

Africa's Youth And Conflicts: A Sub-Saharan Spring?



Recent travels to Chad, Cameroon and Mali confronted me with the conflicts in these countries as well as in the Central African Republic, and the youth's involvement in them. How are we as researchers to analyse the conflicts and protests, what questions and fields of study should we explore? Are we observing a Sub-Saharan spring?

Opposed youth groups in CAR

In Cameroon I worked on a [project](#) with researchers from CAR. Since 2013 CAR has entered a new cycle of violence. Seleka and anti-Balaka are opposed groups of mainly youth who fight in a rhythm of vengeance. The government controls the capital city Bangui, but other parts of the country are under control of the diverse 'rebel' groups. Both sides are mainly filled with young (wo)men.

Salaries cut in Chad

In Chad I met young men who had just been released from prison where they had been tortured on accusation of disturbing the order. Since January this year Chad has entered a new period of protests and strikes. It was not acceptable for most people that salaries were cut by half and indemnities were not paid. Families could no longer pay for the school fees of their children and some families could only afford one meal a day. It was another period of scarcity in a long sequence of protests in, what is in fact, bankrupt Chad since November 2015. Youth are raising their fists against the regime, but they have little power as the oppression is far more powerful. Since a month now the internet has been cut down again. (This [research](#) done in Chad from 2014 to now about youth movements/hardship gives more insight.)

Read

more: <http://www.ascleiden.nl/mirjam-de-bruijn/africas-youth-and-conflicts-sub-saharan-spring>