

RESULTS OF REFLECTIONS OF THE BENIN PARTICIPANTS

1. WOUNDS

REGION

- Colonisation ;
- Monetary domination of France, the colonising country, over African countries that share the French language through the veto placed on the CFA Franc;
- International trade agreements that bind our countries to France;
- Cross-border insecurity with the development of terrorism in all its forms;
- The multiplication of coups d'état;

COUNTRIES

- Colonisation ;
- Political dissensions and electoral post violence of the last legislative and presidential elections since 2019;
- Lack of inclusion in socio-economic reforms
- The high cost of living;
- The displacement operations carried out in 2017;
- Inter-community conflicts.

COMMUNITIES

- Disputes over land ownership;
- Disputes over the management of convents
- Conflicts over succession to thrones;
- Conflicts generated by wars of domination between tribes or socio-cultural groups;
- Conflicts between authorities and citizens during the revolutionary period;
- Conflicts between farmers and the Peulh

2. EVENTS OR SITUATIONS EXPERIENCED

- Razzias of the dominant dynasties (the atchoupa strategy; conquests between tribes)
- Revolutionary power and its autocratic methods (Segbana prison);
- Widowhood rites (levirate);
- Incest;
- Tensions and confrontations between farmers and herders;
- Inter-religious conflicts;
- Proliferation of sects;

DESCRIPTION

- The raids of the dominant dynasties: the battles between kingdoms, the wars of domination,
- Revolutionary power and its autocratic methods: torture and other human rights violations.
- The levirate is the fact that a widow is forced to marry a member of her family-in-law in order to take over the property of the deceased.

- The unsecured passage of herds of oxen belonging to nomadic Fulani over farmers' fields: this leads to tensions and confrontations between farmers and herders, resulting in ransacked fields and deaths among the farmers.

PAIN AND PEOPLE AFFECTED

- Raids by the dominant dynasties: painful for the mahis; the baribas;
- Tensions and confrontations between farmers and herders lead to loss of life and property: (ransacked fields, deaths in the ranks of farmers)
- The levirate is painful for the woman and her children;
- Inter-religious conflicts and abuses (church members, communities)

3- THE CAUSES OF THESE WOUNDS (THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL BEHAVIOURS IN OUR COUNTRY THAT HAVE CAUSED OR ARE STILL CAUSING WOUNDS.

SOCIAL ATTITUDES

- the resurgence of socio-cultural burdens (hatred between cultures against the backdrop of the after-effects of the raids. e.g. prohibition of marriage between the Fon and Nago communities)
- the tendency for young people and certain holders of occult powers to seek easy gain; example: the Guy-man phenomenon and the Kenenssi vodou phenomenon;
- the strong culture of individualism;
- Greed of the elites;
- religious intolerance;
- exploitation of the misery of the population

POLITICAL ATTITUDES

- Political intolerance (non-inclusion of all political forces in the major development orientations, absence of the opposition in elections);
- The politicisation of the administration;
- muzzling of the press and standardisation of opinions
- The instrumentalisation of justice;

DISCRIMINATED GROUPS

-Political minorities, opposition parties, journalists, junior staff, youth, women, children, parents, churchgoers.

4. IN WHAT WAYS THE WOUNDS ARE VISIBLE IN OUR COUNTRY:

- Lack of national cohesion;
- Difficulty in building development;
- Eternal distrust between people of different cultures;
- The deficit of patriotism;
- General intolerance;

- Corruption,
- The trivialisation of empathy.

WOUNDS IN THE COUNTRY THAT AFFECT US

- The coups d'état ;
- Kidnappings;
- Judicial decisions with a political background;
- political settlements of scores;
- the unequal distribution of national wealth
- the high cost of living;
- the loss of jobs following the clearing of land in Dantokpa....

IN WHAT WAYS:

- Physically,
- Psychologically,
- Spiritually too;
- Frustrations also remain.

WHAT ARE THE AREAS OF SILENCE? THINGS THAT CANNOT BE SPOKEN ABOUT IN OUR COUNTRY OR IN CERTAIN COMMUNITIES WITHIN IT. WHY THE SILENCE?

Arbitrary imprisonments, wars between communities that have definitively separated the fons and the nagos, the baribas and the nagos, the stifling of citizens relating to political governance for fear of ending up behind bars; the trivialisation of the employment law; the exaggerated violence of the peuls that leaves everyone speechless, even those in power, children born out of wedlock as a result of the rape of mothers during the revolutionary period, etc.

WHO ARE THE PERPETRATORS IN OUR CONTEXT? WHO IS US? WHO IS THEM? WHAT STEPS SHOULD BE TAKEN TO HEAL SOME OF THE DEEP WOUNDS WE HAVE IDENTIFIED? WHAT IS OUR DREAM FOR BENIN, OUR PEOPLE? HOW CAN WE CONTRIBUTE TO THE REALISATION OF THIS DREAM?

Authors: the government, our community,

We are sometimes direct or indirect authors of these acts;

They too are sometimes direct or indirect actors of these acts;

The process must follow several stages:

- a general procedure based mainly on the forgiveness of the communities in a mutual way (the community that has offended must go to the offended one to ask for forgiveness and the offended community should have the love of peace to forgive the offending community),
- a collective process because these frustrations prevent Benin's children, both boys and girls, from being happy once they are in love;
- a national reconciliation process because national wounds exist and affect many Beninese citizens and threaten peace in the country.

Our dream for Benin:

We dream of a united, strong Benin with citizens who share the same values.

We dream that the Fons will trust the Nagos and vice versa and that the Baribas and Nagos will trust each other;

Finally, we dream that the values of work and courage shared by the sons of Benin through their national flag;

Finally, we dream that Beninese patriotism will rise from its ashes.

How to contribute to the realisation of this dream

- Healing of Memories workshops for members of the government, representatives of the Fons and Nago communities, representatives of the Nago and Baribas communities, Fulani representatives and farmers' representatives, trade unionists and members of the government;
- informal exchanges between opposition parties and parties of the presidential movement.