The Study on Socioeconomic role of one dollar campaign project initiated by Rwandan diaspora

Ntegamahererzo Emmanuel¹), Lee Chun Ho²)

Abstract

This paper on the socioeconomic role of One Dollar Campaign project initiated by Rwanda Diaspora in the reconstruction of the country after 1994 genocide against Tutsi tends to show how Rwanda Diaspora contributes to the socioeconomic development of their home country. The 1994 genocide against Tutsi in Rwanda has destroyed the country and the Rwandan society; and rebuilding the trust, unity, hope and socioeconomic status of genocide survivors in particular and of all Rwandans in general had to engage all Rwandans wherever they were. The focus of this paper is to assess the change on socioeconomic status of the beneficiaries of the one dollar campaign project initiated by Rwanda Diaspora which aimed to help genocide survivor orphans to have a shelter. The results showed that the amount of money contributed by Rwanda Diaspora for this project is of paramount importance as it exerts a positive impact on genocide orphan survivors’ daily life, change of their socioeconomic status and to the country’s development in general.

Keywords: diaspora, genocide, reconstruction and socioeconomic role

1. Introduction

In the past Diaspora was associated with factors that contribute to declining the development process particularly the development of sending countries, but currently the tendency has changed and Diaspora is considered a potential factor of development in many ways [1].

The linkage between Diaspora and Development got international recognition for the first time in 2006, during a UN high level summit that was held in New York[2]. It is nearly 2000’s, that Rwanda started recognizing its diaspora potential. Before that time, Diaspora engagement policies was not a high priority for the Government of Rwanda, which was striving to rebuild its economic infrastructure and restore social ties within the society[3].

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Having noticed the importance of Diaspora in the national development, the Government of Rwanda strongly believes that Rwanda Diaspora is an important element that can't be ignored, and which can contribute to the socioeconomic development of the country if it is well utilized[4].

According to the African Union as quoted by Rwanda Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, African Diaspora consists of people living outside their continent, irrespective of their citizenship and nationality and who are willing to contribute to the development of the continent and the building of the African Union[5].

According to Rwanda Diaspora policy, the term Diaspora is used to refer to any people or ethnic population forced to leave their traditional homelands, being dispersed throughout other parts of the world and ensuring development in their dispersal and culture[6].

In the Rwandan context, Rwandan Diaspora refers in general to all Rwandans who left their country voluntarily or were forced to leave for other countries of the world, foreigners holding Rwandan citizenship and willing to contribute to the development of Rwanda.

According to H. E Paul KAGAME, the president of the Republic of Rwanda, the Rwandan community abroad is recognized as the 6th province of Rwanda and can contribute to the development of the country. Rwanda suffered a genocide against Tutsi in April 1994 and costed life to nearly 1,000,000 innocent people[7]. When genocide ended, Rwanda started reconstruction process of the country and involved all Rwandans wherever they were around the world[8].

To date, many studies have evaluated the role of Rwanda Diaspora in post genocide reconstruction of the country in terms of business partnership, remittances, knowledge and skills transfers, socio-political contribution, using individual levels of stratifications related to income, education, social class or wealth[9]. However, despite this, there is a lack of research that uses standardized measures for socioeconomic patterns to compare the association of Rwanda Diaspora initiative of one dollar campaign project in favor of orphan survivors of genocide against Tutsi and its socioeconomic role in the reconstruction of the country.

In addition to this, the majority of studies on Rwanda Diaspora and its contribution in the post genocide reconstruction of Rwanda have been carried out broadly countrywide and this article tends to particularly focus on one of its project "One Dollar Campaign Project". The main objective of this paper is to examine the socioeconomic role of One Dollar Campaign project which was initiated by Rwanda Diaspora in the reconstruction of the country after 1994 genocide against Tutsi. The beneficiaries of this project were survivor orphans of genocide against Tutsi and the aim is to assess if the project has played any role in the change of
socioeconomic status of the beneficiaries in particular and to the country in general.

2. Methodology

The present study bases its methodology on documentary research about Rwanda Diaspora specifically on the socioeconomic contribution of One Dollar Campaign Project as initiated in 2009 by Rwanda Diaspora to support orphan survivors of genocide against Tutsi. Reliable data about Rwanda Diaspora contribution to the project were collected from the website of Rwanda Directorate General of Diaspora in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation and that of the Rwanda Diaspora Global Network.

In addition to this, I conducted face-to-face interview with 75 beneficiaries of the project so as to identify if any change on socioeconomic status has been achieved. These people were selected to give a broad representation of the entire group benefiting from the project, taking into account their age, sex and marital status. The group of beneficiaries has a representative and it is through him that I was able to meet all of them. The socioeconomic role was measured by the combined scores of the total number of years of stay in the one dollar campaign complex, number of years of education and income level of participants after joining the program. Multivariable logistic regression was used to assess the association between socioeconomic change of beneficiaries and the benefits of the one dollar campaign project.

3. Results and discussion

The analytical sample size was 75. In terms of age, all of them were between 20 and 23. Graph 1 presents the amount of money as a contribution of Rwanda Diaspora for the One Dollar Campaign Project[10]. Table 1 presents the association between the increase of income for the project beneficiaries and change of their life style; it also illustrates significant relationship between change in income and the beneficiaries' education level. Fig. 1 shows the One Dollar Campaign Complex which is a result of the project[11]. Table 2 shows the Pearson correlation between income and education as benefits from the One Dollar Campaign Project to be able to clearly see the relevance of the project for beneficiaries. Graph 2 is comparing all the dependent variables so as to figure out how they have been changing all along as the beneficiaries got admitted to the one dollar campaign project. Table 3 sums us all the variables which will be a base for our conclusion.
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[Graph 1] Contributed amount by Rwandan Diaspora for the One Dollar Campaign Project

Source: www.Minecofin.gov.rw

[Fig. 1] The One Dollar Campaign Complex was built to provide shelter to at least 200 orphans of the 1994 Genocide against Tutsi

Source: The NewTimes, October 29, 2014

As per the Directorate General of Diaspora in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation in Rwanda, quoting the central Bank, the One Dollar Campaign Complex (a four story building) is worth 1.7 billion Rwandan Francs and the Rwanda Diaspora has contributed 875 million Rwandan Francs.

From the figure above, the Rwandan Diaspora has contributed 51, 47% of the total budget to the project and Diaspora emerges as key contributor to the implementation of the project. There is clearly a growing awareness of their potential contributions in terms of home country’s development.

The one dollar campaign complex was officially inaugurated by the Minister of Local Government. The hostel was at first home to 192 vulnerable orphans of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi – 96 girls and 96 boys aged between 20 and 23 years and were to stay in the hostel during school holidays.
Linear regression analysis here was conducted to examine the relationship between income and lifestyle of the beneficiaries vis-a-vis the one dollar campaign project. The table above shows the descriptive statistics and analysis results. As it is clearly seen on the table 1, the linear curve is exponentially going high in terms of income and lifestyle which is positively and significantly correlated to the criterion, indicating that the one dollar campaign project has greatly contributed to the socioeconomic change of the beneficiaries in particular and to the country in general.

As per the NewTimes interview with one of the beneficiaries named Solange Uwase from
Muhanga District, a student at the University of Rwanda, College of Education, she said that having a home gives her great hope for a better future because she will no longer have to worry about where to live. “After genocide I was left with only my grandmother,” she explained. “We lived together during my childhood, my primary and secondary studies, but when I entered university she died and I was lonely and sometimes I went to my classmates’ home during holidays or just stayed at school. Now that I have got a permanent place to live, I feel relieved from my worries, and hope that my studies will be more successful than before,” Uwase added. “I wish all the best to everyone who has contributed to this project.”

The first floor of the building was used for different businesses, the money out of that was distributed to the beneficiaries; this was so helpful for their self reliance.

Table 2 reveals with the Pearson correlation between income and education, that the beneficiaries have been able to attend school and the influence of the increase in income to education is $r = 0.5$, which is 50%. This means that education of beneficiaries of the Once dollar campaign project got influenced at 50% by change in income.

The graph above compares the variables and shows how they have been changing all along as the beneficiaries moved to the one dollar campaign complex. We note improvement in education, life style and change of social class. However the welfare has not improved a lot; as this involves happiness, fortune and health, this might be due to that the beneficiaries were still psychologically suffering the wounds of genocide against Tutsi. It is not actually easy to be entirely happy while your beloved innocent people have been killed, their family property were also destroyed during genocide and their mental health was problematic.
In the table 3 above, each term in the model as a whole is tested for its ability for variation in the dependent variable. We note that the significance value for each term except lifestyle is less than 0.05; therefore each term is significant except lifestyle. This entails that lifestyle was not a predictor of socioeconomic change of the beneficiaries of the 1994 genocide against Tutsi.

The results of these analyses demonstrate that of the variable of this study, income, shelter and education were the strongest influencing factors of the socioeconomic change of the beneficiaries of the One Dollar Campaign Project. This is shown by the 0.5 level (2-tailed) Pearson correlation, equivalent to 50% as a contributor and the remaining 50% comes from other influencing factors that are not part of this study. Although lifestyle has shown negative results to socioeconomic change by the mean square equaling to -0.024, it has not affected the general umbrella of socioeconomic improvement of the beneficiaries. This is consistent with other research that survivors of genocide against Tutsi suffered a lot their mental health and till now some of them are still suffering the wound, whatever support and assistance, mental health take a long time to get recover.

**Table 3** Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
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<td>.321</td>
<td>1.315</td>
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<td>.</td>
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</table>

a. R Squared = .004 (Adjusted R Squared = -.022)
b. R Squared = .110 (Adjusted R Squared = .087)
c. R Squared = .033 (Adjusted R Squared = .008)
Overall, the role of One Dollar Campaign Project considered in this study was 0.5, equivalent to 50 percent of the variance of the contribution to the change of socioeconomic status of beneficiaries. This is an adequate proportion even higher considering previous research in the same fields. We are aware that this is not the only on socioeconomic change of survivors of genocide against Tutsi, but the focus of this was only on the One Dollar Campaign Project initiated by Rwanda Diaspora as their contribution in the reconstruction of the country after 1994 genocide against Tusti.

4. Conclusion

This study provides insights on the socioeconomic role of one dollar campaign project initiated by Rwanda Diaspora in the reconstruction of the country after 1994 genocide against Tutsi. Basing on the human development index indicators often framed in terms of whether people are able to be and do desirable things in life, like being well fed, sheltered, healthy, studying, working, the results of the study revealed that Rwanda Diaspora contribution to the one dollar campaign project have played a key role in the change of socioeconomic status of the beneficiaries. The Available amount of raised funds showed that their contribution has absolutely positive impact on socioeconomic change of orphan survivors in such a way that 96% of the beneficiaries have graduated university and all of them are employed in public service and private sector, 4% are still pursuing university studies, 63% have married and have good families.

References


