

Workshop Program Point Sud 2021

Politics and Armed Conflicts in Africa: Bring the Peasantry back to the Center of the Debate

21-26 March 2022

**Gender and Development Laboratory of the University Joseph Ki-Zerbo,
Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso**

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Abstract

The dominant discourses on armed groups and mobilizations in Africa have evolved over time, ranging from extreme violence to identity politics to the role of economic incentives. Increasingly, research analyzes the recurrence of armed groups in countries in armed conflict. However, the impact of violence and conflict on the peasantry, including forced displacement and the destruction of territory as a place for peasant life, requires more attention. Far from being a product of nature, the peasantry identifies itself through a series of claims, mobilizations, innovations and a particular way of life. This makes it a dynamic actor that (co-) shapes conflicts and contributes to the different processes it generates. Most researchers neglect the role of the peasantry in their analyses of the processes of transformation of violent conflict, and its political capital.

This workshop is devoted to the reflection on the relationship between the peasantry and armed conflicts in the Sahel and the Great Lakes region. Three main objectives are targeted in this workshop. First, it will bring together a group of researchers (junior and senior) from various disciplines and geographical areas around the issue of the relationship between peasantry and armed conflict, in order to exchange on methodological approaches to address this topic from a multidisciplinary perspective. This will contribute to the state of knowledge in the research on the subject. Secondly, it will also help to deconstruct the classic categories in this research area that consider peasants in conflict-affected areas as victims only. This discussion is necessary because the impact of violence and conflict on the peasantry and the role of the peasantry in these transformation processes and its political capital are very important. Finally, this workshop aims to set up a research program that will have as its objectives to study the discourses and actions of the peasantry and draw lessons to be used in the development of recommendations to inform and guide the prevention and management of armed conflicts in Africa.