Burundian population. The urban population is growing, but is still at low levels. In 2000 it was estimated that only nine per cent of the total population was living in urban

Figure 6.4 **Urban population in Burundi and neighbouring countries as a percentage of total population, 1975, 2003, and 2015**



Note: Figures for 2003 and 2015 are medium-variant projections by UNDP.  
Source: UNDP (2005, pp. 234-35)<sup>27</sup>

Figure 6.5 **Comparison between Bujumbura-Mairie and the other provinces' most populated provincial districts, 2003**



Note: The largest provincial districts represented here are the most populated in each province, not necessarily the provincial capitals.  
Source: Burundi (2004)

areas (the proportion was seven per cent in 1993) (UNHCHR, 1999; WRI, 2006). This figure is extremely small if compared with the sub-Saharan Africa average of 34 per cent, or the world average of 47 per cent (WRI, 2006). Based on projections over the next ten years, it appears that, as for most other countries worldwide, the urban population can be expected to grow in Burundi, but less sharply than in Burundi's three neighbouring countries (see Figure 6.4).

This low rate of urban population in Burundi also applies at the provincial level. Provincial districts hosting the provincial capitals rarely host significantly more people than other, less-urban districts. Overall, there seems to be no strong phenomenon of population concentration around provincial capitals.

In terms of the services that can be offered in these cities, it appears that only Bujumbura and Gitega can be referred to as 'urban'. Others lack means of communication and have only their main roads tarred. In terms of population, there is a large gap between the capital and other cities. Bujumbura is by far the most populated, and is home to slightly more than 350,000 people. The second most populated city in the country, Gitega, has a population one-third of the size (Burundi, 2004). Most urban centres in Burundi have a population of fewer than 100,000 inhabitants (see Figure 6.5). This fact makes certain types of urban violence in Burundian cities less likely, since size appears to be one factor leading to such violence. According to Pérouse de Montclos, '[a] city of 100,000 inhabitants seems to constitute the minimal threshold below which "typical" urban violence can not develop'

(Pérouse de Montclos, 2002, p. 6)—which is not to say, of course, that small cities are entirely devoid of violence. Population density is another factor that seems conducive to urban violence (Aguirre and Restrepo, 2005, pp. 33–34). However, population density is rather low in Bujumbura, with 3,292 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> (UNHCHR, 1999).<sup>28</sup>

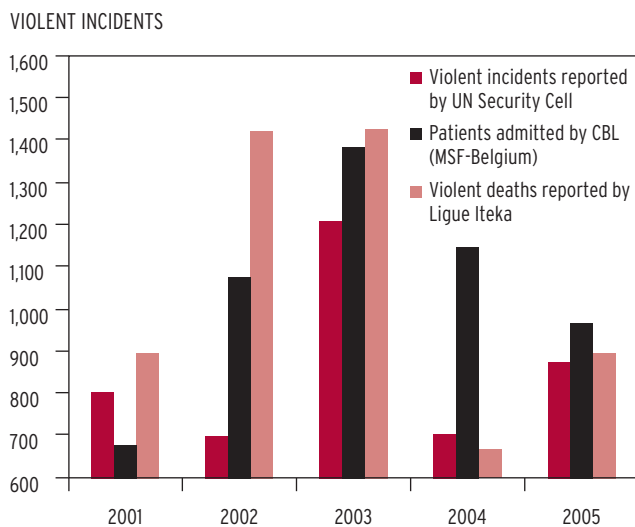
## ARMED VIOLENCE IN POST-CONFLICT BURUNDI

As one could expect from the many positive developments in Burundi since 2003 that this chapter has outlined—including the ceasefire agreement, the demobilization of combatants, and the reform of state institutions—various sources point to a relative return to security in the country in the post-conflict period. This section will show, however, that this overall improvement extends only partially to the capital city, Bujumbura-Mairie, and to Bujumbura Rural, a province that experienced conflict up to mid-2006.<sup>29</sup>



Children receive medical attention at a centre for war victims run by MSF. © Carl De Keyzer/Magnum Photos

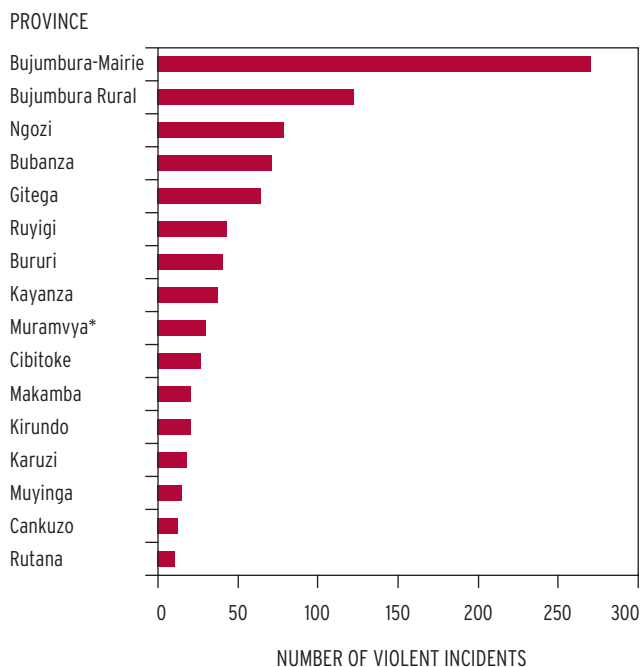
Figure 6.6 Variations in levels of violence by source, 2001–05



Note: The CBL figures for 2001 and 2002 should be treated with caution: because the CBL had to operate clandestinely for security reasons, it became known and used by the population only after 2002, according to an interview with an international source, Bujumbura, February 2006.

Sources: MSF-Belgium (2001–05); Ligue Iteka (2005; 2006); authors' calculations based on the UN Security Cell's weekly insecurity reports (2001–05)

Figure 6.7 Number of violent incidents recorded by the UN Security Cell, by province, 2005



\* Including Mwaro

Source: Authors' calculations based on the UN Security Cell's weekly security reports for 2005

Figure 6.6 compares levels of insecurity from 2001 to 2005 as measured through three indicators: the number of admissions registered at Médecins sans frontières (MSF)-Belgium's clinic, Centre des Blessés Légers (CBL), in Kamenge neighbourhood in Bujumbura, violent deaths recorded in human rights NGO Ligue Iteka's annual reports, and incidents of insecurity and criminality recorded by the UN Security Cell.<sup>30</sup> All three sources point to lower levels of insecurity in 2005 when compared with 2003, which stands out as the peak of insecurity over the five years under consideration.

Findings from the Small Arms Survey–Ligue Iteka household survey conducted between 23 November and 21 December 2005 tend to confirm this overall improvement in the security situation. In the six provinces covered by the study, perceptions of security have clearly improved over the last two years. In Bururi, Mwaro, Cibitoke, and Ruyigi, more than 90 per cent of respondents declared that security levels had increased in the previous two years. Bujumbura Rural stands out as the province where improved security was a less widespread feeling, with only 63 per cent of respondents noting an improvement—a finding explained by the fact that this province was still experiencing conflict between government forces and the last active rebel movement at the time the survey was administered. More than 12 per cent of the Bujumbura Rural respondents interviewed thought the security situation had actually deteriorated.

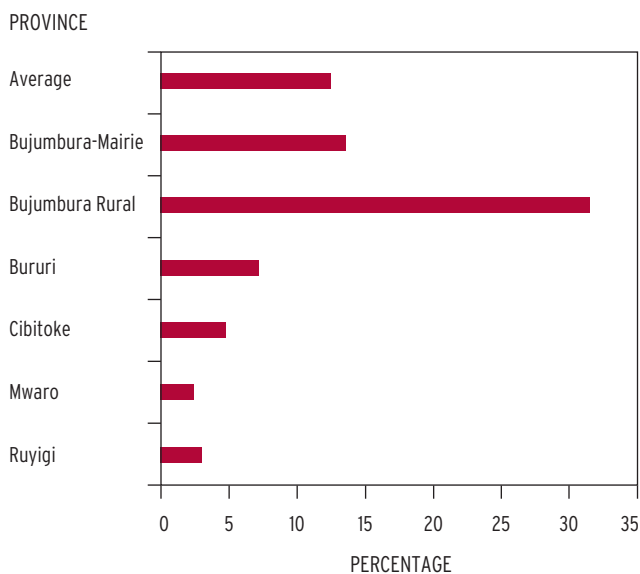
Despite overall progress, the situation remained difficult in several provinces as of late 2005. The UN Security Cell recorded high numbers of incidents, particularly in

the capital (267 incidents) as well as in Bujumbura Rural (122). Other provinces that remained affected by insecurity included Ngozi (78 incidents), Bubanza (71), and Gitega (64) (see Figure 6.7). While the number of incidents across the country generally declined after 2003, it remained stable or even increased in Bujumbura Rural and Bujumbura-Mairie.

Household survey results confirm these regional variations in levels of security. In Bujumbura Rural, for instance, a greater proportion of respondents (31.5 per cent) did not feel safe 'at all', while less than 15 per cent felt 'totally safe'. The situation in Bujumbura-Mairie was almost as worrying: the proportion of respondents who felt 'not at all' or 'only a little' secure also exceeded that of people who felt 'very' or 'totally' secure (41.6 v. 34.7 per cent) (Figure 6.8). Perceptions of security were rather better in the other provinces surveyed (Cibitoke, 4.8 per cent; Bururi, 7.1 per cent; Ruyigi, 2.9 per cent; and Mwaro, 2.5 per cent). In Mwaro, more than 50 per cent of respondents stated that they felt totally safe.

Bujumbura-Mairie and Bujumbura Rural were also the provinces where a greater proportion of respondents declared knowing at least one household member who had been a victim of violence over the previous six months. The household survey found that, throughout Burundi, almost one out of ten households consulted was home to a victim of violence. Again, victimization rates were much higher in Bujumbura-Mairie and Bujumbura Rural than in the other four provinces covered in the study (Figure 6.9). One should note, however, that some of these victims may have sought shelter in

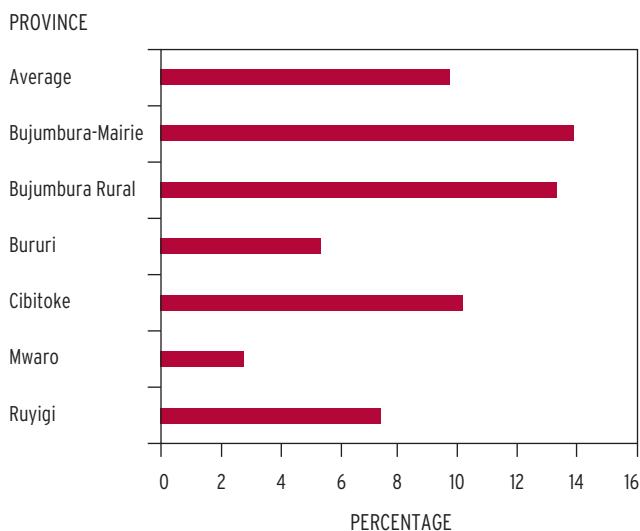
**Figure 6.8 Percentage of respondents claiming not to feel safe at all, by province, November–December 2005**



Note: The average reflects the percentage of the total number of respondents who fall into this category. Since population size, and therefore the number of respondents, varies per province, the average provided here is not the average of the percentages shown per province.

Source: Nindagiye (2006)

**Figure 6.9 Percentage of respondents who declared that at least one person in their household had been the victim of acts of violence over the six months preceding November–December 2005, by province**

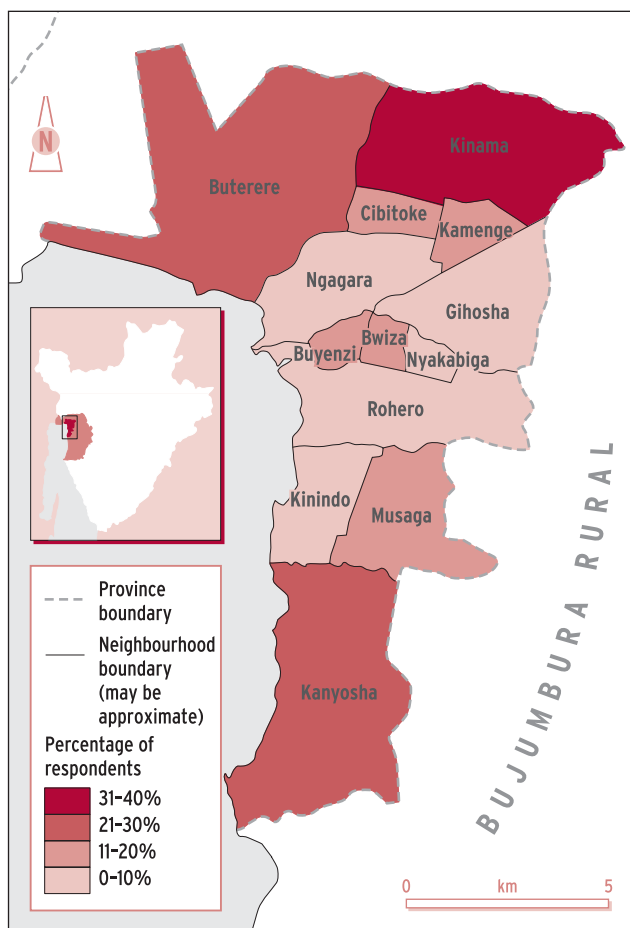


Note: The average reflects the percentage of the total number of respondents who fall into this category. Since population size, and therefore the number of respondents, varies per province, the average provided here is not the average of the percentages shown per province.

Source: Nindagiye (2006)



**Map 6.3 Percentage of Bujumbura respondents whose household include at least one victim of an act of violence between May and November 2005, by neighbourhood**



relatives' households in Bujumbura-Mairie after fleeing violence from other provinces, which could explain the higher victimization rates in the capital city when compared with other provinces. Map 6.3 reflects violence levels in Bujumbura.

The types of violence most frequently cited by respondents included, in decreasing order and for all six provinces, armed robberies, gang violence, fights due to alcohol, other fights, and assassinations. Armed robberies were commonly reported in Bujumbura-Mairie, while assassinations were frequently cited in Bujumbura Rural, which may reflect the different types of threat (criminal v. conflict-related, respectively) that affected the two provinces at the time of the interviews. Gang violence was most frequently cited in the provinces of Bururi, Mwaro, and Ruyigi.

The two provinces identified above as experiencing the highest rates of insecurity in 2005—Bujumbura-Mairie and Bujumbura Rural—also stand out as the provinces where small arms were most frequently used and misused. As Figure 6.10 illustrates, gunshots were most frequently heard in

Bujumbura-Mairie and Bujumbura Rural. It is also in these two provinces that most respondents declared that the majority of violent acts were carried out using firearms: 32.4 per cent of people interviewed in the capital and 40.3 per cent in Bujumbura Rural answered that violent acts often or always involved small arms, as opposed to just 18.6 per cent for the overall sample.

Data obtained from public health actors, such as MSF's CBL, also point to the primary role played by small arms in post-conflict violence in Burundi (see Figure 6.11).<sup>31</sup> CBL data on the cause of injury, including by weapon type, is available for 2004 and 2005.<sup>32</sup> During these two 'post-conflict' years, the CBL treated 1,298 violence-related injuries. Almost 60 per cent of these wounds were inflicted by firearms, while grenades were responsible for 22 per cent of admissions for violent injuries. When adding injuries from mortar shells, 83 per cent of all violent injuries treated by the centre were caused by small arms and light weapons. Given that a number of victims of small arms violence—whose wounds are usually more serious than those inflicted by other types of weapons (Small Arms Survey, 2006, ch. 8)—died before reaching the CBL, the proportion of violent injuries attributable to small arms and light weapons

Figure 6.10 Percentage of respondents who declared hearing gunshots in their neighbourhood at least once a week, November-December 2005, by province

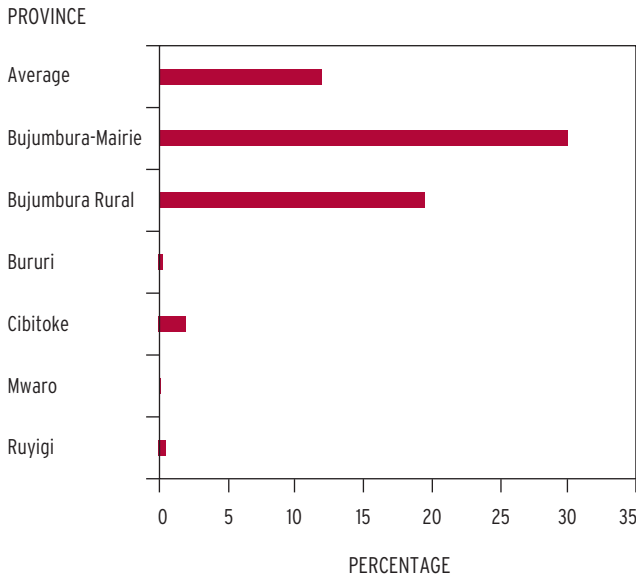
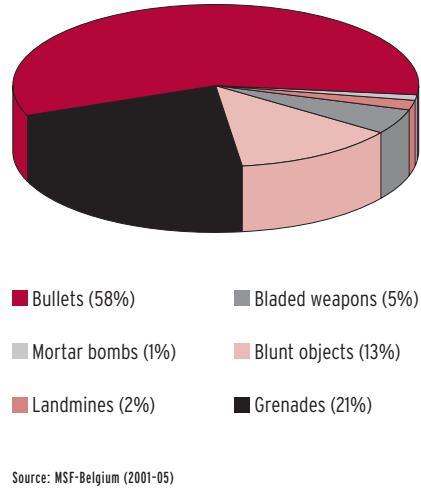
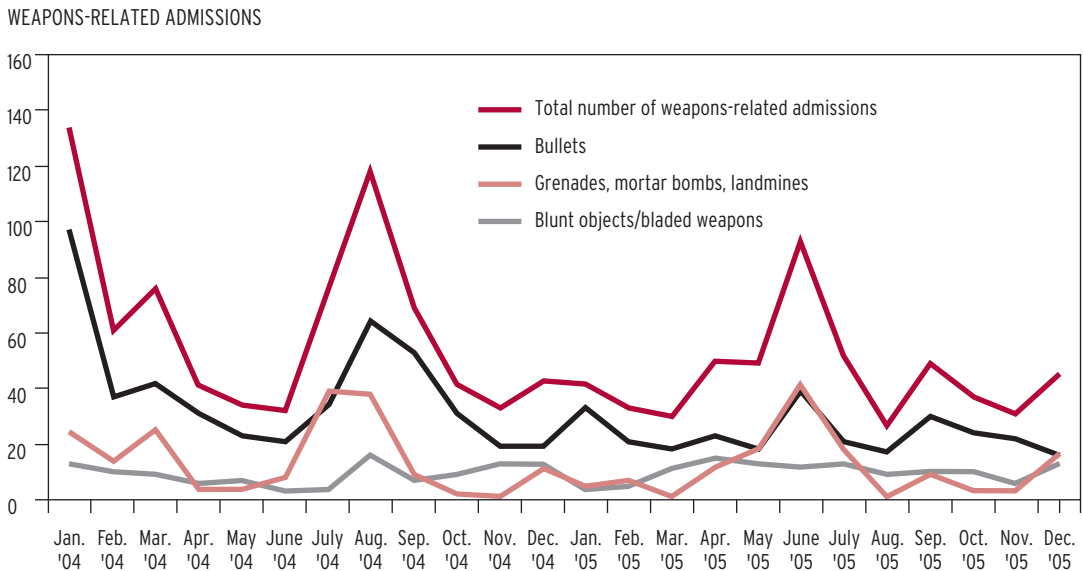


Figure 6.11 Violent injuries treated at the CBL by weapon type, 2004-05 (n = 1,298)



Note: The average reflects the percentage of the total number of respondents who fall into this category. Since population size, and therefore the number of respondents, varies per province, the average provided here is not the average of the percentages shown per province.  
Source: Nindagiye (2006)

Figure 6.12 Monthly distribution of CBL admissions, by weapon type, 2004-05



Source: MSF-Belgium (2001-05)

was probably even higher.<sup>33</sup> Blunt objects and bladed weapons were responsible for only 15 per cent of treated injuries. Interestingly, officials at the Kamenge Military Hospital, which treats wounded army soldiers, note that while landmine injuries were common during the conflict period (i.e. until 2003), they became much scarcer after the war. The proportion of patients treated for bullet wounds in the military hospital therefore increased after the war when compared with landmine injuries.<sup>34</sup>

The CBL data also shows how small arms and light weapons played an important role during peaks of violence. Monthly admissions of blunt object and bladed weapon injuries remained relatively stable during 2004 and 2005. On the other hand, admissions due to firearm violence varied greatly and accounted for the variations in the overall number of patients treated for violent injuries (Figure 6.12).

#### Box 6.4 Survivors of armed violence in Burundi

Although overall levels of armed violence in Burundi appear to have declined since 2003, small arms continue to wound people. Armed violence has particularly dramatic consequences for Burundian victims in a context of widespread poverty, as many of them cannot afford proper treatment. While the government and international organizations recognize the problem, it seems highly unlikely that specific measures will be put in place to care for the victims of armed violence, given the other public health emergencies the country is facing.

The Burundian public health infrastructure is seriously under-funded. In 2005 only 2.5 per cent of the national budget was allocated to the public health sector, which is an allocation of USD 0.70 per person per year (MOH, 2005, p. 12). The number of inhabitants per facility is below World Health Organization standards (1 facility for every 10,000 people) in 13 out of Burundi's 17 provinces (MOH, 2005, p. 21). The public health system also faces significant medical supply and personnel shortages (MOH, 2005, pp. 23-26). Burundi lacks more than half of the required doctors and specialists, a consequence of low pay, the emigration of qualified personnel, and insufficient national training capacities.<sup>35</sup> In addition, qualified staff are concentrated in Bujumbura-Mairie, which is host to 80 per cent of the country's doctors and more than 50 per cent of paramedics, and this leaves the rest of the country with only the most basic services (MOH, 2005, p. 24).



A Burundian man is treated for his bullet wounds at a hospital in Bujumbura, July 2003. © Antony Njuguna/Reuters

As a result of this lack of infrastructure and other important factors, the government estimates that between only 0.2 and 3 per cent of the people who require hospital admission every year actually use hospitals (MOH, 2005, p. 21). A key reason for many Burundians not using the public health infrastructure lies in the prohibitive cost of health care for the great majority of the population (MSF-Belgium, 2004, p. 6). According to a 2004 MSF survey, almost three out of four Burundians who had used public health facilities needed to go into debt or sell their belongings to pay their medical bills. The study found that Burundi's health care reimbursement schemes were insufficient to provide health care to about one million people (out of a total population of seven million) (MSF-Belgium, 2004, p. 6). As a result, 17.4 per cent of people needing treatment had no access to health care, primarily due to financial considerations (in more than 80 per cent of cases) (MSF-Belgium, 2004, p. 6). When patients are unable to pay their bills, they can be effectively 'imprisoned' within health facilities until their relatives can collect enough money to get them out (FIACAT, 2005; MSF-Belgium, 2004, pp. 46, 53). National Solidarity Minister Françoise Ngendahayo acknowledged the issue on 23 December 2005 when she ordered the release of all such 'imprisoned' patients and settled their bills (Netpress, 2005). Despite growing government recognition of the problem, the situation remains difficult even today (HRW, 2006).

However limited access to health care is for the general Burundian population, it can only be even more restricted for victims of armed violence, who, in addition to financial constraints, are also faced with the fear of being seen by the authorities as criminals because of the nature of their wounds.

Small arms wounds also require far more complex (and expensive) treatment than other types of injuries (Small Arms Survey, 2006, pp. 199-200, 204-5). Indeed, the lack of specialists and medical equipment forces even the country's only—and relatively well-equipped—military hospital in Bujumbura to transfer its most serious cases to Kenya or South Africa.<sup>36</sup> With the closing of the free MSF facility in February 2006, and despite the periodic assistance provided by international NGOs such as Handicap International Belgium, other MSF facilities, and the International Committee of the Red Cross, victims of post-conflict armed violence have little hope of finding the appropriate treatment.<sup>37</sup> Lastly, owing to the seriousness and long-term impact of small arms injuries, their cumulative burden on the health system and state after years of conflict is significant.

As the Burundian government strives to tackle the issue of small arms and light weapons control as part of its reconstruction and peace-building efforts, it remains unclear to what extent victims of armed violence will feature in its small arms policies. Early versions of the national strategy against small arms do call on society to 'continue caring for the victims of armed conflict at both the physical and psychological levels' (Burundi, 2006, art. 14), but the Ministry of Health's national health plan for 2006-10 does not mention armed violence among the major causes of death and injury in the country—a long list topped by malaria, HIV/AIDS, and other diseases (MOH, 2005, pp. 15-19). As armed violence is unlikely to figure as a specific public health concern in the years to come, it is becoming urgent to find ways of caring for the victims of armed violence.

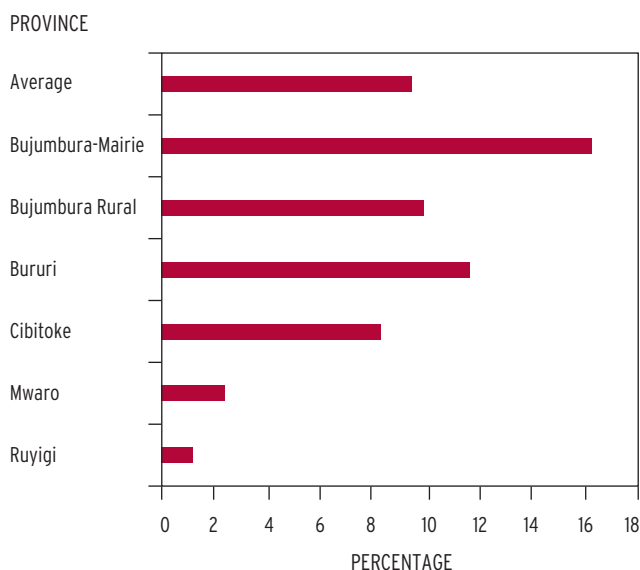
Source: Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (2007)

## CIVILIAN GUN POSSESSION: A CITY TRADEMARK?

Household survey results make it possible to compare general weapons availability patterns among the six provinces studied. Answers to the question 'How many households in your neighbourhood possess firearms?' show extreme differences among provinces. Bujumbura-Mairie stands out as the province where civilians possess the most weapons: 16.1 per cent of respondents stated that many or most households owned guns. Provinces close to the DRC (Bujumbura Rural with 9.8 per cent and Cibitoke with 8.2 per cent) also appear to experience relatively high rates of civilian small arms ownership.<sup>38</sup> Bururi, which has historically experienced political tensions, rates high as well (11.6 per cent). Firearm availability seems to be less of an issue in the central and eastern provinces of the country, such as Mwaro (2.3 per cent) and Ruyigi (1 per cent). These results clearly demonstrate that the western part of the country, and in particular the city of Bujumbura, experiences the highest rates of small arms ownership (Figure 6.13).

Given the sensitive nature of the issue and the low response rate to such questions, household survey results do not make it possible to appraise the exact proportion of households possessing weapons. Qualitative interviews with key informants suggest that, depending on the province, between 5 and 25 per cent of households possess at least

**Figure 6.13 Percentage of respondents stating that many or most households in their neighbourhood/district own at least one firearm, November–December 2005, by province**



Note: The average reflects the percentage of the total number of respondents who fall into this category. Since population size, and therefore the number of respondents, varies per province, the average provided here is not the average of the percentages shown per province.

Source: Nindagiye (2006)

Rural, Bururi, Cibitoke, and Makamba. The lowest rate of 1 out of 20 is used for the remaining provinces in the central, northern, and eastern parts of the country (see Table 6.2).

Multiplying these small arms ownership rates by the number of households per province suggests that close to 100,000 Burundian households possess at least one small arm, which is a significantly higher number than the estimated 3,500 to 4,000 Burundians who have legally registered their guns since 1960.<sup>41</sup> These figures tend to confirm some previous estimates.<sup>42</sup>

The types of weapons held by civilians in Bujumbura-Mairie are different from those in other provinces. Household survey results (Nindagiye, 2006) and key informant interviews<sup>43</sup> show that while Kalashnikovs and grenades are the weapons types most present in Bujumbura, the capital city stands out as the only province where handguns (pistols and revolvers) are held. In other provinces, Kalashnikovs and grenades are the main types of weapons available. This difference may be explained by the fact that many weapons owners in Bujumbura may hold handguns—which are typical defensive weapons—for self-defence purposes, given the ongoing post-conflict insecurity, while the weapons in other provinces appear to be essentially left over from the conflict period.

Survey results indicate that civilians own weapons primarily for reasons of personal protection (33.7 per cent of respondents in all 6 provinces), and particularly so in the city of Bujumbura (48.7 per cent). Bujumbura-Mairie also stands out as the province where the most respondents declared that protecting family was a key motivation for owning firearms (34 per cent v. less than 10 per cent in the other 5 provinces), while fewer than 1 per cent of respondents mentioned tradition, peer pressure, and prestige as motivating factors for owning a gun.<sup>44</sup>

one small arm.<sup>39</sup> It is important to note here that such estimates include all small arms and light weapons, as defined by the UN (UNGA, 1997), as well as grenades, which appear to be particularly common in Burundi. Key informants also confirm the trend suggested by the household survey: small arms ownership levels are higher in Bujumbura, as well as in provinces bordering the DRC and those particularly affected by the conflict.<sup>40</sup>

Based on this admittedly limited data, one can assign a rough small arms ownership multiplier at the provincial level to produce small arms availability estimates. The rate of one weapon for four households is applied to Bujumbura-Mairie, which both survey results and informants indicate is by far the most armed province. The intermediary rate of one firearm for every ten households is applied to the five provinces in the west and south of the country: Bubanza, Bujumbura

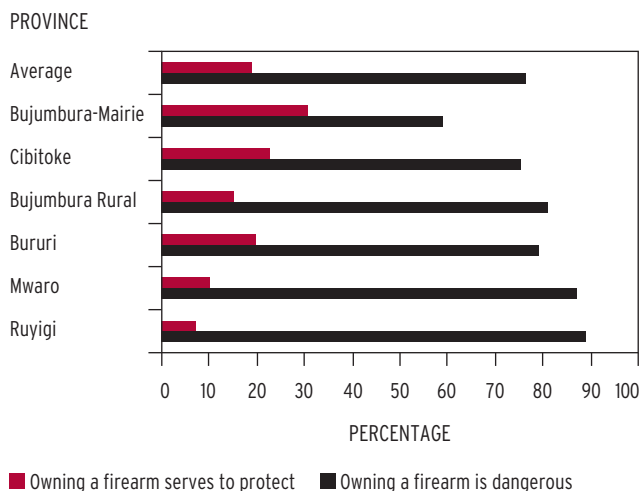
**Table 6.2 Small arms and light weapons used by Burundian rebel groups during the war**

Province	Number of households	Weapons multiplier	Minimum number of small arms
Bubanza	57,738	1/10	5,774
Bujumbura-Mairie	62,728	1/4	15,682
Bujumbura Rural	109,662	1/10	10,966
Bururi	84,017	1/10	8,402
Cankuzo	35,683	1/20	1,784
Cibitoke	75,102	1/10	7,510
Gitega	133,398	1/20	6,670
Karuzi	73,471	1/20	3,674
Kayanza	109,421	1/20	5,471
Kirundo	116,635	1/20	5,832
Makamba	49,447	1/10	4,945
Muramvya	55,109	1/20	2,756
Muyinga	110,180	1/20	5,509
Mwaro	51,445	1/20	2,572
Ngozi	125,001	1/20	6,250
Rutana	52,778	1/20	2,639
Ruyigi	65,260	1/20	3,263
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,367,165</b>	<b>1/14</b>	<b>99,699</b>

Sources: Number of households : ISTEERU, 2004; weapons multipliers : interviews with ex-combatants, Bujumbura, 1 February 2006; interview with international source; interview with high-ranking Burundian official, Bujumbura, February 2006

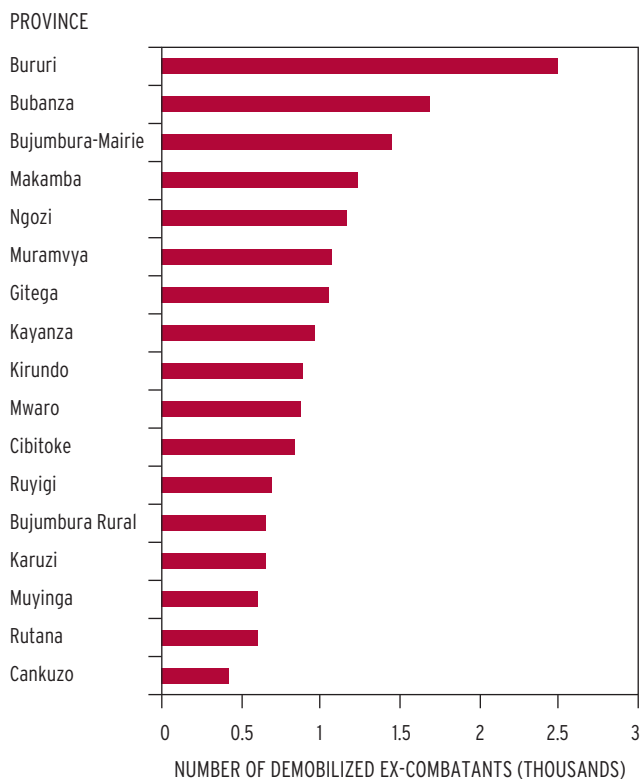
The Burundian population in general appears to have a rather negative perception of small arms. When asked whether small arms 'serves to protect' or are 'dangerous', more than two-thirds of respondents typically selected the second answer. Interestingly, Bujumbura-Mairie again stands out, this time as the province where the lowest proportion of respondents thought small arms were dangerous (58.8 per cent), while in Bujumbura Rural the overwhelming majority of respondents had a negative perception of guns (more than 80 per cent) (see Figure 6.14). These important differences between urban and rural provinces most affected by armed violence at the time of the survey confirm the previous observation that motivations for weapons ownership and the types of weapons owned are different in the capital from those in other provinces. Residents of Bujumbura-Mairie were more inclined to arm themselves for personal protection, while those of Bujumbura Rural felt threatened by the ongoing conflict and placed little hope in using weapons for individual protection. Similarly, the types of weapons present in the capital—handguns—were typically perceived as self-defence weapons, as opposed to the more offensive nature of the grenades and assault rifles found in the rest of the country.

Figure 6.14 Respondents' perceptions on firearm ownership (%), by province, November–December 2005



Source: Nindagiye (2006)

Figure 6.15 Province of destination of demobilized ex-combatants, 2006



Source: CNDRR (2006b)

## EX-COMBATANTS IN THE CITY

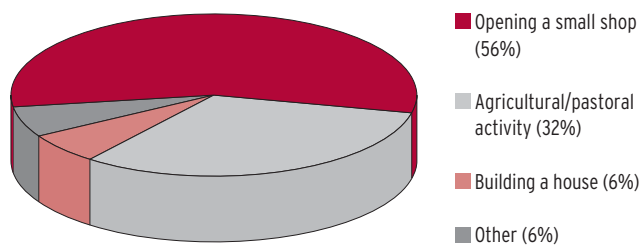
In terms of post-conflict criminality, ex-combatants usually represent a population at risk.<sup>45</sup> Some of them may have failed to reintegrate into society, or they may feel strongly disillusioned with the political and social aftermath of the conflict. This latter issue is particularly salient in Burundi: after a war that lasted more than ten years, a large number of young men and women have been deprived of basic education and may find it even more difficult than their older peers to find some sort of employment.

### Destination of ex-combatants

An analysis of the province of destination of demobilized ex-combatants shows that Bujumbura ranks only third, after Bururi and Bubanza (see Figure 6.15). The large number of ex-combatants going to Bururi and Bubanza can be explained by the fact that these were, to a large extent, their provinces of origin. The same logic applies for the Gardiens de la paix. The CNDD-FDD was founded in 1994 in Kamenge (a predominantly Hutu neighbourhood of Bujumbura), but was soon driven out of the capital by the military, and found refuge in Bubanza, where it recruited many combatants. The organization also recruited heavily in Bururi, which was the home province of its leader, Léonard Nyangoma, and his chief of staff, Colonel Jean-Bosco Ndayikengurukiye.<sup>46</sup>

An ex-combatant's decision to relocate to an urban or a rural area depends on several factors that include his/her personal background, the armed group he/she belonged to, and the length of time he/she spent in the group (Colletta, Kostner, and Wieder-

Figure 6.16 Expected reintegration activity of ex-combatants, 2006



Notes: These figures do not include former child soldiers. The category 'Other' includes professional training, handcraft activities, going back to school, and other types of assistance.  
Source: CNDRR (2006b)

hofer, 1996, p. 33). In the case of Burundi, there has not been a massive settling of ex-combatants in Bujumbura, with only eight per cent of ex-combatants choosing to settle there rather than in another province (CNDRR, 2006b).<sup>47</sup> This choice is also reflected in the types of activities elected by ex-combatants for their reintegration: almost one-third chose an agricultural/pastoral activity (CNDRR, 2006b), drawing them towards rural areas (see Figure 6.16).

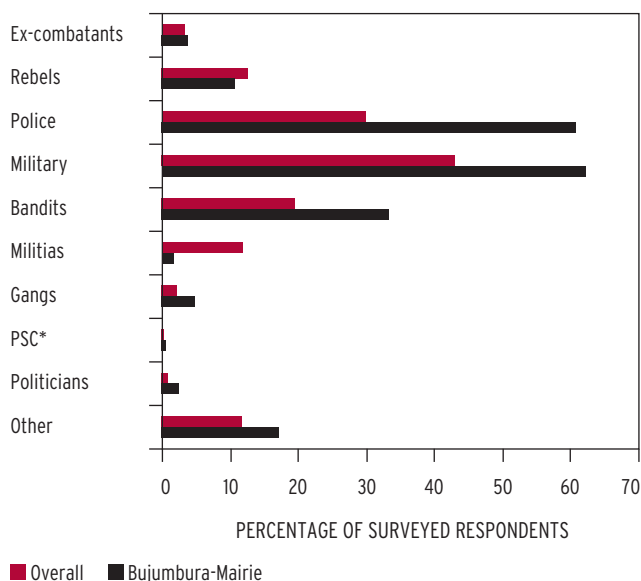
### Ex-combatants and insecurity

How did the ex-combatants who decided to settle down in Bujumbura (either because they were originally from the capital or because they found that they had more economic opportunities there) manage to blend into society? One way to approach this question is to look at how they are perceived by the rest of the population: are they treated as any other category of the population or are they stigmatized as a potentially threatening group?

On this issue, the household survey's results allow for some optimism. A first question enquired about the odds that some ex-combatants would have retained some of their weapons after the war. When asked who, in their province, holds one or more firearms, less than four per cent of the population in all six provinces surveyed cited ex-combatants

(Nindagiye, 2006). Ex-combatants do not, therefore, seem to be considered as more heavily armed than the rest of the population (see Figure 6.17).<sup>48</sup>

Figure 6.17 Categories of the population holding one or more firearms (%), November–December 2005



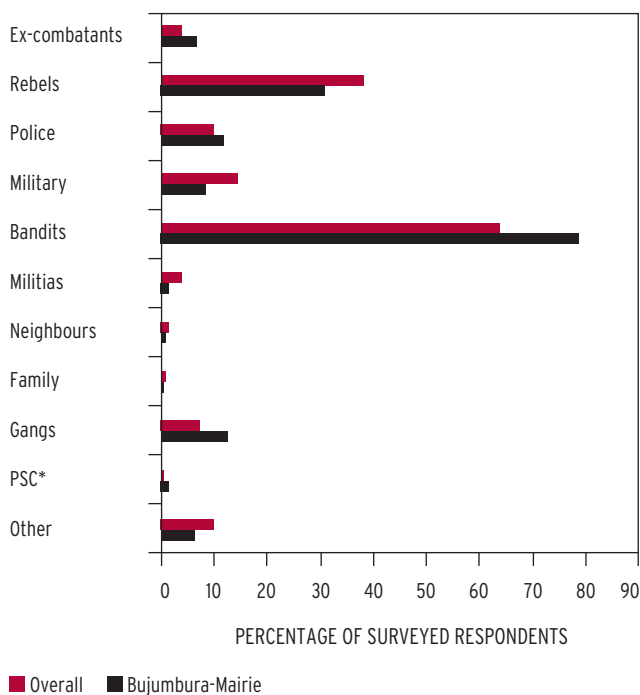
\* Private security companies  
Source: Nindagiye (2006)

Another question on the main sources of insecurity identified by respondents resulted in bandits and rebels being overwhelmingly cited, whereas ex-combatants ranked only eighth. Ex-combatants do appear to be more feared in Bujumbura than in the rest of the country, but even in this specific case, only 6.6 per cent of the population identified them as a source of insecurity (Nindagiye, 2006). Ex-combatants do not, in general, seem to be perceived as a threat by the population (see Figure 6.18).

Although it is likely that ex-combatants kept a number of weapons after the war, a fact that some of them acknowledge, it is difficult to assess the extent of this phenomenon.<sup>49</sup> Grenades, because of their small



**Figure 6.18 Sources of insecurity cited by respondents in Bujumbura-Mairie and the six provinces overall (%), November-December 2005**



Note: These figures represent the percentage of respondents who chose the answer mentioned. The total is higher than 100, because respondents were allowed to give more than one answer.

\* Private security companies

Source: Nindagiye (2006)

size, seem to have been the easiest weapon to conceal from the group; combatants could pretend to have used them during combat and hide them instead. Grenades too are among the weapons most used in post-conflict violence in Burundi, and in Bujumbura specifically. A common practice is for burglars to throw grenades behind them to cover their escape.<sup>50</sup> According to data from CBL MSF-Belgium in Bujumbura, 21 per cent of violence-related injuries among patients in 2004–05 were due to grenades (MSF-Belgium, 2001–05, note ‘CBL statistics’; see also Figure 6.11).

The answers given by respondents to the survey show that firearms are predominantly perceived as dangerous, and that in this context ex-combatants are not perceived as particularly armed or dangerous (unless one tacitly considers them as part of the ‘Bandits’ or ‘Militias’ categories). Although Bujumbura-Mairie experiences more criminality than the other provinces surveyed, the population usually does not blame ex-combatants for it.

## CONCLUSION

As of early 2007, Burundi has taken most of the steps that should allow for a return to the normal functioning of its institutions. It adopted a new Constitution, held peaceful elections, restructured the army and police, and completed most DDR activities. The country has not yet, however, emerged from its transitional period. Although attacks by the last active rebel group—the Palipehutu-FNL—appear to have ceased since the signing of a ceasefire agreement in September 2006, the road to peace remains long and a comprehensive agreement has yet to be signed.

During the conflict, Bujumbura was the target of numerous attacks on its peripheral neighbourhoods. It was never, however, really at risk of being seized by the rebels. The war effectively strengthened the ethnic polarization of certain areas of Bujumbura, with previously ‘mixed’ areas gradually disappearing. A few displaced people have returned to their areas of origin, but, overall, Bujumbura now seems more ethnically divided than it was prior to the war.

Most demobilized ex-combatants have not settled in Bujumbura, preferring instead to go back to their provinces of origin. The rest of the population does not perceive those who chose to relocate to Bujumbura as a threat to security, however.

Demobilization of former combatants and militias, and the restructuring of the army have enabled the government to seize a number of weapons that would otherwise still be beyond its control. This number, however, has proved disappointing in relation to the quantity of small arms and light weapons that were used during the conflict and those that are now in the possession of private citizens. Overall, an estimated 100,000 small arms, light weapons, and grenades are unaccounted for, and are most likely in circulation in the country.

Burundi must now tackle the issue of ‘residual’ violence in the post-conflict period. This violence appears to involve mainly small arms and grenades. It is true that armed violence has decreased in the whole country and that current levels are far lower than they were during the war. This should not, however, hide important differences between Bujumbura and the other provinces, with post-conflict violence apparently concentrated in the capital. This violence may be of a criminal nature: ‘conflict weapons’ such as assault rifles and grenades have now made their way into the hands of criminal elements, and ‘bandits’ are identified by the population as the main source of insecurity. In response, worried civilians have turned to handguns for self-protection. However, some of this violence may still be political. Political, sociological, and ethnic tensions inherited from the civil war—and from the political troubles and massacres that preceded it—are unlikely to have disappeared with the signing of the peace agreement in 2003. In both cases, the persistence of armed violence in Bujumbura shows that the causes of violence, whatever they are, have not been completely addressed by the new authorities. While the government has made visible efforts in early 2007 towards resolving dangerous political tensions,<sup>51</sup> the durable restoration of security will require constant attention and efforts, all the more so as ONUB peacekeeping troops withdrew in February 2007 (BBC, 2007).

If it wants to restore security in its capital city, the government will need to design strategies that not only recognize urban specificities (see Burundi, 2006, art. 42), but also help remedy the long-standing heritage of ethnic segregation and suspicion in Bujumbura. The city, in fact, reflects the ethnic and regional fault lines that run through the country as a whole. These tensions are especially visible in Bujumbura, given the city’s concentration of political, economic, and military power. Measures targeting small arms proliferation in Bujumbura therefore need to be underpinned by broader efforts to consolidate recent security gains and achieve lasting reconciliation—in the capital city and nationwide. ■

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CBL	Centre des blessés légers (MSF)	DDR	disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration
CEDAC	Centre d’encadrement et de développement des anciens combattants	DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
CNDD	Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie	FAB	Forces armées burundaises (Burundian Armed Forces)
CNDD-FDD	Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie–Forces de défense de la démocratie	FBU	Burundian franc
CNDRR	Commission nationale chargée de la démobilisation, de la réinsertion et de la réintégration	FDN	Force de défense nationale
		FNL-Icanzo	Front national de libération Icanzo
		FROLINA	Front pour la libération nationale
		Kaze-FDD	Kaze-Forces pour la défense de la démocratie

MDRP	Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Programme (World Bank)	PMPA	armed parties and political movements
MSF	Médecins sans frontières	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
ONUB	United Nations Operation in Burundi	UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Palipehutu-	Parti de libération du peuple hutu-	USD	US dollar
FNL	Forces nationales de libération		

## ENDNOTES

- 1 In this chapter, the names 'Bujumbura' and 'Bujumbura-Mairie' are used interchangeably. Bujumbura-Mairie is a province name, but physically the province Bujumbura-Mairie and the city of Bujumbura overlap. The areas around the city of Bujumbura belong to another province, Bujumbura Rural.
- 2 See Pézard and Florquin (2007) for more details about methodology and full results. The household survey was carried out between 23 November and 21 December 2005, and covered 3,060 randomly selected households in 6 provinces representative of the different dynamics of violence affecting the country. Bujumbura-Mairie (see endnote 1) was selected because of its strategic position as capital city and as the main—if not only—urban centre in the country; Bujumbura Rural was at the time of the survey one of the last provinces still affected by conflict; Bururi was not particularly affected by violence throughout the conflict, but has long been at the centre of political and ethnic tensions, and is therefore more likely to experience high rates of small arms availability; Cibitoke is also affected by residual armed violence in the aftermath of the conflict; Ruyigi is a province bordering on Tanzania, a country that has hosted many refugees during and after the war and saw movements of armed groups across its border; and Mwaro was selected as a province that has been spared armed violence and was expected not to experience a small arms problem.
- 3 Twas are a minority whose members are marginalized politically, economically, and socially, and are the victims of discrimination (Jackson, 2004, p. 7).
- 4 See, for example, Ngaruko and Nkurunziza (2000, p. 371, n. 2).
- 5 Ndikumana notes that 'Muramvya comprises a large proportion of the national intelligentsia. The South has dominated the political scene after the independence and has always considered Muramvya as a political rival. However, ethnic cohesion always takes precedence over regional differences when Hutu-Tutsi antagonism threatens the Tutsi supremacy' (Ndikumana, 1998, p. 37).
- 6 Another difference is the fact that the crisis initiated in 1993 '[was] a genuine war in the sense that it opposed armed factions' (Ndikumana, 2000, p. 435).
- 7 A caveat here is that it is possible that a larger number of displaced people did relocate to Bujumbura, but do not appear in the statistics, because they were housed by friends and family members.
- 8 UNHCR already runs two camps, Gasorwe in Muyinga province and Gihinga in Mwaro province; it is developing a third camp in Giharo (Rutana province) with a capacity of up to 30,000 people (UNHCR, 2006).
- 9 This section is based on Barahinduka (2006).
- 10 Neighbourhoods of the capital city are called 'communes' in Burundi, but 'neighbourhood' is used throughout the chapter, for clarity. In the rest of the country, communes are the equivalent of provincial districts.
- 11 Bujumbura also experienced episodes of civil unrest, such as the so-called 'operation dead city' (*opération ville morte*) in early 1994. Two politicians who had not obtained seats in the new government organized barricades all over the city. These barricades were organized by young Tutsis, who violently attacked people attempting to go through the barriers. This operation ultimately ended with the inclusion of the two politicians in the government.
- 12 Various authors' interviews with Burundian officials, international organizations, and NGO representatives, Bujumbura, February and May 2006.
- 13 Interview with a Burundian official source, Bujumbura, February 2006.
- 14 According to a confidential ONUB document, March 2006.
- 15 Interview with ex-combatants, Bujumbura, 1–2 February 2006.
- 16 Interview with two CNDD-FDD ex-combatants, Bujumbura, 1 February 2006.
- 17 Interview with a Burundian official source, Bujumbura, February 2006.
- 18 Interview with a Burundian official source, Bujumbura, February 2006.
- 19 Interview between the UNDP technical adviser on small arms and armed violence reduction and an official Burundian source, Bujumbura, 28 September 2005.
- 20 Correspondence with a Burundian source, 14 and 15 January 2007.
- 21 Correspondence with official Burundian sources, 17 April 2007.
- 22 The large presence of Gardiens de la paix in Kayanza can be explained by the fact that the Kibira forest, which borders Kayanza, was a major rebel stronghold. The army therefore recruited many young civilians from Kayanza province to fight the rebels. A similar explanation holds for

Cibitoke, where the army confronted the rebel groups in many instances. The Bubanza case results from the establishment of a CNDD-FDD base in this province (after it was driven out of Kamenge neighbourhood in Bujumbura-Mairie), where it recruited a large number of Militants combattants (phone interview with Eric Niragira, CEDAC, 23 August 2006; correspondence with a Burundian source, 26 January 2007). Bururi and Makamba are the two provinces from where most Tutsi politicians and army officers came, which may explain why the Gardiens de la Paix movement was particularly strong there.

- 23 It should be noted, however, that the numbers of arms cited here come from observations made by UNOB, which was not directly involved in the demobilization or disarmament of the militias.
- 24 Correspondence with the UNDP technical adviser on small arms and armed violence reduction, 12 March 2006; correspondence with a former CNDD-FDD combatant, 12 March 2006.
- 25 Authors' interview with an official Burundian source, Bujumbura, February 2006.
- 26 Correspondence between the authors and an international source, April 2006.
- 27 This source notes that '[b]ecause data are based on national definitions of what constitutes a city or metropolitan area, cross-country comparisons should be made with caution' (UNDP, 2005, p. 235).
- 28 The figure of 3,292 is for 1993. As means of comparison, Nairobi has a density of 4,412 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> (Boisteau, 2006, p. 98).
- 29 Trends since 2003 do not mean that the situation in these two provinces is worse than during the peak of conflict in the mid-1990s, when curfews had to be put in place due to the dramatic insecurity discussed in the above sections. Owing to the limited coverage of existing data sources, however, quantitative comparisons can be made only between the very last stages of the war (after 2001) and the aftermath of the 2003 ceasefire.
- 30 This is the UN office in Burundi responsible for UN staff security, which also monitored incidents of violence as reported by the local media and key informants from 2001 onwards.
- 31 The CBL was located in Kamenge, on the outskirts of Bujumbura-Mairie. Opened by MSF in 1995, it treated the war wounded free of charge and with almost no interruption until it closed in February 2006. Having no operating theatre, it could treat only 'light' wounds and had to refer more serious cases requiring surgery to hospitals, most often covering the associated costs. The CBL maintained statistics on its patients from August 2000 to December 2005, although data gathered in 2000 and 2001 is not representative. Because the CBL had to operate semi-clandestinely for security reasons, it became known and used by the population only after 2002. Most patients treated were originally from Bujumbura Rural, a major conflict zone deprived of a public hospital, with others coming from Bujumbura-Mairie, Bubanza, and Cibitoke (interview with an international source, Bujumbura, February 2006).
- 32 Interview with an international source, Bujumbura, February 2006.
- 33 Although the magnitude of the phenomenon is impossible to estimate from the available data, for security reasons many wounded do not report to health centres.
- 34 Interview with a Burundian public health official, Bujumbura, 31 March 2006.
- 35 Interview with an international public health official, Bujumbura, 31 May 2006.
- 36 Interview with a Burundian public health official, Bujumbura, 31 March 2006.
- 37 Interview with an international public health official, Bujumbura, 31 May 2006.
- 38 These numbers are likely to be artificially low because of respondents' bias against full disclosure. The numbers do, however, provide insights into relative weapons availability levels at the provincial level (e.g. which provinces are the most armed).
- 39 Interviews with ex-combatants, Bujumbura, 1 February 2006; interview with an international source; interview with a high-ranking Burundian official, Bujumbura, February 2006. See Pezard and Florquin (2007) for more information.
- 40 Interviews with ex-combatants, Bujumbura, 1 February 2006.
- 41 Interviews with the UNDP technical adviser on small arms and armed violence reduction, and Burundian officials, January 2006; written correspondence with an international source, March 2006.
- 42 Existing estimates of the number, type, origin, and use of civilian-held weapons in Burundi have little scientific basis. The transitional government put forward the number of 100,000 illegal weapons (including assault rifles, grenades, and RPGs) in May 2005, at the time the decree on civilian disarmament was adopted (Niyoyita, 2005). The UN Group of Experts on the DRC quoted a higher figure of 300,000 in its 25 January 2005 report, which was subsequently quoted in reports by the UN Secretary-General (UNSC, 2005, para. 30) and the UN Economic and Social Council (UNECOSOC, 2005, para. 5).
- 43 Various interviews, Bujumbura, February and May 2006.
- 44 These results confirm those of a study published in 2006 by the Groupe de recherche et d'information sur la paix et la sécurité (GRIP), which covered about 300 inhabitants of Bujumbura Rural, Cibitoke, and Bubanza, and found that personal protection (85 per cent of respondents), as well as protection of goods (51 per cent) and family (57 per cent), were the key motivating factors cited by the 138 people who admitted owning a firearm in 2004 (Ntibarikure, 2006, p. 24).
- 45 This risk should, however, not be overstated, and ex-combatants should not be identified altogether as potential delinquents. It is worth remembering that in Uganda, for instance, '[u]ntil mid-1995, only 159 veterans had been found guilty of some criminal act, that is, 0.5 percent of all veterans discharged . . . this is a far lower percentage than the normal crime rate in an equivalent civilian population and allays fears that veterans are undisciplined troublemakers, drug abusers, or thieves' (Colletta, Kostner, and Wiederhofer, 1996, pp. 277–78).
- 46 Telephone interview with Eric Niragira of CEDAC, 23 August 2006.
- 47 A potential caveat here is that this group does not include those who chose to join the police and the army rather than be demobilized, many of whom are now in Bujumbura.
- 48 A potential caveat here is the fact that some ex-combatants may be among the bandits or militias that are seen by the population as heavily armed.

- 49 Interview with ex-combatants, Bujumbura, 1–2 February 2006. There is no general agreement, however, on the likely ratio of combatants who have kept their weapons, with tentative answers ranging from 10 to 99 per cent on this question.
- 50 Interview with an international source, Bujumbura, January 2006.
- 51 A major development was the dismissal of Hussein Rajabu as president of the ruling CNDD-FDD at the party's congress on 6 February 2007. Rajabu had been criticized by civil society, government officials, and international observers as corrupt and the source of many of the government's controversial actions (ICG, 2006, pp. 10–11, p. 17, fn. 84).

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