

The experiences and needs of returning refugees to Kigali, Rwanda and the role of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in their repatriation.

BY

Benon Kabeera

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ABSTRACT

The study was designed to understand the experiences and needs of returning refugees to Kigali, Rwanda and the role of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in their repatriation. The study adopted a qualitative research method where in-depth interviews were conducted with 23 returnees and 4 key informants; 2 from the UNHCR and 2 from the GoR. Many African countries especially in the Great Lakes region have been variously hit by military and ethnic conflicts that are responsible for the refugee plight. While the UNHCR and its partners have tried its level best to deal with refugees' problems in the region, many challenges remain in repatriation and re-integration of Rwandese returnees. This is due to institutional weaknesses, lack of multi-disciplinary approaches to solving the returnees' problems, poor governance and failure to monitor the sustainability of development projects and plans that are in line with the returnees/refugees needs. The capacity to design and implement successful refugee policy programmes in Africa is weak from the global to the community level. Even the external assistance for the returnees to Rwanda is failing because of lack of 'in-country' experience needed to understand returnees' needs and to find appropriate durable solutions. African governments must make efforts to operationalise refugee laws and policies and draw on locally conceived ideas for addressing refugees/returnees problems on the continent. In this study the findings in Chapter five indicate that virtually all returnees experienced violence, victimization, psychological distress and extremely traumatic genocide experiences. The returnees' recovery from trauma and loss of their relatives during the genocide, especially among the new caseload returnees, appeared to be complicated by overwhelming blame and guilt associated with the outcome of the Gacacca court investigations and the various unmet needs for social intervention after returning to Rwanda. Many participants experienced difficulty in coping with life in Rwanda, yet little is known by the GoR about the coping patterns of such returnees. The study highlights possible recommendations for averting the refugee phenomenon and recommends a variety of counselling, financial and other service interventions to meet returnees' needs.

DECLARATION

I declare that the whole of this Masters dissertation is my original work. Where references are made of the work of others, these are duly acknowledged in the text.

Student signature: _____

Supervisor's signature: _____

DEDICATION

Dedicated to my late parents the late Mr. M. Kanimba and Joyce Kanimba and to all the RPF/A cadres both living and dead who sacrificed their lives to ensure repatriation of the Rwandese refugees to Rwanda.

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ACRONYMS AND TERMS USED IN THE DISSERTATION

AU = African Union

COOPI = Cooperazione Internazionale

DRC = Democratic Republic of Congo

ex-Far = Soldiers of the pre-1994 government

FARG = Fund for the Assistance of Genocide Survivors

Gacaca = Kinyarwanda term for traditional grassroots justice

Genocidaires = Those accused of, or responsible for, crimes of the genocide

GTZ = German Technical Corporation

GoR = Government of Rwanda

ICJ = International Court of Justice

ICTR = International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda

ID = Identity Card

IDP = Internally Displaced Persons

IRO = International Refugee Organization

KCC = Kigali City Council

MINALOC = Ministry of Local government

MINITERRE = Ministry of Land and Human Resettlement

New caseload = Rwandan refugees whose departure from the country was precipitated by the events of 1994

NEPAD = Partnership for Africa's Development

NGOs = Non-Government Organizations

NRA = National Resistance Army

NCR = National Council for Refugees

NRM = National Resistance Movement

NURC = National Unity and Reconciliation Commission

OAU = Organization of African Unity

Old caseload = Rwandan refugees who left the country before 1994, many between 1959-1967

PARMEHUTU = Party for the Emancipation of the Hutu People/ Parti du Mouvement de L' Emancipation Hutu

JCRRRR = Joint Commission on the Repatriation and Reintegration of Rwandese Refugees

RDF = Rwanda Defence Forces

RDGN = Rwanda Diaspora Global Network

RANU = Rwandese Alliance for National Unity

RRA = Rwanda Revenue Authority

RPA = Rwandese Patriotic Army

RPF = Rwandese Patriotic Front

SAPs = Structural Adjustment Programmes

UNHCR = United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNICEF = United Nations Children's Fund

UN = United Nations

UNDP = United Nations Development Program

VAT = Value Added Tax

WFP = World Food Program

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Rwanda Rushya [New Rwanda] as most returnees call it today, after the genocide, is a new country to most returnees. Lucky is the returning exile whose eyes feast, for the first time in two decades, on the transformed Kanombe and Kigali cityscapes, with red-tiled roofs of luxury homes that tax one's gaze as they disappear over the horizons in all directions. Today, Kigali is a sprawling metropolis of luxury hotels like Intercontinental hotel, clothing boutiques, replicas of South African-style suburb shopping malls, and new multi-storied commercial buildings and refurbished oldies like Milles Collines. Yet, alongside all of this lies the spectre of the genocide and of social exclusions, ethnic divisions and inequalities of the most manifest kinds as reflected in this dissertation. When the exiles left all those years ago, Kigali was the city of death, destruction and destitution. God had literally forgotten it. It is perplexing as one witnesses the metamorphosis of Rwanda after the genocide. Rwanda became an epicenter of a war which infected the whole of central and east Africa in the early 1990s. Almost every country in the region was involved by either hosting refugees during the crisis, or getting dragged into regional politics which had been poisoned by war. It sounds cynical, but that was the situation in Rwanda during the time of the genocide.

Rwanda became synonymous with war and violence. For many people, it still conjures images of the genocide. For the Rwandans [now] genocide is an odd feeling. Many cannot quite believe they have pulled it off. Well, they have not scored the ultimate goal, not quite, not yet- but there is hope and the goal is in sight. Most residents believe that the best way to achieve the much desired peace and economic prosperity is cherished freedom and perceive Rwanda as a "land of milk and honey" as Rwanda is commonly referred to.

Kigali city is characterized by modest homes cramped together on city perimeters, myriad workshops in their midst, countless crisscrossing minibus lines, all seeming to speed from nowhere, craft-workers' tools engaged in informal sector that have expanded the range of activities carried out in Kigali city. The sheer size of the city creates its own opportunities. New business owners have emerged who, unlike their predecessors, are of very humble origins.

With some stability Rwanda has made very many positive gains in the last eleven years and statistics tell the story as shown in Rwanda's economy. But let me not even touch the numbers yet. The eyes do not need statistics to convince them that Rwanda is an unstoppable African lion roaring out of the jungles of the third world towards the first. Rwanda presents a unique case study on returning refugees. After a genocide in which up to a million people were killed in a remarkably short period of time, huge numbers of the exiled population returned to their native country, some discovering it for the first time, and became the new elite responsible for reconstruction, reconciliation, and rule of law. It was an amazing burden to take on after living an entire generation in exile, but the mass influx of "old caseload" returnees to the country immediately after the genocide indicates that they were eager and willing to undertake the enormous task of rebuilding a country from the devastation of genocide.

Rationale of the study

A number of factors motivated me to pick this topic for my study. First, this study seeks to address a very important aspect of Rwandan refugees that affected me personally as my ancestors emigrated from Rwanda to Uganda during the Tutsi/Hutu fight in the 1950s and I have learned to appreciate my Rwandan heritage. I had heard and read many of ethnic clashes and Rwandese refugees in alien countries before and was curious about the stories around them. I ended up being interested in doing this research to obtain real insights of the experiences of Rwandese refugees. I chose this topic partly out of respect for my history as well as fellow Rwandese refugees in exile. My own conviction is that many problems have been faced by Rwandese refugees living in refugee host countries.

Secondly, the findings of the study will be used to inform policy makers, politicians and bureaucrats of government to address the issue of refugees; what causes it and its possible solutions. This may take the form of designing programmes with due consideration to refugees as a crucial instrument for catalysing peace and harmony in Rwanda.

Thirdly, the study is also very interesting to me because it will help me to investigate livelihood and socio-economic repatriation and re-integration of returnees back to Rwanda and the treatment they receive upon arrival. The study sought to address latent issues regarding the needs of returning refugees to Rwanda and of social inclusion and exclusion embedded in the selection criteria and distribution of opportunities/benefits. It also sought to analyze the government's policy on trying the perpetrators of genocide and whether the returnees have had adequate housing, education, medical services, food, agricultural supplies and employment, and to understand what caused the Rwandese to seek refuge elsewhere in the world.

“Life of hard knocks”

With all my refugee life experiences, I feel it important to provide a brief biography that explains my interest in this study. It does have resonance with the participants' narratives of their lived experiences in alien countries that I discuss in Chapter 5. Through suffering, the relevance of my biography, as a genre of lived experiences as a refugee, revolves around two sub-themes: my life as a refugee and my life as a returnee in Rwanda that was filled with passions, joys, pleasures and sorrows. I was born as a refugee in Uganda because my parents had fled Rwanda in 1959. I did not know that I was a refugee until I began school when I was ridiculed for being a Rwandese refugee in Uganda.

As a child, I saw myself as a Ugandan because I shared the language and even the religion with our Ugandan neighbours. In Uganda we all liked and ate the same kinds of food. I would never know the difference between a refugee and a national if I did not learn it from school and peers. School was the first place that I learnt that I was not to be regarded as a Ugandan national. During the first week of my first school year, there was

election of local leaders. The electorate asked refugees to go to one side and Ugandan nationals on the other side. The majority of students were confused. That was my first experience of knowing that I was a refugee- a recognition that I was separate and different from the others.

When I went home my parents told me I was a refugee. I asked why? They explained to me the events that happened in 1959 and 1973; that Tutsi houses had been burned, some Tutsis were killed and that Hutus kicked them out of Rwanda. That is how I learned that I was a refugee and a Tutsi by ethnicity and Rwandan by origin. I was a victim being a refugee in Uganda. This was the beginning of other critical “refugee moments” in my individual biography.

I started to discover the meaning of refugee experiences when I entered secondary school in 1993. I was told often enough that I was a refugee. I and other Rwandese being refugees in Uganda faced serious persecution during the Obote government in the 1980s. I started to reflect deeply and began to believe that it was bad being a refugee in an alien country. My parents, family members, and other Rwandese refugees in Uganda began to express their anger and resentment over the discrimination they faced from xenophobic political Ugandans. These discriminations ranged from being denied jobs, land and joining better schools. I was older by this time and I started to truly understand the meaning of what was happening. The discrimination was based on a presumption that Rwandese refugees were strangers who came to take Ugandan land. We suffered through the events of the 1980s.

Because of refugee life, I have figured out my life up to the present time. I was fascinated by the peculiar identities when in Uganda when I was both a Ugandan and a Rwandese. I was in a total dilemma. I was neither a Ugandan nor Rwandese- seen as an outsider in both countries [Uganda and Rwanda]. Although I see myself and identify my self as Rwandan, and legally “enjoy” the Rwandan citizenship, I am seldom perceived to be a Rwandan by most survivors of genocide (new caseload returnees). My surname Kabeera has much bearing on this identity. In Rwandan my surname is supposed to be spelt as

Kabera but because of the Ugandan background and the need to disguise my identity my parents had to change the spelling to Kabeera. When I returned to Rwanda this was strange to most Rwandese. This was a problem reported by most participants in Chapter 5 where people had Ugandan names on returning to Rwanda. This gives a greater understanding of how my nationality and citizenship has been historically refugee produced. The greatest accomplishment of my biography is that it describes the problematisation of the refugee condition and suffering that most participants narrated in Chapter 5.

My first day stepping in Rwanda

My first day stepping in Rwanda was such an exciting one though. I praised the day because I considered myself as a Rwandan not a refugee any more. Most of my relatives had repatriated to Rwanda but I was left in Uganda schooling. The distance from Uganda to Rwanda is not a long journey so I had to board a bus from Kampala city (Uganda) to Kigali city, [Rwanda]. When I reached the Uganda-Rwanda border there was a problem. I had a Ugandan passport and in such a confusing scenario I was supposed to fill an emigration form to allow me entry into Rwanda as a Ugandan. I believed I was betraying myself disguised as a Ugandan when in an actual sense I was a Rwandan. When the bus crossed the border to Rwanda I stood despite my seat being unoccupied, as I wanted to view how Rwanda looked. I looked [and felt] a stranger in a country I called mine! I loved going to live in Rwanda. Although we lived in Uganda we never felt Uganda was our country. Despite my parents and I having Ugandan citizenship we never felt that Uganda was our motherland. We all wanted to find ourselves in Rwanda at some point. It is regrettable that my parents never made it to Rwanda, they died in Uganda. I was born as a refugee in Uganda and had experienced several problems of social exclusion. But in 1999 I returned to Rwanda and I believed my dream came true. Now I am a Rwandan national having a Rwandan passport. Yet I await full acknowledgement and social acceptance of this citizenship.

Main aims of the research

The aim of this study was to explore the experiences and needs of returning refugees to Kigali, Rwanda and the role of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in their repatriation. I focused on the challenges the returnees face in terms of land allocation and distribution, re-settlement and how were being tried in Gacaca courts [those who participated in the 1994 genocide]. I also focused on the government's policy towards the return of refugees from the diaspora. But my major focus was on the repatriation, experiences, and challenges these returnees faced and whether the Government of Rwanda (GoR) in collaboration with the UNHCR were meeting their needs. To achieve these aims I conducted in-depth interviews with 23 Rwandan returnees and 4 key informants and I attended Gacaca court hearings in Kigali, Rwanda. I also attended a timely conference on returning Rwandans while in Kigali. While the latter two were not included as part of the initial plan of this study, they certainly provided the context for great appreciation of the complexities of the issues under investigation, and they helped me to further achieve some of the objectives of the study.

Objectives of the study

- 1) To gain a comprehensive understanding of the experiences and needs of returning refugees to Kigali, Rwanda.
- 2) To understand the role of the UNHCR's social and economic roles in the repatriation of returning Rwandan refugees.
- 3) To understand the government policy framework with regard to returning refugees.
- 4) To understand to the efforts of national and international non-governmental organizations and the UNHCR in monitoring, providing assistance and protection of refugees. Thus the study will attempt to fill a gap, which many writers on human rights have ignored that is of specific concern to the plight of refugees.
- 5) To increase awareness about the rights of refugees among nationals by recommending similar services for both refugees and nationals for better co-operation. This will erase the feeling of being resented in host countries.

Underlying assumptions

The returning Rwandan refugees face numerous problems ranging from political, social, economic, Judicial and human rights violations when they are in exile and when they are repatriated to Kigali, Rwanda.

Problem statement

Large-scale movements of refugees and other forced migrants have become a defining characteristic of the contemporary world. At few times in recent history have large numbers of people in so many parts of the globe been obliged to leave their countries and communities to seek safety elsewhere UNHCR (1995) cited in Zeager (1998: 1). In the wake of Rwanda and the Great Lakes crisis in Africa in which tens of thousands of people were repeatedly killed and millions forced to flee, government's first consideration is state security and establishment of new government leaders than immediately responding to the needs of the returnees. It has been noted, with serious concern, that returning refugees have faced peculiar circumstances. They share a range of common needs such as physical, psychological, social, educational, spiritual and emotional, which have to be met if they are to develop normally and healthily.

Little attention has been paid to the Rwandan returnees and the devastating effects of the damage done to them after the war and the genocide. Most researchers have been interested in discussing the term "experience", though most of the literature falls short to characterize actual refugee experiences. Several of these include important quotations which give a hint of these formative events like the genocide in Rwanda yet they often move too quickly to a conclusion which inadvertently serves to diminish Rwandese refugee experiences of their life both in the diaspora and back in Rwanda. Often such research done on Rwandese refugees lacks the perspective and analytical tools needed to understand Rwandese refugees' experiences. Furthermore, the research done on the current Rwandese refugees ignores available theories that explain the dynamics of the conflicts and the genocide that occurred in Rwanda. This research was designed to fill these identified gaps.

Key Research Questions (interview guide)

The following research questions guided the study;

- 1) What are the experiences and needs of returning refugees to Kigali, Rwanda?
- 2) What is the UNHCR's social and economic role in repatriation of returning Rwandan refugees?
- 3) What is the relationship between the Rwandan government and the UNHCR in facilitating the repatriation of returning Rwandan refugees?
- 4) Is there congruence between official policy statements and practice with regard to government and UNHCR on returning refugees to Rwanda?
- 5) What structures, practices and strategies do respondents believe should be put in place to facilitate the return of Rwandan refugees from exile?

The above questions served to guide the in-depth interviews used with the primary sample of 23 returning refugees to Rwanda and the 4 key informants in this study.

Theoretical framework guiding the study

The major conceptual framework guiding this study is the ecological-systems perspective. This conceptual framework contextualizes the essential philosophical application to this study that investigates the lived Rwandese experiences of refugees' and the role of UNHCR in their repatriation to Kigali, Rwanda.

The Ecological-systems perspective

Using the ecological-systems perspective helped me to discuss the trajectories of different systems that make up a whole. The significance of this theory is that it recognizes that all systems or layers are interrelated one affecting the other; in this case it recognizes people and their environment, their social, political, religious, educational, health and judicial concerns. The ecosystems perspective theoretical model is presented with an explanation of its application to the area of investigation this dissertation.

Bronfenbrenner (1998: 5) examined the complexity of contexts, especially the relationships between various systems that affect an individual. In doing so, he identified and defined "microsystems" as those systems that have direct contact with the individual.

He defined “mesosystems” as those systems that occur when microsystems interact. “Exosystems” are defined as those systems that affect family members and, through their impact on family members, affect the child and the macrosystems or the global as the last layer in the system, all these are related in nature. Bronfenbrenner’s (1998) theory highlights the pivotal role of context in the life of refugees and their family members. For example political decisions taken at the macro level have a direct bearing on the micro level institutions. For instance in poor political, economic and social policies determined by the leaders will affect the entire society in one way or another.

Much has been talked about refugees but no suitable conceptual model has been found but rather conflicting ones. It is upon this that I will surmise the ecological perspective paradigm to explain this study. The model provides a framework for explaining the refugee experiences, problems, needs and what affects them in both micro to macro levels. The ecological system as a whole is seen to be in a dynamic process of self-organization and self-maintenance (Wakefield, 1996; Zastrow, 1997). It is believed that if the political, legal, social and economic systems exist and are functioning well everything is in equilibrium but if they are disrupted by other external factors the whole system affects the smooth running of other institutions like individuals, families and the entire community is affected or are broken down or come to a state of disequilibrium (Berk, 1996: 73).

A whole is a collection of interrelated or parts [concepts] (Compton et al, 2005). This theoretical frame work is vital in a way that no matter how much one thinks he knows about a topic, and how unbiased one thinks is, it is impossible for a human being not to have preconceived notions, even if they are of a very general nature. It is therefore, important that in this study ecological-systems theory provides for a thorough understanding of the refugee phenomena. Germain (1978: 539) argued that “People and their environment are viewed as interdependent, complementary parts of a whole in which person and environment are constantly changing and shaping the other”.

It is noted that the social environment comprises of human beings organized in similar relations, social networks, bureaucratic institutions and other social institutions including the neighborhood, community, and society itself. Compton et al (2005: 38) defines human ecology as “the study of the spatial and temporal interrelationships between humans and their economic, social, and political organization” while Barker (2003 cited in Compton et al, 2005: 39) defines the ecosystems perspective as providing the “conceptual lens through which the social worker can note the systematic relatedness of case variables”. Wars destroy human life and all that supports it. Whether as the deliberate tactic of attack and through mindless destruction of habitats, war’s effects on the environment carry on oblivious to the delicacies of refugees’ lives in the entire world. This theoretical model will help me to analytically study the refugee problems, experiences, needs and situations.

Nevertheless, a critique of systems theory is that the theory emphasizes hierarchical relations/interaction such as humans/nature, management/workers with the assumption that all systems do collaborate for the benefit of the other system and that the shift of one layer/system leads to another. Compton et al (2005: 24) argues that “we often serve people who have made many unsuccessful attempts to address social problems”. The systems theory focuses squarely on hierarchical systems claims (Compton et al (2005). Ecological system assumes an ever changing environment to which all its layers must adapt but this is not always the case. This becomes a limitation in its application to this study. (Compton et al, 2005). It is this “goodness-of-fit” emphasis, where the individual must adapt the ever-changing demands of the environment within the eco-systems approach that has been criticized. The approach does not call for changes in oppressive structures of society that foster social exclusion, hate, violence and wars (Mullay, 1993).

The physical environment comprises of the natural world of animals, plants and land forms. The social and physical environments are related to each other in complex ways (Germain, 1991). The supportive environment precisely means the physical and social aspects of our surroundings (Queralt, 1996). It encompasses where people live, their local community, and their home, where they work and play. Supportive environments

include the framework, which determines access to resources for living. Thus actions to create a supportive environment have many dimensions: physical, social, spiritual, economic and political. Each of these dimensions is inextricably linked to the others in a dynamic interaction. It requires co-ordinated actions at local, regional, national, and global levels to achieve solutions for refugees that are truly sustainable.

As reflected in the data analysis, this theoretical framework has relevance to the returnees' environmental concerns. This is mainly because 90% of the country's population is still engaged in agricultural activities. Many returnees find wetlands as convenient for crops such as rice, yams, vegetables, and sugarcanes among others. They expressed how these crops do well in the wetlands. On the hand, wetlands play an essential role in the ecosystem. Unlike most other habitats, wetlands directly improve other ecosystems because of its many cleansing benefits. Wetlands have been compared to 'kidneys'. The analogy is a good one. In drawing from ecosystems perspective, which underscores the relationship between the physical environment and human beings, this is relevant. Of course, the after-effects of loss of environment are many, both on the ecosystem and on human health. For instance, with pollution people are vulnerable to adverse health. Ecosystems perspective therefore offers a useful framework for understanding the interrelationship between environment and people.

Societies are complex and interrelated. Health cannot be separated from refugees' lives. The inextricable links between people and their environment constitutes the basis for a socio-ecological approach to refugees' health. The overall guiding principle for the world, nations, regions, communities and to the individual level alike is the need to encourage reciprocal maintenance to take care of each other, our communities and our natural world. A supportive environment is of paramount importance for refugees' health as the two are interdependent and inseparable. Refugees are poor and helpless; poverty often prevents to access good health and other services. However, the solution to these massive problems lies in a strong commitment by the UNHCR, governments and other support organizations.

There is a need for general recognition that African refugees, like those on other continents, are often psychologically disturbed by their experiences of inferiority, isolation, despair, shame and doubt, guilt, stagnation and mistrust. Compton et al (2005) contend that “the process is the problem”. The systems principle that everything affects everything else is relevant to the Rwandan refugee situation (Compton et al, 2005: 24). The people who suffer more in such poor and difficult situations are children and the UNHCR should help, protect and assist them. But more importantly they should assist the community in which they are living in supporting the family and thereby protecting refugee children. The best way to help refugee children is to help their families, and one of the best ways to help families is to help the community. The ecosystems perspective is applicable here as it shows how these institutions are interrelated.

Under the Convention of 1989 on the Rights of Children, special care and protection of children was first recognized internationally in the 1924 League of Nations declaration on the rights of children. In 1989, the Convention on the Rights of Children was introduced by the UN, and it was ratified by more than 180 states. State parties to the CRC must respect and ensure the rights in the Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination, a reminder that refugee children are first and foremost children, a fact which sometimes risks being ignored in the midst of chaos and upheaval of mass forced migration (UNHCR, 2003).

An environmentally just or unjust policy or practice affects individuals, groups, or communities in places of life and work. Macro systems on the national level, especially the country’s restoration of macro economic, social and political stability and policy consistency contributes directly to the well being of individuals. This may curb refugee flows. If the momentum of peace is to be maintained over a long-term, security has to be maintained to ensure the well being of nationals. The quest for peace in most conflict-prone countries should be a key component of national political strategies as the aggregate goal to end the plight of exiles that enormously impacts refugees at the micro, mezzo and macrosystem levels. If this is not achieved and political turmoil erupts the country’s infrastructure is destroyed, schools are demolished and this results in low

enrolment levels which affects the individuals and the community. More so health facilities are destroyed and this increases high mortality rates.

To apply systems perspective to refugees I look critically at the social problems that affect every refugee. Such problems span at the micro level to a macro level including the global context. The suffering of Rwandan refugees eventually became a global concern affecting Western and African countries like DRC, Uganda, Tanzania, and Burundi as the number of refugees fleeing to these countries became a global problem that attracted the attention of the UNHCR and other UN agencies. Many asylum countries complain that refugees disrupt the social, economic and political order by boosting the population of certain minorities by aligning themselves with the opposition as a leverage to pressure their interests, thereby, tilting the political balance of power against the government. Their arrival in large influxes can disrupt the delivery of essential community, social and economic services and therefore distort the local economy as the asylum government may be compelled to share the little it has with the refugees.

To demonstrate the demonstration of this ecological systems perspective to this study, all it takes is putting the concept of the individual at the centre of a returnee. This perspective helps understand in understanding what mutations are likely to affect the returnees at a micro level and beyond society itself and at the macro level.

Taking the concept of the individuals (returnees) is fundamental in assessing how they have adjusted and re-integrated themselves with others in their home country, the feelings of the returnees, housing needs, finances, health needs, and education, among others. Maslow (1976) contends that our needs fit into a hierarchy ranging from basic needs like food and shelter to ultimate self realization. Only where lower needs are satisfied can the fulfilment of higher needs be undertaken. The relative importance given to the satisfaction of individual rights and needs far outstrips any efforts made to encourage corresponding obligations to society. The fulfilment of returnees' needs has largely been masked by the UNHCR and the home government leaving refugees to suffer without the basic necessities of life. This affects the mezzo/community level. For instance if there is

an outbreak of diseases brought about by the returnees or due to poor health conditions, the outbreak of the disease affects the whole community.

Systems theory states “that in any system a change in one part has a direct impact on the other” (Berger, et al, 1996: 41). Individuals/refugee returnees needs at a micro level have a direct impact on the mezzo/community level. Returnees’ wellbeing being rests on their ability to access health services, education, finance and water to mention but a few. All these have a direct impact on the community as scarce resources tend to be squeezed and competed for (Weick, 1992 cited in Berger, 1996: 7). It is difficult to build community, or to repair one, when refugee needs are so vast. These needs focus on person -in-environment. Because of this association between individuals and mezzo/community, it is apparent that these cannot be completely separated from the ways in which we envision and experience our relationship with the environment. That is, concerns of returnees are person/nature consciousness, cannot be separated from all those systematic forces that function to maintain all forms of injustice, whether towards nature or other human beings for instance wars that cause suffering and eventually refugee problems (Berger, et al 1996).

The ecosystems levels

This section discusses each of the systems levels in a more detail, and discusses more specifically their application to this study.

- 1) Micro systems which deals few individuals especially at a family level, there is face-to-face interaction which takes place, this could include mother, father and children. The understanding begins at a nuclear level and one learns from family, school, community and to the whole society. Cultural dynamics are shaped by our societies which tend to change from time to time depending on people’s perception of the society. Our environment is always changing as peoples’ lives change in the current and modern technology. Children are affected by their culture through the communication of beliefs and customs parents receive from other structures in the mesosystem and exosystem. Our culture dictates beliefs concerning religion, school, family, and community life.

Generations pass on cultural values via these structures, and the developing child receives them in turn. For example, in Rwandan culture there is belief that parents are primarily responsible for their child's up-bringing. To need help with the task of providing for one's family is seen by the culture as negative.

2) Mesosystems; this embody the acquaintances between various micro systems in which family members are involved say settling grass root disputes. This looks at how refugees needs actualization, how they have maintained their traditions/rituals and the community's acceptance. The returnees may find themselves rejected, discriminated and their customs and rituals different from those that they have found back in their native country. These cases are significant with the Rwandese returnees who have been abroad for long and have forgotten their traditions and customs, so adjusting to this new cultural framework is not an easy one as the findings revealed. For the case of Rwanda the old caseload is believed to have lost the Rwandan traditions and cultural norms.

3) Exosystems /community within this level the social settings may not be directly involved in any given development but could have a direct bearing to individual. A community is a group of people who are socially interdependent, who participate together in discussion and decision-making, and who share certain practices that both define the community and are nurtured by it. Such a community is not quickly formed. It almost always has a history and so is also a community of memory, defined in part by its past and its memory of its past just like the case of Gacaca elders [Inyangamugayo] in Rwanda.

This notion has some relevance with the Gacaca courts which postulates that individuals, society, community and national have some efforts in bringing a just society that will live harmoniously. Cases that cannot be tried by Gacaca courts are taken to international level in Arusha for hearing. In particular, Gacaca courts exemplify the importance that people and their environment are viewed as interdependent and complementary parts. This interdependence explains that traditional justice is organized hierarchically. Like that manifested in the systems perspective owing to the fact that without one the other part it

will be limited. Hence the this theory is considered appropriate for the study as it best fits in this traditional courts of justice that ranges from the individual to the global level.

Community participation is primarily aimed at meeting the human right to self-determination, a fundamental human principle. Refugees have temporarily lost control of their lives and this must be regained to the extent possible as they return Rwanda. The dignity, value and the right to influence their situation is important. Promoting community participation means that you believe that returnees are creative and have the capacity to take action in order to improve and develop their own situation. This is valid like in Gacaca local courts. Community participation enables returnees to create, develop and apply social structures for identifying and responding to needs of families and children as well as the wider community. It provides social security for the members, project stability to adults and children, and increases the psychological well being of its members. In many refugee/returnee situations, social structures are broken or sometimes lost. In order to be able to facilitate self-help and coping mechanisms governments and support organizations need to know a great deal about the patterns of resources within the refugee community. This involves an understanding of the roles of families, fathers, mothers, traditional leaders, teachers, older family members and others in the community. The social structure is the foundation and creates the necessary conditions for stimulation, motivation and collective action.

Furthermore, another example applicable to this is the Gacaca courts in Rwanda which are involved in settling disputes among the returnees and the other Rwandese natives. Family members especially elders come together to settle disputes. Gacaca courts are basically Rwandese traditional way of justice system which is used to settle conflicts among the family members. Conflicts brought to Gacaca courts for assistance are attended to by Inyangamugayo [elders of integrity]. The model of ecological systems (micro system) has a connection with the Rwandese family based disputes settlement.

In a related application of the system theory returnees find it hard to secure land for their cultivation purposes and resettlement and may completely fail to access land. This directly affects the individuals (returnees) but the individual does not directly affect or influence the department of lands. Again the authorities may have hostile attitudes to the homecoming refugees as they view as drains on scarce resources that have to be shared by all nationals. Bronfenbrenner (1998) argues that these are the contexts or situations that influence an individual's development, but in which the individual does not directly participate. The mezzo level in the ecological systems perspective includes associations like hospitals, schools, universities, welfare organizations and industry. Germain (1991) contends that this level has an intermediate level influence such as social institutions involved in such activities as transportation, entertainment, news organizations, and the like. These institutions interact with one another and are complementary to other levels like the microsystem institutions. For the case of Rwanda, political leaders who were in the former political party or who had served in different capacities in the former Habyarima's government found themselves in exile for political reasons which had an impact on these individuals but the individuals could not influence such political actions.

4) The macro system level: This is the broadest level like the national, regional and international. The macro levels are always drawn by policy makers but these policies directly affect individuals at micro-level in terms of welfare and development. For instance globalization, Value Added Tax (VAT), Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), Poverty alleviation, empowerment and affirmative action or domestic relations bill and other laws at a macro level have an impact on the individuals. These consist of cultural or sub cultural values, beliefs, and ideologies that influence the interactions within and between meso- and exosystems. These policies can affect individuals at a micro level either positively or negatively. There exists a fundamental interrelation between physical environment and social environment of people.

Therefore, the social environment cannot stand in isolation from the physical environment interaction. Queralt (1996) contends that humans have a special place in the physical environment because they are responsible for undertaking their own role in the

larger system and managing it. From the institutional level, variables like race, ethnicity, and beliefs, both cultural and sub-cultural are central. All these variables are dynamic in nature especially the influence of culture and people's behaviour. It is also important to note that there are exchanges taking place between families and other social institutions such as the economy, the law, the political processes, the government agencies, schools, religious and hospitals that show the interrelatedness of these institutions.

This model explains the refugee problem in Rwanda and where macro policies affect the individuals at a low level. This perspective transcends the individual level and recognizes the reciprocal relationships of people and the environment. It allowed for a critical analysis of power conflicts on the wellbeing of individuals as the case of Rwandan ethnic conflicts that caused wars and affected individuals. The theory looks at individuals within the context of the system of relationships that form their environment. Changes or conflict in one aspect/layer will affect other layers. Understandably, political systems in Rwanda were pervasive and bureaucratic, much of the macro policies were determined by a few individuals at the expense of the other. This is related to issues of configurations as ethnic habitus, ethnic identity, and ethnic interest to social structures. Such pessimistic views and along-standing conflicts eventually had a direct bearing to individuals and the whole community at large.

The ecological systems model is applied to two groups of Rwandese refugees; Tutsis living or who were living in exile for decades. The contrasting circumstances surrounding these refugees' crises provide an opportunity to study asylum countries that were sympathetic or unsympathetic, and to the changing attitudes in the country of origin and the international community towards the refugees. The model also allowed for understanding of the unfolding of the negotiation process and the opportunities that eventually became available to the refugees to return home (UNHCR, 2003; Stenberg, 1989). At the global level refugee policies impact all other systems directly to the micro level individuals. Zastrow (2003: 18) argues that "human beings are viewed as developing and adopting through transactions with all elements of their environment. An ecological model gives attention to both internal and external factors. It does not view

people as passive reactors to their environment but rather as being involved in dynamic and reciprocal interactions with them”. So just as the environment influences and acts upon returnees, they have power to influence and act upon the environment.

In conclusion, though the ecosystems model provides a fairly comprehensive application and analysis tool to this study, ecological systems perspective is quite difficult to utilize because the system assumes an ever changing environment to which all its layers must adapt but this is not always the case. The system does not call for changes within the ecosystems approach.

The structure of the dissertation

This dissertation is structured in seven chapters.

Chapter: One

This chapter deals with the motivation of the study, a brief biography of my refugee experience that I termed as “Life of hard knocks”, aims of the research, objectives and need for the study, underlying assumptions, problem statement, key research questions (interview guide) and conceptual framework.

Chapter Two: This chapter explores the nature, extent and aetiology of the refugee phenomenon in Rwanda and contemporary patterns of ethnic divisions on the refugee phenomenon in Rwanda and beyond.

Chapter: Three

The third chapter deals with the consequences of war and the 1994 genocide in Rwanda and the strategies to deal with the refugee phenomenon.

Chapter: Four

The aim of this chapter is to specify the kind of the research methodology, the analysis of data, issues of validity and reliability, ethical considerations and the limitations of the study.

Chapter: Five

Chapter five and six deals with the presentations of results and discussions but chapter five deals with presentation of data obtained from the primary sample of returnees, highlighting the participants' genocide experiences and their lived refugee life experiences.

Chapter: six

Chapter six and seven deals with data obtained from key informants and the discussions of the results are explored.

Chapter: Seven Recommendations and conclusions

The final chapter deals with the recommendations and conclusions drawn from this study. Recommendations and the way forward are made to the issues pertaining refugees/returnees in Rwanda and elsewhere in countries facing this phenomenon.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

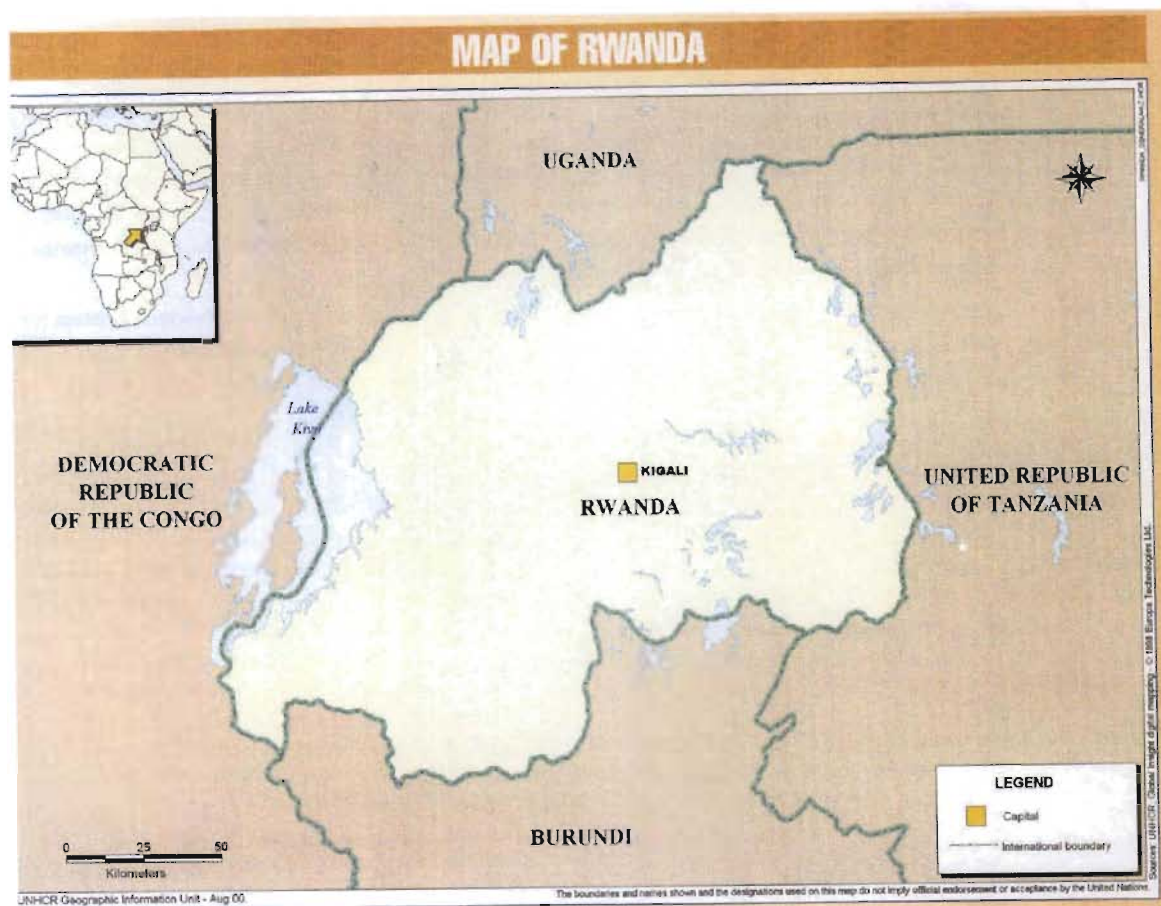
The nature, extent and aetiology of the refugee phenomenon in Rwanda

The aim of this chapter is to review studies which will highlight the current contestations on the refugee definition, their rights and protection in alien countries, the causes of their flight and the strategies for dealing with the refugee phenomenon in Africa.

Country profile and background

For the latter part of the 20th century the name Rwanda was synonymous with war and killing and the failure of the international community to effectively mitigate either. Rwanda is a small landlocked country of the Great Lakes Region of Central Africa. It is best known to the outside world for the 1994 Rwandan genocide. But there is another story about Rwanda to be told, a tale of concrete change against enormous odds, one of progress and achievements painstakingly gained. The Central-East African landlocked tiny Republic of Rwanda is a former trustee territory of Belgium and only about 26,388 sq km but home to 8 million people, which makes it one of the most densely populated countries in the world (Prunier, 1997). Situated just south of the Equator and bordered by Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in the west, Uganda to the North, Tanzania in the east and Burundi in the south (Waller, 1996). See the map below.

Map of Rwanda



Source: UNHCR (2000: 3)

In Rwanda the term “Banyarwanda” is used in a plural/collective form to refer to people who are indigenous to Rwanda or those who have historical roots and ethnic relations with the people in Rwanda. “Kinyarwanda” is the Rwandese language. The singular for animate nouns is “umu” or “mu” (mw) and the plural is “aba” or “ba” for example, Batutsi (Abatutsi); Bahutu (Abahutu) and Batwa (Abatwa). These are the ethnic labels in Rwanda (Weinstein, 1976: 17).

In addition to Kinyarwanda other official languages spoken in Rwanda are French, English and Swahili used in commercial centres. The country’s long form is Republic of Rwanda, conventional short form is Rwanda and local long form is Republika y’u Rwanda. The government type is republic, presidential, multiparty system and the capital city is Kigali. The administrative divisions in Rwanda are 12 provinces namely Butare,

Byumba, Cyangugu, Gikongoro, Gisenyi, Gitarama, Kibungo, Kibuye, Kigali Rurale, Kigali-ville, Umutara and Ruhengeri (Kamanzi, 1997).

Rwanda is “a land of breath taking beautiful vistas dotted with countless hills” which is popularly referred to as *Pay de mille Collines* (“the land of a thousand hills” (Prunier, 1997: 2). To the north-west, the hills rise into high mountains not only providing home to the only surviving mountain Guerrillas in the world but also influencing a unique temperate climatic island within the Equatorial zone, which is why Rwanda has proudly been referred to as the Switzerland of Africa. It is this unique home to the three ethnic composition of the Hutu (83%), the Tutsi (16%), and Twa (1%) that caught the attention of the world until it was host to the 1994 horrendous genocidal frenzy and holocaust against the Tutsi and heinous massacres of moderate Hutu opposition to the genocidal regime. Their religions are Roman Catholic 56.5%, Protestant 26%, Adventist 11.1%, Muslim 4.6%, indigenous beliefs 0.1%, none 1.7% (Waller, 1996).

Rwanda's economy

Rwanda is one of the world's poorest countries and is situated in an extremely volatile and isolated region. However, since the 1994 genocide, Rwanda has made substantial strides towards recapturing lost economic ground, achieving growth of nearly 6 percent in 2000 and average growth of nearly 10 percent since 1995 (UNDP, 2001). In support of this effort, Rwanda a small, low income country of 8 million inhabitants residing on just 26 thousand square kilometres of land has been the beneficiary of substantial international donor funding. From a collapsed economy, to an empty state coffer, to a divided population emerging from one of the greatest tragedies in human history, Rwanda had all the ingredients of a failed state and was on the way to disintegration. After eleven years of peace and stability ushered in by Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) Rwandans want to have a better environment that can serve as a spring-board for economic progress. The country is striving to rebuild its economy, with coffee and tea production being among its main sources of foreign exchange (Waller, 1996). Within eleven years, the country has been transformed into a robust economy with a gross capital formation of 2.1% of GDP. It would be simplistic to suggest that all the impressive growth and

transformation of this country is due to an increase in the savings rate only. There are certainly other accompanying factors, like peace and good governance which may explain these changes. It is important to realize that these changes did not occur in a vacuum there is a concerted effort by the residents to unify around hard work and investment.

There is 80% of unemployment in the public sector and the private sector is very small. Despite the huge economic growth over 70% of the population live below the poverty line (UNDP, 2001). All these reduce the standard of living and jeopardize the country's development. Rwanda's comparative advantage lies in agriculture, given the fact that it has no minerals and its industrialization is at a very low growth rate. Agriculture production is dependent on natural rainfall, production has continued to fall because of the persistent drought and food insecurity has become a chronic problem for the entire population of Rwanda. Rwanda's economy was rapidly eroded by the civil war and the 1994 genocide. This war had disastrous consequences for the economy. However, after the liberation of the country by Rwandese Patriotic Front/Army [RPF/A], the need to rehabilitate the economy was obvious. The new government attempted to introduce economic austerity measures like privatisation and the economy is now making a positive growth towards recovery. However, many challenges remain for Rwanda. Poverty remains a problem and low standard of living. Rwanda is also dependent on significant foreign aid.

Exports continue to lag behind imports and this limits the country's economic development. The economy of Rwanda is a poor rural country with about 90% of the population engaged in (mainly subsistence) agriculture (Waller, 1996). Primary foreign exchange earners are coffee and tea. Attempts to diversify into non-traditional agriculture exports such as flowers and vegetables have been stymied by a lack of adequate transportation infrastructure. Rwanda has struggled to rebuild its economy, left in tatters by the massacre in 1994 of 800 000 minority Tutsis and politically moderate Hutus by extremists from the Hutu majority.

DEFINITION OF A REFUGEE

The term “refugee” derives its meaning from both international and regional instruments enacted by member states of the United Nations (UN) and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) now the African Union to specifically deal with situations of dislocation and displacement involving cross border movements (UNHCR, 2003; Malki, 1995: 497). However, there is a sedentary bias in the concept of refugee, which implicitly suggests that people belong to a particular location as if by nature (Kibreab, 1987). The word refugee now slips slightly off our lips that its fuzziness is not readily appreciated. In his terse and succinct guide Zetter (1991), warns of the difficulties of defining and the meaning attached to the very word refugee. The difficulty comes in a scenario when it’s hard to define and differentiate who is a refugee and who is an illegal migrant.

The term has become in international circles, a highly technical word with a definite meaning. Although attempts are being made to review and revise its meaning, no move has yet been taken to give it a meaning other than the one which has been given to it by the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the status of refugees, and its 1967 protocol. The concept refers to “people who are outside their country of origin who are unable to return to it, because of well founded fear of persecution, for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular group or political opinion” (UN Report, 1951: 7).

However, the concept, as used in practical policies of the UNHCR extends beyond the conventional definition to “include people who are forced to leave their country because of armed conflict and civil strife, those who are in the process of submitting a claim for refugee status, (asylum seekers), and people who have to flee their homes to take refuge in other parts of the country without necessarily crossing international boundaries. The latter group is what is referred to as internal refugees” (UNHCR, 2000: 22). Refugees are a disparate group, with multiple forms of past experience and multiple causes of exile from their home communities. They are united only in far as they have all undergone a legal process and have satisfied certain legal criteria. Refugee status is externally bestowed by the state (UNHCR, 2003). The International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966, in its preamble pronounces that an ideal free human

being should enjoy freedom from fear and economic, social and cultural rights (UNHCR, 2003).

The 1951 Convention was not quite enough for the nascent African states. UNHCR's tight definition of a refugee failed to reflect the reality of conditions on the African continent (Rogers, 1992). In 1964, the then OAU offered a more generous definition of the word "refugee", to take in not solely those fearful of individual persecution, but all who were driven to flee their homes because of war and civil conflict. Wars, violence, ethnic fighting would now enter the refugee debate, as qualifying people to be recognized as refugees. Although not of a legally binding character in itself, the declaration, which has been affirmed by the OAU General Assembly of the Organization of African States, is respected by all 'contracting states'. The OAU confirms that refugees matter because they are a litmus test of how tolerant and just we are as a society, as a nation and as an international community (Ogata cited in UNHCR, 2003).

Determining refugee status

Approximately ninety percent of the world's ten million plus refugees are from developing countries and over ninety percent of these refugees will stay in developing countries, either settling in their countries of first asylum, being repatriated to their homelands, or remaining in semi-permanent relief camps. An overwhelming proportion of these refugees are from rural areas in their homelands and they stay in the rural areas in their less developed sanctuaries (Keely, 1981).

The UN Convention was set up to promote the welfare of refugees soon after World War 11 as the refugee problem increased drastically. If a critical assessment is taken, the Convention should be replaced by a more appropriate instrument, which will cover the present and future needs of refugees. The determination of refugee status is "a process of ascertaining and evaluating the facts within the framework of refugee law" (UNHCR, 1979: para. 205). The foundations of modern refugee law is the 1951 Convention relating to the status of refugee as amended by the 1967 protocol relating to the status of refugees (Goodwin-Gill, 1983: 166). Under Article 1A (2) of the Convention, a refugee is

essentially one who has a “ ... well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinions, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable. Or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself/herself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it” (UN Report, 1951: 7). Unless the claimant satisfies each of these elements, he/she will not be entitled to a refugee status (Goodwin-Gill, 1983: 72).

Nevertheless, this pre-existing status does not suggest a concomitant guarantee to refugees' rights. The refugee status is a process defined and granted by the process of law. It amounts to legal classifications of each refugee. It is society, through its government and law makers, which classifies a person as a refugee or not depending on its interpretation of the refugee convention. On this basis, I suggest that the refugee is both a forced and an externally defined status. A refugee is a person who has departed involuntarily from her/his country of origin as a result of breakdown of relations with her/his state (Allen, 1996). As I have elucidated above, the refugee is in effect forced to adopt surrogate relations with a new asylum state.

Surprisingly, many countries do not abide by the 1951 UN Conventional definition of a refugee and asylum seeker. They have violated this principle by denying status to refugees who flee from persecution and other related causes from their home country. This is of course, a less positive side of the coin. Reported cases of refugees who have been denied refugee status, effectively having it taken away include Somalis in Kenya, Kurds in Turkey, Haitians in the USA and Bosnians in Europe (Allen, 1996: 3). This contravenes Articles 32 and 33 of the 1951 Convention relating on the status of refugees which states “The Contracting States shall not expel a refugee lawfully in their territory save on grounds of national security or public order unless if a refugee had been convicted of grave crimes or offences” (Stenberg, 1989: 171-182). The refugee movements which have taken place during this century have necessitated the development of rules of public international law regarding removal, in general, of

refugees from the territory of a state and their forcible removal to a country of persecution in particular. According to these rules, removal may take place only in exceptional circumstances when the interests of the state outweigh the interests of the refugee (Goodwin-Gill, 1983: 76).

Further, Stenberg (1989) stressed that the problem is how to draw the line between these conflicting interests. Some governments have contravened this law by expelling refugees which they had given refugee status to like the regime of President Obote of Uganda in the 1980s that developed non-compassionate attitudes towards the Rwandese refugees (UNHCR, 2003). Other countries need serious verification from these refugees to grant them refugee status. They need them to prove to the Home Affairs that they are refugees who have suffered persecution and are fleeing from turmoil. Conversely, a person who has not suffered persecution may be refused refugee status in a host country, but one questions how this criterion of showing proof can work in practice.

Most governments complain that the issue relates to politics between two countries. The relationship is deeply embedded between the host state and the country of origin of refugees. Almost invariably, countries that are involved in the refugee exchange share common borders. Refugees just cross over to the other side of the border when trouble erupts in their own country. The persons thrown out of their country usually carry with them hostile and militant attitudes towards the government in their homeland. This is more so when persons are forced to flee their countries because of political conflict, oppression, persecution or domination. This creates tension and situations of conflict between the two countries (Gorman, 1987).

Asylum countries normally reject refugees on the ground that they bring burdens and Gorman (1987: 111) calls this burden "twin perspectives" [economic burden and social burden]. The reasons are the economic burden and social infrastructure. Countries hosting refugees from the most heavily refugee-producing countries, for example, Sudan and Somalia which together account for about half of Africa's refugees on the whole, have strained rather than benefited the host economies (Cimade- Inodep- Mink, 1985: 91).

Nevertheless, in some countries, refugees have been a net plus, for example, Tanzania where refugees have become productive contributors to the national economy. This is demonstrated by the words of former Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere “I love the refugees. They cultivate the country for me. But I have no money. You bring in money” (cited in Sommers, 2001: 64).

Granting permanent asylum to refugees who have political interests in their country of origin would mean placing permanent conflicts on the political agenda of the neighbouring countries or imposing burdens on them (Gorman, 1987: 1). This has been a cause of conflict between Rwanda and the DRC as Rwanda accused the DRC of harbouring Interahamwe militias and other political opponents. These Interahamwe groups often use their bases in the neighbouring countries as springboards to attack the Rwandan government forces and populations of their former homeland. However, some countries like Tanzania and Kenya in East Africa have abided by and have expedited the UN Convention’s principles and have conferred and granted social rights to refugees from Rwanda, Somalia and the DRC through a process of complete absorption and assimilation. It also uses the strategy of naturalisation as a way of integrating refugees. Naturalisation means the loss of citizenship of the country from which the refugee came from. Other countries have different policies towards refugees (Goodwin-Gill, 1983: 263).

Hathaway (1991: 99) regards persecution as the “key criterion in the UN convention”. The concept of persecution takes us to the heart of the refugee definition and refugee status in a host country which concerns the relation between the individual and the state. Persecution is “most appropriately defined as the sustained or systematic failure of the host state’s protection in relation to one of the core entitlements which has been recognised by the international community” (ibid, 1991: 112). International human rights norms are a cornerstone of the relationship between individual and the state, in that the individual is entitled to look to his/her state for protection against human rights violation (Harrell-Bond, 1986: 188). If the state is unwilling or unable to bestow this protection,

the relationship breaks down and the individual is forced to seek “surrogate protection” in another state.

The well-founded fear of persecution arises from race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion (Stenberg, 1989: 69; Goodwin-Gill, 1983: 72). Unless any asylum claimant fears persecution for reasons of one or more of these convention of political fear and persecution, the asylum claim may fail and the refugee status not granted (Stenberg, 1989: 63) He goes on to argue that “in order for one to qualify as a refugee the individual in question has to be outside his country of nationality on account of fear of persecution, if he is a stateless person, he has to be outside his country of former habitual residence” (Stenberg, 1989: 73). In addition, alienation may be subject to retrospective assessment because a refugee has already suffered a break down of relations within his own state. He has fled his own state as a person who “has been cast adrift” because of his aspirations, beliefs or alliances. The motivation for seeking international protection lies in this pre-existing alienation, which triggers departure from the country of origin (Stenberg, 1989: 72).

Subjective fear must be “well-founded” in that it must be “supported by an objective situation” (UNHCR, 1997, para.38) in any asylum claimant’s home state. Thus, the claimant’s own, internal anticipation of risk must be rooted in evidence suggesting that the risk may eventuate (Stenberg, 1989: 63) The Home Office will consider whether conditions in the country of origin provide objective justification for an asylum claimant’s subjective fear. The question is whether persecution is reasonably likely to materialise. In the UNHCR’s words:

The competent authorities that are called upon to determine refugee status are not required to pass judgement on conditions in the applicant’s country of origin. The applicant’s statements cannot, however, be considered in the abstract, and must be viewed in the context of the relevant background situation...in general, the applicant’s fear should be considered well-founded if she/he can establish, to a reasonable degree, that his/her continued stay in his country of origin has become

intolerable to him/her...or would ...be intolerable if he/she returned there (1979, para 42).

In this respect, the assessment must be wholly prospective. If a person has suffered persecution in the past, but cannot demonstrate that she/he will suffer persecution in the future, her/his fear will not be well-founded and she/he will not be recognised as a refugee. Conversely, a person who has never suffered persecution may be recognised as a refugee because she/he can demonstrate that she/he will suffer persecution in future, her/his fear will not be well-founded and she/he will not be recognised as a refugee (Stenberg, 1989: 66-67). However, the core principle of “nonrefoulement” (Goodwin-Gill, 1983: 69) states that no refugee may be sent to a country where he/she risks persecution. States, therefore, where refugees are running to and fleeing from political persecution have no justifiable grounds to refuse entry and protection of these refugees (Stenberg, 1989: 171). Article 33 of the 1951 states that; “No Contracting State shall expel or return (“refouler”) a refugee in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion”.

This instrument was adopted on 10th December 1948. In its preamble it does lay down the rights of refugees. It acknowledges that every one is entitled to fundamental human rights in respecting dignity and it affirms equal rights of men and women. It is determined to promote social progress and better standards of life (UNHCR, 2002). Article 14 (1) provides that every one has a right to seek and enjoy asylum in countries where they can get protection from persecution.

The refugee phenomenon in Africa

There is a growing trend of refugees in Africa, Rwanda being no exception. Today, Africa ‘enjoys’ the problem of being the continent of refugees as writers have asserted that it is “a continent on the move” (Rogers, 1992: 117) Africa shelters millions of refugees (Cimande- Inodep- Mink, 1986). There are different reasons for this growth of refugee population in Africa: inequalities in distribution of resources and power, ethnicity

clashes, negative attitudes of certain African leaders towards any form of criticism, the fact that the wellbeing of the nation is often mistakenly considered to be that of the leader of the state, and so on (Wilkinson, 1997). Rwandese took refuge in a range of geographical locations for varying lengths of time, dependent upon the date of their political circumstances like the 1959 refugees and those of the 1990s.

Rwanda is a country identified very strongly with the refugee experience for at least the last decade up to the present time. As a country in turmoil for a long time, refugeedom, displacement and dislodgement have been central experiences for most of the ethnic groups in Rwanda. Political violence has profound, long-term effects on its victims (Gordenker, 1987). Perpetrated by the very agencies entrusted to protect them and maintain order, it creates a context in which peoples' lives are blurred and where the shift from protection to violence is obscured. All too frequently this leads to the development of refugees and hopelessness that can easily be transmitted from generation to generation (Cimande- Inodep- Mink, 1986: 101).

Refugees in biblical times

An examination of the refugees in the bible may help to better understand that refugee phenomenon is not a new concept in Africa and the entire world-over. The refugee problem is as old as human-kind (Stenberg, 1987: 15). If one makes a citation from the bible, the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden is an archetypal depiction of the theme of flight and exile. "So [God] drove out of the man; and he placed cherubim at east of the Garden of Eden..." (Genesis 3: 24). Seen symbolically, Adam and Eve were the first group [people] who were forced to leave their home. The core theme reflected in the New Testament is that of persecution: "murder of the innocents by king Herod...was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts; from two years of old..."(Mathew 2: 16) (Raimanová, 2002: 2). This citation in the bible reveals that refugees in Africa and the entire world is not a new phenomenon. The persecution of people by dictatorial leaders, as the case of King Herod, is one of the fundamental reasons why people take refuge.

Contemporary patterns of ethnic divisions on the refugee phenomenon in Rwanda

Rwanda was ravaged by a cycle of ethnic cleansing against the minority Tutsi from 1959 throughout the 1960s to 1973 in what Lemarchand has described as acts of genocide (Lemarchand, 1970). This kept a constant and dramatic flux of Rwandans to other countries. Three decades later, not only had Rwanda's ethno-political divisions not subsided, but they intensified to inconceivable levels, leading to the genocide of nearly one million Tutsis and moderate Hutus in 1994 (Waller, 1996). Many of the Tutsis who survived this wave of deliberate and state sanctioned violence fled the country to Uganda, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and other African and European countries where they became wonderers and objects of mockery while the established Hutu regime in Rwanda denied Tutsi citizenship, rendered them stateless and condemned them to perpetual refugee-hood.

For the first time in Rwanda's history large portions of the people became stateless and were denied the right to live in their motherland. "President Habyarimana used the analogy of a glass full of water to illustrate how overpopulated Rwanda was so that any return of Tutsi refugees would cause a further spill of Rwandese to neighbouring countries by displacement" (Kamanzi, 1997: 7).

Rwandans in the diaspora did not have total freedom to come to Rwanda and visit relatives at home [Rwanda] because of the then Hutu government. National life got equated with the interest of a clique or cliques of Hutus against Tutsis. This contravenes and violates the human rights principle which states that "Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country" (Goodwin-Gill, 1983: 240). Kibreab (1999) argues that societies that exclude people from their motherland country and that consider them 'others' causes conflicts. This was the case in Rwanda where Hutus excluded their fellow citizens from Rwanda. This gave rise to the forceful return of Rwandese from the diaspora which marked the October 1990 invasion of the RPF's protracted armed struggle whose ultimate objective was to create conditions in Rwanda

of a kind that were to enable the long suffering Banyarwanda refugees in diaspora, to return to their homeland (Waller, 1996).

The (RPF/A) invasion of Rwanda from Uganda not only triggered a bitter civil war in an already staggering economy but also re-awakened the political explosive ethno-racial sentiments and hatred of the Hutu against the Tutsis (Melvern, 2004). By the end of 1990 and throughout 1991, 1992, a replica of the 1959 and 1960s massacres of Tutsis and later moderate Hutu was slowly and steadily set in motion, but this time, with a remarkable sophistication in terms of systematic selection, mobilisation and machinery. “As early as mid February 1993 ...the show of violence and war hung over Rwanda, as the crowing of the cock a harbinger of dawn, so were the sporadic killings of Tutsis” (Anyidoko, 1997: 19).

Indeed, the mouldering disaster exploded with President Habyarimana’s plane, “violently downed by a rocket attack” (Prunier, 1997: 213) as it approached the Airport at Kanombe and landed into the presidential palace yard, perishing with the lives of two presidents, Habyarimana of Rwanda and Ntaryamira of Burundi and their aides and the entire crew on their return from a peace Summit in Tanzania. The Rwanda crisis is deemed the worst humanitarian disaster in the UN’s 50-year history. The 1994 genocide was a carefully planned and executed exercise to annihilate Rwanda’s Tutsi population and Hutus who did not agree with the extremist politics of the Habyarimana regime. One million lives were lost in only one hundred days. It is the fastest and most vicious genocide yet recorded in human history. Not a single explanation on earth can justify the sickening human catastrophe that went on in Rwanda, the degradation, desolation and the horrors killing off generation after generation (Melvern, 2004).

The tragedy that befell Rwanda following the death of President Habyarimana in a plane crash on 6th, April, 1994 was a diabolical replication and reminder of the 1959 problems in Rwanda which created what became to be termed the Banyarwanda refugee dilemma that was to face many African and European countries for many decades. Yet the death of Habyarimana was only a catalytic event which brought into

full relief problems behind the civil war which had gone on in the country for some time. The Rwandese refugees in Uganda were determined to return home as they had love for the country and were tired of being called refugees in host countries. This is well explained in the words of Papadopoulos (1997: 14), “The fact that we belong to a country, that our country exists, that we belong as a certain language group and we are used to certain sounds, that we belong to a certain geographical landscape and milieu, that we are surrounded by particular types of architectural designs”.

I know of no recent or present situation where all the elements that constitute genocide under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes of Genocide (UNHCR, 2003) have been brought together in such a chillingly comprehensive manner, as in Rwanda. The Rwandan genocide was a campaign directed against the ethnic Tutsis and moderate Hutus with the purpose of destroying it in whole or in part or of preventing its preservation or development. It is important to understand that the genocide in Rwanda was not an event, but a process, whose roots can be traced back to a traumatic colonial and post colonial history which laid the structural, ideological, spiritual and political foundations for genocide and the crimes against humanity. Genocide and segregation were embedded in the public policy framework and espoused by successive postcolonial governments. The tendency of former colonial powers to meddle in the internal affairs of their former colonies as the case of Rwanda (Geertz, 1963), was a catalyst and source of conflict, which led to war, genocide and led to population displacement. This is exemplified by the involvement of France, Germany and Belgium in Rwanda with the former government that led to genocide.

The influence of colonialism on the refugee phenomenon in Africa

The relationship between colonialism and conflicts in Africa is important in explaining the refugee phenomenon. The legacies of colonialism in Africa are responsible in part for the prevalent ethnic clashes, armed struggle and wars that lead to massive refugee flights in Africa. The inter-ethnic conflicts in Rwanda and Africa in general, is blamed on colonialism in Africa.

Like other societies on the African continent, Rwanda did not escape the wrath of colonialism. Colonialism cultivated, in pre-colonial Rwanda, several prickly contradictions. The Twa were presented as pygmies who spent most of their time looking for fruits and chasing animals and they were regarded as a 'sorry race' by the Tutsis (Newbury, 1988). The Hutu were perceived by Belgians as pioneer farmers while the Tutsi were regarded as a Hamitic people hailed as notable conquerors from the Nile valley whose cultural superiority came from the depths of civilisation itself (Weinstein, 1976). This idea is shared by Diamond (2005: 314) who gives another difference between Tutsis and Hutus initiated by Belgians as: "... Hutus being on average shorter, stockier, darker, flat-nosed, thick lipped, and narrow-chinned. Tutsis are taller, more slender, paler-skinned, thin-lipped, and narrow-chinned". From the point of view of the Belgian colonialists, the Tutsi must have been a 'superior race' and that is why they were able to impose the monarchy peacefully on the other two ethnic groups. The Tutsi were perceived as a race of giants, who were far more apt to command and who were more organised than the Hutus.

Use of force through wars and other methods of aggression as instruments of national policy in Africa can be traced far back to the continent's colonial past. Colonial regimes were characterised by the dominant minority representing foreign interests, taking control of the national resources to the exclusion of a territory's majority. The colonial regime utilised repression for the total control and subjugation of the economically and politically powerless majority. The colonised peoples resorted to violence as they tried to fight for their independence. However, ushering in of independence did little to change the power relations and arbitrary use of force to suppress dissent and opposition (Cimade-Inodep – Mink, 1985). Most governments in Africa are characterised by arbitrariness of discretionary powers, absence of the rule of law and economic exploitation of human rights and natural resources.

Before colonialism, the three ethnic social groups in Rwanda lived in harmony. Ethnic and civil wars were not known in Rwanda and refugee flight remained relatively unknown (Cimande- Inodep-Mink, 1986: 101). However, as political struggle for power

and resources grew conflicts among groups started in Africa, as a result of this conflict the refugee phenomenon emerged as a real problem on the African continent. From 1959 onwards, Rwandese started fleeing the country in large numbers following the overthrow of the minority Tutsi government by the Hutu. Quite clearly, the flight of such magnitude of citizens from the country is not an issue of small proportion when one considers how deleterious or adverse its implications can be, not only in terms of social and human sufferings involved especially in cases of mass flight of people; but even in political terms. In recognition of the intensity and gravity of the Tutsi persecutions and killings by Hutu, the Tutsi had to take refuge in other countries outside their homeland of Rwanda (Cimande- Inodep- Mink, 1986).

These three social ethnic groups, the Tutsi, Hutu and the Twa lived in Rwanda. For several centuries the Twa were hunters and potters while the Hutu were farmers and the Tutsi herdsmen. The Tutsi exercised a dominant role in politics because of the colonialists empowering them and denying the other two ethnic groups [Hutus and Twa] the right to exercise the same political power. This caused divisions among these groups. Prior to this political classification in these social ethnic groups the political organisation of the Rwandan society was based on cultural and linguistic similarities and the monarchical power. Rwanda's inhabitants lived under a feudal system and identified themselves according to social class rather than ethnic affiliation. But with the coming of European colonisers the relationship between the Tutsi and Hutu took a new turn at the end of the 19th century (Weinstein, 1976: 10).

Colonial rule, which began in the late 19th Century, did little to bring the groups together. The Belgians who ruled Rwanda forced Hutus and Tutsis to carry ethnic identity cards. The colonial administrators further exacerbated divisions by only allowing Tutsis to attain higher education and hold positions of power. It was Belgians colonialists who created the notions of two different races rather than castes. Culturally, it was something of an artificial division. The Belgian colonialists favoured the Tutsis in accentuating high political power than the Hutus (Newbury, 1988).

During the second half of the 19th century, Africa was carved out among the imperial powers. Imperialism had a role to play in the cause of African conflicts and the plight of refugees, returnees and displaced persons. Internal conflicts in Rwanda have their genesis from imperialism between the Belgians, France and later Germans which contributed to refugee flows (Newbury, 1988). Even today, the civil war that has been going on between the Tutsi and Hutu ethnic social groups in combination with other factors like political power and fighting over ownership of scarce resources by one group excluding others clearly explain why Rwanda is a generator of refugees which has reached unmanageable proportions (Mamdani, 2001). The United Nations Development Project in their recent Human Development Report stressed that the alarming refugee population is rapidly increasing at a time when the country is faced with serious problems of economic recovery and transformation compounded by scarce resources, the excruciating debt and huge loss of skilled manpower during the genocide (UNDP, 2001).

After the 1885 Berlin Conference that divided Africa, both the Germans and the Belgians found it convenient to rule the country through the existing Tutsi elite (Waller, 1996). To justify their support of this section of the population they forwarded the idea that the Tutsi were similar to Europeans. The difference between the two groups became more marked when Belgians introduced identity cards classifying the Rwandans according to their physical appearance, wealth and social status into Hutu, Tutsi and Twa. These divisions among the Rwandans resulted in widespread discontent and led to the 1959 social revolution based on ethnic lines, clashes started in Rwanda that led to the flight of the Tutsi out of their native country. Lamarchand (1970) cited in Malkki (1995: 31) stressed that “despite the brevity of colonial interlude, its impact was overwhelming. In Rwanda it unleashed one of the most violent upheavals ever witnessed by an African state at a similar state of its evolution that sowed seeds of ethnic conflicts that may well prove equally devastating”.

Under pressure from the United Nations in the late 1950s, the Belgians began to yield to the process of democratisation (Cimande-Inodep-Mink, 1986: 69). This was however, resisted by the Tutsi with the aim of perpetuating Tutsi dominance in which resource

allocation favoured the Tutsi lords. Attempts to maintain power were also made by forming the Union Nationale Ruandaise (UNAR) party. This party controlled by militant Tutsi, with its neo-traditionalist ideology became a focus of contention between the Tutsi and their Belgian allies (Weinstein, 1976: 274-5). For the Belgians to succeed in their policy of divide and rule among the Rwandans, they introduced ethnic identity cards portraying one as a Hutu, Tutsi or Twa. This increased tension among these three ethnic groups and precipitated and perpetuated the ethnic clashes that forced most of the Tutsis into exile after losing power to the Hutus during 1959 (Malkki, 1995).

While the manoeuvres for controlling power were still going on, the Tutsi Mwami (King), Mutara 11, died in the 1960s without an heir. The Belgians decided to establish a republic but they were foiled by the Tutsi aristocracy in an extra-ordinary manoeuvre at the burial ceremony. The Belgian Resident-General was quite literally jostled by Tutsi spears at the very edge of the open grave and was forced to approve the accession of Mutara's half-brother, Kigeri. Spurred on this success over the Belgians, a ruthless, Tutsi clan embarked on a plan to crush the upstart Hutu leadership in a wave of killings and intimidation (Melvern, 2004).

In economic terms colonialism enabled the Tutsi to have greater control of resources particularly land. The Tutsi lords' administration was also used in forced recruitment of the Hutu peasants to provide labour on public works, for instance in plantations and mining in the Belgian Congo. The Tutsi were also the political allies of colonialists (Newbury, 1988). Over time the Hutu were reduced to the low status of servants or serfs. The process was accompanied by a complex mechanism of land and cattle contracts in what was termed as "Ubugake", "Abashumba", "Shebuja", "Umugaragu", and others literally meaning one word (slavery) (Newbury, 1988: 4). The political system of the King Mutara ruled before the penetration of the white colonialists. What was interesting to note was that the colonial system of oppression and exploitation generated resentment from the masses particularly the Hutu ethnic group. Then in the late 1940s Hutu nationalism began to take shape. Within the support of a new generation of missionaries inspired by progressive Catholicism, a Hutu counter elite began to emerge in the 1950s

urging the Belgian trust authorities to institute democratic institutions that would provide a means to overturn the Tutsi dominant hierarchy (Zolberg et al, 1989: 46).

On 1st November 1959, an attack on a Hutu sub-chief provoked a widespread and spontaneous Hutu uprising involving some bloodshed and much looting and burning of Tutsi homes. The Tutsi reiterated with the killing of various Hutu leaders. Belgian troops arrived to 'restore order', but persistent Tutsi fighting continued. By the middle of the 1960s Mwami Kigeri had fled the country and there were 22,000 internal refugees (Cimande-Inodep-Mink, 1986; Melvern, 2004). The Belgian administration then began to prepare for a Hutu government by replacing many Tutsi chiefs. Earlier, the Tutsi held all 43 chiefdoms, 549 out of 559 sub-chief positions, and 82% of posts in areas such as the judiciary, agriculture and veterinary services (Newbury, 1988).

These events culminated into the October 1960 elections and the formation of a provincial government with the Hutu leader, Gregory Kayibanda, as Prime Minister. Later, a United Nations supervised referendum in September 1961 led to the adoption of a Republican constitution. In the pre-independence elections the Hutu majority party, Parti du Mouvement de L' Emancipation Hutu (PARMEHUTU), won another overwhelming majority and Kayibanda became President of independent Rwanda on 1st July, 1962 (Cimande-Inodep-Mink, 1986: 103). Kayibanda had developed a policy to 'clear the bush and pulling out the bad weeds' meaning to exterminate all the Tutsis in Rwanda (Melvern, 2004: 26). This forced all Tutsi to save their lives by fleeing to exile in the neighboring countries of Uganda, Congo, Burundi and Tanzania.

The past regimes had forced millions of Rwandese to flee their motherland because of poor politics based on ethnicity (Lemarchand, 1977). There was an apartheid type of segregation in Rwanda where sections of Rwandans did not have the right to education, employment and above all participation in decision making as to what affected their lives. This affected mainly the Tutsis who were 'second class citizens' in their own country. The government in place by then could not see the refugee situation of Rwandans across the globe especially in neighbouring countries as its own. It instead made matters worse

by allying with bad regimes like that of President Obote II of Uganda to persecute Rwandan refugees. The population of Rwandese refugees in Uganda were put at the centre stage of witch-hunting. Rwandans within Uganda got persecuted, they had no right of de facto citizens and refugees got persecuted across the globe at the instigation of the regime of post-independence Rwanda (Clay, 1984).

The 1959 revolt against the Belgian colonial administration began in Central Rwanda. The revolt in the Central region aimed to overthrow the traditional chiefs but maintain the present social/political hierarchy. The revolt that followed in the North rejected the established social order altogether and aimed to restore the country to a social organization that existed before the establishment of the Tutsi kingdom centuries before (Newbury, 1988: 1). Gitarama and Ruhengeri had become the regional bases of the PARMEHUTU movement (Party for the Emancipation of the Hutu People), a movement agitating for independence and the overthrow of the Tutsi monarchy. Belgium agreed to elections in Rwanda in 1959, hoping to slowly withdraw its administration and prepare the country for independence. The election results led to a massive change in local leadership as Parmehutu gained 70% of the vote. However, many of their leaders were rejected by the people because of their incompetence and abuse. The country became unstable, and the monarchy was officially overthrown in 1961 (Melvern, 2004).

Hutu leaders tried to replace the Tutsi dominated administrative system with a Hutu system, but this was also rejected by the people (Newbury, 1988). With the change in power leading to massacres against the Tutsi in some areas, many fled during 1959-1960. Also exacerbating the situation for Tutsis in Rwanda were armed incursions during 1961-1963 by refugees in Burundi against the Hutu government. These led to reprisals against Tutsis, more killings, and more refugees fleeing. Between 200,000-300,000 Rwandans went into exile, most of whom raised families and remained abroad until the overthrow of the Habyarimana regime in 1994. During the 1960s, Parmehutu became the sole political party. There remained rivalries within the party between the Central (region of President Kayibanda) and Northern leaders and members (Mamdani, 2001).

Northern families had been in positions of power (landlords) before the establishment of the Tutsi aristocracy, so they naturally felt they had the claim to leadership at independence. The leadership concentrated in Central Rwanda tried to marginalize these northern leaders by giving them access only to the lowest administrative positions (Lemarchand, 1970: 86-87). By then Rwanda was still part of the territory of Ruanda-Urundi (Waller, 1996). The Belgian authorities instead of stopping the massacre, failed to honour their undertaking towards the United Nations (UN) which could have lessened the tension, even if it could not have avoided the rise of violence. A United Nations Mission asked, in vain, that the authorities bring back the refugees to their country before organising the first elections and according independence to Rwanda (Cimade- Inodep-Mink; 1985: 102).

The first Republic, under President Gregoire Kayibanda, institutionalised discrimination against the Tutsi that provided an opportunity for the regime to create a Hutu-belt. That was aimed at excluding all Tutsis in leadership positions and periodically used massacres against this targeted Tutsi population as a means of maintaining the status quo. The Hutu victory was made with resistance by some Rwandese refugees who organised themselves to stage a comeback through armed struggle (Newbury, 1988). This Tutsi refugee guerrilla movement known as Inyenzi ['cockroaches'] as the Hutus had termed them was based in neighbouring countries but was defeated militarily by Hutus leadership in 1967 (Melvern, 2004). This made the government to declare a state of emergency and to round up and shoot Tutsi leaders suspected of complicity with Tutsi raiders, while appealing to the people throughout the country to look to their defence. Earlier, in 1963 and 1964 Hutu reprisals led to the death of thousands of Tutsi and drove tens of thousands to exile to seek refuge mostly in Burundi, Uganda and Tanzania. In early 1970s there was a resurgence of anti-Tutsi feeling in Rwanda following the 1972 killings of Hutu by Tutsi soldiers in neighbouring Burundi. Disorder, all over the country prompted the head of the army, Junenal Habyarimana, to oust Kayibanda in a military coup in 1973 and to ban PARMEHUTU (Mamdani, 2001). This change of government also led thousands Rwandese to flee the country.

During Kayibanda's reign there was a wind of change blowing over Rwanda to shake off the yoke of colonialism. The Hutu leadership joined in the ranks by internal reforms of colonialists of divide and rule. It earned Kayibanda marks and finally like some of his counterparts in Africa he had succumbed to colonialism. This facilitated Hutu extremism; a phenomenon Rwandan social fabric would not have produced. The colonialists' administration in Rwanda left its seeds sowed until the 1994 genocide (Newbury, 1988). The unity of Rwandans that had existed for centuries got blown up like a balloon in the twinkling of an eye. Politicians thereof became as foreign in their original countries. They acted like mercenaries by frustrating individual merit and simply promoted mediocrity because of the narrow base from which they drew those to join politics and security forces. These were mainly Hutus at the expense of Tutsis who did not have total freedom.

This violence in Rwanda forced many Tutsi into exile, at first in an almost irregular if not continuous stream between 1959 and 1964, and then after a nine-year interval, again but in more limited numbers during 1972-73. There had already been about 1200,000 refugees by early 1962 and this figure had grown by late 1964 to 336,000. These figures call for some comment, given that much higher ones have been bandied around for propaganda purposes, either to prove that Rwanda could not accommodate all candidates for repatriation or on the contrary, to stigmatise the evil attitude of Rwandese government in keeping out one third of its population (Cimande-Inodep-Mink, 1986). Although this division is much less sharp and antagonistic it was created by the Germans who used Tutsi/Hutu dichotomy, it is nevertheless a social division of some significance that culminated into the Tutsi/Hutu ethnic clashes of 1959.

Politics of ethnicity: Rwanda's curse

The African countries are still rife with undercurrents of ethnic division after more than forty years of independence. This is true in the case of Rwanda. What is not a fact is that African countries are doomed to live off this colonial legacy of ethnic prejudice and bigotry till the day of Armageddon. True, most of the leaders who took over from the mantle of leadership from the white governors proved to be nothing but political figureheads and black marionettes with their operating strings stretching all the way to

the hands of master puppeteers sipping cognac. These leaders continued propagating politics of ethnicity. Being the handy creature that it is, African leaders have not survived this retrogressive reign under their own ilk, where political oppression is the accepted currency. What amazes one is the fact that African leaders, despite their education and experiences, are reverting to the uncivilised political ways of their political ancestors to whom negative ethnicity was a tool of political survival. They manage to do it even better than the old guard. One would be justified in concluding that theirs was a schooling that amounted to nothing, was worth nothing and will change nothing.

Ideologies of ethnicity had everything to do with the sorry state of what happened in contributing to the refugee problem. The unrelenting civil strife in Rwanda has risen due to politics of colonialism. Rwanda is an example of negative ethnicity taken to extremes. “Whenever there is a flare up of armed aggression, the negative ethnicity preached by past leaders is always to blame” (Newbury, 1988: 1). They created the siege mentality among African leaders, raising paranoid perceptions of ethnic jingoism (Horowitz, 1985). As a result of changes brought about during colonial rule, relations between the ethnic groups in Rwanda worsened. Even before European authority of indirect rule, the Hutu had rebelled against the Tutsi authority, but this was localised and it never attained proportions which qualified the violence as conscious ethnic civil war. Rwandese continued to identify themselves according to their social ethnic distinctions. By the end of colonial rule these distinctions were still important but the ethnic cleavage was the primary social division. As independence approached, Hutu and Tutsi leaders began to compete for the positions.

Writing as far back as the early 1960s, a renowned scholar Geertz (1963: 118), detected with much insight and foresight, an important linkage between “ethnic diversity and other primordial factors on one hand, and domestic politics on the other hand, in the then newly independent states of Africa like Rwanda”. He observed that in states of this kind, politics tended to be characterized by intensive and furious inter-group rivalries, assuming sometimes even an “either life or death” intensity, as groups, based on party affiliations or such other foundations as tribe, nationality, ethnicity, religion, struggle to defend their

particular interests in the new situation created by independence. In the process, what should be rules of the political game were, according to his observation, shunted aside, leaving way, far too often, for violence as a means for the resolution of issues.

For the Great Lakes Regions in particular, the observation of Geertz (1963: 118) has been nothing less than prophetic. Indeed, one factor which has projected the region onto the headlines of the international press and air media is the prevalence and ubiquity of violent ethnic conflicts. Even before the tragic genocide of 1994 in Rwanda ethnic conflicts had become a well-established aspect in the circumstances of the coexistence in the region. The most serious problem was that of leadership. The Rwanda government was always the weakest partner in respecting human rights. After all, the RPF which led an armed and forceful return from the diaspora to Rwanda in 1990, could trace its own origins to the distant, but violent, ethnic eruptions that culminated in the massacres of 1959.

Strategies for dealing with the refugee phenomenon in Africa

Independent Africa, has therefore, been rather prolific/creative by way of attempts to develop strategies aimed at preventing or stemming the tide of ethnic conflicts. Accordingly, as one may look to the future, it might be worthwhile to look back at some of these endeavors of the past aimed at preventing ethnic conflicts and promoting peace generally that can stop mass refugee flows. In this regard, attempts to prevent ethnic conflicts and to promote peace almost throughout the continent by African leaders revolved around the “one-party concept”. Multi-party political system competition in Africa was seen to divide people along unprincipled lines of ethnicity and religion leading to vicious cycles of conflicts that was primarily responsible for the phenomenon of refugees (Zolberg, 1966: 48). By and large, this one-party system failed to prevent ethnic conflicts as more wars, coup d’etats and refugee phenomenon continued.

Since the end of the cold war, many leaders of these countries have had to call off their experiments of the prevention of ethnic conflicts in this manner under strong pressures from countries like USA (UNHCR, 1991). One could begin here with the experiment of “ethnic Arithmetic” which the late president Gregoire Kayibanda (1961-1973) and his

successor, Juvenal Habyarimana (1973-1994) launched vigorously in Rwanda on assuming power (Prunier, 1997). Under this experiment, positions in public offices, in the armed forces, and in educational institutions, were to be apportioned out between the Tutsi and Hutu ethnic groups on the basis of their respective ethnic numerical strengths in the national population. That was wrong from the onset. In Rwanda, while originally it was the Hutu who were disadvantaged, over the years they rose in prominence in national affairs (Newbury, 1988). With time, it was the Tutsi who increasingly became disadvantaged. Thus, the evil of “ethnic arithmetic” lay in the fact that it stood to accentuate and to make permanent the very explosive differentiation of the two ethnic groups that resulted in fighting thereby causing displacement and the refugee era.

Worse still, is the experiment, again in Rwanda, that sought to prevent ethnic conflicts through ethnic exclusion. During Habyarimana’s time, the regime toyed with this dangerous and provocative approach, when he shamelessly announced in the early 1980s that Rwanda was too small to receive fellow-nationals who had taken abode as refugees elsewhere in the world. From this perspective it can be noted that Africa has indeed suffered greatly from the pandemic of ethnic conflicts. But one needs to bring a sense of proportion to bear on the assessment of these experiments to avoid refugee flows and despair. With the exception of Burundi and Rwanda, the experiments of unifying different social ethnic groups, so characteristic of Central Europe and the Balkans in the inter war years (Marrus, 1985), has hardly reached here in Africa. Nor, has the experiment of “ethnic cleansing”, so characteristic of the post-cold war years in Europe (UNHCR, 1995), particularly in the former Yugoslavia and other Socialist Eastern Block countries, rarely reached us as yet in Africa but it was surprising that it happened in Rwanda during the 1994 genocide. These observations, one may suggest, should sustain our hope somewhat, as African leaders look ahead to avert the causes of refugee flows and human suffering on this continent. Smith (1994) in his study carried in both Rwanda and Bosnia pointed out that the atrocity in Rwanda comprised an attempt to eliminate entire Tutsi population like the Holocaust in Bosnia. He reported that genocide is essentially a political process. There could no be genocide without the effective control of

the State machinery by people who have the intent of destroying an ethnic group like what happened in Rwanda and Bosnia.

Nevertheless, ethnic diversity is a firm datum or a given for co-existence in African countries. It can neither be wriggled out nor wished away. Diamond (2005) stressed that during the genocide not only Hutus killed Tutsis but even Hutus turned attacking and killing their fellow Hutus. Hence, it is worth examining that the interplay of ethnicity and other factors were responsible for the refugee phenomenon in Rwanda and else where across the globe. It is therefore, important to tackle other factors that cause conflicts, wars and refugee flight. Undoubtedly, the predominant causes of refugee flight are viewed today in terms of political violence. This means that there is a prevalent and indeed dominant discourse that the refugee problem is to a large extent a political cause and that war is an extension of politics by other means; the contest of political will of one group versus that of another (Cimande- Inodep- Mink, 1986: 86).

Other factors that contribute to the refugee phenomenon

There are, at present, several ways to discuss refugee causes. Suhrke (1983: 1) argued that “there are three models of conflict situations that may explain the refugee flight, these models are protracted warfare, international wars and certain kinds of ethnic tension, and government suppression of critics lead to a trickle of a few, highly politicised individuals”.

Beyer (1987: 12-15) proposes the following categories of people of potential humanitarian concern; “convention refugees, victims of civil strife, conscientious objectors, self exiles, victims of natural disasters, migrants and perhaps persons belonging to governments in exile or liberation movements”. Put not far different from Beyer (1987) Cimade-Inodep-Mink (1986: 86) argues that the causes of mass exodus are “mainly at the political level. The principal factors which provoke the violation of human rights; political and military conflicts within a country; tribal and religious repression; frontier disputes and armed conflicts between neighbouring states; rivalry between the super powers; natural catastrophes and economic factors”.

The refugees in Rwanda were among the first in Africa in the wave that occupied the independent period. The first group of refugees left Rwanda at the end of November 1959. The killings continued until 1962, and tens of thousands were obliged to seek sanctuary in the neighbouring states of Burundi, Uganda, Tanzania, Zaire, Kenya and other European states. UNHCR (2000) reported that by 1964, there were 40,000 Rwandan refugees in Burundi, 60,000 in Eastern Zaire, 35,000 in Uganda, and 15,000 in Tanzania. The first massive massacre took place before the declaration of independence on 1st July 1962. Cimade- Inodep – Mink (1985: 103) argued that:

Violent slogans were heard in the songs broadcast by the radio all day long testifying to the hatred of foreigners which was a characteristic of the conflict: strike the serpent [the Tutsi]. Break their heads. Send them back home, to Abyssinia.

All this intensified the flight of the Tutsi who were seen as foreigners by the Hutu leaders.

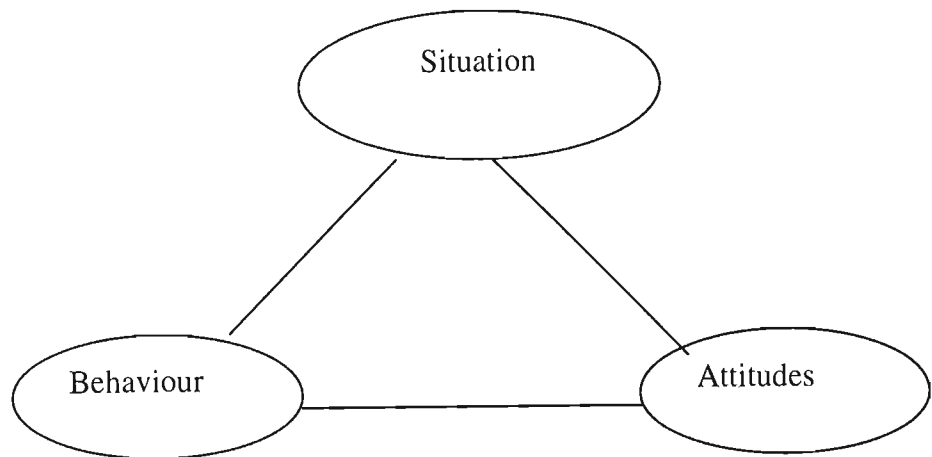
The UNHCR (1991) stressed that the flight of the Rwandese in 1960s was one of the first large-scale movements within Africa. One can argue that the core causes of people today being forced to flee homes are as a result of conflict, systematic discrimination or other forms of persecution. It is important to understand the causes of refugee movements in general and Rwanda in particular. Many people in Africa have become refugees as a result of imperialism/colonialism/neo-colonialism, which in turn has resulted in and/or intensified other factors. el-Hassan (cited in Harrell-Bond, 1986: 188) argues that internal conflict, liberation struggles, oppressive movements and natural disasters cause refugee flows in Africa. Sometimes a combination of these variables in a particular state worsens the refugee crisis (Suhrke, 1983: 12-15).

As of January 2000, there were 22,257,340 refugees in the world. 1,241,930 were from North America, 7,285,800 were from Europe, 7,308,860 were from Asia, 6,250,540 were from Africa, 90,170 were from Latin America and the Caribbean and 80,040 were from Oceania (UNHCR, 2001). It continued to stress that children and adolescents account for approximately 10 million out of the world's 22 million refugees.. The escalating number of refugees makes it imperative that political violence and lack of democracy as the peculiarities contribute the refugee phenomenon.

Bloomfield (1998) argues that the monopolisation of power and control of resources by one group escalates conflicts which almost guarantee a countervailing reaction on another. The actions of one group are responded to by their opponents. Violence begets violence, and the conflict steadily escalates in a series of tit-for-tat exchanges, as in Burundi. Consequently more people will be displaced and end up as refugees. As long as states do not set the priorities right, conflicts will continue to rage throughout the world and refugees will increase (U.S. Committee for Refugees, 1987: 16).

Bloomfield (1998) in his succinct explanation of conflicts in Africa using the conflict triangle argues that unequal distribution of political power among leaders cause political unrest. When the national cake is not well distributed, those who become critics of the existing and corrupt government are repelled and fought. The opposition may end up fighting back and this perpetuates conflicts. Consideration of the causes of refugee notes that violence and threats affecting life and personal security are frequently used to induce refugee flight and in many cases, may amount to systematic patterns of discriminatory treatment in the enjoyment of civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. The dominant group receives preferential treatment vis-à-vis the minority group (Bloomfield, 1998). Feelings of resignation, submission and stoicism by people who have long endured dehumanising treatment by their government or any authority, break in liberating violence. Then follows secondly and more devastating violence that stems from the struggle between the old order seeking to restore its unjust and loathsome power and the hitherto oppressed people hell-bent on settling and sustaining their power.

Conflict triangle



Source: Bloomfield et al, 1998: 46

Situation: - this refers to “objective positions that can cause conflict for instance political power resides in the hands of one section of a population, to the exclusion of the other; or if one group has exclusive success to all the natural resources in an area; or if a country is portioned in such a way as to privilege one group over another” (Bloomfield et al (1998: 46).

Behaviour: - this relates to the actions of people. One group acts in an aggressive manner toward another killing their members, or oppressing them, or discriminating against them. Perhaps the second group retaliates. Eventually the behaviours of both spiral into war, thus the behaviour of those involved, actions and reaction alike generates a context of conflict.

Attitude and perceptions of groups, particularly their images of, and attitudes towards, each other, a belief that another group is less important than their group or they are plotting destruction, or their own beliefs offend their moral code, or that they are generally a danger to them. This causes conflicts and war breaks out which cause people to flee for their safety to neighbouring countries (ibid, 1998: 46). These patterns

of population displacement arising from internal power struggles and animosities between individuals or neighbouring states have persisted in African countries.

Bloomfield et al (1998) argue that “wherever the conflict originates in the triangle, it begins to circulate in both directions. Aggressive behaviour will reinforce negative attitudes; negative attitudes will make the situation worse; a worsened situation will stimulate more defensive or aggressive behaviour. And likewise, aggressive behaviour will make the situation worse, a worsened situation will reinforce negative attitudes, and negative attitudes will be expressed in more aggressive behaviour” (Bloomfield et al, 1998: 46).

Globalisation and unequal distribution of power and resources

Under this sub-heading I will discuss how globalisation and unequal distribution of power and resources cause conflicts ultimately leading to refugee phenomenon.

Africa has experienced the effects of slave trade, colonialism and neo-colonialism and now has globalisation. There has been a growing realisation that there can be no security for any of us unless globalisation is managed with greater justice. This is particularly evident in Africa where there has been a phenomenal increase in the number of refugees over the last 30 years. The situation in Africa is made worse by the effects of globalisation (Cimade- Inodep- Mink, 1985: 89). As traditional communities disappear and ancient cultures are overwhelmed, billions of human beings are losing a sense of place and sense of self that gives life meaning. Globalisation causes inequality between nations and people. The gap between the rich and the poor continues to grow especially with privatisation where the state rolls back by not providing essentials services.

Skeptics of globalization believe that although globalization brings many benefits, it promotes income inequality. Simran (2005) felt that the most negatively affected are the vulnerable and the poor. Income divergence helps to explain another kind of polarization taking place in the world system, between a zone of peace and a zone of turmoil like the Rwandan conflicts and the 1994 genocide. It will not be wrong to assert that conflicts and genocide in Rwanda were also coupled with other factors apart from ethnicity. With

globalization, a rising proportion of the people find their access to basic necessities restricted at the same time as they see others driving Mercedes. Such inequality as a result of globalization may trigger conflicts in such countries a case in point is Rwanda (Kaplinsky, 2005).

Mainstream economic thought promises that globalization would lift the poor above poverty, dissolve dictatorship, and most importantly, reverse the growing economic gap between the rich and the poor countries of the world (Thomas, 2001). However, globalization is not global, meaning that the process and benefits are uneven throughout the world. In other words, a large percentage of the world's population feels excluded from the benefits of globalization. Globalization is increasingly "polarizing the world into two different camps of the impoverished and prosperous" (Thomas, 2001: 578). Given all the uncertainties of globalization time is right to rethink that it is this unequal distribution of resources that causes conflicts and war that result in refuge flows in Africa. What is worse is that all these ills of globalization are in third world countries that are faced with acute poverty that leaves a big population impoverished.

"The fundamental political conflict in the opening decades of the new century we believe, will not be between nations or even between trading blocs but between the forces of globalisation and the territoriality based forces of local survival seeking to pressure and redefine community" (Barnet and Cavanagh, 1994: 22). The increased manufacture of arms and ammunitions by countries such as Russia and the USA has ensured that these tools of warfare are obtained cheaply and are readily available on a global scale. It is inevitable that conflicts in Africa are on the rise as can be demonstrated by the civil wars in Great Lakes Region, Liberia, Somalia, Sierra Leon, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan and Angola.

Economic factors

It would be confusing, unfair, and overly presumptuous for anyone to say that the conflicts and the 1994 genocide in Rwanda were caused by ethnicity differences between the Tutsis and Hutus only. There is little difference between the cultures of the Tutsi and

Hutu, as both groups speak the same language. There isn't any blood difference between the two groups; it is easy for them to change ethnicities (Diamond, 2005). A Hutu can become a Tutsi simply by raising cattle, and a Tutsi can become a Hutu by working in agriculture. Nonetheless, most Rwandans identify themselves as either Tutsi or Hutu. These significant similarities lead many of us to conclude that Tutsi is an expression of class or caste rather than ethnicity. Diamond (2005), argues that the only difference between Tutsis and Hutus were economic, rather than ethnic. This difference in economic life style rather than ethnicity is what (Diamond, 2005) stresses as another factor in the cause of war and the 1994 Rwandan genocide. Excessive inequality between the haves and have-nots, can clearly explain the cause of conflicts and the genocide. As Diamond (2005: 328) cogently asserted:

All these people who were about to be killed had land and at times cows. And somebody had to get these lands and those cows after the owners were dead. In a poor and increasingly overpopulated country this was not a negligible incentive...The people whose children had to walk barefoot to school killed the people who could not buy shoes for theirs.

In Rwanda, it was easy for people to get mobilised by telling their fellow Rwandese because they thought that if they kill, their sons were not going to compete for jobs or for education, or for opportunities in civil service. "So if you kill, you take their jobs, you don't have to fight against them, for places in schools and the like (Diamond: 2005: 328-329), such propaganda led to the Holocaust in Rwanda.

Economic underdevelopment has been emphasised as a fundamental cause of contemporary refugee flows. The majority of these flows originate from the developing world. Due to economic deprivation and scarcity of resources, many groups of people have found themselves trapped in a vicious cycle of poverty. Competition for scarce employment opportunities as well as basic necessities such as food, housing, health and educational facilities tends to intensify ethnic hostilities and political extremism and conflicts as the case was in Rwanda. The repression results in forced displacement of

people. Ethnic animosities can often lie dormant until groups perceive themselves in a “zero sum” game for resources, rights or territory. Issues of identity often provide a convenient cloak for other issues that concern the distribution of these resources. It follows that the problem of poverty and inequality should be dealt with in order to curb the international refugee problem (Zolberg, 1987).

Failure to uphold human rights

Failures to uphold human rights principles by some leaders contribute to the refugee phenomenon. Principles of human rights are alien to a number of countries in the world (Kibreab, 1996). Dictatorship regimes that are common in Africa are characterised by massive rights violations. For example, in Uganda dictatorial regime of president Amin during the 1970s and 1980s (Mamdani (1983), explain the massive flow of Indians from Uganda and the Ugandan nationals who sought refuge in other countries. In Europe, the Balkan crisis provides a perfect example. The regime of ex-president of Yugoslavia, Slobodan Milosevic instructed a massacre in the name of ethnic cleansing where thousands of Albanians were killed and hundreds of others were displaced from their home country causing refugee problem (UNHCR, 2003: 4). This was not far different from the Rwandan massacres and the 1994 genocide where 1 million Tutsis and moderate Hutus died. Others flee from their home countries because of deliberate and systematic torture, disappearance and extra judicial execution by government authorities.

The number of Great Lakes Countries shows that the promises of great respect for human rights made by the new governments have often been cruelly broken. Lack of upholding human rights and freedom pose a double jeopardy of mistreatment and suffering of innocent people as they are frequently displaced. If human rights violations are the principal causes of mass exodus solutions may lie in the constant monitoring by the UN Human rights bodies, and public condemnation of violations by the international community so as to cause public shame upon the offending states. In several parts of the world, the brutal repression of national liberation movements continues to cause people to flee to exile. The instances here include people from East Timor fleeing the Indonesian government repression and Tibetans under the leadership of the Dalai Lama who had to

flee from China because of religious and political persecution. Boutros (1995: 7) argues that “refugees and other uprooted people are the products of failure. The failure to resolve conflicts and its underlying causes; intolerance, antagonism and poverty make their lives hard stressed in alien countries”.

THE RWANDESE PATRIOTIC FRONT [RPF] AND THE OPPORTUNITY FOR THE RETURN OF RWANDESE REFUGEES FROM DIASPORA

Not a single explanation on earth can justify the sickening human catastrophe that went on in Rwanda; the degradation, desolation and the horrors of killing off generation after generation. Mankind is more disposed to suffer and submit to a government long established. There reaches a time though when a government wilfully uses its power that becomes destructive of peoples’ rights in which case it becomes people’s duty to seek abolition of that government. There were ‘a train’ of abuses by the Habyarimana government that had all but abdicated its duty to care for Rwandese refugees in the diaspora. And the abuses were appalling enough as to amount to a justification for RPF to answer the question of Rwandese refugees.

Against a background of entrenched divisive and genocidal ideology, repeated massacres, the persistent problems of refugees in the diaspora, and the lack of avenues for peaceful political change, the Rwandese Alliance for National Unity (RANU) which was formed in 1979 became RPF in 1989. The 1990-94 Rwandese Patriotic Front/Army (RPF/A) war has been termed as a civil war but it was a war of liberation and fighting for the return of Rwandese refugees living in exile. The war was fought by Rwandan refugees for their right to return home after all other means had failed (Mamdani, 2001). The propaganda of “No return” advanced by the hate-infested past regimes in Rwanda left no alternative for the exiled Rwandans but to resort to the dreaded last option, which was the use of a gun. While this was not the best option but prior peaceful avenues had been sought in vain. The country had been beset by ethnic tension associated with the traditionally unequal relationship between the Tutsis and the Hutus. The development of the RPF demonstrates how Tutsi refugees in the diaspora wanted to return to Rwanda (Waller, 1996).

It became the only means by which the refugees were able to return to their homeland, and thus is an interesting study of an exiled social movement engaged in contentious politics. The Rwandese refugees in Uganda started enrolling their children as cadets, regardless of age or gender. While this was no doubt a pragmatic decision in the face of continuing uncertainty, it was clearly not an easy decision for many refugees to make. The whole idea was very idealistically and patriotically based. Collective action by the refugees in the form of militarization in the RPF/A was a logical step to take in the attempt to return to their homeland, a goal many refugees never relinquished from the time of their exile. On many occasions foreign governments requested the former government of Rwanda to allow its people in exile to return home but there was no response (Melvern, 2004: 13).

Despite their extreme geographical dispersion and their increasing social differentiation, the exiled Tutsi remained in touch with each other. In a way that exile even brought them closer by removing social barriers which had existed in Rwanda before 1959. The Rwandese refugees in Kenya and Uganda had formed an alliance called Rwandese Alliance for National Unity (RANU). The objective was to find a solution for the problem of Rwandese refugees and to struggle against dictatorship in Rwanda (Prunier, 1997). This was because things had turned sour in Uganda especially during the regime of President Obote, which was hostile to Rwandese refugees (Clay, 1984; Cimade-Inodep-Mink, 1986: 105).

The Rwandese refugees' sense of wandering and lack of cultural identity was a social injustice that needed correction. Even though the international media portrayed it as a war for tribal supremacy or a chance to even ancient ethnic scores, it was not! Instead, it was the only chance for the exiled Rwandese to reclaim what was rightly theirs after spending decades as refugees and to get rid of the refugee-tag they had carried since 1959. Rwandans were scattered all over the globe.

Suffice to say, the policy of divide and rule employed by the colonialists bred division and hatred whose effects are still vivid till today. Scattered like the chosen people of Israel, the exodus seemed light years from reality. The only difference with Israelites being, while the Pharaoh of Egypt was denying the Israelites departure, in Rwanda, it was the government that was declining its people a peaceful return to the land of their forefathers. So plans for home-coming were meticulously mapped, patiently incubated, and on 1st October, 1990 vociferously executed under the charismatic leadership of RPF/A (Mamdani, 2001; Waller, 1996). However, there were difficulties especially after the death of their leader Fred Rwigyema but the Inkotanyi's (RPF/A) had a serious decision to return home. Like many revolutionary wars, the RPF/A was inspired by the words of Ngugi WA Thiongo's in his novel a grain of wheat. He says that "when one grain is planted, it dies but germinates and finally at harvest time more seeds will be realised" cited in (Melvern, 2004: 14).

The 1990s were great years for exiled Rwandans all over the world but more especially the Rwandese refugees in Uganda who started the invasion led by Fred Rwigyema. The war was waged by Rwandese refugees from Uganda who called themselves "Inkotanyi" [people with a common goal]. Habyarimana, however, described Inkotanyi as "beasts, with tails and two heads" (Melvern, 2004).

The Rwandese refugees' first and second caseload 1950s and 1990s

Refugee problem in Rwanda and Africa, in general, is dynamic and completely complex. The refugees of Rwandan origin have since 1990 been making their way back home into Rwanda from the diaspora, more or less like the Jews of the biblical book of Exodus who did the same exercise two millennia ago out of Egypt. The small Central African Republic of Rwanda suffered from a military uprising where many people died, internally displaced and about a million Tutsi perished as a result of genocide which devastated an already fragile economy that left many societies traumatized and shattered running into exile in other countries (Melvern, 2004; Waller, 1996: 9). These conflicts were devastating causing refugee problems, untold suffering and enormous loss of human life; they fragmented societies and shattered economies. The UNHCR together with the

Government of Rwanda (GoR) are paying much attention on how Rwandan refugees can come back from exile (Zeager, 1998).

Repatriation of refugees has been seen by donors and UNHCR as the “durable solution” to refugee problems (Harrell-Bond, 1989: 22; Cuny and Stein, 1981: 9). Both the UNHCR and the new RPF government encouraged the return of all refugees as the durable solution to solve the problem of Rwandese refugees in diaspora. Clearly this policy was aimed at tackling a major Rwandese refugees concern. Between 1994 and 1996, 1, 3 million Rwandans had repatriated, over 800,000 of whom were old caseload who had left the country since 1959 (Amnesty International, 1996).

In 1995, as the RPF government appeared to gain ground, over 6,700 Banyarwanda refugees with their over 9,000 herd of cattle left various refugee camps and spontaneously returned on their initiative to Rwanda (Amnesty International, 1996). On the other hand, the effects of the civil war in Rwanda generated a new cycle of refugee influx into Uganda, DRC, Tanzania, Burundi and many other African and European countries mostly from the former government. These came to be known as the ‘second caseload’. These were fleeing from crimes against humanity for the genocide they caused.

In late 1996, within a matter of a week, an addition of 1, 1 million refugees returned home. However, the Rwandan refugee returnees’ numbers has some discrepancy reflecting different figures from the UNHCR, government reports and other organisations like the Amnesty International. Despite the fact that the registration of refugees is an integral element in the role of UNHCR, most refugees return to Rwanda using unknown routes thus making it hard for the UNHCR to register them and establish a reliable statistical figure. Despite the good idea of repatriation of Rwandese refugees, Rwanda still finds itself in a fragile position at the turn of the century, and its needs remain great¹.

¹ Joel Boutroue, “Missed Opportunities: The Role of the International Community in the Return of the Rwandan Refugees from Eastern Zaire—July 1994-December 1996,” Massachusetts Institute of Technology-Center for International Studies/UNHCR, February 1998, p. 4.

The country is small and landlocked, and lies in the centre of an extremely volatile region of Great Lakes Region with constant conflicts and wars.

Having come this far, it seems now timely to add to this historical sketch that Rwandan exiles or refugees of these decades since 1920s, 1950s and 1990s belong to various movements. The less mentioned flight was during 1920s. This is because they were economic migrants but not regarded as refugees. This was constituted by migrant Banyarwanda, mostly the Hutu ethnic group, who went to other neighbouring countries like DRC and Uganda in 1920s. These were mainly due to two “push and pull” factors namely search for employment and running away from colonial exploitation of forced work that prevailed during that period (Cimade-Inodep-Mink, 1986: 105). The Banyarwanda economic migrants to Uganda from the 1920s live in different parts of Uganda, although it is almost impossible to number them. But none of these people, whether they speak Kinyarwanda or not, can be taken as ‘refugees’. They live with various degrees of integration within the local populations and no longer identify with a country their parents left mostly for economic reasons and of whose language they are often ignorant (Cimade-Inodep-Mink, 1986: 105).

The first caseload was during 1950s as this constituted majority Tutsi movement. They were consciously encouraged to migrate and leave the country because of ethnic clashes. This was as a result of political upheavals in Rwanda. Following the protracted political turmoil in Rwanda between 1958 and 1964, thousands of refugees mainly of Tutsi tribe, fled their motherland (Cimade-Inodep-Mink, 1986: 105).

On the other hand, the second caseload was that of 1990s that fled during the RPF’s victory in 1994. This led to other peak of Rwandese exiles in the neighbouring countries of Democratic Republic of Congo (Zeager, 1998). The new caseload are Rwandese refugees who fled the country during the RPF’s victory, in the aftermath of the genocide orchestrated by the former government of Rwanda which claimed as many as one million lives. Majority of these were Hutu militias who were fleeing from the genocide they caused. The genocide only ended when the RPF eventually defeated the Rwandan

government's armies and took control of the country. Many fled the country to escape the massacres sparked by the Interahamwe. But fleeing Hutu elite used radio broadcasts to incite fear in Hutu that chose to remain, saying that they will face retaliation and reprisals from returning Tutsi and RPF forces. By mid-July, an estimated 1.2 million Rwandans had fled from the advancing RPF army across the border and into Zaire, forming enormous refugee camps around the city of Goma (UNHCR, 1997).

In conclusion, this chapter provided a broad view of the refugee phenomenon with regard to refugee status, definition of a refugee, contemporary patterns of ethnic divisions on the refugee phenomenon. The chapter concluded with the discussion on how the Rwandese patriotic front [RPF] provided an opportunity for the return of Rwandese refugees from diaspora. Chapter Three introduces the impact of the 1994 genocide on the people of Rwanda and attempts to deal with the refugee phenomenon.

CHAPTER THREE: THE IMPACT OF THE 1994 WAR AND GENOCIDE ON THE PEOPLE OF RWANDA

Introduction

This chapter deals with the consequences of the Rwandan genocide, strategies to deal with the refugee phenomenon, repatriation of Rwandan refugees, reintegration and registration, the foundation of international protection, the 1951 Convention and the 1967 protocol on refugees, and the African Union (AU) and The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

Consequences of war and the 1994 genocide in Rwanda and the strategies to deal with the refugee phenomenon

This chapter explores the consequences of Rwandan genocide, its insurmountable and tremendous impacts on the entire Rwandese population. War is bad. There is no good war because in all wars people somewhere must grieve. Many people in Rwanda suffered immediate pain, horror and death which had long and short-term effects. Some effects were incalculable and unseen like trauma or psychological harm. The events in Rwanda of the 1994 genocide precipitated a tragic upheaval of biblical proportions that affected the entire Great Lakes Region and shocked the world. The speed, quantity, and complexity of population movements during these years were unprecedented in recent history. The crisis was unfolding; some Rwandans had become displaced from their homes and were grouped as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in camps in Rwanda while others fled the country as refugees. Fry (1998: 4) reportedly said that "let no one ever, from henceforth say one word in any way countenancing war. It is dangerous even to speak of how here and there the individual may gain some hardship... For war it is hell, and those who institute it are criminals ... for its disasters far outweigh any of its advantages".

Genocide was a deliberate and intended one. Those who carried it out, typically, prepared the ground through a hate campaign directed at the target community. In fact, president Habyarimana had personally led a very toxic campaign of ethnic racism, hatred, demonisation, and dehumanization, echoed by his close associates. The chauvinism of the Tutsis had to be destroyed from their point of view. In fact, Habyarimana's tribalist politics and virulent anti-Tutsi rhetoric first surfaced in serious ways. It was a regime that was orchestrated and presided over the genocide of its population. The Hutu government was conducting genocide, a government that routinely and chillingly gloats about destroying Tutsis and their children. It was a regime which celebrated and thrived on systematic repression, ethnic racism, and impunity. Militias made a solemn commitment to act together to destroy Tutsi ethnic populations. They were exposed to genocide and grave dangers, when their own government was unwilling to protect them, or, worse, when the state itself was the instrument of a genocidal project (Mamdani, 2001).

War and Rwandan genocide had a tendency of mass killing and death, very much killing as a matter of course, something which devastated the whole country. In reality Rwanda had become an abattoir of mass murder and destruction. Development in the country got stunted, and people's property vanished in war. The genocide and RPF/A war typically created vast populations of displaced refugees who lived dangerous and desperate lives with uncertain futures. Not to mention contending with wound trauma, including some spectacular insults to the human body, rape, injured freedoms and hopelessness. The state of Rwanda's infrastructure was destroyed. Water and sanitation, power supply, food security, housing, transport were in alarming states. During the war, most hospitals had chronic problems with insufficient drugs. The health system was drastically affected by the war. This resulted in a humanitarian catastrophe that led to thousands of deaths of the refugees from diseases such as cholera (Melvern, 2004). It may be noted that Rwandan women and young girls not only witnessed the torture and killing of their families, destruction and looting of their houses, they were also subjected to extreme burns and forms of sexual violence.

Typically, genocide and the 1990-94 war destroyed in whole or in part the physical preservation, the livelihood and the family structure and life of a community. The genocide's result was an unnatural depletion rate of the Tutsis community and racial undermining of its capacity for preservation, regeneration, and development, as a group. The result was too evident a once vibrant society of Tutsis had now been reduced to a mere existential shadow of itself. The human rights and humanitarian catastrophe unfolded in Rwanda was a methodical and comprehensive genocide, conceived and carried out by the then government. An entire society was being systematically destroyed-physically, culturally, emotionally, socially, and economically in full view of the international community as was so poignantly depicted in the movie, *Hotel Rwanda*. Noyoo (2000) argued that wars and conflicts tore apart families and communities in countries like Burundi, Somalia, Sierra Leon and Angola. Families and communities have been displaced; human lives have been lost together with the destruction of infrastructure critical for human survival.

The genocide resulted in a very large number of orphans and widows. Perhaps the most devastating consequence of Rwandan genocide is the sheer numbers of orphans that are living in difficult circumstances. Those who planned and executed the genocide of 1994 violated women's rights on a massive scale by raping them. Carrying their genocide logic to exterminate the "rats" (Tutsis) they said one must also kill the "little rats" (Tutsi children). These caused "IHAHAMUKA" literally meaning HAHA (Lungs, Respiration) and MUKA (Without) IHAHAMUKA or "Bapfuye bahagaze" (the living dead) mainly used for people/survivors who were easily frightened, after seeing thousands of human corpses piling together (Hagengimana, 2001). In 1996 a socio-economic demographic study carried out by UNICEF (1996) found that an estimated 101,000 children were heading up some 42,000 households. "It is not uncommon to see nine-year olds take on the role of head of family and go out to work to support younger brothers and sisters ... the children are sexually harassed". The study also reported that families were headed by women. The genocide had also affected the elderly, who lost their traditional family support. Cultural, social and religious values had been scorned, undermining the

credibility of different symbols and institutions, and the scale of values had been strongly shaken.

Following the genocide, the mass exodus of refugees was rapid and enormous. Pervasive effects of war and genocide spared no one. Many people experienced maiming torture or death. They witnessed atrocities, lost their homes and became refugees. These systematic effects are common causing sudden, overwhelming trauma affecting family members which cause psychiatric disorders, emotional and mental illnesses as a result of grief and forced isolation (Zastrow, 2003: 16). Conversely, when people lose their loved ones, there is always bewilderment and depression as a result of the past experience as they have suffered events of extreme and destructive nature and have fled their native country. Lacroix (2004) in his study of rejected refugee cases in Canada confirmed that asylum seekers suffered from post-traumatic consequences due to forced displacement and the difficulties during displacement and reintegration. Refugees who lived in settlements and camps were exposed to a number of preventable diseases. The most prevalent were diarrhea, malaria, cholera, measles and meningitis. This is because refugees live in temporary settlements or camps have limited access to health.

Many people in Rwanda left their homes due to war or economic desperation. Rwandan refugees suffered significantly from stress, acute poverty, and extreme political instability. They have undergone fearful or traumatic passages as they migrate without legal documentation and may never obtain legal status and live under the threat of deportation. The tremendous influx of refugees to other countries of asylum bears many needs and has challenged asylum countries to provide jobs, protection, rights, education, reintegration, provision of land among others. If the refugee phenomenon is as old as mankind (Stenberg, 1987) as I had earlier stated in the literature review quoting from the bible, some asylum countries have not accorded these needs to the refugees but there has been violence and deportation or forced return. What refugees have in common is the painful loss of home and separation from loved ones and the inevitable mixed emotions of sadness for what they have lost, along with the myriad ambiguities of living in foreign countries and two cultures. This creates a new life in the midst of experiencing multiple

uncertainties and cultural dissonances while facing economic stress and prejudicial treatment in host countries.

Many refugees lose their culture as they happen to go to other asylum countries. Their identity diminishes. This is cited by Cimande- Inodep- Mink (1986) who asserted that many Rwandan refugees in Uganda lost their names, customs and norms. They could not name their children the Kinyarwanda names as this would signify their race that would exclude them from education. They suffered discrimination and xenophobia. Their community could not reverse the situation, they were helpless and the situation was out of their hand. They were discriminated in job employment and their rights were not respected. Their Kinyarwanda language was only spoken in their houses but when they were in public they could speak the Ugandan languages to hide their identity as Rwandese refugees. Such experiences coincide with Omidian's study (1999) among the Afghan refugee community in Northern California. His sample included 49 interview participants. His study revealed how Afghan refugees experienced xenophobia and deprivation in California. Refugees serve as both an index of internal disorder and instability and prima facie evidence of violation of human rights and humanitarian standards.

Attempts to deal with the refugee phenomenon

Beyer (1987) argues that "there are specific groups of people that deserve potential humanitarian attention like the convention refugees who are eligible and covered by the 1951 convention, victims of civil strife, conscientious objectors, self exiles, victims of natural disasters, migrants and perhaps persons belonging to governments in exile or liberation movements" (Beyer, 1987: 12-15). It is from this perspective that UNHCR has the duty to protect and assist all these categories of people in an asylum country.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was set up on 1 January 1951 for an initial period of three years, in accordance with General Assembly Resolution 319 (IV) of 3 December 1949 and 428 (V) of 14 December 1950 (Gorman, 1987: 50; UNHCR, 1991). UNHCR office was established as a subsidiary

organ of the General Assembly, under Article 22 of the Charter, on a basis similar to that of other agencies of the United Nations, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

In recognition of the fact that the refugee problem required continued attention (UNHCR, 1991), persons of concern to UNHCR under its enlarged mandate are those defined as refugees under the Statute annexed to General Assembly Resolution 428 (V) of 14 December 1950, returnees who are former refugees and have recently returned from exile to their home countries, as well as displaced persons whom UNHCR is called upon to assist pursuant to resolutions of the General Assembly or at the request of the Secretary-General.

UNHCR ROLES

UNHCR's main function is to provide international protection to refugees and promote permanent solutions for their problems. It does this, for example, by "promoting the ratification of international conventions for the protection of refugees" (UNHCR, 1991: 3). UNHCR also assists asylum-seekers, returnees, and others of concern. To fulfil its international protection mandate, UNHCR promotes adoption and implementation of international refugee law and human rights standards for the treatment of refugees, particularly in areas such as non-refoulement, that is [the principle which prohibits states from expelling or returning refugees to a country where their lives or liberty may be threatened] reasons related to fear persecution, ensuring freedom of movement and the enjoyment of socio-economic rights in the countries of asylum (UNHCR, 1991; Goodwin-Gill, 1983: 1996). Also to promote durable solutions, UNHCR seeks to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of refugees and reintegration into their country of origin or, where this is not feasible, to facilitate their integration in the countries of asylum or their resettlement in third countries (UNHCR, 1991).

Nevertheless, UNHCR has become profoundly dysfunctional, failing to provide protection to all those most in need of it and condoning discriminatory practices. UNHCR, once regarded as a teacher and a keeper of refugee standards, has lost much of

its former credibility. The refugee Convention is in the odd position of being the only major human rights treaty that is not externally supervised; all other UN human rights accords have some mechanisms to ensure that states are held accountable for what they agreed to (Good-Gill, 1996). UNHCR has also failed to protect refugees' rights in the asylum country. Refugees have been humiliated and they face many human rights violations, curtailing refugees' and asylum seekers' ability to exercise their fundamental human rights. This partly explains the demise of refugees' rights in the country of asylum.

The UNHCR pays a lip-service. According to Guglielmo (1999), the dilemma the UNHCR faces is that the agency is not mandated to intervene politically against governments or opposition groups, even where there is clear evidence of refugees and human rights violations that result in forcible displacement. However, forbidden to challenge governments over their internal affairs, it has a mandate to protect those whom governments persecute (Allen, 1996). Stein (1991 cited in Allen, 1996: 55) argued that the UNHCR's failures of protection responsibilities needs to be critically examined. He further points out that most of the failures of UNHCR to monitor its activities are due to financial vulnerability and reliance on powerful donor governments.

Despite its failures, UNHCR acts as chief advocate for the refugee cause. It should be highly recognised and appreciated by the international community and countries both producing and receiving refugees. UNHCR remains the pre-eminent agency for protection of refugees, with the expertise and experience to ensure refugees' rights, better than any other entity.

UNHCR in Rwanda

UNHCR's assistance to Rwandan refugees stretches back twenty years. The agency first began organising emergency aid in the early 1960s for several hundred thousand Rwandans who had fled ethnic conflicts inside their country. UNHCR's first office in Sub-Saharan Africa was opened in Burundi in 1964 to address the Rwandan refugee crisis, and during the same decade UNHCR had established programmes for Rwandan

refugees in Tanzania, Uganda and former Zaire (UNHCR, 2000). Apart from Rwanda UNHCR continues to identify refugees' needs in countries which have been identified in different regions. The massive population displaced as a result of wars and natural disasters have not abated. This makes its work difficult to execute its mandated duties.

The structure of UNHCR in Kigali, Rwanda is divided into four sections; Executive office, Protection, Programme and Administration/Finance. Logistics fall within Programme. There are also two field offices in Kibuye and Byumba and three Antenna offices in Butare, Cyangugu and Gisenyi and the other two are merely small reception facilities for Rwandan returnees from DRC and Burundi. There are also urban refugees in Kigali-Ville (city) (UNHCR, 2000). The functions of these respective administrative structures are elaborated in Chapter 5 of this dissertation.

The responsibility for refugees within the UN system lies with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) which is mandated to co-ordinate the world body's response to refugees and their problems. Within the UN, the agency fulfils its mandate through frequent co-operation with specialized agencies, including the World Food Programme, the UN Children's Fund, and the World Health Organization (UNHCR, 2003). UNHCR also works closely with the office for the co-ordination of humanitarian affairs, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the UN Development Programme, which includes the UN volunteers, the UN Development Fund and the International Labour Organization. UNHCR collaborates with the UN Population Fund on reproductive health issues and with The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on education projects. International organizations with which UNHCR has developed a close working relationship include the International committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and the International Organization for Migration, Oxfam and many other agencies (UNHCR, 2000).

REPATRIATION

While Rwanda has been at the epicentre of war and regional crises in the Great Lakes Region from 1990-1994, more recent developments usher hopes for the repatriation of refugees in the country. Returnees who were driven from their homes during the wars of 1950s and 1990s are returning to Rwanda in increasing numbers now that peace has transformed the security situation. This is apart from Ruhengeri and Gisenyi which have had insurgencies caused by Interahamwe militias from DRC using hit and run attacks methods.

UNHCR has sought to shift the focus of solutions for refugee crises from exile-oriented strategies of the past to an emphasis on voluntary repatriation as a durable solution. This shift towards return-oriented solutions frequently conflicts with UNHCR's basic protection role in the context of voluntary repatriation, resulting in an erosion of the protection standards especially where the country of origin still faces the problem of political instabilities and wars (UNHCR, 2000). In addressing these concerns, UNHCR does so without any prejudice to the right of refugees to return to their homeland, which they should be given the opportunity to exercise. The right to return to one's own country is based in international law and is the most obvious way to redress the situation of those who are in exile (Allen, 1992).

The Human Rights Organisation (1992 cited in Allen, 1996: 27) stipulates the principles that should be respected by the host country, country of origin and the UNHCR in the process of repatriation. The Organisation provides the following "checklist principles":

- ☞ Repatriation should be promoted only if all countries involved can assure the protection and respect of the fundamental human rights of the refugees;
- ☞ Refugees must not be returned to any country where they would face persecution;
- ☞ Refugee repatriation must be voluntary;
- ☞ Repatriation should be promoted only if it can be accomplished in a manner that ensures safety and dignity upon return;
- ☞ The UNHCR should be involved in a meaningful way from the inception of the repatriation plan to its conclusion;

- ☞ NGOs, in addition to the UNHCR, should have independent access to the refugees both before and after their return;
- ☞ Any repatriation plan should establish that the conflict has abated.
- ☞ Repatriation should be promoted only if there is no longer a likelihood of recurrence of the human rights abuses that precipitated the flight;
- ☞ Particular emphasis must be placed on the unique protection needs of returning women and children, who are a high risk group within an already vulnerable population.

But research conducted by Lomo and Haavisto (2005: 5) on repatriation of Rwandese refugees from Great Lakes Region concluded that:

that the UNHCR's emphasis on repatriation of Rwandese refugees in the Great Lakes region, without careful consideration of conditions of return, including comprehensive and regular monitoring of the protection and post-return needs of returnees has led to premature and involuntary repatriation that fail to comply with fundamental principles of international refugee law, including the principle of voluntariness in refugee returns and non-refoulement. They can also lead to further human rights abuses and renewed violence in Rwanda. The UNHCR has postponed a decision on the invocation of the cessation clauses until mid-2006 for Rwandese refugees. Nonetheless, the threat of having their refugee status withdrawn still remains and instills fear for many refugees given the situation in Rwanda. It is far from meeting the criterion of fundamental changes in the country that is necessary for the invocation of the cessation clauses.

Harrell-Bond (1989) stressed that the bona fide players [government of origin, UNHCR and the country of asylum] underscore the above mentioned principles when they are in the negotiation process for the repatriation of refugees. The UNHCR goes ahead to employ and consent to the use of negative factors such as the reduction of rations to "encourage" refugees to repatriate. In other instances, UNHCR fails to provide neutral, accurate and objective information that refugees need in order to make a truly voluntary choice to return. Allen (1996) and Chimini (1999) argued that some refugees have been

repatriated without their consent and will. This exposes them to more political persecution and arrest in their home country they fled from.

Since 2004 some estimated 25,000 Rwandans have returned on their own initiative to Rwanda (UNHCR, 2000). However, UNHCR has also facilitated this voluntary return and re-integration of Rwandese returnees from exile. Voluntary repatriation has been sought by both the UNHCR and the government as the “optimum solution” to the refugee problem, both in terms of desirability and feasibility (Rogge, 1994). However, Allen (1996) stresses that refugees in asylum country are not contacted whether they want to go back or not. Amnesty International emphasized “repatriation of refugees to Rwanda prematurely for the sake of political and financial expediency will only cause unnecessary human suffering and set the stage for further unrest in Rwanda. The focus should be on ensuring the viable and sustainable solutions based on informed and voluntary consent of refugees” (Lomo and Haavisto, 2005: 5)

In addition the host country, UNHCR and the home country do not deal with each individual refugee views. There could be some refugees who are not willing to be repatriated for reasons of fear and persecution but are forced to repatriate (Sorenson, 1994). Suffice to say, the UNHCR and the host country in most cases do not study the economic and political situation in the home country before they are repatriated (Allen, 1996; Kibreab, 1996). Many refugee returnees have in recent years gone home under duress and to countries which remain socially, economically and politically fragile, even if the fighting has normally come to an end. These circumstances expose returnees to many hardships.

This analysis starkly illustrates how chronic refugee situations are the combined results of unresolved repatriation challenges in the country of origin, the country of asylum and the UNHCR and probably the lack of sufficient external Human Rights watch engagement in such repatriation exercise. Allen (1996: 2) argued that: “this approach...face to face with acute hardships experienced by homecoming populations in economically poor and war-damaged areas...in some instances, such as in Sudan

during 1970s, repatriation and recongregation had caused serious local tensions, and eventually led to renewed warfare and further populations displacements”

There is also fear and suspicion that tend to follow every refugee exile’s life in alien country (Kunz, 1973). Refugees hardly get the necessary information concerning their repatriation (Bariagher, 1999: 612-614), and the resolution reached is between the asylum state and the country of their origin. The ecosystems perspective becomes relevant and applicable here at the mezzo stage where the individual is being affected but has no powers to challenge or reverse the system or situation (Zastrow, 2003).

Lomo and Haavisto (2005: 2) considers the fact that:

As the UNHCR declared the year 2005 as the year of return and emphasized repatriation over durable solutions, undue pressure is pressed upon refugees to return. Decisions by refugees are thus made in a constraining atmosphere questioning the voluntariness of the repatriation exercise. Although refugees have been given a semblance of involvement in the repatriation process through visits to Rwanda by refugee leaders, the experiences of the hundreds of previously repatriated refugees who have again returned to Uganda, in addition, approximately three to four hundred Rwandese refugees who had been repatriated from Uganda to Rwanda have since returned to Uganda citing fears related to arbitrary arrest... and are feared dead by the community.

The above quotation basically demonstrates how the UNHCR fails to study the economic and political situation in the country of origin before repatriating the refugees (Jacobsen, 2001; Kuhlman, 1991). It would be better that before UNHCR begins the process of repatriation of refugees it should take into account and examine situations in the home country. Refugees and their problems appear to be inextricably intertwined, some are repatriated and after some few days they flee their home countries back to exile because of the UNHCR’s failure to consult with refugees before they are repatriated to Rwanda. This misjudges the UNHCR choice of “durable solution” to

repatriation without having made prior arrangements for the safety of refugees (Allen, 1996; Harrell-Bond, 1996: 91). However, Bascom's study (2005) among the Eritrean returnees contends that Eritrean returnees from Sudan were optimistic about their future, 85% left Sudan to Eritrea. Reasons why returnees thought life would improve upon return to Eritrea were primarily psychological and political rather than material. His study indicated that 64% cited the joy of peace, security, freedom, and home as the main reason they anticipated why life would improve, while 34% cited material advantage [e.g., land, jobs].

Because the refugee makes the decision within a short time span, little thought will be given to the consequences of flight. Not until the place of asylum is reached, often in a state of shock, in a condition Kunz (1973: 8) calls "midway to nowhere, will the refugee ponder the three classic choices that they face: To remain in the place of first asylum or to accept a distant resettlement opportunity in a strange land". At this point the repatriation factor will be one of pressure from the country of asylum and the international aid agencies to force the refugee and others to make a choice. Refugees rarely get to choose from the full range of options. Pressure is used because all of the available options may be more or less unsatisfactory.

The Rwandese both Tutsi and Hutu have returned from exile. The Amnesty International (1995) reports that the Hutu who were perpetrators of genocide still return in fewer numbers for fear of being prosecuted by the government. The returnees on arrival receive awareness training and information regarding political reconciliation and unity led by government officials. UNHCR returnees receive a food parcel, a construction kit, and basic domestic supplies. They also receive identification papers from Rwandan authorities, which confirm their citizenship and the entitlements that go with it. Despite the recent increase in the pace of the repatriation programme, two major obstacles stand in the way of UNHCR reaching its target of returning refugees namely; security concerns and financial constraints (UNHCR, 2000).

Repatriation is regarded as the most preferred and “durable solution” to the refugee problem by both the UNHCR and the host government to the refugee problem (UNHCR, 2000). Repatriations take two forms; one being voluntary repatriation and involuntary repatriation. Voluntary repatriation of refugees to Rwanda has been highly recorded among the “old caseload” returnees from Uganda and Burundi. The involuntary one is where the Government of Rwanda (GoR) is asking the countries hosting Rwandese refugees to forcefully send them against their own will. For instance Rwanda has asked DRC to forcefully send back the Interahamwe militias who caused genocide (UNHCR, 1998). It is quite clear that a large number of the recent returnees have repatriated under some form of duress. This has been due to the fact that Interahamwes continue causing massive killing of innocent people especially some Rwandans who are of Tutsi ethnicity living in DRC and also they have been accused of forming rebel groups to fight the RPF government (Waters, 1997). However, this form of repatriation contravenes the principle of 1951 Convention and its principle of non-refoulement (UNHCR, 2003).

“Between November 1996 and September 1997, over 1,350,000 Rwandan refugees returned to their home country, largely owing to the increased political turmoil in the eastern region of the former Zaire and the dangers faced by refugees there (Prunier, 1997). The return of refugees represented one of the largest single voluntary repatriation movements in African history. Over 850,000 refugees returned from the former Zaire and approximately 500,000 from the United Republic of Tanzania. The returnees’ figures vary substantially and it’s hard to establish the exact figures by both the government and the UNHCR. Despite efforts to locate and repatriate the remaining Rwandan refugees, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that over 200,000 refugees remain unaccounted for in the Democratic Republic of the Congo” (UN General Assembly, 1997 para 2).

The Rwandan government since 1994 has been encouraging all Rwandan refugees in exile to return home. The government of national unity and reconciliation does not need to repeat the same mistakes of past regimes by stopping Rwandans in the diaspora from

returning home to their motherland. Both the old and new caseloads are encouraged to return despite the Interahamwe militias that engineered the genocide (Prunier, 1997). In spite of the government's call, the rate of voluntary return of Rwandan refugees of 1993/94 known as the new "caseload" to Rwanda has been low (UNHCR, 2000). During 1995, approximately 1,350,000 out of 1.7 million refugees had voluntarily returned to Rwanda, but only 78,000 of these were new "caseload" refugees. At the same time, however, one should not be too sentimental about the circumstances of the returning refugees' because they face a lot of difficulties in re-integration. Some have been tried and jailed in prison for the genocide, they have faced physical assaults from the 'stayees'/locals. It would be misleading to argue that returnees find life easy and therefore face no problems in their home country as Allen (1996) demonstrated in his study in the Sudanese returnees.

The country continues to encourage the return and reintegration of the remaining Rwandan citizens living in various countries in the region. Throughout 2003, UNHCR concluded tripartite agreements with seven countries currently hosting Rwandan refugees, establishing legal and operational frameworks, for their voluntary repatriation (Zeager, 1998). However, the complexity of the remaining caseload poses definite challenges to UNHCR, as well as the countries of asylum and Rwanda itself. An enhanced repatriation plan is being drawn up by the Rwanda government.

It should be noted that in fragile post-war situations like Rwanda failure to achieve socio-economic reintegration and the effective resolution of the original root causes of conflict could incur the risk of renewed conflict. In seeking "durable solutions" Rwanda, together with the UNHCR and Human rights organisations need to examine the imperatives relevant to the creation of conducive socio-economic conditions and grass-roots development, as well as those applying to security, respect for human rights, rule of law and good governance. Failure to do this will lead to further conflicts and refugee flights.

Reintegration and Registration of Refugees

Repatriation and reintegration are ostensibly the most positive aspects of the refugee problem (Allen, 1996) when compared with trauma and flight and uncertainty of exile. The journey back home can certainly be a joyful experience by returnees. In his study on the Eritrean returnees Kibreab (2002) argued that the UNHCR needed to study the political situation in the home country before repatriating refugees. After a study of Eritrean returnees Kibreab (2002) contends that 69% of Eritrean returnees were pleased with the process of UNHCR repatriation and 20% not pleased. Understanding such dynamics help to account for the mixed perception by local residents of returnees' impact on jobs and housing. For example, in the case of Eritrean returnees Kibreab (2002) reported that one proportion of local residents believed returnees had prompted improvements in housing 27% and employment opportunities while 35% believed that these had deteriorated as a result of returnees.

Nevertheless, there have been disturbing reports of the identity papers and civil records of refugees being destroyed making it impossible for refugees to prove their identity and reclaim their properties when the time comes for them to return to their home this makes their eventual repatriation extremely difficult. Registration is also a crucial element of efforts to trace and reunite families separated either as they left their homes or upon their arrival in Rwanda.

The foundation of international protection of refugees

The aftermath of World War 1, the Russian revolution and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire produced mass movements of people in Europe and Asia Minor. The League of Nations defined refugees in terms of specific groups of people who were judged to be in danger if they returned to their home countries (Gorman, 1987: 50). The league's first action on behalf of refugees took place in 1921, when it created the position of High Commissioner for Russian refugees and elected Mr. Fridtjof Nansen to fill it.

When the UN replaced the League of Nations in 1947, it established a new body, the International Refugee Organisation (IRO) (Gorman, 1987: 50). The IRO's mandate was to protect existing refugee groups scattered throughout Europe in the aftermath of World War II. Initially, the IRO's main objective was repatriation, but the political build up to the cold war led the balance instead towards resettlement of those who had "valid objections" to returning home. Such valid objections included persecution, or fear of persecution because of race, religion, nationality or political opinions.

Over the following years, the league set up a succession of organisations and agreements to deal with new refugee situations as they emerged. The list of national categories was progressively extended to take in Assyrians, Turks, Greeks, Americans, Spaniards, Austrian and German Jews. Measures to protect refugees became more comprehensive as time went on, covering a wide range of matters of vital importance to their daily lives such as the regularisation of their personal status, access to employment and protection against expulsion.

The 1951 Convention and the 1967 protocol on refugee status

Soon after the Second World War, the refugee problem was far from solved. There was a call for an instrument, which defined the legal status of refugees and contained a general definition of the term "refugee" which was not tied to specific national groups (UNHCR, 2003: 81). By the resolution 492 (V) of the 14th December 1950, the UN General Assembly decided to convene a conference of plenipotentiaries to draft and sign a convention on refugees and stateless persons. The convention relating to the status of refugees was adopted on 28th July 1951 and it entered into force on 21st April 1954.

Article One of the Convention limits the definition of refugees by reference not only to a well founded fear of persecution but also to a date line (those resulting from events occurring before 1st January 1951) and it offered states the option of further restricting their obligations to refugees resulting from events occurring in Europe before the critical date. Subsequent decades demonstrated that refugee movements were by no means a phenomenon confined to World War II and its aftermath. As new refugee groups

emerged, it became necessary to adapt the Convention in order to make it applicable to new refugee situations. In 1967, a protocol relating to the status of refugees was introduced and it entered into force on 4th October 1967. The protocol abolished the dateline, making the convention a universal instrument.

The 1951 convention relating to the status of refugees was a legally binding treaty and a milestone in international refugee law. However, some of the provisions of the convention and the 1967 protocol are inadequate to deal with certain aspects of today's refugee problems. It should not be forgotten that the convention has its origin in the cold war climate of the late 1940s and the early 1950s when concern was centred on refugees in Europe. The provisions of the convention have a European "flavour" as majority member countries that drafted the Convention were from Europe. The scope of the earlier definition of refugees has been outlived and the refugee problem now demands an outlook that embraces refugee crises from over the globe.

Certain articles in the convention like have integrity absolutely, protected refugees including articles 1 (definition of refugees), 3 (non-discrimination), 4 (religion), 16 (1) (Access to courts) and 33 (non-refoulement). One of the principle concerns of the convention and the protocol is the status of refugees. Various issues are not dealt with such as the admission of refugee to countries of asylum, resettlement and voluntary return to countries of origin (UNHCR, 2003).

The 1967 OAU Convention governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa

The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) decided as early as 1963 that a regional refugee treaty was needed, in order to take into account the special characteristics of the situation in Africa. Article 11 of the OAU Convention is the only provision in refugee law that deals with the settling of refugees in a specific area particularly a reasonable distance from the border, for reasons of security (UNHCR, 2003). The physical security of refugees in their countries of asylum has been guaranteed by the OAU convention. However, in practice refugee camps in most African countries like Tanzania and Uganda

are situated at the borders (Harrell-Bond, 1986). The close proximity between the country of asylum and the country from which the refugees fled has exposed the camps to various dangers (Amnesty International, 1997). Of the several other international legal instruments that are directly or indirectly concerned with refugees, special mention should be made of the Convention governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa, adopted by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1969 (which 42 African states have now been ratified).

A gap often exists between the obligatory human rights protection for refugees as outlined in international law and the actual protection, which takes place in practice within the territorial boundaries of the sovereign host state. In international law, nationality is described as the principle link between the individual and the international law (Harrell-Bond, 1986). For refugees this link is broken either because they are stateless or because they do not have the protection of the state of their nationality. Their nationality is “ineffective”. The international protection of refugees is a framework for promoting and defending the rights of people who have been forced to leave their home country. The International Law provides the legal and social protection to refugees that a properly functioning government is normally expected to extend to its nationals at home and abroad. They make up the content of “national protection”. Refugees cannot count on national protection and they are unable to take advantage of the normal standards of international law for treatment of people outside their home country. Special international standards have had to be defined to take account of the particular plight of refugees (UNHCR, 2003: 3).

International Human Rights Conventions, which include a strong body of laws on the protection of refugees, have developed over time. The conventions set down standards of treatment to be accorded to refugees, a special category created by the international community to address their unique protection needs (Gorman, 1987; Godwin, 1983). In spite of the implementation of international human rights conventions, the number of host countries violating refugee rights worldwide seems to escalate, for example, Rwandese refugees in Uganda (Cimade-Inodep-Mink, 1986).

Increasingly political leaders have violated the 1967 OAU Convention and have resorted to the use of political reasons to chase refugees out of an asylum country. At the same time, the system devised to protect refugees has fallen into disarray, with states showing increasing reluctance to host refugees. All too often, states deny resettlement cases with little or no explanation to the refugee/s. There is little justification for such an opaque approach and has ill served the principle of non-refoulement. This happened to Rwandese refugees in Uganda where President Obote chased these refugees and denied others entry. This exclusion of Rwandese refugees in Uganda created a nightmare scenario of acute problems. This is a challenge to African policy makers and OAU's mandate to the issue of African refugees. The point is their participation and competition for resources generated resentment from both the Uganda local population and the central government of 1980-85. The resulting attempts were to expel the Banyarwanda ethnic group of which the refugees are a party. This brought the refugee question to the forefront in Rwanda-Uganda relations more profoundly than ever before (Cimade-Inodep-Mink, 1986; Harrell-Bond, 1986, Clay, 1984).

It is estimated that 40,000 people fled Uganda between 1982 and 1983 to Rwanda. Although the Ugandan government denied involvement in the expulsions, the violation of human rights could not exonerate Uganda from being responsible for the tragedy. Notwithstanding the arguments of Rwanda which doubted its capacity to accommodate returnees, some of whom it believed were Ugandan citizens, the refugee question could no longer be relegated to the periphery of the regional political agenda. Thus the across-the border dimension brought the two states into negotiations at Gabiro from 22-27 October, 1982. The provisions of the negotiation remained on paper until January 1986 when the National Resistance Movement/ National Resistance Army (NRM/NRA) overthrew the military junta which had also overthrown the Obote government in July 1985 (Clay, 1984). The NRM administration resumed the negotiations between Rwanda and Uganda to find a lasting solution to the refugee question. A number of border talks were organised between presidents Museveni of Uganda and Habyarimana of Rwanda. While these talks were going on some refugees attacked Rwanda from the direction of

Uganda on 1st October, 1990. These organised themselves under the Rwandese Patriotic Front/Army (RPF/RPA) (Mamdani, 2001).

The refugees who fled to Uganda were settled in a number of camps namely: Nakivale, Oruchinga, Mirama Hills, Kyaka 1 and 11 (Harrell-Bond, 1986). Over time, these refugees more or less 'integrated' into the Ugandan society. This made them participate in Ugandan politics. However, it is not the intention of this dissertation to discuss circumstances under which Rwandese refugees participated in the politics of the host state but to demonstrate how Rwandan returnees while still in exile suffered from gross violations of human rights in exile engineered by the host country [Uganda] and other experiences they went through. However, I will discuss the experiences of Rwandese returnees in detail in chapter five.

Host states particularly in Africa tend to view refugees as a unique and 'temporary' phenomenon. These perceptions at the macro level affects refugees as their needs are not met, hoping that they will return soon to their home countries. The resulting impact of this perception is that, governments do not want to include the refugees on their development agenda especially with regard to their integration in the host communities. In practice, however, weak host governments with this kind of fluid domestic politics tend to see refugees as a threat to their power. When faced with this kind of refugee challenge to their authority, host states react by evoking national security concerns to justify repressive solutions to problems (Prunier, 1995). Under such circumstances, host states also tend to apply ad-hoc policies in the administration of the refugees.

At the global level refugees have been regarded as an 'economic burden' which has led to policies aimed at controlling, segregating, pacifying, depoliticizing and marginalizing the refugees so that they do not become a source of conflict in the intra-state and inter-state politics. Thus even if some of these asylum-seekers qualify for refugee status, this status is denied and left in limbo. Those that are given refugee status are pushed in refugee resettlement schemes or camps. Some refugees have no choice as to their places of residence irrespective of their status, their duration of stay and they are 'herded' in

settlements (Daley, 1989: 204). All these problems directly affect the individual, the community and the country. Kibreab (1989: 471) has observed that one of the purposes of segregating the refugee settlement is to ensure that the prospects of repatriation are not weakened by eventual cultural and social integration. As this isolation is not enough, the refugees in most of asylum countries are fenced, albeit, bureaucratically. In some parts of the world, such as Hong Kong, refugees live in closed camps which are fenced physically with barbed wires and they are not allowed to move out (Allen, 1996).

Consequently, the government/s normally has/have problems of satisfying refugee needs, which raise the question of their ability to govern. According to the UN (1996: 89), the DRC government was “under internal pressure, particularly from the parliament”, to resolve the refugee issues and to restore security along the border. Amnesty International (1996: 5) identifies some of the likely sources of this pressure on the parliament:

Both DRC and Tanzania already faced grave economic problems before the mass influxes of refugees in 1993 and 1994. Feelings of resentment have built up among the local population who believe that the refugees are benefiting from higher standard of living because of aid provided by international agencies and because of the refugees own commercial activities. Some local DRC have lost their livelihood, because refugees are prepared to work for lower wages”.

On the international front, the refugees’ presence in a host country can jeopardize the diplomatic relationships between states, more particularly if the sending state is hostile or if the refugees fled because of repression. Therefore bestowing refugee status to them could be constructed by one state as condemning the sending state for violation of fundamental rights and other as aiding and abetting rebellious. This can result in inter country skirmishes.

The OAU has also had tremendous impact on the behaviour of member-states towards the refugee phenomenon. The OAU has been described by some observers as a club of leaders enacting policies aimed at maintaining their own survival (Daley, 1989: 106). The

majority of the framers of the OAU Convention were the producers of these refugees and they feared the consequent political repercussions of their actions. Certain clauses were, therefore, deliberately added to the Convention to protect their interests. For instance, the OAU Convention of 1969, though it recognizes that the granting of asylum is not to be regarded as an unfriendly act (Article 11 (2)), imposes certain restrictive codes on the activities of the refugees which member states are obliged to enforce. For instance, they have to ensure that refugees do not use host-ground or other facilities such as the press or the radio to launch what is called “subversive” activities against countries of origin (Article 11(2)); the refugees must be located at a reasonable distance from the border of their countries of origin (Article 11(6)).

The African Union (AU) and The New Partnership for Africa’s development (NEPAD)

This section explores the role of AU and NEPAD with regard to refugee phenomenon in Africa. African Union is an international organization consisting of 53 African member States. Founded in 2002, the AU was formed as a successor to the African Economic Community (AEC) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The transformation of the Organisation of African Union (OAU) into AU and the adoption of the NEPAD in July 2001 sponsored by the AU has been sought to deal with Africa’s internal problems. Africa’s problems cannot be solved by relying on Western powers but for African leaders to combine their efforts and solve their underlying problems that have made the continent suffer from many problems ranging from ethnic conflicts, wars, genocide, the refugee problems, poverty and underdevelopment.

The OAU paved the way for the formation of AU in July 1999. The continental organization focuses on the promotion of peace, security and stability on the continent as a prerequisite for controlling wars, conflicts which are some of the causes of refugee flight. The formation of AU shows that African leaders have showed their interests in dealing with Africa’s problems. The AU aims to maintain peace, stability and promote economic development in Africa, thereby creating necessary conditions to the solution of the refugee problem (UNHCR, 2003). African countries are trying to get together through

NEPAD to find a solution to the refugee problem. AU should also take full awareness of the gravity of the refugee situation and help the continent from crisis to stability.

African leaders should realize that through NEPAD, certainly the unfinished problem of refugee flows can be solved. The remedy to the refugee phenomenon is within NEPAD which provides the necessary apparatus for Africa's problems. African leaders have to find a way out of the cycle of failure which the OAU suffered and the AU could suffer. The current calls of NEPAD based on a set of core values of good governance, respect for human rights and security can help to deal with the refugee crisis in Africa. During the 53rd session AU leaders of the "Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Program, AU leaders introduced their initiative to solve refugee problems in the region by implementing NEPAD" (UNHCR, 2003: 3). During this session the issue of refugee phenomenon featured prominently and African leaders reiterated the need for urgent attention to refugee phenomenon in Africa.

The AU adopted NEPAD with the aim of breaking the vicious cycle of political instability, poverty, and underdevelopment (Ayittey, 2005). Accordingly, through NEPAD a solid achievement with regard to refugee crisis can be achieved by breaking the vicious cycle of conflicts, underdevelopment and end to poverty that contribute to a large degree the refugee phenomenon. In this regard, AU is paying particular attention to the important matters of peace and security that can reduce the refugee flows on the African continent. The African Parliamentary Conference held in Benin 2004 stressed that "recognising that no country is immune from the risk of generating and receiving refugee flows, and that therefore protecting refugees is a shared duty of all States and is a matter of respect for basic human rights" (UNHCR, 2004: 1). If the political ideology of AU/NEPAD is well articulated and well implemented, the AU/NEPAD ideology can help to heal the long outstanding conflicts in Africa and the refugee phenomenon that have prevented Africa from achieving unity and peace.

It is expected that African leaders will enhance and strengthen their efforts to achieve the shared objectives of promoting democracy, good governance and respecting human rights identified in NEPAD and their programmes of action to deal with African refugees. Some African leaders especially South African President Thabo Mbeki and President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria have acceded to NEPAD as the only vision to solve Africa's problems (Ayittey, 2005). Over the years, successive Summits of the OAU/AU have taken decisions aimed at dealing with refugee phenomenon by ensuring democracy and good political governance. In particular, through the constitutive act of the AU, member States commit themselves, among others, to the objectives and principles of protecting refugees and promoting democracy, good political governance, human rights and rule of law (Manby, 2004). Consequently, the NEPAD Framework Document and the Declaration identify, among others democracy and good political governance as preconditions of eradication of poverty and sustainable peace.

The AU, the continental body must work together to end the refugee crisis. Yet the OAU, the AU predecessor, failed to deal with the refugee phenomenon but many hopes are put in AU/NEPAD. African states must take advantage of the formation of NEPAD to bring about development and to hasten peace on African continent (Sewpaul, 2005). If the whole of African leaders works together it is much more realistic that the problem of refugees in Africa can be handled. An open and inclusive democracy will save the continent from conflicts and avert the refugee crisis. However, it is no coincidence that some African leaders have refused to embrace democratic values of NEPAD like Bashir of Sudan's negative attitude which does not respect the rights of refugees in his country. This would seem to imply that Bashir's government does less to solve the crisis of refugees and political crisis in Sudan. But it may be time for African leaders to take responsibility of acknowledging NEPAD to deal with the refugee phenomenon on African continent (Snoddy, 2005).

Conceptually, AU has been criticised on grounds that it has made less efforts to readdress the refugee problems on African continent. AU does remain blind, deaf and dumb to the Darfur crisis in Sudan. Less attention is paid to avert the appalling refugee situation in

Sudan and Sierra Leon. The AU has failed to make much progress in the Darfur conflict which could be a repeat of Rwanda. Despite a large number AU troops, AU is doing too little, too late to deal with the refugee crisis on the African continent. The root causes of refugees must be confronted. AU has in the past flinched from responsibility to deal with the refugee phenomenon. Ironically, the only hope for reversing the refugee problem in African countries is to insist on the observance of the NEPAD which AU seemed to have failed in this respect (Ayittey, 2005).

Perhaps the biggest challenge that NEPAD faces is that its success still depends solely on donors outside Africa, principally in the West which reflects dependency. NEPAD has, however, received too little support from Western powers and the United Nations (UN), and it is most unlikely that it will effectively carry out its roles. Unless the Western Powers give funds and other resources to NEPAD otherwise it will remain a pipedream with a blurred vision to deal with the refugee phenomenon. Snoddy (2005: 9) argues that “NEPAD itself will probably not be a miracle cure for Africa, and some of its core elements may be modified or left behind, but shared commitment to its foundation by most African leaders and its power to mobilise developed countries to invest in Africa, could lead to significant forward movement for the continent”. Democracy cannot march on an empty stomach. There is need for NEPAD to pay attention to poverty and underdevelopment in Africa. Political stability and economic stability are the two sides of the same coin.

For AU/NEPAD to succeed in dealing with the refugee phenomenon, African leaders should practice democracy, respect for human rights and good governance. This can help to curtail some of the causes of mass refugee flight and the refugee problems. AU/NEPAD should not be one man’s body but an inclusive body of all member States to work together. The creation of a co-ordination framework is a critical necessity to deal with Africa’s refugee problem. A collective means is required to achieve this. AU/NEPAD should ensure that refugee issues as well as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) occupy a high priority in African Parliamentary review to support and protect them in line with the existing established principles of International law.

In conclusion, with the formation of AU and adoption of NEPAD something positive with respect to underdevelopment, poverty and refugee phenomenon can be achieved. Nevertheless, the impression I gauge is that without collective responsibility of African Heads of States working together to solve Africa's problems nothing material will come out in the sowed seeds of NEPAD. There should be collective action towards solving the refugee crisis by eliminating all forms of poor leadership that contribute to the causes of refugee flight. Without this Africa will remain in a perpetual state of turmoil and will continue to produce refugees. In this transition from OAU to AU/NEPAD, African leaders should pay attention to the question of democracy. In particular, they should aspire for governance characterised by a system of representation; a system in which civil and political rights are guaranteed by law; a system that respects human rights, including the rights of minorities; a system where the rule of law is observed.

Finally, this chapter explored the impact of the 1994 war and the genocide on people of Rwanda, the role of UNHCR in repatriation of Rwandese refugees, and attempts to deal with the refugee phenomenon. Chapter Four deals with the research methodology.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter explores the research methodology used in this study. It discusses the method of data collection, data analysis, validity and reliability, limitations to the study and ethical considerations. The study relied on qualitative method using in-depth interviews with 23 participants (returnees) and four (4) key informants from UNHCR and Local government who were responsible for repatriation and re-integration of Rwandese returnees. Thematic Analysis was used to analyze the data.

Method of data collection and procedure

This study employed a qualitative research method and a descriptive research design. Strauss and Corbin (1999) describe qualitative method as a method of data collection that uses non-mathematical procedures in the process of data collection and interpretation. Qualitative research uses a naturalistic approach that seeks to understand phenomenon in context-specific settings, such as “real world [where] the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of ‘interest’” (Patton, 2001: 39). Qualitative research, broadly defined, means “any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification” (Straus and Corbin, 1990: 17) and instead, the kind of research that produces findings arrived “from real-world settings where the phenomenon of interest unfold naturally”(Patton, 2001: 39).

Qualitative research was of advantage in this study because it helped me record subtle verbal and non-verbal messages of the participants in as much detail as possible. Indeed this is why I chose qualitative research. Objectivity is vital in qualitative research because the researcher has a closer relationship with the participants than in quantitative research. Eisner (1991: 58) contends that “a good qualitative research study can help...to understand a situation that would otherwise be enigmatic or confusing”. However, I ensured that the nature of this relationship or the possible biases that I had held did not confound the data collection. It should be emphasised that unlike quantitative analysis

which is the end point in a study, in qualitative research the analysis and theoretical statements which emerge from the data collected often influence the subsequent direction of the research. Nevertheless, qualitative research is often criticised for the degree of subjectivity and lack of 'rigour' in the techniques used (Cassell and Symon, 1994). They also contend that qualitative research may depart from the original objectives of the research in response to the changing nature of the context. However, Patton (2002) argues that the qualitative method produces richer, more valid data and improves validity, reliability and above all qualitative researchers may involve the participants in the study which may be rare to find in quantitative research.

Before the actual data collection was carried out I visited the UNHCR offices in Kacyiru and the Ministry of Local government office also based in Kigali, Kacyiru where I met the officials to ascertain whether it would be possible to carry out the research. After that, I kept in close contact with the director of UNHCR and one government official through e-mails. Before I carried out the interviews these officials knew me and thus helped to ease the bureaucracy of moving from one person to another to seek appointments to interview these key informants.

→ In-depth Interviews

The main method of empirical data collection was in-depth interviews with audio-recorded interviews. Face-to-face interviews were essential since the interviews were directed to understand lived experiences of participants (Chrzanowksa, 2002). This method elicited positive responses from the original 20 participants that I had anticipated plus an additional 3 participants that volunteered to be interviewed. In order to get in-depth meaning, the interviews were conducted in the local language and then transcribed from Kinyawanda language into English. Given the multi-lingual nature of the participants, there were many occasions in the interview where the participants used English and Kinyarwanda both of which I am fluent in. For ease of data presentation and in the interest of confidentiality I personally transcribed all interviews. However, for the purposes of this dissertation it is useful to note that translation of some Kinyarwanda words (saying what the participant said exactly in English) was complex and problematic

to me. The complex issues in the translation were metaphors that did not easily translate into English from Kinyarwanda. However, I put emphasis and clarity discussing such words after the interview with participants (or during the interview when it seemed appropriate) to ensure that there was a common understanding of their usage.

In-depth interviews were used with a primary sample of returning refugees and a secondary sample with key informants who provide services to returning refugees. Kumar (1996) argues that any person-to-person interaction between two or more individuals with a specific purpose in mind is called an interview. This method was appropriate because it is flexible and gave the respondents opportunity to say all they wanted to about the issues under investigation (Cohen and Manion, 1994).

The participants interviewed were both the old and the new caseload returnees who fled Rwanda in 1959 and during the 1994 genocide. The latter provided detailed accounts of genocide experiences unlike the old caseload returnees who did not witness the genocide. Most of the old caseload returnees were staying in exile by the time of the genocide. But what was common between the old caseload and the new caseload returnees was that all of them found it very painful to live in exile.

Each individual interview consisted of between 30 minutes to one hour of recorded discussions. Interviews were then transcribed. The interviews were carried both in Kinyarwanda and English. Kinyarwanda language was used especially where the participants did not know how to speak English or were French speakers. English language was mostly used with key informants who knew how to speak English. However, participants who knew how to speak English were interviewed in English as this eased my task of transcribing from Kinyarwanda to English. The participants were briefed as to the purpose of the research and were asked for some details about their background to differentiate them from the stayees/locals who never went to exile. Probing questions were used to stimulate a broader discussion.

In addition, using snowball sampling I made home visits in Remera, Kabeza and Kacyiru. Eight participants out of twenty three proposed and agreed that I interview them in their homes during weekends. As a result I had to interview these 8 participants in their homes during weekends. The basic advantage of this was that they would be able to fully express themselves as this would help me elicit more detailed accounts of their biographies and the chronology of events. This elicited more detailed accounts than interview with participants in garages and carpentry workshops because they did not have much time. Nevertheless, these interviews also provided rich data.

Sources of data collection

- 1) Primary sample of 23 returnees.
- 2) Four key informants
- 3) Two Gacaca court proceedings
- 4) A timely attendance to a conference in Rwanda specifically addressing the return of refugees from the diaspora.

The 23 interview transcripts were complemented by field notes that the researcher gathered in December 2005 at Gacaca courts proceedings at Remera-Kabeza and from the conference held in Kacyiru that I attended in December 2005. The title of the conference was “The door to Rwanda is open to all”. The conference was organized by National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) on how to facilitate and encourage all Rwandese refugees in the diaspora to return home. All these field notes were incorporated as a method of data to get a holistic picture of the participants’ life experiences.

Contrary to what I anticipated the majority of participants [fully] expressed themselves when narrating their life experiences. They showed good cooperation and encouraged me to conduct more research in the area of refugees. They never refused to be tape-recorded as I had anticipated. They were eager to be tape recorded and some of them specifically requested that I switch on the tape recorder as they recounted their experiences. They

would recall the past events and they wanted to ensure that every minute of their recollections were recorded. Some of these participants were genocide survivors. They encouraged me to write down their genocide experiences that they thought most people would not imagine possible. Some of them encouraged me to look at a movie that portrays the genocide in Rwanda called *Hotel Rwanda* and I shared with them that I had seen this movie.

Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (1992) stress that qualitative research not only allows the exploration and description of the participants' views but also gives an account of the perception and opinions held by participants. Henning, Van Rensburg and Smith (2003: 12) stated that in qualitative research the researcher makes meaning from the data by seeing the bigger picture and by converting raw information into what they called "thick description". They also argued that:

A thick description gives an account of the phenomenon which is coherent and which gives more than facts and empirical content, but which also interprets the information in the light of the other empirical information in the same study as well as from the basis of a theoretical framework that locates the study (Henning, Van Rensburg and Smith, 2003: 12).

This was considered useful in this study as it allowed designing an interview guide which contained questions that constantly changed to accommodate different participants to the conceptualization of the study (Dey, 1993).

Key research questions:

- 1) What are the experiences and needs of returning refugees to Kigali, Rwanda?
- 2) What is the UNHCR's social and economic role in repatriation of returning Rwandan refugees?
- 3) What is the relationship between the Rwandan government and the UNHCR in facilitating the repatriation of returning Rwandan refugees?
- 4) Is there congruence between official policy statements and practice with regard to government and UNHCR on returning refugees to Rwanda?

Biographical Method

The incorporation of the biographical method in the interviews is particularly relevant for this study. This is a recent method of data collection in qualitative research that pays attention to the individual as a person with great wealth of experiences. According to Hatch (1975 in Kithome, 2004) the method focuses on central moments, critical incidences, fateful moments that revolves around decisions, confusions, contradictions and ironies in one's life. In other words, it enquires about what Denzin (1989) describes as "episodes"-turning points, the best and worst times of people's lives. Kithome (2004) asserts that the method is concerned with the relationship between the worlds of the individual, with his/her unique life history and that of the past, present and the future contextual worlds through which the individuals travels. The method was therefore used to explore the life experiences of returning refugees which they faced both in exile and on their return to Rwanda.

Sampling

Two non-probability sampling strategies were used in this study; snowball sampling for the primary sample of returning refugees and purposive sampling with the secondary sample of key informants.

The target population sample was returning Rwandan refugees from exile aged 20 years and above. The criteria were based on the premise that those aged 20 years and above have enough experiences about their refugee life. In addition, I selected returnees who have spent six (6) months in Kigali, Rwanda since they returned. It was assumed that such returnees would have some experience of life since they returned to Rwanda compared with the new arrivals.

Snowball sampling

Network or snowball sampling is often chosen where the target populations are hidden (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). Snowball sampling was used to identify participants in Remera and Kabeza. This method of snowball sampling was helpful to me because I identified many participants who identified their fellow returnees that were working in

garages and carpentry workshops. Before carrying out interviews I had to seek permission from the manager/supervisor of the workshop/garage to allow me entry to these work environments to carry interviews. Where permission was not granted like in Remera restaurant, I could not conduct the interviews. A drawback of snowball sampling is that only persons within one friendship network of the population may be interviewed. To reduce this possibility varied starting points were found with different returnee groups.

As I conducted more interviews it reached a stage where participants started repeating the same narratives of those that I had interviewed in Remera garage/carpentry workshops. Their views and life experiences were not far different from those that I had interviewed in Kabeza and Kacyiru areas. As theoretical saturation had been reached there was no point of carrying more interviews where the participants were giving me the same responses. Conversely, however, this method of snowball sampling can drastically reduce a big sample and the participants' views may not be a good reflection of a cross section of the large population of returnees. Nevertheless, it is useful especially in trying to reach populations that are diverse and are inaccessible.

Purposive sampling

A purposive sampling method was utilised in this study with key informants. De Vos (1998: 317) states that "a purposive study is whereby information-rich participants with depth and breadth of experience and who share commonalities are identified". I used this criterion to select four (4) key informants; two from the UNHCR and two representatives from the Ministry of Local government in charge of returnees' repatriation. These two key informants were working with NCR (National Council for Refugees). They had vast experience because they worked directly with the returning refugees to Rwanda.

Sewpaul (1995: 33) argues that "purposive research may also be referred to as judgmental sampling where the researcher exercises his/her judgment in selecting knowledge of the population". Using purposive sampling to access key informants helped me to obtain a great deal of data and to complement the data I had elicited from the

primary sample of refugees. However, I obtained a great deal of information from the government officials as they spent more time with me. The interview basically took four conservative days from Monday to Thursday. The interviews could take 1-hour and thereafter breakfast would be provided to us (the interviewer and the interviewee). There was a cordial atmosphere compared with the UNHCR where the key informants spent less time with me because they had busy assignments in the field of operation. On account of time constraints I had only two days with them rather than the three days they had promised me to conduct the interviews.

Data analysis

Mahrer (1998) stresses that there are many ways to analyse informant's talk about their experiences and the thematic analysis is one such way. From the conversations that I had with the participants, their experiences could be better understood with the use of thematic analysis. Thematic analysis focuses on identifiable themes and patterns of living and/or behaviour.

I decided to use thematic analysis as it provided for a much wider and richer, analysis and understanding of the participants' narratives. Boyatzis (1998: 160) argues that "descriptive use of thematic analysis is desirable if the methodology chosen for the study requires it...it does not preclude scoring or scaling of themes and then using this numeric representation to check the consistency of judgments...neither do they preclude using the information to portray the themes and describe the units of analysis".

Thematic method of data analysis was useful in a way of interpreting human experiences (Holloway, 1997). Of late this has been a common method used in interpretation of social reality (Denzin, 1989), especially when dealing with biographical data. It involves careful reading of the transcribed life histories, categorisation of the stories into themes and seeking patterns of meaning and experiences (Boyatzis, 1998). A key principle of thematic analysis is to stay close to the data, and to interpret it from a position of emphatic understanding. According to Geertz (1973) the purpose of interpretive analysis is to provide a thick description which he explains to mean:

A thorough description of characteristics, process, transactions and contexts that constitute the phenomenon being studied, couched in language not alien to the phenomenon, as well as an account of the researcher's role in constructing the phenomenon (cited in Terre Blanche and Kelly, 2002: 139).

Thematic analysis is primarily concerned with the meaning of a text which the researcher comes to understand through oral or written text. Taylor says that:

Interpretation, in the sense relevant to hermeneutics, is an attempt to make clear, to make sense of an object of study. This object must, therefore, be a text, or a text-analogue, which in some way is confused, incomplete, cloudy, seemingly contradictory - in one way or another, unclear. The interpretation aims to bring to light an underlying coherence or sense (Taylor, 1976: 15).

The idea of thematic analysis helps in the understanding of the text and its interpretation. This facilitates an internal coherence between method of data collection and data analysis.

Thematic data analysis has become a commonly used qualitative method for analyzing data (Aronson, 1992). Once the information is gathered, researchers are faced with the decision on how to analyze the data and thematic analysis is one which is useful in analyzing respondents' talk about their experiences (Mahrer, 1988; Spradley, 1979; Taylor and Bogdan, 1989). From the conversations that take place in interview sessions ideas emerge that can be better understood under the control of thematic analysis.

Thematic analysis focuses on identifiable themes and patterns of living and/or behaviour. The first step was to collect data. Audiotapes were collected to study the talk of in-depth interviews (Spradley, 1979). From the transcribed conversations, patterns of experiences were listed. This came from direct quotes or paraphrasing common ideas that the respondents had talked about. Families were also interviewed to get a better

understanding of returnees' experience. The entire responses were transcribed (Aronson, 1992).

The next step to a thematic analysis was to identify all data that relate to the already classified patterns. The identified patterns were then expounded on. All of the talk that fits under the specific pattern was identified and placed with the corresponding pattern. Boyatzis (1998: 160) complement that "thematic analysis allows a researcher with qualitative method and design to develop themes and a code, use a check on consistency of judgment". I immersed myself in the raw data which I kept on cross-checking to make sense out of it. My difficulty was to determine which raw data was more useful than the other for inclusion and exclusion given my little experience in using thematic analysis. It was challenging and time consuming.

The next step was to combine and code related patterns into sub-themes. Themes were defined as units derived from patterns such as conversation topics, meanings, feelings, or folk sayings and proverb (Bogdan, and Biklen, 1998). Themes are identified by "bringing together components or fragments of ideas or experiences, which often are meaningless when viewed alone" (Leininger, 1985: 60). Themes that emerged from the informants' stories were pieced together to form a comprehensive sense and to make meaning of participants' collective experiences. The "coherence of ideas rests with the analyst who has rigorously studied how different ideas or components fit together in a meaningful way when linked together" (Leininger, 1985: 60), Constat (1992) reiterates this point and states that the "interpretative approach should be considered as a distinct point of origination" (pg. 258). In gathering sub-themes to get comprehensive ideas of information from these participants, it was easy to see a pattern emerging.

Gathering of sub-themes helped me to build a valid argument for choosing the themes. This was done by referring back to the respondents' views. Out of this I gained information that allowed me to make inferences from the interview or session. Once the themes had been collected and the literature had been studied I got ready to formulate theme statements to develop a story line. Boyatzis (1998) argues that when the literature

is interwoven with the findings, the story that the interviewer constructs is one that stands with merit.

Validity and reliability

Validity and reliability are areas of primary concern in this study. Doing without them could have made the study less coherent. Sewpaul (1995: 48) argues that “the reliability of qualitative research may be questioned as there are no statistical checks and figures”. As a result, many researchers have developed their own concepts they consider to be more appropriate to establish reliable recording of data within the qualitative research paradigm. The reliability and validity concerns the accuracy and consistency of data. Reliability is defined as the extent to which the instrument yields the same results (Kirk and Miller, 1986). There is need for validity in qualitative research as with all research. Davies and Dodd (2002) argue that unlike in quantitative research, researchers in qualitative research should accept that there “is subjectivity, reflexivity, and social interaction of interviewing” (Pg. 282). Validity in this study was achieved by referring to the literature pertaining to the research topic. This facilitated coherence between methodology, method of data collection and data analysis. Responses were regularly clarified or repeated back verbatim to the participants for confirmation.

According to Sewpaul (1995), validation is a process through which the researcher maintains the value of data collection through reliable recording of data and evaluates the trustworthiness of reported observation, interpretation, and generalizations. If the overall assessment of a study’s trustworthiness were high enough to be acted upon, the findings of the study would be granted a sufficient degree of validity to invest researcher’s time and energy in, and put the reputation of the researcher (s) at a criticism of competent investigators.

Reliability refers to consistency of a measure. In this regard, the cross checking of data was ensured to maintain reliability (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). I maintained this by asking questions (probing questions) that were not far different. I did this by encouraging the participants to tell their stories and life experiences in their own words. This helped

me to elicit important responses from participants that correlated with the study. Babbie and Mouton (1998: 122) define validity as “the extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the real meaning of the concept under consideration”. In addition, in writing up this dissertation I made necessary checks to make sure that I was still in line with research objectives.

Stenbacka (2001: 551) argues that “the concept of reliability is even misleading in qualitative research. If a qualitative study is discussed with reliability as a criterion, the consequence is rather that the study is no good” (Pg. 552). On the other hand, Patton (2002) states that validity and reliability are factors which any qualitative research should be concerned with while designing a study, analysing results and judging the quality of the study. This corresponds to the question that “How can an inquirer persuade his/her audience that research findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to?” (Lincoln and Guba, 1985: 290). To answer to this question, Kirk and Miller (1986) assert that the quality of a study in each paradigm should be judged by its own paradigm’s terms. In the same vein, Clot (1992) and Seale (1999) endorse the concept reliability as consistency. The consistency of data will be achieved when the steps of the research are verified through examination of such items as raw data, data reduction products, and process notes (Seale, 1999).

To widen the spectrum of conceptualization of reliability and revealing the congruence of reliability and validity in qualitative research, Seale (1999) argues that an examination of trustworthiness is crucial. This trustworthiness of research lies at the heart of issues conventionally discussed as validity and reliability (Pg. 266). While judging qualitative work, Strauss and Corbin (1990) suggest that the “usual canons of good science ... require redefinition in order to fit the realities of qualitative research” (Pg. 552). Sewpaul (1995: 47) cited in Marshall (1983) who offered the following reflective checklist that may be used in our assessment of validity: -

- Was the researcher aware of his/her own perspective and influence?
- How did the researcher handle himself/herself?
- Did he/she challenge himself/herself and accept challenges from others?

- Was he/she open to new encounters?
- Did he/she tolerate and work on the chaos and confusion?
- Had the researcher grown personally through the experience?

Ethical considerations

The issue of ethics is very important in research. Through research, knowledge cannot be pursued at the expense of participants' dignity. When carrying out research, it is essential that the researcher be guided by ethical principles that involve respect for the rights of the research participants (Stenbacka, 2001). A similar view is expressed by (Babbie and Mouton, 2001) when they stated that the researcher should understand his/her responsibility to maintain ethical considerations.

The primary ethical concerns in this study were protection of participants' privacy and confidentiality. Privacy concerns questions about the role of informed consent. Conducting interviews with individual/s who have not consented clearly constitutes an invasion of privacy. In order to ensure the confidentiality of those who participated in this study, participants' names and identities were replaced with fictitious names for the purposes of maintaining anonymity (Blaikie, 2000). The privacy of the participants was respected and their identities were kept confidential. Some commentators like Babbie and Mutton (2001) have suggested that such issues should be balanced against the importance of the research. Others like Davies and Dodd (2002) argue that the right to privacy cannot or should not be overridden by the value of the research. Before conducting the interviews I sought consent from participants which were given to me.

Prior to conducting the research study, the research proposal was submitted to the School of Social work and Community Development for approval. Permission was also sought from the Higher Degrees Committee where I submitted my proposal and ethical clearance forms. A covering letter was given to me from my supervisor Prof: V. Sewpaul explaining the aims of the study and requesting participation in the study with full cooperation. The participants were informed about the purpose of the study and of their right to decide voluntarily whether or not to participate in the study, to refuse to give

information or to end their participation should they wish to do so. Verbal informed consent was sought from all the participants before carrying out the interviews.

Researcher's bias

The researcher's bias may have occurred in a few instances. For instance I could have relied more on the exaggerated sufferings of these returnees given the fact that I had a similar experience when I was still a refugee in Uganda. In taking my position as a researcher into consideration, I used my perspective as a source of understanding rather than a view that sets me apart from the study. However, Blaikie (2000) underscores the importance of self-reflexivity which allows researchers to communicate their experiences within a shared framework with the participants. This is a point to be reckoned with. The participants experiences may have reinforced on my feelings as well. But no matter how far removed the participants experiences may have been; no matter how profound the participants' feelings were I remained neutral. Sewpaul (1995: 46) cited in Marshall (1983) contended that "the value-free and value neutral notions of research needs to be replaced by that of conscious partiality". The issue was in understanding my consciousness not to be subjective to the participants' views rather to be objective.

It becomes difficult to report the results of research purely from the point of view of the participants as indicated by (Blaikie, 2000). Sewpaul (1995) goes ahead to stress that researchers cannot detach themselves from the subjects of the study because they too are members of a particular culture and they have their own convictions. From this point of view I found it necessary that I consider my views but this did not mean that I became subjective in conducting the research.

Limitations to the study

It is important for the researcher to acknowledge the possible limitations faced when carrying out a study. However, these potential limitations did not mean that useful information was not elicited from participants and therefore these limitations did not negate the findings of this study. Nevertheless, these limitations need to be taken into account and acknowledged.

The sample focused on both male and female refugee returnees aged 20 years and above. No young children were interviewed and therefore their views are not represented in this study. Secondly, regarding the limitation of the snowball sampling or network method that was used by locating participants at different locations meant that very isolated returnees were missed. My findings do not represent the views of all Rwandese returnees hence the study missed out on the perspectives of majority returnees. The study covered a limited geographical scope and thus, generalization of results to the entire country should be cautious. Of course, one cannot make too many generalizations based on the limited number of interviews conducted. Unlike quantitative researchers who seek casual determination, prediction, and generalisation of findings, qualitative researchers provide springboard to seek instead illumination, understanding, and extrapolation to similar situations (Hoepfl, 1997).

Most participants' were able and free to participate in the study as I had earlier stated in the previous Chapter. However, a few of the participants (3) were very suspicious of my research. Some mistook me to be an intelligence person from the government. This limited them to feel at ease during the interviews. Some participants talked with reservations; they did not want to fully express themselves. They would say "This is all what I had, and no more information from me". Most of them asked not to be named for reasons of safety and security which I had assured them. To ensure this I used disguised names to protect their identity. It is easy for Rwandese to identify themselves like a Tutsi or a Hutu. Though the government abolished the issue of ethnicity identity cards but still their physical appearances portray one as a Hutu and a Tutsi. Being a Tutsi myself, most Hutus feared me as if I was carrying out intelligence on behalf of the government to try them in Gacaca courts. However, some participants interviewed talked about their version of events of "ins and outs" [inner feelings and outside feelings] of Rwandan refugeeism, and cast themselves in as positive as light possible.

The other limitation that I faced during data collection was that given my background growing up outside Rwanda where Kinyarwanda language was rarely spoken I found it difficult and I was hard-pressed to translate Kinyarwanda into English. Some words were

not familiar to me I was challenged to find another word that would have similar meaning in English. To some degree this could have made me lose some useful information. But I tried as much as possible to makes sense of rich and useful narrations from participants. Contrary to what I had anticipated in my research proposal I found it easy for returnees to declare themselves that they were once refugees, and it was easy to separate them from the locals/stayees. The only problem was that I did not have enough research funds and this limited me from conducting an extensive study.

In conclusion, the method of data collection, the use of in-depth interviews, the sampling techniques and the method of data analysis are elucidated. The chapter also deals with the ethical concerns that were adhered throughout in the study and finally the challenges and limitations are also discussed. The following chapter five and six deals with the presentation of findings and discussions.

CHAPTER FIVE: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Introduction

The data are presented in two chapters. Chapter five deals with the primary sample of returnees and Chapter six deals with data obtained from key informants. The researcher uses the study participants' views and narrative accounts and in turn interprets these experiences and descriptions. The participants' narratives are organised into themes and sub-themes to provide understanding of their experiences. The narratives reflect that the stress, tension, economic hardships, political, cultural differences and poor health and nutrition faced by Rwandese refugees in alien countries prompted them to return to Rwanda. The respondents' narratives were voluminous and presented in no coherent fashion and I was hard-pressed to organise and re-organise their responses in a more logical manner.

Rwandese returnees' recount their life experiences of exile, genocide and dispersal

The refugee experience, in early stages, can be characterised by extreme loss and pain. The Rwandese returnees' experiences are difficult to encapsulate. All participants during the interviews had strong recollections of their lives. Each account represented a diversity of experiences, all pertinent to an understanding of survival and their agonising life. Together, their stories highlighted the complex nature of refugees' endurance in the face of extreme hardships ranging from extremely negative living conditions since their flight during genocide, journeys and their life in exile which was demoralising to them. The most effective way for the researcher to illustrate returnees' experiences was to allow them to speak for themselves. The personal recollections of those who survived the genocide indicate the awful situations they went through. Each individual's story was of value in its own right. This gives an account on how each individual managed to face adversity in alien countries. Many participants and their families that I visited over the weekends requested that the tape recorder be turned on while they recounted events they thought no-one would believe. The majority of the participants were returnees who fled

Rwanda during the genocide as new caseload returnees. I had few old caseload returnees whom I interviewed. This was because most of the old caseload returnees stay in rural places. They never had houses in Kigali. A few of these old caseload returnees are beginning to construct their houses in urban Kigali. The following table summarises the biographical data of participants.

Biographical data of participants

No	Name	Age	Sex	Country of exile	Length of time in exile (yrs)	Length of time in years Rwanda as a returnee
1	Mucho	53	M	Tanzania	3	6
2	Kalisa	48	M	DRC	2	7
3	Ayinkamiye	42	F	DRC	5	5
4	Gatsinzi	39	M	Tanzania	2	7
5	Serubuga	66	M	DRC	3	7
6	Harera	39	M	Uganda	2	8
7	Nzaramba	37	M	Tanzania	4	6
8	Ndemezo	44	M	Uganda	33	8
9	Mutagoma	51		Burundi	3	7
10	Habyarimana	47	M	Uganda	3	6
11	Hategeka	42	M	Uganda	4	6
12	Nzirasanabo	41	M	Tanzania	38	3
13	Munyaneza	43	M	Tanzania	28	7
14	Kabatsi	52	M	Uganda	43	9
15	Kalasira	48	M	DRC	5	5
16	Kayonga	38	M	DRC	3	5
17	Kanyindi	47	F	Burundi	5	4
18	Gasana	37	M	Tanzania	5	6
19	Uwimana	48	F	Burundi	3	6
20	Habineza	58	M	Uganda	50	8
21	Butera	26	M	DRC	18	8
22	Bazivamo	49	M	Congo Brazzaville	4	5
23	Kubwimana	41	M	Burundi	4	5

NB: All names have been changed to fictitious names to protect the identities of participants' and to uphold the ethic confidentiality. The above table demonstrates that the majority participants interviewed and participated in this study were males (20) with

only three (3) females. This was because I happen to have found more men that were willing to be interviewed than women and partly because women in Rwanda culturally are not supposed to talk when the head of the family is around. The three women participants were married of which two (2) were widows. The other observation is that most of these returnees ran to neighbouring African countries. None of the participants was noted to have repatriated from a European country. The average age of participants was 45 years and the range was 40 years of age. The old caseload returnees were much older in age probably because they spent most of their life in exile.

Participants' profile

This sub-section gives a brief profile of each participant who was interviewed during the study. Their profiles contain information pertaining their age, time spent in exile, country of exile and their years spent in Rwanda since they returned.

Mucyo

Mucho was a survivor of the 1994 genocide. He was married with four children. He lived in Remera a Kigali suburb. He owned a merchandise shop. He worked with his wife to earn a living. He dropped out of school at an early age because education was not a priority according to his parents. He resorted to business. He however, regretted why he left school. He spent three years in exile in Tanzania.

Kalisa

Kalisa got re-married after he lost his first wife during the genocide. Kalisa and his new wife lived in Kacyiru where they were renting a house. He had three children with the current wife and two children with his deceased wife. He struggled to feed them. Kalisa and his wife had no qualifications and they found it hard to get formal jobs. They were engaged in informal business of selling carpets, match boxes, sweets and candles. They operated their business in a veranda of their friend's motor garage in Kisementi. He spent 2 years in exile and seven years since he returned to Rwanda.

Ayinkamiye

Ayinkamiye was a widow. She lost her husband during the genocide. She never witnessed her husband's death and she never buried him but he disappeared during the war and genocide. She had five children, two girls and three boys. She found her life hard and could not afford to pay school fees for the two children who were in college. Ayinkamiye and her five children were living in Umudugudu settlement house that the government provided them with when they repatriated to Rwanda five years ago.

Gatsinzi

Gatsinzi was a local councillor in Remera. He was married to Agnes. They had six children all of them were girls. Asked why they had many children and were still producing more Gatsinzi said that he had to produce until he got a son because all their children were females. Gatsinzi also said that they wanted to produce more because most of his family members and relatives died during the genocide. Gatsinzi spent two years in exile and five years in Rwanda since he repatriated.

Serubuga

When the 100 days of slaughter came to an end on 4th July 1994 Serubuga was one of the men who survived, but unfortunately, with no house to live in, no relative to take care of him and a number of children and relatives dead. Serubuga was aged 66 years. He got remarried and had two children a boy and a girl. Serubuga is a new caseload returnee, he spent three years in exile and seven years in Rwanda since he repatriated.

Harera

He was a teacher by profession. He was a primary school teacher in Kacyiru. He was married with three children. Harera also participated in Gacaca courts as Inyangamugayo. He said was not paid to do this work but devoted himself for the betterment of his country Rwanda. He lived in Remera where he rented a house. He found it hard to pay electricity bills and water. He said the salary was too little to afford paying this bill. He was a returnee from Uganda. He lived in Kyaka refugee camp Kabarole district in Uganda.

Nzaramba

He was a Rwandan returnee from Tanzania. He was married with two wives and eight children. His wives did not stay in the same place. He had two homes one in Remera and another one in Kimironko. Nzaramba was a businessman he owned two shops; one in Remera and another one in Kimironko which were run by his two wives.

Ndemezo

Ndemezo was an old caseload returnee whose parents fled Rwanda in 1959. He was not certain about his exact age when his parents fled Rwanda. Ndemezo divorced his wife and was straying with his six children. Ndemezo said he could not re-marry because he did not want to bring another wife who will mistreat his children. He lost his job in the government restructuring process. After losing his job Ndemezo decided to start a shop that was selling second-hand cell phones that helped him manage buy food for his children. He estimated spending about thirty three years in exile in Uganda and had returned to Rwanda eight years ago.

Mutagoma

He was a graduate from Butare University. He was a qualified nurse working with the Ministry of Health. He got married at the age of 32. He had three children. He stayed in Kimihurura a Kigali suburb. His wife was a nursery school teacher. They said they do most of their domestic cores together. Mutago said he believed in gender balance and there was no need to leave most of the domestic work to be done by his wife as a slave.

Habyarimana

He was a returnee from Uganda. Habyarimana was married with five children. He was a business man conducting business in Kigali. He stayed in Nyamirambo. Habyarimana said he struggled to afford to pay school fees for his children. He spent 3 years in exile in Uganda and had returned to Rwanda 6 years ago.

Hategeka

Hategeka was another returnee from Uganda. Aged 42 years, he was a father of nine children. Hategeka's father passed away while he was still in exile. His mother single-handedly took care of Hategeka and his siblings. He grew up in a rural refugee camp of Kyadondo in Uganda before repatriating to Rwanda. After completing senior standard four in a Ugandan secondary school, he got a job in a super market as a cashier. He started paying fees for his siblings. During the time of the interviews Hategeka was working as a manager of a security company in Kigali. He spent four years in exile and had returned to Rwanda six years ago.

Nzirasanabo

Nzirasanabo was forty one years of age. He had five children and was married to a nurse who was working in the Kigali Health Institute. He spent most of his time in exile in Tanzania. Nzirasanabo worked with World Vision Rwanda. He took care of his two sisters beside his old mother. Nzirasanabo was a diploma holder in business management.

Munyaneza

Munyaneza was forty three years of age staying with his extended family in a small house in Gikondo. He took care of his parents, siblings, and his wife. Munyaneza was born from a polygamous family of twelve children and he was the first born in their family. He held most of the responsibilities like paying fees for his siblings, food, medical treatment and transport. He found life hard compared to when he was in exile where land was enough to cultivate food crops, unlike in Rwanda where land was scarce and too expensive to buy.

Kabatsi

Kabatsi was an old caseload returnee born in Rwanda but his parents fled to Uganda when he was young. He grew up in Uganda as a refugee where his father died. He was married with eight children. He stayed in Remera. Most of his children were not schooling. He said they did simple work to earn a living since Kabatsi and his wife were not working. Kabatsi and his wife entirely depended on their children's meagre earnings for survival. Kabatsi was working but his ill-health of asthma made him leave his job as a

teacher. Despite him being a school teacher in Uganda his pay was just little and would be spent on buying food for his family and no extra money to pay school fees for his children.

Kalasira

Kalasira was a father of three boys and two girls whose ages ranged from three to eighteen years of age. He was married to Laura who was a housewife. Kalasira got married when he was still in Rwanda before he fled into exile in DRC where he spent four years in exile and had returned to Rwanda five years ago. They lived in Kibumba refugee camp in DRC where life was extremely hard for him. He repatriated to Rwanda and he stayed in Kimisagala.

Kayonga

Kayonga was still a young man who was thirty eight years old. He returned from exile in DRC where he spent six years in exile. He was not yet married. He said that because of hard life in Rwanda he had no plans of getting married until he got enough money. Kayonga worked in a garage in Remera. Besides he said on weekends went to Byumba rural areas where his parents were staying.

Kanyindi

Kanyindi was a widow who lost her husband during the genocide. She had four children. Kanyindi lost her parents when the genocide was at its peak in Rwanda. Kanyindi was a single mother who found her life hard. Kanyindi was helped by the Orthodox Church which took care of her two children by paying school fees and other living expenses when they were at school.

Gasana

Gasana was another returnee from Tanzania. He was thirty seven years of age. He worked as a conductor in a bus. He said that was the only job available for him because he was not educated. He said he could not go to school because Gasana and his parents

were in exile where life was hard for them to afford paying school fees for him. Gasana spent five years in exile and returned to Rwanda six years ago.

Uwimana

Uwimana was a mother to seven children. She lost her husband during the genocide. Uwimana was a devoted Christian. She was born in Rwanda. She said the genocide atrocities left vivid memories in her mind. Uwimana's upkeep came from well-wishers and FARG [a genocide survivor's fund] which she hoped will continue to support her. She could not earn a pension because she had never been employed. Her father was a Reverend. She attended her secondary education in a seminarian school. She fled to Burundi into exile on account of genocide and war and spent three years in exile and returned to Rwanda six years ago.

Habineza

Habineza was a returnee from Uganda. He was fifty-eight years of age. Habineza had three brothers and two sisters. His father died in exile in Uganda. Habineza and his five siblings were brought up by their single mother. Although their mother was a domestic worker, she managed to take them to a good school. Habineza was a graduate and he was teaching in a secondary school. He was married to Miriam who did a simple business of cake selling at a school where her husband taught.

Butera

Butera was a young man who was twenty six years of age. He was pursuing his high school in Remera. He was born as a refugee in DRC. His father and mother were still alive. Butera said he made bricks that he used to sell to school which helped him get school fees. Besides that he rode a motor bike which he used to take passenger from one location to another to earn himself money. He was optimistic about his future despite the poverty. He, however, said that it was good that he repatriated to Rwanda. Butera looked ambitious to achieve his goal of becoming an engineer.

Bazivamo

Bazivamo, unlike most of the other returnees who took refuge in DRC, Uganda, Tanzania and Burundi, Bazivamo was the only participant who repatriated from Congo Brazzaville. He spent 44 years in exile and repatriated to Rwanda when RPF took over from the past regime. He was married with four children. He had a sewing machine which he used to sew school uniforms at home. He got a contract from schools and other companies like hotels to make uniforms for workers.

Kubwimana

Kubwimana was a returnee from Burundi. He left Rwanda on account of the genocide. Shortly after the genocide ended he had to wait for UNHCR to repatriate him. He said he would have repatriated to Rwanda immediately but he was incapacitated to repatriate because of lack of money for transportation of his family. He was married to Chantal with five children. Three of his children were in secondary school and were being sponsored by UNHCR. The other two were in primary school where they benefited from free universal primary education. He was a carpenter and he owned a workshop in Remera where he stayed.

Factors that precipitated participants leaving Rwanda

The reasons for leaving Rwanda are captured under this sub-theme.

There were basically two outstanding reasons that explain the massive flight of Rwandese into exile. Genocide and the 1959 ethnic clashes were the causes of massive flight to exile. Almost all of them (21) said they fled Rwanda on account of the genocide and war. These constituted mainly new caseload returnees. Majority of returnees fled Rwanda during 1993-94 when genocide was taking shape and when it reached its climax of bloodshed in 1994. They were helpless and defenceless and the only option was for them to flee into exile to save their lives.

Two [2] participants who were born in exile said their parent's cause of refuge was due to the 1959 ethnic clashes between the Tutsis and Hutus. These constituted the old caseload returnees. For some of them it was their first time to be in Rwanda, a country they had wished to return to in vain and their hopes of returning had become a dream.

Another reason that accounted for the participants' fleeing Rwanda was fear of persecution. Participants said they left Rwanda because they were fleeing from threats and intimidation. They had to flee because the Hutu government mistook some of them to be collaborating with the Tutsi rebels who had waged a war of forceful return to Rwanda. They said that their names had been listed by local leaders that anytime something dangerous would happen on them.

Participants' account of the genocide experiences

This sub-theme begins by providing participants' genocide experiences. In narrating their stories, participants often described how the genocide was scary and had remained their story to tell.

Mucho said he saw death at close hand losing relatives and friends during the genocide. He recollected:

Despite of me returning to Rwanda it does not take away the pain nor does it stop memories of occasional nightmare. There is a feeling of uncertainty, a feeling of doom. I was waiting for the militias to kill me as a Tutsi. We were all fearful of militias they were sending intermittent letter to us. The Interahamwes eventually rounded up an estimated 20 Tutsis who were immediately killed. I had a nervous break down. I was taken to Kigali hospital where I was in intensive care for two weeks and from there I went for a surgical operation to cut off my leg. Up to this day I have not recovered fully because I still get chest and back problems but I have no money to afford meaningful treatment I suspect I could have a broken rib.

This is a story of one of the survivors of the genocide who cheated death. It is a story of the more than one million Rwandans who tasted the 100 days of blood bath told in one heartrending tale.

Another participant Serubuga lamented about the genocide and had this to say:

At least in 1950s Hutus killed our educated sons and parents, but during genocide they were determined to wipe out a whole Tutsi people. I do not remember all the details to tell you now but sometimes when I go to sleep, I shut my eyes and I see all these things. I always prayed to God but there were sometimes I would say, God, if we have to be all the time here [exile], get us to die tomorrow. I don't want to live like this. It was a hard life.

He recalled how the Interahamwes said that a 'good Tutsi is a dead one'. Their extremism led to the massacre of many Tutsis. On his experience during genocide he continued to say:

The Hutu militia men surrounded the village a sense blind of fear fascinating everyone. My heart skipped for a moment because I definitely knew this was our time to die. I said a short prayer. We didn't know what to do or where to go. There were lots of conspiracy theories going around. Then a brigade of casual dressed stick welding Hutu men came picking able-bodied men and hiding was a sure ticket to death. All the men on our quarters were taken including my son. That was the last time I set my eyes on him. He bravely promised to come back and urged me to take good care of his wife. In the evening arrangements were made and we manoeuvred through forests and we escaped from these militias.

Serubaga's testimony is a reflection of a movie called Hotel Rwanda based on the true story of the genocide in Rwanda. Nevertheless, it is hard for many people to believe the film of the horrors of genocide. When the violence started, Rusesabagina who was a manager of hotel Des Mille Collines was able to move himself and his extended family into the Hotel. As the weeks went on, more and more Tutsis sought refuge in the hotel. Rusesabagina was himself a Hutu, but his wife was a Tutsi, as were all her relatives. Rusesabagina tried to protect Tutsis that took refuge in the hotel during the carnage calling them 'guests'. The hotel was largely protected because of the heavy presence of white Europeans. But when the Europeans were evacuated under the United Nations, hundreds of refugees in the hotel were left with only Rusesabagina standing between them and certain slaughter.

Nzaramba, a 37-year-old during the genocide, related his feelings:

It was my luck to have survived after all my friends and relatives were killed, the Militias used to say we shall make them [Tutsis] like grasshoppers; you know what happens when you trap them in a bottle and close the lid...every thing in Rwanda was dying, the extent of suffering was overwhelming.

Nzaramba fled to Tanzania. Nzaramba said that he decided to come back to Rwanda as this was his motherland country and he felt much better at home than when he was in exile. About genocide as his cause of flight he said:

Rwanda at that time, ethnicity was at its peak. Genocide hung in the air but no one could have ever imagined the scale of what was to come. At the first massacre site I found a large pile of identity cards all bearing the Tutsi destination. There were almost 1000 people being killed each day.

These findings are in conformity with the study carried by Smith (1994), as discussed in the literature review Chapter 1. In his study in both Rwanda and Bosnia, where he carried separated interviews on three different participants, he reported how the three participants in these two countries expressed similar views of holocaust as if they were living in the same country. He stressed:

“... I had interviews with three survivors of different acts of genocide from Rwanda and Bosnia. None knew anything about the other but listening to these three separate interviews I heard similar things-friends turning to enemies, parents’ dilemmas, perpetrators’ power, the fear of dying, the fear of living, the struggle to survive, and concerns about the cycle of hate” (Smith, 1994: 213-214).

Joseph Mutagoma, a survivor of the Rwandan genocide, had a difficult story to tell. He suffered the loss of relatives and friends to brutal killers and his home was destroyed. He spent weeks hiding in a bush without food and anything to drink. He described his life as follows:

I can’t find strength to go into some of the details. All I can say it was an ordeal situation but after surviving the massacres of genocide. It is not easy to be a

'gatekeeper' to the future of so many desperate people; nor is it easy to keep in mind the intricacies of genocide and political repression... gone are the terrors of sudden massacres, but re-settlement is never automatic and it can take many years to settle down; the waiting almost becomes too painful.

Mutagoma's situation reflects a tip of the iceberg of the bad experiences of many participants' who lived in refugee camps. His testimony showed how he suffered severely. On exploring his genocide experience he said:

With genocide it is something I don't need to talk about as you would see extremist Interahamwes killing innocent people because they were Tutsis. However much there is a new government and a lot have changed to better I cannot forget my children and relatives who perished during the genocide. Some people have no children. No one to help them in their old age, some of them committed suicide when they knew they were left with nothing and no one to care about them at their old age.

The participant's testimony confirms the research results of Salem (1994). His research on the impact of the genocide and war in Rwanda among the genocide survivors is summarised as: "the tale of what happened during those dark days in Rwanda must be told again and again and again, not out of a morbid desire for gruesome tales, but out of a concern that the innocent dead should continuously burn the memories of the living" (Salem, 1994: 6). His findings revealed how Rwandese suffered gravely during the genocide. He went ahead to assert that during his interviews with the survivors, some were numbed and could not speak, others just cried. His findings revealed that such behaviours were as a result of 'flashbacks', haunting pictures of the genocide and traumatised by the memories.

Another participant Habyarimana echoed the same frustrations. His testimony was not far different from other participants who fled Rwanda because of the genocide and Tutsi massacres. Habyarimana was a returnee from Uganda who had been violently attacked.

He fled with his sister who became ill and died during their flight. He said “don’t make me recall the past. It reminds me of my people who perished during the genocide and takes me back to bad memories that I am trying to forget”. Habyarimana explained that what happened during the genocide was scary, and that it was hard to get them out of his memories. He had this to say:

I and my daughter were visiting our uncle when fighting broke out. Militias broke his house, waving guns. [*His voice trailed off as he searches for the strength to continue*] I ran outside and hid but a soldier came and found my daughter then he raped her and then another one came and he did the same. I was really scared. After they left I couldn’t find my uncle... I didn’t think things would ever get better. I thought the war would always find me. But I feel safer now that I am back to Rwanda. I am coping with new life after the government giving some assistance. I don’t feel so helpless anymore. Things are getting better.

Habyarimana said the government aids him with some money. He had set up a business and he was trying to live on his own. He said he was experiencing money crisis and he was often hard-pressed in difficult situations without clear ways of how to boost his business. He tried to redefine his life situation and adopt strategies for dealing with this crisis; he began to discover that his prior life experiences have not adequately prepared him for a life in his homeland country Rwanda.

Kayonga had more than his share of tragedy. He had four children. Two of them died. They were killed by Interahamwe militias. He said that they started their night commuting to avoid Interahamwes see them escape. In the words of Kayonga:

I didn’t bury them; I left them where they had been killed. The situation was really bad. Only two of them are left. The genocide and war affected us in many ways. I lost my children, so I don’t get the help I had before. I am weak and I can’t work for myself any more. I am seeing a lot of things that I never seen before. I prefer to die than to see any more of this life.

In his sobering words, Kayonga seemed very worried of his uncertain future. He was old and he needed help which he expected from his children whom he lost during the genocide. He said he lived by the mercy of God.

Another participant Kubwimana fled Rwanda in 1994 because of the genocide and the worst part of the killing was when they killed his brother in broad day-light before him and his father. He said:

After my father witnessing his son being killed he laid unconscious on the floor and up to now he says he is mentally ill. The Militias went on a frenzy burning buildings that belonged to Tutsis and taking the iron sheets off the top of the buildings in case they did not have paraffin and match box to put them on fire. Rape was a way of life for the militias. We finally left in such situation that we did not take any of our belongings.

In sum, the moving individual tales and the participants' collective memory of horror, losses, death, rape and despair borne out of the genocide experiences served as a vivid backdrop for the very personal stories of genocide, flight, perseverance, disappointment and triumph.

Participants' physical hardships of the journey

Mucyo cited traumas of the journey to the asylum country [Tanzania] and subsequently to the Mtabila refugee camp and described it in detail:

We spent two weeks on the journey to cross to Tanzania. The whole journey was very dangerous as we thought we would meet the militias on the way. We had to flee as it was the only way to save our life. To add salt to the injury, we spent two days on the border without food. Most of our young children died of cold, hunger and cholera.

It was a long and harrowing journey with little food. Many of them died. And yet some managed to cross to Tanzania and made their way to the refugee camps, those who survived this traumatic ordeal found their way to refugee camps.

On their way to exile Kalasira said that none of them were informed of their destination beforehand or told how long they might expect to be on the journey. He remembered his life in exile which he said was full of hunger, disease, dirt and humiliation. He described his journey as a terrible experience where most of the victims of the long walk to exile were the weak elderly, but little children also died during these lengthy journeys.

Memories of the journey to the exile remain strongly etched in the mind of Kalasira.

Though he had vague recollections of his life in exile he said:

I can't forget the journey full of hunger, thirst, endless journey, cold and impenetrable forests we used to walk and hide in. The conditions of travel were uniformly abysmal [terrible] made worse by the length of time.

Gasana, another participant also explored his stressful journey to exile as:

I started my refugee life in a bush, we had no home, we slept under trees as our shelter, rains could rain on us, we slept on floor and the beddings we had were our clothes we were wearing. It was the hardest life I experienced in my life. As you know of any unplanned journey, it does not give you time to prepare. We just ran from our homes without anything but trying to save our lives from people who were looking for me. As one would run to save his life you would find dead bodies laying and blood oozing. This scared me more I could not expect to reach in an alien land for protection. When I reached Uganda UNHCR put us in a refugee camp where I found other refugees. Life was of gambling. Things were so difficult; it was a question of survival. You survived by hook or by crook. Some refugees were able to cope, some not, it was an ordeal situation to face.

It seems from various narratives most returnees faced almost the same life difficulties. Some participants explained the horrors they faced while crossing to Tanzania watching dead bodies flowing in river Kagera. Those who were running to exile were being trapped along borders or trapped in desolate no-man's lands. They were hungry, desperate and confused. Reaching Tanzania Rwandan refugees were harassed for using their scarce resources at times of high unemployment. This subjected them to xenophobic politicians and other hostile Tanzanian nationals.

Kayonga recalls his journey to DRC that left him ill with no medication. He talked about how a few blocks away from St. Famile church where they were hiding from militias 50 starving people were trapped. Every night Tutsis were mercilessly killed by the infamous Interahamwe militia. He said:

We had done no harm to them. Many of us could not be airlifted by UN missions because we did not have proper documents like visas to enter in foreign countries. Those of us who never had passports walked to DRC to seek refuge. This is the experience that I can never forget in my entire life.

The refugee status, journey and occupation illuminates the long, sad responses that I analysed from most participants. I also identified returnees' frustration in their responses. Any person leaving his or her home culture is likely to experience something similar to moments of grief when they attempt to live in a totally new environment that they are not used in a hostile alien population. Perhaps most striking of all, participants had lengthy stories to tell of their shifting poor and desolate lives.

In summary, the findings reveal that participants faced many problems on their journey to exile. Some participants died on the way and others miraculously reached into exile after trekking for so long. Other participants underwent severe maltreatment of host countries especially at the border which had continued to be etched in their minds.

Participants' experiences of life in exile

Nzirasano explained at length his life in exile [Tanzania]. He said that in refugee camps they were gravely affected in abominable living conditions defined by staggering levels of diseases, death, humiliation and despair, appalling sanitation and hygiene, and massive overcrowding and malnutrition. He recounted:

The refugee camps were over-congested. A family of 6-8 persons had to crowd themselves, sardine-like, into a tiny hut of 4.5 square metres. Contrary to traditional culture, three generations of a family-parents, children and grand parents were all forced to share the same living space, with loss of privacy and dignity. There was life of darkness, deprived of all hope; there was severe trauma and depression. In the face of relentless cultural and personal humiliations and abuse, suicide had risen to unprecedented levels. Suicide was highest among old people who felt despair and their inability to provide for their children or save them from starvation, and death from preventable diseases.

As he talks, he closes his eyes momentarily, as if in prayer. His voice quivers. Nzirasano appears on the surface at times, to forget the genocide but inside, he is an emotional wreck traumatised by the genocide. Nzirasano and his family were always enveloped by a deep sadness because of losing relatives. He has been unable to expunge the exigencies of life in exile and genocide from his memory. Confronted with the bad reputation of refugee life he decided to repatriate to Rwanda to regain his lost identity.

Rwanda is a society renowned for its rich culture, value systems and family structure that he had lost during his life in exile.

Another participant Harera narrated his life in exile as:

It was bad being a refugee where one is ever marginalised and looked down because of being a refugee. When you are a refugee your life is never complete. There is always part of your life that is missing and that is home. It is great I am no longer called a Rwandan refugee but a Rwandan citizen (*He recounts with a bright smile.*) I am an asset to my country and I am proud with living in Rwanda.

Harera said when he returned to Rwanda he started from zero because everything had been destroyed by the militias because he was a Tutsi. He said that life was not easy in Rwanda but he had to go on. At the age of 42, Harera considered his life as bright and considered the changes in his life from refugee to Rwandan national a miracle. He continued to narrate his awful life:

I have no relative around me and I have tried to trace a distant maternal uncle but it seems he is dead too because everywhere I go they say they have spent years without seeing him.

From Uganda, he chose to return to Rwanda, safe at last from physical danger and hunger. He returned to Rwanda with hope and was very happy to return to Rwanda a country he referred to as a land of milk and honey.

Kalasira said that loneliness, hunger and isolation were serious problems he faced at the time of his life in exile. He had this to say:

I cannot express what it feels like a refugee. My life as refugee was not easy; there were times that I was awful confused. It is the saddest moment in my life. I would suffer from hunger and spend two days without food. Life in the camps was totally unsustainable. I believe my experiences are not unique and I am part of a collective of other returnees who lived in alien countries. We almost went through the same horrible situation. It is not easy to understand one's inner feelings and experiences but I can say we all faced severe hardships.

Kalasira's experiences are full of a challenging, agonising and life changing experiences that provide a glimpse of his hardships in exile. Desperate after one year of grappling

with such difficulties Kalasira called the UNHCR from DRC for help. He was given attestation and medical bill and some subsistence allowance. He became more optimistic about his life but his allowance was insufficient and after being re-integrated in an alien country UNHCR ended its disbursement to him.

Upon fleeing Rwanda Mutagoma was forced to join the Rwandese Patriotic Army [RPA] because he believed 'old soldiers never die, they fade'. Mutagoma, a retired former soldier was working with the Ministry of Health and he had a kiosk business in Kimihurura. He joined a group of RPA in a four-year guerrilla war to oust a regime that had denied them the right to return to their home country. He loved to live in a country where he belonged not as a refugee and in a refugee camp. In 1993 left his Rwandan home scattered, and lost everything. He recollected:

There remained one solid hope: The RPA advancing to make us return to our homeland Rwanda and to save the country from bad leadership full of divisionism and ethnicity.

Another participant Gasana had this to say:

At last we went to a refugee camp, the huts in the refugee camps that we were living in were overrun with mice, bedbugs, cockroaches, bats, lizards, red ants and mosquitoes. The one-inch mattress that we shared left my back aching terribly. The hut of disgusting vermin [pests] especially bedbugs, mice, spiders and mosquitoes which I and my family lived in was devastating. Children excreted virtually everywhere.

Kabatsi's experience was not very different from others. He recounted:

It was not easy because I had to dig for Ugandans in exchange of food. I and my children had to run away from camps as there were many contagious diseases and people were dying almost every day. We were aimless, uncertain of our future in the new environment; constantly searching for something to feed on... it was stressful living in exile. Our young daughters and wives were raped and sexually abused by either militias or people with evil mind in alien land. We struggled to survive. I feel so sad of what happened to us when we were still in exile but there is nothing to change. Thank God that I can see my self and my family back in Rwanda.

Kabatsi's situation is not an isolated one, reflecting the problems that many returnees faced in exile upon leaving Rwanda. Many participants indicated that young girls and women in camps in alien lands were either sexually assaulted or had turned to prostitution in the absence of other economic outlets that could bring them some income. Women and girls were prime targets of rape, sexual assault and sexual exploitation in and around most of the 'protected' camps for refugees. The impact of violence and sexual abuse had been identified in the literature review Chapter 2. These findings concur with the study carried by Save the Children (2006) in Liberia. In a qualitative study using in-depth interviews based on narratives of people in various communities, the study revealed that a total of 158 children and 167 women from camps and four returnee communities had been sexually abused. Many Liberian women became victims of sexual abuse and were subjected to torture. The study pointed out that it had become such a common dilemma to see many victims [women and girls] of war trapped and abused sexually or resort to commercial sex for their survival. This was evident among Rwandese refugees in refugee camps as discussed by in Chapter 2 of this study.

Hategeka said that his years in exile and his involvement with refugees was an integral part of who he was. Asked on his life experiences in exile he said:

Those harsh years in exile have been probably the most meaningful years of my life. Life in exile was stressful in that anybody who has not been forced to live outside his/her country will not understand especially the emotional stress that is found in living without a base. You know, when you are in your country you travel freely and you know you are coming back home. If you don't have that understanding within you have somewhere you call home, that by itself is extremely stressful. The fact that you have no family, no friends to whom you have been used to, you are removed from your environment drastically and indefinitely, you don't know when you can reconnect with your relatives I think this is a unique stress which nobody would relate to unless someone has experienced that kind of situation. It was also stressful in that you live on a very tight budget, you don't know how you will meet all the requirements. There were even worse moments when I hated myself why I was born to suffer and seen my children die of hunger.

Nzirasanabo's entire life was lived as a refugee in Tanzania. He said he was born in Tanzania and he did not remember when his parents left Rwanda as both of his parents died. When prompted to talk about his refugee experiences in Tanzania he remarked:

Imagine being born as a refugee in a refugee camp, growing up in the camp, going to school in the camp. If you were lucky enough to live in a camp with a school and seemingly not having a future outside the camp. I did not know any other life; our generation was growing without hopes and expectations for the future or whether one time I would be back in Rwanda.

Munyaneza expressed his experience after leaving Rwanda to Tanzania with much disappointment. He said:

Life in exile is the worst experience you would never wish your friend to have. I was in Tanzania since birth until at the age of 33 I repatriated to Rwanda. When still in Tanzania the local leaders would come and shift us from one location to another. If you had planted your crops, you would not be sure of harvesting them. If the land was fertile, then it meant that as refugees you had to be shifted to poor and infertile land. We had no right to refuse or to protest against this. Some natives would even bring their animals like cows and goats to eat up our crops. When we reported such cases to local leaders there would be no follow up, no punishment to the offenders. The following day the locals would come and tell you that if you don't leave this land we shall continue to bring our animals and eat your crops. This is not your land, it is Tanzania land and you are a Rwandan refugees you don't own land legally here. Go back to your country Rwanda were the words of the day. We were defenseless and helpless and we did not exercise our rights.

Munyaneza told me that they had many gardens in the camp. The gardens consisted of food crops such as maize, sorghum, sweet potatoes and beans which, he said did not imply sufficient food for them. He informed me that most of the refugees sold off the food crops they grew to the nationals and they used the money from the sales to buy items.

Kabatsi recounted his life in exile in Uganda. He said his parents fled Rwanda when he was a young baby. He specified that they fled Rwanda for reasons of ethnic conflicts in 1959. He said:

As refugees it was a horrible situation and sad experience. The worst of our time came during Obote's regime when the government of Obote started cracking Rwandan refugees. I recall this very well, the soldiers came to our home at 3:00pm... it was sad that our houses were put on fire. We lost a lot. We were going back to the same experience we had fled from Rwanda. Imagine being a refugee and the little property you got from scratch are burnt. The following day we shifted the place. We lived like nomads. Living conditions in exile were extremely difficult and our survival came at the price of total dependence on UNHCR and begging.

This testimony concurs with the findings of a study conducted by (Harrell-Bond, (1986); Clay, 1984) in Uganda where Rwandese refugees were living in Kyaka 1 and 11 refugee camps as discussed in Chapter 1. Their findings revealed how the Rwandese refugees in Uganda were harassed, intimidated and forced to flee the country contrary to the international law regarding the rights of refugees.

Crossing cultures

Kalasira narrated that his life in exile was more like "half death". In DRC where he lived in exile life became "darker". He lived with his family of five. All of them did not go to school because he could not afford school fees. "How could I afford school fees even when feeding them was a big challenge to me"? He recounted his happy life before exile; he said he owned a car and a residential house. He fled, leaving his comfortable life and started living under trees and thereafter in refugee camps where there was nothing like privacy and hygiene. He had this to say:

Camps became like a human zoo where refugees were caged in. Life away from home will never be a bed of roses. We mixed up with other refugees from other countries with diverse cultures. There was nothing like maintaining your culture under such life hardships. There were also constant attacks and abductions from DRC rebels (ex-FAR) they wanted to kill us again because they knew most of the refugees in that camp were Rwandan Tutsis.

The most captivating collection of Ndemezo's life experience in exile was operating from varying cultural milieu. He said:

We were mixed up with other refugees and all of them had cultural differences. Other refugees from Sudan would eat snakes and wild animals. To me this was

scary and bizarre, I had never seen people eating such and from our cultural traits it is forbidden to eat a snake.

The findings are in accordance with results of a study by Cimande-Inodep-Mink (1986). As indicated in the literature review Chapter 2, his research on Rwandese refugees in Uganda, are in conformity with the views of the findings in this study. In this light Cimande-Inodep-Mink (1986) poignantly stated that there was a problem of cultural differences between the Rwandese refugees who sought refuge in Uganda. It was hard for these Rwandese refugees to integrate in Uganda. In the event, many Rwandese refugees who took long to repatriate to Rwanda lost their culture, customs and norms. They lost their identity and changed their names due to xenophobia.

Participants' psychosocial problems

Ndemezo stressed that the only way to forget problems and cope with life was to he resort to drinking alcohol.

Alcohol makes you drunk; forget problems and you would get sleep after spending many sleepless nights thinking about life for tomorrow and what your family will feed on. The level of destitution was very grave as some people had fled from countries as far away as Eritrea and Sudan and came to Burundi. Some women were raped; others left with their children but some children died of diseases along the way. We walked through marshes, feet would be swollen and we would sometimes eat insects along the way to survive. The level of destitution was overwhelming.

According to Kalasira, being a refugee meant loss of identity in a strange land. People are isolated, different and often impoverished. This created great suffering for refugees. He noted that they were segregated from the host population. This gives a clear signal that most of the refugees' life experiences are appalling. Their rights are sadly violated; they have limited status, and are being controlled by force and aggression.

Another female participant, Kanyindi, during the interview narrated her personal life filled with heartbreaking stories. She described how before going into exile, she witnessed the political turmoil that nearly tore Rwanda apart. Disenchanted with the

political turmoil and the subsequent genocide in Rwanda, many people decided to escape. She described:

Luckily for me I was picked up by the UNHCR staff and they took care of me, I thought God had just answered my prayers. Little did I know that was going to be the beginning of my real bad memories in exile. [*Sadly Kanyindi left her old parents that could not run nor could they escape or manage the long walk to exile*] I left my parents to be protected by God but bad enough they hide in church where they were found and killed.

When Kanyindi returned to Rwanda her house reminded her of her parents that perished during the political turmoil and genocide. She said that “homeland is forever lost” because she did not find life comfortable in that home where she used to sit with her relatives and parents. Now there were none. Kanyindi, a mother of four, faced a lot of problems during exile because she was a lactating mother. She said that she rarely breast-fed her baby because her breast milk was inconsistent. Her diet of maize meals and beans was inappropriate for a lactating mother. Kanyindi said she used to get 13-14 scoops of maize flour. However, later she only got 6-7 scoops of maize flour. The inconsistency in food supply made it impossible for her to balance her diet.

Gasana said they suffered from contagious diseases during their life in exile. The most common and rampant diseases they faced in refugee camps were dysentery, diarrhoea and malnutrition especially among young children and the old aged people. Gasana described the situation in refugee camps after fleeing from Hutu militias as:

Fleeing from war and going to camps was like taking a bungee dive from the proverbial frying pan to the fire because the dispensary in the camps didn't have even the basic drugs. The dispensary had a bad smell coming from people with terrible wounds. The nurses neglected us. It is because of their negligence that my son's limb was amputated. Every time you walked into the camp it smelt unhealthy. Sanitation conditions were simply unbearable but we had no alternative, the host country [Tanzania] restricted us to remain in camps and our mobility was restricted.

This may sound like a script from a horror movie, but it is the real life story Gasana went through. He also stressed how families of eight to ten people lived in huts just a few centimetres from each other. This brought outbreak of diseases like cholera, measles, dysentery and other contagious diseases. In addition, he stressed that there was poor food, overpopulation in the camps, a harsh environment, bad quality water and an underdeveloped health system. He further said that the host country would set up health centres but the problem faced was lack of doctors in the camps compared to the patient load. Gasana also recounted:

Regrettably, some medical officers employed by the UNHCR were corrupt, they wanted us to pay and we did not have money to afford buying the medical drugs. They would even sell them to nationals or take it to their private clinics. We could not report this to UNHCR and government officials because we feared being ridiculed by the medical staff. Even we feared that doctors would abscond from treating us, so we decided to keep quiet.

Uwimana believed in God amidst the Rwandan Holocaust. She grew up in Rwanda, had her peaceful world ripped apart in 1994 as Rwanda descended into the bloody genocide in which other members of her family were brutally murdered. It was during those endless hours of unspeakable terror that she had to flee Rwanda into exile. Uwimana, a devoted Christian, directed me to read some quotation in the bible Leviticus 19:33-34 says:

Do not exploit the foreigners (strangers) who live in your land. They should be treated like everyone else, and you must love them as you love yourself. Remember that we were once foreigners in the land of Egypt. I, the Lord, am your God.

This was a command given to Israel to observe in all the days of their existence as a requirement from God and because they had also experienced the pain of living in a foreign land which harassed and oppressed them. God is the defender of the stranger and God judges families, communities and nations by the way they treat the strangers in their midst. Strangers are often subjected to weird and demeaning treatment simply because

they are not at par with the people that came before them. This behaviour reveals the evil in our hearts. On her life in exile she said:

Life in alien country is characterized by anxiety, fear, frustration, and emotional disturbances and often refugees' regress to a more infantile state. You lose your willpower and life becomes an apathetic one. You lose structure, the ability to coordinate, predict and expect, and your basic feelings of competence.

Despite the genocidal horrors that led to exile, after returning to Rwanda she demonstrated courage, perseverance and self-esteem even in the face of a challenging life in Rwanda.

Habineza was a returnee from Uganda. He recollected his life in exile:

We tried to assimilate ourselves where the Ugandan natives married our sisters and daughters in order to survive. It was not our will that our daughters got married to some cultures that looked bizarre to us but we had no choice. It was an unfortunate experience.

He explained that in some cases if one's daughter was married to a rich native Ugandan then the family would be assured of protection and sometimes relatives would get jobs and begin work for pay. They would get identity cards as Ugandans. That is how most Rwandese refugees in Uganda lost their identity. They would camouflage as Ugandans and denounce their identity as refugees. He said that it was the leadership of president Museveni that ushered in a new constitution that recognised Banyarwanda as nationals.

However, it does not dismiss the assumption that Rwandans with Ugandan nationality may be null and void. It appears that the status of some of the naturalized Rwandan refugees in Uganda is not secure as most participants said that there are always threats to those Rwandans who are still in Uganda that have not yet repatriated. Important to note is that there are some Rwandan refugees that are not constitutionally recognised or naturalised. Some of these are new caseload refugees that fled from Rwanda to Uganda during the 1990s. They live in camps and are recognised by both the Ugandan government and the UNHCR as refugees.

Habineza also claimed that what made exile precarious was the state of being away from one's motherland. Habineza went on to elaborate that:

An exile is not just someone who lost his home; it is someone who cannot find another and who cannot think of another. He impressionistically explores the way in which living in an alien country can vividly reincarnate (bring back) the memories of your family members and friends. It is a shadow experience. Life was fascinating, perceptive and insightful.

He recalled how he used to be asked of his nationality and it would be a dilemma. He was confused whether to put a Ugandan or a Rwandese. He said "it was something that used to eat my mind all the time where one would lose his nationality. Even more potentially stressful is homesickness". Refugees suddenly find themselves virtual islands in a strange and sometimes hostile environment. Returnees expressed that the nostalgia, depression, anxiety, guilt, anger and frustration were so severe during their life in exile that many refugees were preoccupied with the idea of going home even though they feared the consequences.

Another participant (Kubwimna) from Burundi described himself as an "integrationist" asserting that exile life can only be redeemed by accepting and ignoring all insults and abuses from the natives. He observed that it was the youth who adapted quite well but it was more difficult for the older people. He stressed that:

It was difficult to be away from one's country of origin, struggling with a new language, culture and environment. The only option was to make friends, assimilate and reintegrate in the host society.

However, he emphasised that the question of reintegration was more complex and challenging than [usually] people think. Cultures may differ vastly from each other and natives [always] did not want to associate with foreigners. He stressed that they forgot that one time they could as well be in exile. He said:

No one woke up and decided to be a refugee but severe circumstances dictate beyond one's control and one finds him/her self in exile.

He postulated the way in which life can magnify memorise of the past. The result, he suggested, was that exiles distort the vision of the past; which forever impedes the ability to deal with the present. Kubwimana recounted that:

I escaped to exile after losing my relatives. On returning to Rwanda, other people also returned to their areas but all of us had something in common; we were dirty on the outside and our hearts were bleeding. The first day we met, we shared problems and the day ended in tears. Kubwimana recalled.

He went on to say that:

Life in camps was horrible. People were not living, were next to dead. Life in camps was of abject poverty. Food was short, and many infants suffered from malnutrition. Water was scarce since camps often did not have enough boreholes. There was little access to health. In some camps there were schools, but not enough teachers.

Most participants [20] testified that life in the camps had a disastrous effect. Signs of social breakdown included high levels of promiscuity, substance abuse and increased number of child mothers. They said as refugees stayed longer in the camps their dignity was gradually eroded. Young girls had to look for their survival from native locals by accepting early marriages or being seduced into sex.

Bazivamo told me that it was a perilous journey to reach Congo Brazzaville. When Bazivamo and his family they reached Brazzaville refugee camps finding food to feed the family was a burden on his mind from dawn until sunset:

Often the only option was to eat one meal a day and go to bed hungry. Besides all these odds everything in the alien country was very strange especially the culture and food. For me, it was the end of the world. The food distributions were erratic and there was no real system. We took the little that was available but the majority of the food went to the camp leaders. Besides the miserable life, assistance from UNHCR was not forthcoming. Malnutrition was rampant. Malnutrition was further compounded by the total lack of health services, there was one toilet for very many refugees in the camp, and health interventions were limited. The mortality rate was even alarming among children under five years of age.

Bazivamo and his family sold firewood and survived on irregular food distributions from humanitarian agencies.

It is difficult to wipe the image of Jane Ayinkamiye's face. One thing is certain; she has suffered untold horrors during Rwanda's recent traumatic history. Deep gashes across her nose bid physical testimony to a machete attack in Kibeho massacres. Jane, her husband, and their children fled Rwanda to DRC in 1993 along with others due to ethnic Rwandan Tutsis fearing reprisals for the genocide of ethnic Hutu militias. Jane chose to return to Rwanda because her life in exile was not good. She felt more secure at home [Rwanda] now that peace had prevailed in the country. On her life experiences in exile she said, "*In the process of fleeing we survived on wild fruits and slept on ground*". While hiding in the forest Jane was separated from her two eldest children. "*I can't say that my children are dead though I am not optimistic that they are still alive*". Jane was pregnant with her fourth child when her husband also disappeared. Jane whose Kinyarwanda name Ayinkamiye means "the cow gives milk", had a house in Gisenyi Prefecture before the war in Rwanda. After being transported by UNHCR truck back to her home district of origin, she found her house uninhabitable. She narrated:

That prospect is somehow better than life in exile. The way we lived in exile was not normal. The conditions were so bad. In the camps the deficiency of food like one loaf of bread per person each day was not enough for us who were used to having our normal food calories back home before we were displaced by war. Lack of adequate sanitation and no work were the main themes. I am happy I decided to come back. My wish is to begin a new life and to take care of my children.

The narration of this returnee, describing her life experiences in exile and the journey from her native country to the country of asylum, was accompanied by emotion, fast speech and hand gestures used to emphasize her sufferings in exile.

Another participant, Augustine Gatsinzi was councillor of Mutu sector from 1989 to May 1992. He said that he was prompted to come back to Rwanda because the government of Rwanda compelled them [Rwandese refugees] to repatriate. With the assistance of UNHCR he decided to repatriate.

He recounted:

I repatriated on August 26, 1996. I arrived home, but on October 2 I was put in jail for one year and seven months. During that time, the authorities, both local leaders and a magistrate, kept looking into my case. They made investigations in Gacaca courts and found out that I was in jail due to hatred and I had not killed or robbed anybody. I was released on April 10, 1998. I came back home and found everything all right. My wife and children were there. The relatives I had left in Burundi had also reached my home and they resumed their normal life. Now I farm and raise animals. We have enough crops and my family is fine.

Gatsinzi showed great courage in reliving the grief of losing loved ones during the genocide. The main difficulties he faced in exile were being unable to express himself and not being accepted in an alien country. He said that most Tanzanian nationals were hostile to them [Rwandese refugees] fearing that they would bring the same legacy of ethnic conflicts to their country. Tanzanian nationals believed that Rwandan refugees were bringing misfortunes to Tanzania. In his sobering words Gatsinzi he said:

I felt naked, stripped of my identity; my ego felt small ... I felt desperate. Later, on learning Tanzanian local languages, slowly the construction of my new identity began and I could communicate with Tanzanians easily in the local languages.

At the age of 66, Serubuga found it very painful, and at times very confused, to recount his experience of genocide and life in exile. Asked of his life in exile (DRC) he had this to say:

Frankly, it is not entirely imprecise to describe what I saw as a slow extinction facing the Tutsis... I encountered unique and heart-stopping suffering ...shocking cruelty and death stalking a people by the minute, by the hour, by the day, for the last two decades.

On his life in exile he said nobody was there to care for them. He said that some essentials like sugar were a luxury and they could very seldom get any clothing. He said that it was already a starvation diet but not to the point of death. It was scary. His

testimony demonstrates that their life in exile was agonizing, full of isolation, discrimination and hunger. H said:

We live like that. It is God who kept us alive. Like birds that fly in the air. We yelled at the UNHCR authorities to help us...they decided to give us two kilos of beans. Imagine two kilos of beans for a family of seven! It was not enough for even two people. We fed on rice and some tinned beans.

Serubuga said that his poor life in exile prompted him to return to Rwanda.

To recapitulate the stress and traumas inflicted on these returnees during their flight and in exile, range from loss of status, identity confusion, language difficulties, poverty, concern for separated or lost family members, guilt, isolation and host hostility. Countless other factors add to the pressures on the refugees in a strange land. Most participants expressed that the longer refugees took to adjust to host country's societies the more traumas they experienced and more they remembered and idealized their homeland country.

The returnees' motivations for returning to Rwanda

Rwanda, is a country that has recently emerged from the agony of genocide and war both of which brought forth untold suffering and the destruction of human lives and property to the majority of Rwandese. Against this background the GoR has set up policies and reform mechanisms to make all its exiled population return to Rwanda. The challenge is to determine the requisite resources to achieve such unprecedented targets.

Participants said that once they had left their homeland they became stateless, remained homeless; they had been deprived of their rights, they became [*right less*]. However, it soon became apparent that the majority of them wanted to return to Rwanda, a country that some of them [those that were born in exile] had never stepped in before. When one participant was asked *how long he lived in exile*, he said "my entire life". Some gave a specific number of years while others did not know when they left Rwanda. Neither did they know how many years they had spent in exile. This was more especially with old caseload returnees some of whom were illiterate and did not have a clear time-line of

their stay in alien countries. Most of the participants interviewed said they felt joyous to return to their mother country. It was a total sense of relief and rejoicing after they had spent many years in exile. These returnees had stayed in different refugee countries but their life experiences, to some extent, were similar especially those that stayed in the same refugee country. I found that this joyful moments expressed by Rwandese returnees confirm to the findings by (Kibreab, 20002) in a study on Eritrean returnees'. The results of this study asserted that majority (69%) of Eritrean returnees' were happy to have repatriated to Eritrea and 20% not happy as elucidated in Chapter 2.

Kanyindi said one of the reasons that made her repatriate was the insults from nationals where she had taken abode in Burundi. She said:

There is nothing good like being at home, despite of all other setbacks like poverty but you have peace of mind.

She further said that being a refugee was more like being a slave. One has no choice and one's rights are not respected at all despite the UNHCR efforts to protect. In Kanyindi's words: - "One's ego is always cheapened", as she tried to unravel her life in exile, she reflected that she was the only person in her family who survived from the genocide. She adopted orphans to live with and get comfort from to forget the memories of her relatives who perished during the war. Its important to note that most returnees' interviewed came from Uganda, DRC, Burundi and Tanzania and majority of them were new caseloads.

Mucho said he was prompted to return to his homeland because Rwanda was peaceful and that they heard about developments in the country that prompted them to return to Rwanda. He said that "*there were rumours when we were still in exile that the government is imprisoning returnees but I have found out that it is not true*". However, he never ruled it out completely. He said the government puts someone in jail after being proven guilty of masterminding the massacres and genocide. He said he would never go back to that "hellhole". He remembered the excitement and nervous departures from exile in Tanzania. By and large, responses indicated that the government's campaign to promote reconciliation and peace building has really become ingrained within the

returnee population. Nearly all the returnees interviewed expressed their desire and willingness to contribute positively to reconstruction, reconciliation and peace.

It is important to note that those who returned to Rwanda but had fled the country in 1959 are referred as '59ers'. These are the first caseload refugees who fled waves of ethnic violence in Rwanda at the beginning of 1959. One participant of this era said: "I am happy to be back in Rwanda. I am happy that I am no longer called a refugee".

Identity and belonging

Bazivamo said they lived their life in exile in Congo Brazzaville. He said that he knew that there was a country called Rwanda where his parents came from. To him Rwanda sounded like U.S.A. He had never stepped in Rwanda before and when the opportunity for him to go to Rwanda arose he took it. He was prompted to return to Rwanda because Congo Brazzaville nationals used to belittle him as a refugee. He was discriminated and humiliated, and was regarded as a self settled refugee who came to take their wealth. He vividly described living under harsh conditions in a country that did not belong to him. When the RPF liberated the country he had a chance to return to Rwanda. He said that it was good that the RPF government encouraged the return of all Rwandese living in the diaspora. He said his parents who returned to Rwanda were excited and were very happy about it.

A similar experience was reported by another returnee from Uganda [Habyarimna]. He said that the nasty thing that perturbed them as refugees was the humiliation and vindictiveness by Ugandan nationals. He noted that years ago, most Rwandans felt ashamed of proclaiming Rwandan citizenship but hastened to add that the trend had significantly changed. "*We are no longer afraid or ashamed to speak of Rwanda as a great nation*". He emphasized that they had to change their names to hide their national identity not to be failed in national examinations. It was very clear that Ugandan nationals could tell the names of Rwandese refugees when marking examination scripts. So they had to look for strategies of changing their Rwandan names to Ugandan names in order to pass exams and get admission to schools and colleges. "*There is nothing more frustrating*

and humiliating like being a refugee in an alien country. You are put under provocation” he said. He decided to return to Rwanda where he would express his full rights as a national and be respected.

Mutagoma expressed similar refugee discrimination in education. In Burundi, Rwandese refugee students had obtain 70% of the marks to be promoted to another class, while the Burundian nationals had to obtain 50% to be promoted to another level of class. These kinds of dissatisfaction prompted them to return to Rwanda.

Habineza described life in exile in vivid terms. He said however much the Ugandan constitution accorded them nationality and recognised them as Ugandan nationals; there were still problems in civil service and in the military. He maintained that in the army Rwandese refugees could not be promoted for their distinguished services. They were kept at a low rank despite their good military services. It was only the Ugandan nationals that were promoted. Rwandese would always be marginalised and mocked as refugees. These continued provocations made Rwandese refugees in Uganda to fight for their forceful return to Rwanda. He said that was the reason behind the RPF/A war. His assertions concur with Prunier’s (1997) findings of the Rwandese and their experiences in Uganda that made them forcefully return to Rwanda.

UNHCR (1999) reported that over 810,000 old case-load returnees came back to Rwanda by 2000. Most had lived their entire lives abroad, never having seen their mother country until their return. Returnees repeatedly mentioned that their elders described Rwanda as a land “flowing with milk and honey” and there was great nostalgia on the part of those who had left Rwanda at independence or shortly thereafter. In the course of the interviews, many people had similar sentiments about their causes of return to Rwanda:

To make my contribution towards the development of the country, I am pleased with my country and I’m in the process of contributing my efforts in order to rebuild it, and further, [the government] is moving in the right direction in terms of policies.

Experiences on returning to Rwanda

One participant [Butera] said while they would be told by their parents not to speak Kinyarwanda, this was meant to hide their identity as Banyarwanda refugees among the Congolese. *“We would be told not to speak Kinyarwanda language but speak Lingala. It was extremely unpleasant not to speak our mother language Kinyarwanda.* This explains why most of them after returning to Rwanda could not speak Kinyarwanda. This shows how Rwandese refugees in alien countries were robbed of their cultural heritage and language. Butera expressed his sentiment succinctly as:

Upon my return to Rwanda I looked an “alien” in my country. It was very interesting experience to be in Rwanda, a country I have never been before since birth. I did not know how to speak Kinyarwanda language because when I was in Congo I had assimilated with the Congolese and could not speak Kinyarwanda. My life experience in exile was not good at all. How could I fail to speak Kinyarwanda when I and my parents are Rwandese? It irritates me to look a foreigner in my motherland country.

He continued to say that upon their arrival the youth were encouraged to go to schools and colleges. The intention was to provide the youth with knowledge and skills which would ensure they could contribute to the rebuilding of post-war Rwanda and become ‘engines’ of nation building, national discourse and rehabilitation. Formal education was a high priority. At a more informal level, but with the same educational and patriotic intent, strong scouting movements called “Ingando” [political awareness] were instituted. This was intended to teach the young generation how to live harmoniously without classifying themselves as Tutsis and Hutus.

Social exclusion and lack of access to resources

Another participant [Ndemezo] gave his view about circumstances which made him return to Rwanda. He said he was tired of being called “akanyarwanda” meaning [minor Rwandan] by Ugandans, precisely “meaning a cheap Rwandan”. *“That is something indelible on my mind and I cannot erase it”.* This subjected him to live in substandard, displaced camps without the opportunity to earn a decent living. He said he wanted to return to his home country where he would be recognized as a real citizen not as a second

class citizen and with less criminal behaviour from Ugandan nationals who used to come and cause havoc in his family. While in exile in Uganda, Ndemezo faced severe restrictions in accessing meaningful employment. He was barred from owning land. He was thus at a disadvantaged position as a refugee in an alien country. He lamentably concluded his narratives with *“life in exile was awkward that left a bad memory in my experiences”*. On his return to Rwanda, he said:

It is still a daunting task to integrate in the community. But I am glad that I am back in Rwanda. I have peace and I am secure.

Kalisa left Rwanda to go to the DRC. He decided to return to Rwanda because many Congolese excluded him from attending school or gaining employment. However, he expressed what happened in Rwanda:

At the risk of sounding unpatriotic, I must say it was an embarrassing time for militias who caused genocide. Never have I been ashamed of my country and disgusted with its leaders as I am at this point in my life. Ignorance, they say, is bliss, and indeed sometimes I wish I was an ignorant person content with the misrepresentations that our country went through.

Many of the returnees from Uganda excelled economically and this increased the tensions and resentment between Rwandese refugees in Uganda and Ugandan nationals. They said that some of them owned land and commercial buildings but they never felt any sense of belonging, they were uncertain of any political changes. Ndemezo said that insecurity of their properties increased when Idi Amin, President of Uganda chased all the Indians and lost all their properties. He said they [Rwandese refugees] thought they would be the next foreigners to follow Indians. They were always insecure that at some stage their riches would be confiscated by Ugandan nationals. He, however, mentioned a greater feeling of patriotism and love for Rwanda that prompted him to return to Rwanda.

UNHCR assistance to returnees

UNHCR had provided most returnees sites with water supply. But, in the region as a whole, many drilling projects have been unsuccessful, wells have gone dry, and many water pumps have broken. Despite the efforts of the government and UNHCR to expanded services, the findings of this study reflect that returnees experienced great problems. Despite the UNHCR's efforts and reintegration strategies, Rwandan returnees were often hard pressed to survive. There is little doubt that though the UNHCR and the GoR facilitate reintegration pressing challenges are faced by returnees to adjust to the societies.

Purely from the issue of re-integration of the groups who returned to Rwanda most participants (19) said the organisation (UNHCR) gave them packages and roofing sheets, doors, windows, support poles, nails, and tools to construct a basic home in addition to jerry cans, buckets, plastic cups and plates, cooking pots, bars of soap, blankets and tarpaulins. This helped them to embark on the arduous task of making mud bricks and putting up the small huts for themselves. One participant said:

We found a lot of courage to construct our own house and worked day and night to see it standing.

However, they expressed their dissatisfaction that the assistance given to them by UNHCR was not sustainable. They give them assistance as soon as they have returned to Rwanda and immediately when they were reintegrated the UNCR withdrew its assistance.

Difficulties and problems faced by returnees in Rwanda

Rwanda looked extra-ordinarily different to most returnees especially the old caseloads. Some returnees [7] returned to Rwanda after their entire life in exile. They said they had been in exile since birth. When they returned life seemed to be a constant struggle, unlike what they had expected. Most of the participants (19) said that their expectations were to get assistance from government and find good jobs as they returned to Rwanda. Few

participants (4) said that they just wanted to return to Rwanda and did not expect offers from the government but to be in their home country.

Contrary to their expectations and hope of getting jobs and other forms of assistance from the government by and large, the returnees encountered more problems. In coping with the situation, one participant [Habineza] said:

We had much hope that when we are repatriated we shall get a lot like funding from the government, big chunks of land, good jobs. We didn't know that we are coming to face all these hardships. We did not expect to be selling mats and selling local beers to earn some income to keep us surviving.

Hope and disappointment

Returnees had high expectations about their new life in their homeland, especially regarding their economic and job benefits. The returnees wanted to recover their lost status and were resistant to accepting jobs that represented underemployment. The participants stressed that the government promised them jobs but that they could not find jobs. A phenomenon of particular importance regarding their expectations during repatriation was the returnees' strong belief that they were owed something. Since their persecutors were unavailable, the new caseload returnees shifted their demands to the government. In the past ten years, the returnees have struggled to build a life for themselves in a new home country. I found that participants' expectations upon returning to Rwanda were not met thus supporting the findings Bascom (1996). He stressed that the Eritrean government has not ended the life of hardship of returning refugees. Many of the former refugees live in camp-like conditions struggling to make ends meet. The struggle over limited resources like land creates potential for conflicts. Some returnees had been expelled from land by 'stayees' and expressed the view that government had paid lip-service to meet their expectations.

They said they were coping and were getting some money to push their life and to manage to buy food, transport and to pay rent. However, they were disappointed by the Rwanda Revenue Authority (RRA) as revenue tax collectors come and levy heavy taxes on them; they remain with less disposable income. On another similar disappointment the

Kigali City Council (KCC) officials evict them from the streets where they are operating their petty business. Although a few had access to small plots of land others said they were poor and could not afford buying plots in Kigali to run their business. Land scarcity remains Rwanda's biggest socio-economic challenge for all returnees.

Participants' problems in integration to Rwanda

Most participants (16) expressed that the language barrier was a problem when they returned to Rwanda. Rwanda, being a French-speaking (Francophone) country had most returnees who spoke English (Anglophones). The returnees from Uganda had communication problems. They did not know how to speak Kinyarwanda or French which were spoken by the majority of Rwandese. In offices it was a struggle to communicate. One participant cited an example at his work place when his boss asked him to bring "Idosiye" literally meaning [a file]. This sounded strange to him as he had never heard about idosiye before and did not know exactly what his boss wanted. It was also difficult for the returnees to get jobs because of language barriers. For returnees Kinyarwanda was not their first language. However, participants said that this problem was no more, they were now very fluent in Kinyarwanda and they had taken up refresher courses in French.

The present influx of returnees to Kigali, Rwanda of large numbers of qualified local people offers challenges as well as threats. The challenge is that their energies can be harnessed to develop Rwanda; the threat is that they will get disappointed because the opportunities for employment will not materialise. Nevertheless, returnees acted as a catalyst for development. The findings of this study reveal that the conditions of Rwandese returnees are aggravated by lack of employment opportunities. The competition for few available jobs was simply cut-throat with corruption and nepotism being prevalent in some public offices. One participant [Harera] lamented that:

It goes by the name of "technical know who" when one enters into some one's office to drop his/her application papers one is unashamedly asked "Uri uwande [literally meaning [whose daughter or son are you?].As if that has any bearing on your ability to do the job. So if you are nobody's daughter or son, you just have to

take a walk. Why then won't one get disillusioned in his country and head to where s/he can earn a living on merit?

The returnees who were born and grew up in exile had most of their documents identifying them as Ugandans, Burundians, Congolese or Tanzanians. They had changed their nationality and identity. Even the education qualification papers they owned portrayed them as foreigners, not Rwandese. It was very hard to differentiate them from other foreigners. It was hard for them to prove that they were Rwandese. Getting a job and Rwandan national identity [Indangamuntu] was not easy. Even in the education system it was hard to benefit from government funding/sponsorship because all documents showed one as a foreigner. This is a similar problem that I faced. I have my first degree from Makerere University, Uganda showing my nationality as a Ugandan. It was hard for me to have a job, bursary and Rwandese Identity Card (ID) because all my documents identified me as a Ugandan.

Psychological hardships

Most participants, especially the new caseload returnees, said that the hardships they faced upon arrival in Rwanda was that of seeing huge graves where their relatives were buried. This increased serious trauma because of the past experience of war. Findings from the participants revealed that the UNHCR and the government have not paid attention to the psychological well being of these returnees. Some returnees develop mental problems and because there is lack of medical case histories and poor diagnosis of mental disabilities or mental illness it is difficult to establish whether illnesses are caused by war or have other causes.

One participant said they had to hold the past bereavements, mourning, emotion and anger but with perseverance, patience and the grace of God, they had to mutually stay with the perpetrators of genocide. They were able to forgive them. They said that they do not want to cause genocide in Rwanda. They also stressed that they have to acknowledge the irretrievable loss of their property and be innovative and adjust to new life patterns in Rwanda.

Gatsinzi said:

To reconcile, you have to accept the bitterness of it because tolerating someone who killed your people is a serious pill to swallow. And I believe a pill that is bitter is sometimes the one that heals.

Nevertheless, some stayees/locals are not happy with the returning of the old case load returnees. They said they have come to cause shortage of land for farming, compete for jobs and other resources. Similar findings are found by Allen (1996) about the Eritrean returnees that had repatriated from Sudan. The locals never welcomed returnees. His finding reveals that Eritrean locals were hostile to returnees accusing them of competing with them for jobs and making land scarcer for cultivation.

Cultural problems during integration

Participants claimed that there were differences between the 1994 genocide survivors and old caseload returnees. Old caseload returnees were culturally and ethnically vastly different from the genocide survivors. They came with different life styles and behaviours. Returnees acquired new culture, contrary to their culture they had before exile. All returnees come back with alien cultures depending on which countries they lived in. Before exile they were culturally and ethnically similar to the locals/stayees especially in the ways of dressing, conduct and marriage but because old caseload returnees had stayed in exile over a long period of time, they had completely different cultural norms and behaviours. The old caseload and locals/stayees' culture are strange and alien to each other. This made their adjustment and reintegration hard. It is regrettable because these were the same people who spoke the same language, had the same culture and norms but every thing was different.

The study findings are consistent with the findings of a study by Harrell-Bond (1989:42) in Sudan among the Sudanese refugees. The author contends that given the dynamic nature of society as well as individual personality, the re-integration of returnees into home society maybe as complicated as the experiences of adjusting to a new culture while in asylum. However, Findley (2001: 294) argued that refugees housed in neighbouring countries often make a quick return to their home country after the end of

causes that led to their flight. Such returnees may not have lost their culture as they have not spent much time in exile and thus find it easy to adjust to the culture of in their home country.

In addition, participants cited the problem of cultural differences between old caseload returnees and the survivors. Those who grew up abroad, though Rwandan were culturally acclimated to their country of refuge, one returnee [Kalisa] explained it this way:

I feel close to other people like me, people who returned after the war. Somehow I feel free with them, not like people who lived here before and during the war. With those people, it's more difficult. They are more cautious and closed; I don't know where they stand. I do not feel close to survivors because they mis-interpret us having been the root cause of genocide. Though I do sympathize with them, rapport does not exist between these two groups.

Asked on how they co-exist with those who caused the genocide, he said:

It is too much for me. Imagine being in a place and you see people and you know they are the ones who killed your relatives.

The other problem noted by participants was that of marriages between the Tutsi and the Hutu. These findings reveal that there are still ethnic social classifications and divides between Tutsis and Hutus. The participants stressed that a Tutsi girl would even be exterminated by her parents if she was married to a Hutu. Participants said that there were some RPA soldiers who had married women survivors without knowing that they were Hutus but later when they discovered it they divorced them.

Problems with drought and inadequate food

A great number of returnees expressed their difficulty after returning to a devastated Rwanda where food was insufficient due to persistent drought. Habyarimana said:

Before I was brought to this place (Rwanda), I used to live in Uganda where I could find enough food. When I was repatriated UNHCR gave me assistance for a few months which later stopped. I didn't have any immediate solution so I

thought of trying to sell some Rwandan cultural art and steel since it is lucrative in this place. I did not have any business skills I just do it for survival to buy milk and food for my family.

Deeper analyses of the country's economic context present big challenges for the country and its returnees. This is besides the semi-arid environment which makes the returnees vulnerable to famine. The population exceeds the capacity of the land available, especially given that the vast majority of Rwandans are farming. Subsistence agriculture continues to be the primary occupation of most returnees but the prolonged drought constitutes the famine problem.

Overall, the returnees felt that the prolonged drought has led to poor agricultural harvests and death of many cattle. Returnees felt chronically food insecure due to their proneness to erratic weather conditions. What exacerbates the problem is the smallness of the country. Most returnees have failed to secure enough land to carry on ranching and cultivation. Participants expressed the view that returnees had more problems than locals. As one participant [Kayonga] noted:

When we arrive in Rwanda normally we take long to plant crops in time for the next harvest. The weather conditions are not good because of prolonged drought. The UNHCR gave us agricultural equipments and the government gives us land. We need a more long lasting solution not a fire fighting measure that will temporarily bring relief to us and it is no more. The government and UNHCR focused on trying to solve our problems by piecemeal means. Life conditions are really hard but we have to cope.

Returnees normally found it difficult at early stages of re-integration. They were disadvantaged in multiple ways economically and socially. Assistance offered by the UNHCR and government was not sufficient enough.

The other problems faced by most returnees were low salaries for those who are working. Unemployment and extremely high cost of living make returnees life hard. Mucho stressed that:

I have four children. I struggle terribly to manage financially. I am the breadwinner of my family. Our family is big they depend on me with my low salary that I get. My wife doesn't have any education and therefore no profession and finds it very difficult to get a job. I feel over stretched beyond limit. I can't save anything towards a future. Rent is exorbitantly high together with transport. Under such circumstances it is difficult for us to lead a normal life.

Despite all these challenging experiences, returnees expressed how good it was staying in Rwanda rather than in exile.

One participant cited the problem of orphans. Some orphans are heading up family households; others lived with their siblings on their family land without adult supervision. This phenomenon was triggered by the genocide of 1994 in Rwanda when mass killings and displacement created a disaster for children on a scale not heard of since the Jewish holocaust. Instead of improving with time, the orphan crisis had been worsened by the exceptionally high toll the HIV/AIDS pandemic is taking on Rwanda's adult population. One of the participants said:

Orphans have food shortages where sometimes they spend two days without food. They may have other chances like going to school because government provides free primary education, but when they do not have food they cannot study well and cannot go to school, sometimes they are forced to escape from school and go to look for what to feed on.

Returnees earn their livelihood and source of support

Habineza, a returnee from Uganda who said he has been in exile since birth said he owned a restaurant in Kigali. Asked how he kept his business running. He said:

Nothing special. It is a matter of being creative and to make a difference from your competitors. For example, I decorate my place with Rwandan cultural art pieces which is the first thing that attracts many, including foreigners and tourists. Secondly, I do supervision myself, sometimes I do the cooking with them, I teach them how to do things and of-course how to handle customers. Indeed the eye of a master will do more work than both his hands. And again much attention to circumspection and care because sometimes a little neglect may breed a great mischief. In business, one does not have to assign duties and sit back; you have to get involved in the work yourself. Some people especially women, enjoy armchair supervision and that is why many fail in business.

Most participants who were not employed in the civil service got their incomes from running petty businesses in the informal sector like cooking, handicraft production and carpet weaving. However, most participants said that the biggest setbacks to their business were taxes which were regularly increasing. I found that the Rwandan business community is currently dominated by male returnees, a situation that undermines gender equality efforts. Traditionally, on account of the existing social setup, Rwandese women are home-makers. This partially explains why women are always left behind in all areas of life. During the interview returnees showed an impressive drive to rebuild their country and promote unity and reconciliation. Some displayed that they have stabilized, built houses and are doing well. The participant's view could have been a biased one. Basing on these findings I presume that women in Rwanda can also do business well but this was not a view typically shared by male participants.

In conclusion, the returnees' experiences were full of challenging, agonising and life changing experiences that demonstrated a glimpse of their hardships in exile. Returnees' life in Rwanda and in exile demonstrates how they have suffered insurmountable problems. Chapter Six deals with the responses of key informants from the government and the UNHCR

CHAPTER SIX: THE ROLE OF UNHCR AND GoR AS SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS TO RWANDESE RETURNEES

Introduction

This chapter deals with the responses of key informants. It will explore the role of UNHCR and the government in repatriation and the integration of returnees to Rwanda.

In 1994 millions of Rwandese went into exile as a result of the horrors of the Rwandan genocide and its aftermath. This extra-ordinary exodus of refugees, government militias, and rebels set in motion events which engulfed the Great Lakes region in a decade of suffering. Poverty is acute in Rwanda and everyone regardless of being a returnee or not is in need of assistance. The UNHCR came to deal with emergency situations in the country during the genocide but it ended up doing rehabilitation and development in the country torn apart by war. Returnees as discussed in the previous Chapter, suffer from complex problems which can only be met with an equally complex assistance. The researcher obtained views from an UNHCR officer at the head office in Kacyiru and one field officer.

When UNHCR started work in the country after the war, Rwanda was at zero. “We have achieved a lot, but still have a long way to go” said the UNHCR officer. The organisation has built schools and health centres which are very crucial to both returnees and locals/stayees. He also noted that returnees are given a repatriation assistance package consisting of items such as foodstuffs, blankets, cooking equipments, agricultural tools and temporary shelter. The UNHCR official told the researcher that in order to promote self reliance they set up projects for income generating activities in the local communities where returnees have been settled. “This could be the only means for returnees to develop especially that they scratch from zero” [having nothing to begin life with]. He stressed that the UNHCR also carries out significant work in support of Rwandan returnees in the areas of maternal and child health through their integrated management of child illness programmes and the control of highly infectious diseases. He said that UNHCR carries out youth education and sensitization programmes on primary health care. The official

said that since the 1990s UNHCR, in conjunction with the Red Cross Society, have been implementing comprehensive programmes of emergency services to refugees and returnees in Rwanda.

Nevertheless, the officer explained to the researcher that UNHCR staff uses admission criteria for all returnees. He stressed that not all returnees' benefit from assistance packages. There are some returnees who return on their own with much wealth and resources especially those from Uganda, Tanzania and DRC who had a lot of herds of cattle. Such returnees were not helped by UNHCR, unlike returnees from Congo-Brazzaville and Burundi that needed urgent assistance to reintegrate in the society.

The UNHCR official said that the goal of UNHCR among others was to address the basic sanitation needs of returnees especially when they were in transit camps still waiting to be re-integrated in the society when the government allocates them land. The official still stressed that they assisted returnees by equipping them with income-producing skills such as carpentry and baking. The UNHCR officer said:

They can use these skills in future to maintain their livelihood; we want to increase the number of economic opportunities. This can help returnees survive their ordeal, retain a sense of self-worth and build job skills and economic structures to ensure that they return to normal life. Our head office in Kachiru, Kigali has coordinated with our field offices in Byumba and Butare to implement this task, to fulfil our key element of our mandate to assist and advocate for the rights of refugees and returnees.

The UNHCR official told the researcher that all returnees continue to benefit from the protection of UNHCR for one year after the date of their return. He said that they do this through monitoring of activities among returnees. When returnees could sustain themselves then UNHCR withdraws its support to avoid dependency among these returnees. At the same time, UNHCR was aware that identifying needs that would go unanswered could undermine UNHCR credibility in responding to the needs of these returnees. By virtue of its activities the UNHCR works in partnership with the

government, regional organisations, international and non-governmental organisations to respond to the needs of these returnees.

However, this is contrary to the views of the participants in the previous Chapter. Most participants expressed how the UNHCR assistance is short-lived and not sustainable. They said UNHCR withdraws its assistance before returnees fully reintegrate in the society and they suffer from multiple constraints of illnesses, hunger, lack of shelter and clothing.

UNHCR has played a pivotal role in repatriation of Rwandese returnees by providing returnees with transport from country of refuge to their homeland. The official said:

We transport returnees either by flying them or using trucks depending on the distance. We have made necessary steps to ensure their transport is available for repatriation.

However, he noted that the main challenge they faced was logistical problems in the process of repatriation. He said:

Transportation of refugees to Rwanda is a bit problematic. We always have difficulties and we are hard pressed in the repatriation exercise. Some of the returnees had amassed wealth especially the old case-load refugees from Uganda, Burundi, Tanzania and DRC. The government in most cases does the campaigning for the return of these refugees but logistically it offers a lip-service. This makes the exercise of repatriation slow.

The official stressed the need for a good and cordial partnership in working with the government. He said that to facilitate repatriation UNHCR collaborated with the Joint Commission on the Repatriation and Reintegration of Rwandese Refugees (JCRRRR) to repatriate Rwandese refugees and re-integrate them. However, he noted that JCRRRR was replaced with the National Council for Refugees (NCR) [in French it is called Conseil National pour les Réfugiés [CNR] which came into being in early 2004. Consequently, UNHCR is hitherto working with MINALOC [Ministry of Local government] and the MINALOC-based CNR as its governmental implementing partners. The official regretted that since CNR assumed ownership in the repatriation exercise

progress has been slow due to the abhorrent lack of capacity. He noted that the repatriation of Rwandan refugees from DRC was expected to take off after the successful presidential elections in 2006.

UNHCR was involved in providing free health services. In addition, it provided assistance like the provision of free primary and secondary education to children who are orphans and needy. He said that this happens in partnership with the government that does also provide free universal primary education to all. UNHCR had sought to compensate the very limited capacity of state structures to undertake urgent rehabilitation. Health centres and schools had been constructed in areas of Bugesera, Byumba and Mutara provinces. After prompting him whether UNHCR staff offer counselling services to returnees, he said that less was offered for psychological help or counselling because of the limited number of qualified personnel to offer the services. Asked whether the projects remain in operation when UNHCR activities come to an end he said:

There is always poor management and inefficiencies, the projects normally stop functioning. In most cases locals do not have the skills and some are corrupt thus making these projects unsustainable.

The informant said that upon the arrival of returnees UNHCR provided assistance to vulnerable returnees in six of Rwanda's provinces. The special assistance included corrugated iron sheets to shelter 336 families and money for a health insurance policy, popularly known as "Mutuelle" that would benefit 6,950 families. He also said part of this money goes to the purchase of hoes as well as national identification cards (ID) for returnees in all six provinces. In addition, UNHCR gives returnees plastic sheeting, blankets and seeds. The official said that "returnees live under blue plastic sheeting temporarily until the government allocates them with land for settlement".

These findings confirm the findings of Philpott (2005) in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He asserted that UNHCR played an important role in post-recovery of Bosnia-Herzegovina after the war. The UNHCR established temporary houses and it provided [with] returnees beddings and other equipments. Returnees also benefited from government support that

provided them with health facilities and food. However, he stressed that the assistance was short-lived in nature that left them in misery of suffering again.

But the field operations worker working with UNHCR expressed that:

The donations to the returnees would help impoverished returnees to start normalizing their living conditions. When returnees arrive at the transit camp, UNHCR normally gives them a standard repatriation package consisting of a three month food ration and basic non-food items such as jerry cans, kitchen sets, blankets, soaps and plating sheeting. To enhance reintegration we offer returnees with seeds and hoes to enable them cope with the sustainable living than dependency on UNHCR assistance.

During the interview the UNHCR official pointed out that the main problems faced by returnees in the transit camp are of a social and economic nature, emanating from the reduction in government's provision of social and economic services. He expressed the view that some returnees are not used to the life conditions in Rwanda.

The official also indicated that working with the government was a bit stressful and challenging. He said that government expects much from UNHCR even duties that are out of UNHCR roles. He said: "The government cannot ask us to repatriate the refugees and the next day to keep them". The informant also highlighted the government's arbitrary detention of individuals who criticise the government and jailing some people on account of masterminding the genocide.

Furthermore, he stressed that the question of land had become a source of increasing controversy. In some cases, this was because land had been commercialized in Kigali where land was potentially lucrative. It was evident that returnees found themselves in a particular disadvantaged position when it came to the distribution of land and registration of land titles. Returnees tend to experience difficulties in this respect, partly because they are socially and economically marginalized by the rich people. The policy makers are often reluctant to move quickly or boldly in the direction of adopting significant land policy that will benefit the returnees. In such an environment, it is contended that returnees face the problem of land that is unevenly distributed.

These findings are consistent with a study by Kibreab (2002) as discussed in Chapter 1. His study revealed that in Eritrea locals tend to be hostile to refugee returnees when they are in need of land. They deny them land as if they are second-class citizens of the country. This caused conflicts between the Eritrean refugee returnees and locals who did not want to give away some of the land when the government was giving part of the land to Eritrean returnees.

In the same vein, The UNHCR official also noted how they faced the problem of most Rwandese being poor. He said:

Every one claims to be a returnee in order to benefit from UNHCR re-integration and repatriation package benefits. It has been hard for UNHCR to register all returnees. Those that are registered are those helped to be repatriated under the assistance of UNHCR but others just come in without being registered. So there has been a problem to differentiate who is a returnee and not.

Challenges and rewards of working with refugees

The UNHCR official cited disappointment and burnout as the challenge. He stressed that the other main challenge is frustration with the bureaucracy and politics in the government. In addition, he stressed how the UNHCR is heavily dependent on overseas donors, thus they are not able to meet the refugees/returnees expectations. However, he said that the main reward was doing something to help the refugees and returnees in this case.

The UNHCR official told the researcher that the problems faced was the lack of security in the areas especially in their operation to repatriate refugees. The lack of security lies in the DRC where the Interahamwe militias are hiding. He singled out the recent spate of killings of aid workers in Kivu when UNHCR workers were returning from providing assistance to refugees in DRC and Congo Brazzaville.

He indicated:

Rebels do not compromise with you. They attack you and some of our staff is being killed innocently. Aid workers sacrifice their lives. Their work has been a risky venture in the DRC where ex-FAR militias are based. Even in the repatriation process trucks carrying returnees are being attacked on the way back home. They disorganize and disrupt the whole exercise of repatriation.

Asked whether the government provides security, he admitted that the government gives them security and protection but emphasized that rebels use hit and run tactics. Rebels are not predictable. “At times the UNHCR staff goes without security personnel”.

The other challenge noted by the field officer was the problem of insufficient supply of aid like food stuffs and other necessities to returnees. He said:

You are working as a refugee worker in a transit camp where there are growing problems connected to the food distribution. The refugee leader seems to lay hands on large quantities of food aid for sale. Other refugees in the camp complain that they never received the rations they are entitled to, their children suffer and single mothers sometimes have to prostitute themselves in order to get the food.

This was a challenging problem that almost all refugee workers face. “Sometimes you are accused from all angles that you don’t care for their problems”.

In pursuing their expectations to recover what they have lost, returnees become aggressive, demanding and suspicious. Behind these behaviors, though, there is confusion, uncertainty and a need for guidance. What is portrayed is somewhat bleak. In reality, lives torn apart are not easily repaired. The refugee paid a high price for flight. The field worker reported the challenge of working with refugees:

Returnees tend to be very demanding, displaying an attitude that they should be compensated for their unjust suffering. They continually complain of not receiving enough. Neither the government nor the UNHCR are able to satisfy all their expectations.

The UNHCR field worker stressed that it was difficult to engage all returnees in doing their own work like gardening and bricklaying to enable them earn some source of income than fully depending on UNHCR assistance. Returnees were not interested in

work, because they always expect to be 'spoon-fed' by the UNHCR and other NGOs. He told the researcher that in order to overcome the problem, the UNHCR together with the government, had to withdraw such assistance after a period of time when they expected that all returnees have had enough time to settle and live on their own. This was contrary to the returnees/participants hopes of getting assistance from both the government and the UNHCR. This continued to be a haunting experience among the returnees as less is offered than expected.

Mechanisms and policies that government of Rwanda (GoR) put in place to help Rwandese refugee returnees

The government official stated that government and the UNHCR have been in partnership to help Rwandese refugees return to Rwanda. He said that the GoR has changed the policy of mere facilitation to active promotion of the repatriation of Rwandan refugees from all over the globe. The government has formed Rwanda Diaspora Global Network (RDGN) to sensitize and mobilize all Rwandans in the diaspora to return. This is intended to signify that all Rwandese in the diaspora have a feeling that the country belongs to them and are free to return to Rwanda at any time.

The informant stressed that many agreements have been signed by the GoR and countries hosting Rwandan refugees as a way of government's commitment to promoting refugees to return to Rwanda. He also said how the GoR has been sending officials to various countries to meet and encourage Rwandan refugees to return to Rwanda. He said:

Recently the government sent the minister charged with the duty of repatriating Rwandese refugees from diaspora to return to Rwanda. The Minister went to meet Rwandan refugees in camps of Nkivale, Kyaka 1 and 11 to tell them how the country is peaceful and is determined to help them by resettling, reintegrating and giving them material assistance.

He said a tripartite agreement has been signed which sets modalities of voluntary repatriation. The government's policy of 'free return to Rwanda' is an encouragement and promotion of all Rwandese in the diapora to return to Rwanda.

A key informant from the government was optimistic that this policy of repatriation has been successful and he regretted the causes of Rwandese refugees. He recalled:

Our predecessors used to cover up for their leadership failure and greed. We have learnt enough out of the sad political history and this is why we have to work very closely to rectify the historical mistakes of Rwandese refugees and ensure their repatriation and smooth co-existence of these returnees. All I am sure about is that the government is determined to return all Rwandese refugees in diaspora to come and build their country. To treat the symptoms of a problem without addressing the underlying causes is merely to compound the problem in the future.

This unity and togetherness has encouraged many Rwandan refugees to return in huge numbers. However, the exercise is a big challenge to the government of Rwanda because the country is small with few resources to fully support all the returnees.

The government's policy of setting up a Tripartite Commission is a clear indication of its willingness to repatriate its nationals. He stressed how there have been campaigns promoting voluntary repatriation to Rwanda. He cited the example of two Kinyarwanda-language videos which were produced in 2002. These videos are shown to Rwandese refugees in the diaspora reflecting how the Gacaca courts work and how government is willing to help all returnees to Rwanda. The government's policy encourages all Rwandan refugees in diaspora to return to Rwanda without fear of revenge especially the perpetrators of genocide. The GoR has put a commission called National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) to deal with all returnee problems. The commission deals with land allocation, assistance packages and other forms of assistance to help returnees to reintegrate within the society. When they are still in transit camps, the government together with the UNHCR, provides them with shelter and food items.

The government's reintegration policy recognizes that land is crucial to all returnees for them to re-integrate successfully. Reintegration is carried out NURC together with The Ministry of Land and Human Resettlement (MINITERRE). After NURC taking over from Disarmament, Repatriation, Rehabilitation, Resettlement and Reintegration

(DDRRR), he stressed that all returnees have equal access to safe and decent housing. However, this view is not shared by participants as seen in the previous Chapter. If the government fails to meet its obligations to these returnees then it would pose a serious challenge and jeopardize further return of other Rwandese from exile.

He further noted that for free voluntary repatriation informational campaigns have been carried out with words like “go and see” visits. These campaigns have prompted many exiles to return to Rwanda and see how the country is at peace. He said that large numbers of refugees have returned to Rwanda either on their own or through organized repatriation programmes, the government partnership with UNHCR. UNHCR has been sponsoring these campaigns and sensitization programs.

In addition, he said that relevant Rwandan government officials visit areas hosting Rwandan refugees, to explain among other things, Rwanda’s Gacaca (traditional) tribunals, and government’s policy on returning property that belonged to Rwandese who are in exile especially those that fled the country for fear of causing the 1994 genocide. They are assured how their properties like houses and lands would be returned to them after repatriation. The government officials said that “go and see” initiative, in a bid to encourage Rwandese in the diaspora has encouraged many to return.

The informant cited some of the Rwandese refugees who came from Burundi to tour Rwanda to find out whether Rwanda is politically secure for them to repatriate. These Rwandan refugees who are still living in Burundi go back to report to their colleagues and encourage them to return. He said:

This is a chance for them to compare what they see and the rumours that thrive in exile so that they can make an informed decision of returning home.

The Officer in charge of protection and repatriation at the UNHCR in Kachiru, Kigali noted that:

The significance of ‘Go and See’ is that it gives Rwandan refugees the opportunity to assess and check the realities on the ground and take a true image

of the country to their relatives and friends still in exile and living in camps who are not informed.

However, he said that despite all these good policies initiated by the GoR, there are still many Rwandese refugees that are still living out of Rwanda. This remains a big challenge to the government.

Government services for social and economic re-integration

The 1994 genocide in Rwanda took away many lives, all killed atrociously within a blink of 100 days. Those 'martyrs' left widows, orphans and handicapped victims who live in misery and untold hardship. This was awful. The government with the help of UNHCR has carried on with the daunting task of settling/resettling hundreds of thousands of returnees to Rwanda. The informant stressed that returnees are assured of security, good hospitality beginning from the reception centres and other entry points. He said that the government was working on resettling returnees with a package that included an ox, a plough, household items, cooking utensils, food for six months and 30 pieces of iron sheets per household. He said:

The government targets these returnees to recover the vulnerability and miseries, they are accommodated in the first place; the young orphans have been taken to school while others taken to vocational schools so that they can support themselves in the future. Some of the tangible activities we have done for them include; Imidugudu Yamahoro [Creating peace villages] which we built in Bugesera and in Butare provinces. They have accommodated many returnees while ex-combatant returnees are advised to join small scale projects to support their families and livelihood.

The above quotation reflects Bascom (2005) findings from a sample of 80 household returnees in Eritrea. He asserted that upon their arrival, [Eritreans] were issued tents for shelter and food rations in form of maize, oil, and flour. But food assistance was phased out after an initial three-month allotment. Hence, these returnees to Eritrea had to look elsewhere for ways to augment their income and secure subsistence. The options were limited: 7% of the sample had began some type of trade activities; 6% had secured financial assistance from relatives or friends elsewhere in Eritrea; and 10% received

financial assistance from relatives and friends working outside the country mainly Saudi Arabia.

The informant also told the researcher that the soldiers of the former regime of Habyarimana (ex-FAR) who lay down their arms were integrated into the Rwanda Defense Forces (RDF) to form a national army. This had accelerated the process of reconciliation, peace and unity. The informant emphasized that the RPF government gives all returnees equal opportunities and property rights regardless of one being a Hutus/Tutsi or Twa. He emphasized that there was no such thing as one being described on the basis of social ethnic identity.

Caring for the genocide widows and orphans

After the war many women lost their husbands and the war spawned a generation of orphans. The single mothers could not afford taking care of these orphans and it came to a realisation that the government was to take care of them.

The key informant said that due to the poor living conditions faced by widows and orphans, the government responded to this need by establishing projects like AVEGA and IBUKA [umbrella organisations of genocide survivors] that were intended to benefit women returnees who lost their relatives and children during the genocide. He expressed that for one to be a beneficiary of these local projects, the criterion for acceptance of any survivor is that one must be a registered victim of the genocide with certified documents. In an effort to improve the livelihood of these disadvantaged widows, the informant said that the government initiated a heifer project in which a heifer was given to a group of widows that they would be expected to share the offspring. "Initially we give a heifer to three widows but with time, we shall increase the number of heifers". That was intended to increase food security and self-reliance of widows who returned to Rwanda. A study carried out by UNICEF (1996) in Rwanda revealed that the majority of children lost their parents and became the head of the families. The study showed that 613,000 Rwandan children between the ages of 0-14 years old are orphans. There were an estimated 101,000 children heading up some 42,000 households. They shouldered the

responsibilities of caring for their siblings since their parents had perished during the genocide, a situation that was very hard for them to manage.

As a result government created AVEGA to cater for homeless children who lost their parents and relatives during the genocide. Chiefly, AVEGA promotes the general welfare of the genocide survivors by encouraging solidarity and promoting activities aimed at improving the condition of the widows and the orphanage. The informant said that AVEGA had been working for the last seven years to help orphans and widows to deal with their past bad experiences and to rebuild their shattered lives. He also stressed that despite the seven years of AVEGA in place it still faced serious constraints [financial] in carrying out its activities. This made it hard to achieve its objectives.

Dealing with housing crisis

The government of Rwanda introduced the human settlement habitat policy scheme, known locally as “Imidugudu” to respond to the returnees housing crisis. The Imidugudu settlement came into being in late 1995 to help homeless returnees make a living. The informant said that to cater for returnees’ needs, the government had constructed at least 300,000 mud-bricked houses under the Imidugudu initiative. During the genocide homes were burnt down leaving the country with a severe housing problem. However, in my own observation, I found that the overall hygiene situation in these Imidugudu settlements was still not satisfactory due to poor sanitation.

He said that the government collaboratively works with other NGOs to construct houses for the returnees. He said that in 1995 an international NGO, Cooperazione Internazionale (COOPI), initiated the Tamira Housing project in Mutara and Gisenyi districts using UNHCR and United Nations Development Program (UNDP) to build the Imidugudu houses to overcome the of housing crisis.

The informant told the researcher that the settlements were built in one place with the aim of ethnic mixing all returnees to encourage reconciliation and to make it easier for the government to provide social and economic services such as health centres, schools, and water especially bore-holes and dams. However, one participant [Kalasira] expressed his

dissatisfaction about the housing policy indicating that it did not benefit all returnees equally. He said:

Only those who own the country (bene- gihugu) meaning Tutsis get good shelter than Hutus. If you want to see the difference go to rural places, there are people in sheeting and grass there. When the rain falls it falls on them, even though they had solid houses before. People are very sad. This is an act of revenge. It is a subtle form of revenge.

This was contrary to what the key informant from the government had said above that the issue of ethnicity was no longer a problem among Rwandese. Hutus believed that they had lost more from the imidugudu policy than the Tutsis. This policy measure may have avoided some disputes in the short-term but have laid the grounds for longer-term conflicts. These findings confirm that of Prunier (1997:369). His study on Rwanda after the genocide revealed that at the end of 1996, fifteen of the twenty-two cabinet directors, sixteen of nineteen directors' generals, six of the eleven prefects, 80% of burgomasters and 95% of all soldiers were Tutsis.

I was informed by one participant [Kayonga] that the habitat policy initiated by the government did not allow returnees to have full ownership of those houses. As a result many did not take good care of them. Kayonga further said that Imidugudu settlements were more or less like the same refugee camps they lived in. In Imidugudu houses returnees were compacted with no privacy and people were sharing toilets. All these posed many threats to the outbreak of diseases. Such environments in which children are expected to dwell and grow in for long time obviously hinders proper growth and development. Despite some shortcomings in implementing this policy, the government still firmly believed that Imidugudu represents the only feasible alternative to Rwanda's high population.

I found that the Imidugudu houses were not well constructed. They had small compounds that separate them. The houses were very small and could be compared to shacks. They were constructed with mud bricks and small windows and narrow doors. Gasana, a father of five children complained that during the day his house was very hot due to the

tarpaulin roof and at night the house was cold due to the lack of shutters on the windows. During the rainy season, Gasana's house leaked depriving his children of the only shelter they had.

Most of the returnees who occupied and lived in these houses complained of water seeping through the house when it rained. There were a few makeshift bathrooms; most of imidugudu houses were devoid of bathrooms. In the few that had them they did not provide privacy for people to wash and bathe themselves. Some of the houses did not have a lock, so the owners supported them with a hand hoe. The roof of Gasana's house was low and sagging menacingly. I found that re-integration exercise revealed tension between the genocide survivors and the returnees in the resettlement that must be dealt with if returnees were to live in harmony.

Reintegration benefits to returnees

On the successful re-integration of ex-combatants falling under the jurisdiction of returnees', the key informant said that:

When ex-FAR refugees come back they are camped at Mutabo demobilisation centre in Ruhengeri province; where they undertake courses in various aspects of national development in a bid to re-integrate them in society. What we do in demobilisation camps is combatant screening, this is meant to separate ex-combatants from civilians; the civilians are sent to Nkamira transit centre and members of the ex-armed groups stay in Mutabo.

He further noted that ex-combatants were given 50,000 Francs after two months solidarity training and received an additional 1000,000 Francs from (NURC) after a period of six months. The informant said that there was need to provide the returnees with a package to enable them to start a new life. The bulk of the ex-exiles, according to the informant, had embarked on planting fast-yielding crops like maize, potatoes and cassava to stave off possible famine when their food rations provided by UNHCR ran out.

Compounded with the country's small resources NURC was working closely with its partners like UNHCR, American Refugee Committee and other NGOs like German Technical Corporation [GTZ], African Humanitarian Action among others to provide assistance to the most vulnerable returnees. The informant said the government had established projects like Maisha Rwanda project that aimed at helping the impoverished orphaned children. The government allocates 5% of the national budget each year to the Fund for the Assistance of Genocide Survivors (FARG) to help the survivors of the genocide. However, the findings of the six-man committee instituted to ascertain the situation of survivors in ten districts in Rwanda reported that there were deteriorating conditions of genocide survivors. The study reported that there were other people of well do families who benefited on FARG funds at the expense of bona fide vulnerable survivors (Musoni, 2006).

Dealing with the suspects of genocide: problems and prospects

The government of Rwanda faced a political matrix of dealing with the authors of genocide who exterminated Tutsis and other moderate Hutus. Given the vacuum of qualified lawyers after the genocide, Rwanda relied on Gacaca courts. Gacaca courts were based on the process which established individual culpability, and not a blanket condemnation of the Hutu militias. However, the informant noted that the government still faced challenges in dealing with justice related problems especially on the genocide ideologies.

Asked how the government uses Gacaca courts to deal with the master minders of the genocide, the informant said Gacaca courts had been established to expedite prosecution of perpetrators of the genocide. Returnees especially the new caseloads (survivors of genocide) were encouraged to testify and tell the truth to the 'Inyangamugayo' [Judges with no bias] who carry on 'gushishoza' (self-examination) of those accused of masterminding genocide. The informant also stressed that there were some perpetrators of genocide that were not tried by Gacaca courts. Such perpetrators were tried by the ICTR ((International Court of Tribunal for Rwanda) based in Arusha Tanzania and some

tried at the ICJ (International Court of Justice) at Hague. When prompted to elaborate whether Gacaca courts made returnees flee back to exile, the informant said:

It is true some have escaped after being found guilty of masterminding the genocide. But Gacaca courts emerged as the most human possible solution. Unfortunately, those who want to sabotage it are the ones who flee to Congo and other countries where they expect to link up with saboteurs like Interahamwe militias.

He continued to say:

We are promoting unity and reconciliation. We should not only forgive the perpetrators of genocide but we should also forget the past. I am happy that the government is promoting unity and reconciliation. People should be united and forget the past. We should think of developing our country than planning to fight. With war it is destructive and you don't know how destructive it may be it may also claim your life.

He said that most returnees going back to exile went for reasons of seeking employment and not because they were persecuted or oppressed by the government. He emphasised that the role of Gacaca was to emphasise unity and reconciliation, as a constitutional framework. In order to get a better understanding of how the government tried to stop returnees from going again into exile, I questioned the informant on measures put in place. He said that there were stringent measures that had been put in place to stop returnees from fleeing the country. He said they took away their identity cards and passports. He emphasised:

The government keeps passports for some returnees and if one is to leave the country he/she must give a reason on where she/he is going. When you take away their passports especially those you suspect that may flee they look like 'de-feathered chicken'.

However, during the Gacaca meeting that I attended one of the witnesses gave a testimony that many returnees fled to Burundi and DRC for fear of false accusations and unfair trials in Rwandan people's Gacaca courts. He also said that others fled on rumours of being associated with mass massacre during the genocide. It is perhaps fitting to say that the Gacaca courts will contribute to insecurity and less freedom of returnees who are

associated with the genocide. The Gacaca courts seem to pursue inequitable justice and emphasize ethnic punishments that may be interpreted as revenge on the side of Hutus and may stop them from returning to Rwanda.

My critique, however, is on the government's policy of withholding some returnee's passport and other travel documents to stop them from going out of the country which may violate the principle of fundamental justice. It seems incorrect and unreasonable to restrict individuals' free mobility in anticipation that they might flee the country. These were exclusions that could swiftly affect one to travel. One can make an analysis that Gacaca Courts were not a panacea for Rwanda's problems. If prosecution in Gacaca courts are seen as the panacea for Rwanda's ills, then the country's problems are far from over and may in fact be exacerbated.

The government of national unity and reconciliation had managed to build consciousness around human rights and the returnee community had responded in the most incredible and mature manner. The challenge therefore, lies in disseminating information on the Gacaca Courts to the people who were to be involved in testifying. The informant noted:

Rwanda has had enough. No Angels will solve the problems of Rwandans without their efforts that is why we rely on Gacaca. The subjective and objective realities have to be considered and married optimally. Anybody who envisages a military option as a solution to the problems of Rwanda now risks isolation and is no different from the perpetrators of genocide. There may be weaknesses but there are institutional approaches in solving the problems thus caused.

The informant contended that issues of reconciliation in the wake of civil conflict would be necessary to determine how those who fought on opposing sides would relate to each other. The establishment of NURC marked a major milestone in fundamentally changing the effect of bad governance based on discrimination and sectarianism that had marred Rwanda's past. Every returnee apparently appreciated how important peace, unity and togetherness were if Rwanda was to develop and shake off the unpleasant historical underpinnings of the past.

The informant expressed this more optimistically that:

Gacaca mandate is to unearth the truth behind the genocide. I am sure that people will testify if they are made to understand what this is all about. Attaining unity and reconciliation is not spontaneous, it is a gradual process. It needs effective work and commitment. We both have a violent past. Our people have suffered a lot. We should know our past, this will help us understand and shape our future.

There appears to be a lack of congruence between the ideal objectives of the Gacaca courts and the way that actually operate in practice. RPF government had cautiously avoided ethnic ideologies as a basis for its formation. All of which point to the right direction of learning from the country's past history and not wanting a recurrence of the same. As one of the core roles of the URC, the key informant stressed that it had embarked on an all-out aggressive civic sensitisation campaign programmes called 'Ingando' [Political awareness]. It was worth noting that returnees fully participate in 'umuganda' [community work], 'Abakangurambaga' [facilitators] and Abunzi (reconcilers). The cardinal objectives of those campaigns were to create awareness within returnees about their social and political responsibilities. The informant was happy that ethnicity was steadily fading into oblivion. He said:

I think the last election showed how we have put behind this ethnic divide in our country. The most important thing is that when people went to vote, they did not go to vote for a Hutu or for a Tutsi; they went to vote for a political programme that would bring peace, unity and development in the country. I think on the contrary, that used to happen before but this time it is not the case.

It was very interesting that Rwandese no longer identified themselves as Hutus, Tutsis and Twas anymore; which the key informant squarely attributed to the present RPF leadership. While this informant representing the GoR, was extremely optimistic about inter-group relationships, this view was certainly not embraced by the majority of the participants in this study as reflected in the previous chapter.

Government partnership with the UNHCR

The informant from the government said that there was a good partnership between the government and UNHCR in repatriation and re-integration process. He emphasised:

Had it not been for the role of UNHCR the repatriation of Rwandese refugees from different countries would not have been possible especially on their transportation back to Rwanda.

He however, noted one criticism of the Human Rights NGOs that were partnering with UNHCR which he claimed acted as saboteurs to the government's efforts in trying to deal with those who caused genocide. He complained that when the government takes to jail the perpetrators of the genocide the human rights watch NGOs came up condemning the government as violating human rights. Despite this, findings from participants reveal that jailing the perpetrators of genocide was fragile and if not adequately addressed could derail the peace process and plunge Rwanda back into war. Contrary to the claims of this informant, Guglielmo (1999) asserted that UNHCR finds itself in a dilemma about whether or not to intervene politically against governments or opposition groups, even where there is clear evidence of refugees and human rights violations that result in forcible displacement.

In this chapter the views of the participants and key informants towards the re-integration of Rwandese returnees have been detailed. The final chapter that follows presents the major conclusions drawn from the study and the recommendations.

CHAPTER SEVEN: MAJOR CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The major aim of the study was to explore the experiences and needs of returning refugees to Kigali, Rwanda and the role of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in their repatriation. I focused on the challenges the returnees faced both in exile and on their return to Rwanda. I also investigated government's and UNHCR's policy and programmes in respect of returning refugees from diaspora. The study relied on the paradigm using in-depth interviews with 23 participants (returnees) and four (4) key informants from UNHCR and government (Local government) who were responsible for repatriation and re-integration of Rwandese returnees. Thematic Analysis was used to analyze the data.

Summary of the major findings

- In this study, findings revealed the horrors experienced the survivors especially the new caseloads who witnessed the genocide. This caused trauma and stress with participants reporting vivid memories of loss, death, and destruction. Eleven years down the road after the genocide in Rwanda was not enough for the survivors to have forgotten such scary experiences.
- Rwanda is currently faced with serious challenges of bringing justice by use of Gacaca courts that currently serves as a framework for prosecuting and sentencing people suspected of having committed genocide offences and crimes against humanity. However, the systems leave a lot to be desired. Through my direct observation during the Gacaca courts proceedings there seemed to be a lot of problems associated with this type of justice. Much as it was a good strategy instituted by the RPF government to establish social harmony, justice and unity. The suspects accused of masterminding the genocide claimed that they were of

revenge. Dealing with the past injustice is a crucial test for the new democratic RPF government. While the criminal justice has improved dramatically since 1994, it is still weak and judiciary is still overwhelmed.

- Rwandese returnees are returning home [Rwanda], but face enormous difficulties: basic assistance and services in their communities are minimal or nonexistent. Participants in this study reported a great desire and joy from exile. However, some participants expressed that the joy they had expected to experience turned to be sour and frustrating as families struggled to re-integrate into a society ravaged by war and social dislocation. They complained that the assistance offered by both the GoR and the UNHCR was poor and short-lived. The key informants expressed that the cause of such short-lived assistance was to reduce dependency of returnees and on account of inadequate resources. However, many returnees did not have the choice of becoming refugees again, and for economic and political reasons have to survive and rebuild their lives in their homeland-whatever its conditions.
- Returnees talked about the difficulties journeys they went into exile. Their lives in asylum countries were grotesquely affected by refugee camps, destitution, being landless and, all too frequently by physical insecurity from a hostile local community. The findings also revealed how returnees slept under trees without any shelter, and how they slept on floors without beddings. The aged ones and children died on the way due to long journeys, hunger, thirst and lack of medical facilities, with the rape of women being the target.
- Helping returnees and managing the process of return has been far easier to the GoR than responding to the needs of these returnees often living in remote areas with poor housing. Clearly, conditions in areas of return are precarious for returnees. Rwandese returnees tended to be housed in areas affected by economic deprivation with insufficient infrastructure like health centres, schools, roads and communication facilities. The Imidugudu housing designated for these returnees

were particularly vulnerable to burglaries and vandalism. Nevertheless, their formation was intended to reduce tension between stayees and returnees and to promote peaceful co-existence and for government to easily supply essential services to them. The government should amend its policy framework and approach and introduce policy reforms that genuinely meet the needs of these returnees who may have suffered appalling situations.

- Despite efforts by the new GoR to encourage unity and reconciliation, the findings reveal that there are still ethnic tensions and biases between the Tutsis and Hutus. Relationships between these two ethnic groups remain largely superficial.

In sum, this study set out to achieve two major objectives: To understand the roles of the GoR and the UNHCR in the repatriation of Rwandese refugees on one hand, and on the other hand, to assess the needs and experiences of Rwandese returnees. This study has achieved these intended objectives. The refugee phenomenon has a long history. Refugees on the Africa continent have resulted from historical processes in which complex internal and external factors interact. Therefore, my approach to this study has been multi-dimensional. The refugee phenomenon has increasingly come to signify persons fleeing from political persecution, as a result of gross violation of human rights, ethnicity and violence. The plight of refugees are bound with complex international political issues.

In spite of the fact that Rwanda has gone through many episodes of refugees, its state of preparedness to deal with the problem is inadequate. There are still a lot of 'management by crisis' interventions and if it were not for UNHCR and other NGOs, things would be much worse, especially with regards to meeting the needs of the returnees like food supplies, housing, medical care. Hence the need for appreciation of such NGOs like the WFP and Red Cross. What appears evident from this study is that there are deliberate efforts on the part of the GoR to repatriate all Rwandese refugees from abroad, to maintain peace and tranquillity in the country and toward reconciliation by use of Gacaca

courts to try those that masterminded the genocide. This is commendable in itself. But there are also signs of recklessness in public policy frameworks regarding refugees/returnees. For these reasons, this section shapes the recommendations that are generated or gleaned from major findings of the study and from the literature. The ecosystems theory is herein applied in these major recommendations.

Recommendations to survivors of the genocide or people affected by war

In Chapter five of this dissertation, the research findings indicate that survivors of the genocide suffered post-trauma reactions, despair and emotional disturbances. They lived in a situation of war and the genocide. Returnees, especially the new caseloads, often went through a frightening experience. Those that experienced life-threatening, shocking events like rape and murder could have robbed them of a sense of integrity and wholeness. Some survivors could not stop thinking about terrible things that happened to them. They had nightmares or experience pictures in their mind that reminded them of scary things. They felt as if they were living again in a terrible scene of genocide from their past. Sometimes they found it difficult to sleep, felt tense and extremely sad. Yet despite the deep seated trauma and horrors people had experienced, there were no proper counselling services in place. The recommendation to this is that the government, NGOs and churches should offer services to help survivors of such torture and trauma. This should be done by trained and experienced counsellors to help the survivors to understand and manage stress and psychological trauma associated with the genocide. Cole et al (cited in Sossou, 2006: 14) called “for national social services to enlarge their field of activity to include refugee problems, and to be assisted by their governments in such a way that they could gradually take over the responsibility of providing counselling services to refugees in their countries”.

Government should establish micro-credit schemes and soft loans for returnees who are in conditions of poverty designed to improve food security and improve on their household incomes. This would enable them to access basic social services to achieve their goals and reduce their dependency on UNHCR and government. GoR should aim at ensuring appropriate protection and assistance of refugees/returnees and should also

adopt national policies in the implementation of refugee programmes and projects that will be sustainable in meeting the needs of refugees/returnees.

In conjunction with the UNHCR, the government's institutional mechanisms for registering the number of refugees and returnees in Rwanda should be set up. The literature review in Chapter 2 revealed in respect of the number of refugees that had returned to Rwanda. This hinders proper planning for them. The way forward, therefore, is to ensure that an effective mechanism is in place to foster effective registration of refugees/returnees. The National Council for Refugees (NCR) should establish a database to record to know how many Rwandese refugees have returned. This would aid both the GoR and the UNHCR to budget and provide assistance according to the established figures.

It is imperative to note that the responsibility of meeting the needs of returnees [regardless of the precipitating factors], largely falls under the Ministry of Local Government and Social Affairs. The ministry should be adequately financed. In particular from this study the key informant complained that the budget is so low that very few relief activities can be financed from it. Consequently, much of the relief work [including food supplies, water and health facilities] must be supplemented by donor agencies.

UNHCR should adopt mechanisms where widows and orphans living independently, could be helped by social workers and kinship carer in the community. This is to ensure that they have equal access to health services, schools and money availed to them to further the self-sufficient programmes in the settlement. It is necessary for the UNHCR and other NGOs could monitor whether the returnees/refugees have reached a point of sustainability before UNHCR/NGOs and government withdrawals their support.

Recommendations to countries hosting and producing refugees

African countries like DRC, Rwanda, Burundi, Somalia, Sudan, Sierra Leon, Uganda to mention but a few have been involved in continuous wars and rebel activities. They have played a great role in violation of human rights. The whole idea is ironic given their professed commitment to democracy. Refugees are physically and psychologically victims of traumatic and stressful situations. It is upon this that state parties especially countries of asylum should take on the responsibility placed on them to provide appropriate protection and care for refugees. Most of the refugees are subject to neglect and abuse. They are subjected to sexual abuse [women], assault and exploitation in a greater number contrary to the international law that protects them. There is need to reform the UN Human Rights system and policy to adopt measures to eliminate the violation of refugees' human rights. Despite tens of millions of refugees in this century, international law that is supposed to protect refugees is sporadic, unsystematic, isolated, and cursory.

These recommendations goes to legal and policy reforms of state agencies, such as immigration police and the Local Government Ministry concerned with the repatriation and responding to the needs of returnees in Rwanda. A framework is needed to establish a refugee/returnee policy that balances intervention with humanitarian aid, as well as solutions to domestic problems of these returnees, before they become global nightmares (Kibreab, 2002: 77). Some countries have drawn up these policy frameworks regarding refugees but they are not implemented. This recommendation should also apply to other countries facing the refugee phenomenon. The legislature must reform the national laws applicable to refugees. Various national legislations concerning refugees should measure to international law standards, which accord specific civil, economic, social and cultural rights.

Government can reduce ethnic dilemmas by democratic governance. This requires building a secure, democratic, just and tolerant political order in which the principles of constitutionalism, the rule of law, and freedom of conscience, speech and association are guaranteed so that people can participate in political, economic, and civil affairs without

fear of discrimination based on criteria such as race, colour, religion, belief, ethnic origin and gender. Collaboration with civil society and NGOs and promotion of democratic governance keeping humanity, social justice and human rights to the fore front will be important aspects of this strategy. It is a secure political environment which leads to a stable social and economic environment, hence the operational premise for reducing income inequality and ethnic divisions. Diplomacy and non-violent resistance strategies must be used against human rights abuses especially in dictatorial regimes. Peace talks should preside as measures of solving endemic conflicts and persistent insecurity that cause refugee flight.

GoR should be working vigorously to support many of the NGOs working under difficult circumstances to provide relief to refugees. In particular, GoR should grant more unconditional access to the UNHCR so that it can live up to its mandate to care for refugees. Otherwise, it is difficult to make a formal assessment of the full scope of the Great Lakes Region refugee problems. This may help the UNHCR and its partners to providing assistance and encouragement of these refugees/returnees through a sustained public advocacy of their plight.

The Gacaca traditional justice system was introduced to expedite trials for thousands of people suspected of involvement in the 1994 genocide. In theory Gacaca is more of a reconciliation bid than a litigation process. I would recommend that Gacaca courts be streamlined and that they encourage reconciliation in Rwanda. The Gacaca courts should hereby undertake to negotiate genocide related cases rather than seek revenge. Rwanda's Tutsi need to find a way to coexist with the Hutus, there is no place either inside or outside the country where they can hope to re-group in a self-supportive way without promoting unity and reconciliation. Rwandan government authorities should launch campaigns to heighten awareness amongst Rwandese on how to reconcile and avoid the issues of ethnicity and to look at themselves as Rwandese. Lederach (1995) argues that reconciliation is the ultimate goal for peace. Laderach (1995: 4) describes reconciliation as "a meeting ground where trust and mercy have met, and where justice and peace have kissed". Thus Gacaca courts should be able to bring people together and uphold the

principles and practices of restorative justice to people to grow beyond the past and to re-establish normalized, peaceful and trusting relationships in the present Rwanda. I do not believe that the universal concept of democracy cannot apply to Rwanda at the moment. In my view, democracy is not only political. It has economic and social components as well. Reconciliation and forgiveness is the only way forward for Rwanda.

Through principles of restorative justice and reconciliation peace in Rwanda can prevail. Justice, according to Lederach (1995: 20) “involves the pursuit of restoration, of rectifying wrongs, of creating right relationship based on equity and fairness”. Pursuing justice involves advocacy for those harmed, for open acknowledgement of the wrongs committed, and for making things right. Machar (2006: 3) stressed that:

In Africa when your brother is suffering, the other brother is totally happy. A brother dies, the other brother takes his wife and property...peace cannot be obtained in a day or a month; it can be obtained through understanding. All this depends on the type of mediation and type of facilitation.

Those that were harmed during the genocide should have mercy that involves compassion and forgiveness. Mercy is oriented toward supporting persons who have committed injustices, encouraging them to change and to move on.

Recommendations to UNHCR and GoR

UNHCR, as the special head of international efforts to solve the problems of refugees, is committed to protecting and providing for the adequate needs of refugees. It must take within its responsibility the initiative to promote refugee law and human rights by encouraging strict adherence to international instruments that provide for human rights. However, there is a need for UNHCR to update its administrative systems, which are lagging behind and not fully implemented.

In a context of wide spread vulnerability among both returnees, it is imperative that every intervention be planned and implemented in a coordinated way by UNHCR in coordination with the GoR. UNHCR and other NGOs should make improvements to water, sanitation, education, and agriculture in the communities where these returnees have been settled. UNHCR, GoR and other humanitarian agencies must coordinate their interventions, especially to provide essential services for self-sufficiency, and increase community capacity to absorb returnees. This expectation, however, is far being fulfilled, as most participants in this study revealed.

UNHCR should recommend a regular, timely assessment and review of needs of refugees/returnees and needs to promote co-operation of the concerned agencies. However, there is a need to monitor the staff responsible for effective management of refugees/returnees protection and assistance, especially in times of emergencies when refugee's rights are at risk. UNHCR should do this by strengthening refugees' survival and safety to achieve durable solutions appropriate to long-term development of refugees. UNHCR should ensure that careful assessment of refugee welfare is in place and focus on those returnees/refugees that are more vulnerable and needy.

The research finding of this study shows that there are gaps in existing arrangements and institutional framework to address the needs of Rwandese returnees. The findings also revealed that there is lack of a comprehensive, systematic and effective response to the returnees' needs. The GoR in collaboration with the UNHCR should allocate more funds to equip the Health Centres with medical instruments to diagnosis diseases, facilitate surgical services, and ensure adequate supply of all drugs especially for malaria, cholera, and measles in the settlement camps where these returnees live. Although UNHCR has offered tremendous help to establish services in the best interest of refugees/returnees it has been criticized for lack of openness and accountability with its current system and for fostering suspicion, resentment and anger by asylum seekers and refugees.

The study has only reinforced my belief that the international community must always intervene in such enormous human tragedy like the 1994 genocide in Rwanda: The starvation, deprivation, persecution, and direct murder of thousands and maybe even a million of the citizens of Rwanda are unpardonable. They deserved UN intense focus and sustained public advocacy. Had UN intervened probably the scale of the murder that happened in Rwanda in 1994 would have been averted. The recommendation therefore, is that the UN must be an active player in peace keeping and monitoring.

Resettlement of refugees in a country of asylum remains an effective way of offering refugees protection and a temporary solution to the dismal and isolated camps in which they are forced to languish for ages. By coincidence or design, refugees get isolated socially, economically, psychologically and in other ways in the countries of refuge. Ife (2001) points out that issues of refugees and asylum-seekers are so internationally linked that confining a response to a specific country or group is ineffective. In many cases, they are made to suffer social stigma robbing them of their rights. It is recommended therefore, that determining the appropriate status for refugees and asylum seekers must be made quickly and with the appropriate special attention and procedures. Keeping refugees in limbo regarding their status is violating the rights of refugees hence their security and future can be jeopardized. Determination of whether a refugee qualifies for refugee status must be done by the Home affairs department as soon as possible. The issue of proof of well-founded fear of persecution is an important factor in every refugee status determination. As the time is given to refugees to provide proof of whether they qualify for refugee status, the Home Affairs Department or any other department concerned with refugees should give benefit of doubt regarding the credibility of the history and in the meantime provide food, clothing and protection to them.

A special and major programme for rehabilitation, reconstruction and healing will be needed in post-genocide Rwanda. The challenges are immense and particularly daunting. This will require very strong commitment and support from the Rwandan government and the international community. NGOs in conjunction with the UNHCR and other organizations for example, UNICEF should collaborate to provide education to child

refugees/returnees. UNHCR resources should be dedicated to more vigorously and strategically pursue resettlement for refugees/returnees without local integration prospects. This can be achieved through consolidation of funds from different sources to set up schools and vocational training to improve their skills. NGOs and the UNHCR should provide more funds for purposes of promoting and developing the self-help projects which generates income to cater for the needs of refugees/returnees to promote their welfare. The role of government is central in scaling up the response to returnees needs. The government should respond to the various returnees' needs, to ensure a long term response to the vulnerabilities that drive from poverty and poor development. It is crucial that the UNHCR and the government understand their core mandate roles and responsibilities as service providers (Harrell-Bond, 1986: 187).

The government should put emphasis in promoting the peace education from primary level up to high institutions of learning. There should be a curriculum in the context of peace education. Teachers should address students on issues regarding conflict, violence and war being destructive and peace as useful for peoples' wellbeing and development. They should be taught not to be destructive and resort to killing in case of a war break out. Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that peace education can construct and change their violence thinking to peace making. Peace education is seen by those affected by conflicts as an early focus for reconstruction as it may promote peace and reconciliation, both through teaching of the intended curriculum and in the ways school systems operate (Williams, 2005: 240). Increasing awareness through peace education should emphasis non-violence means of solving conflicts. Reardon (1999: 31-32) argues that:

The development of learning that will enable humankind to renounce the institution of war and replace it with institutions more consistent with the visions and values being articulated in the body of international standards ... remains the core of the peace education task.

Recommendations to African Union/NEPAD

The AU should deal with the underlying causes of mass refugee flight by ensuring that governments are more aware of human rights abuses and political upheaval that affect the increase in refugee flows. Attempts must be made to hold governments more accountable through action and intervention before crises erupt. There is enough evidence from this study that many cases of refugees have been precipitated by political, economic and ethnic factors. The use of political skills in negotiations and other means of resolving conflicts must be preferred to using coercive means to bring about social change. This can be done by ensuring that States comply with AU refugee resolutions. Various measures should be used to sensitize African leaders to change their attitudes to resolving conflicts by dialogue. Although African leaders see adherence to international refugee law as a remedy to the protection of refugees, I believe that the international refugee law, especially the principle of non-refoulement, has been violated and most refugees have been forcefully returned. The hallmark of the repatriation exercise should be safety of the refugees, their dignity and voluntarism. The UNHCR and the host government must move to a system of impartiality where all refugees matter equally and they must consent whether to return or not. Repatriation should be viewed as a means rather than an end to the refugee problems in African.

William's excellent case study of "Never Again" should such catastrophe of genocide happen in Rwanda. The AU should strive to ensure that such catastrophe should never happen again in any other part of the African continent. Mechanisms of peace making and building should be promoted at early stages of conflict to avert the war breaking. Power sharing and open democracy should be promoted to eliminate the government's elements of exclusion of opponents. The quest for peace in most conflict prone countries should be a key component of AU political strategies as an aggregate goal to end the plight of refugees that enormously impact African countries development.

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Appendix 1

Interview guide to be used with flexibility with returning Rwandan refugees

- 1) When did you leave Rwanda?
- 2) What made you leave Rwanda as your motherland country?
- 3) Which country did you go to after fleeing Rwanda?
- 4) What were your experiences in the country of exile?
- 5) What prompted you coming back to Rwanda?
- 6) What were your expectations on returning to Rwanda?
- 7) Do you get any assistance from the UNHCR? (In-depth exploration)
- 8) What are the main difficulties/problems facing you as a returning refugee? (In-depth exploration of difficulties/problems)
- 9) What are your main sources of support?

Interview guide to be used with flexibility with UNHCR key informants

1. What is the role of your organisation in supporting returnees?
2. What services do you provide to facilitate the social and economic reintegration of returning refugees?
3. What are the major challenges facing returning refugees?
4. What are the main challenges or rewards of working with refugees?
5. What is the relationship between UNHCR and the Government in working on the re-integration of refugees? What are some of the challenges/strengths of working with government?

Interview guide to be used with flexibility with key informants from government

- 1) What mechanism and policies have you put in place to help returning refugees?

- 2) What role have you played in the reintegration of returnees?
- 3) How do you handle the issue of returnees who participated in the genocide?
- 4) Do returnees get equal opportunities in respect of services such as education, health, welfare, housing and employment compared with other Rwandese nationals?
- 5) Are there returnees you have identified that have gone back to exile and if yes why and what mechanisms have you put in place to stop this?
- 6) What is your relationship with UNHCR? What are some of the challenges/strengths of working with UNHC

Appendix 2



9 November 2005

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Madam/Sir

Re: Mr Benon Kabeera: Student Number: 204514663

This is to confirm that Mr Kabeera is a registered student for the Master of Social Science degree in the School of Social Work and Community Development at the University of KwaZulu Natal. He is required to complete a research dissertation. His research project is titled: ***The experiences and needs of returning refugees to Kigali, Rwanda and the role of the United Nations High Commission (UNHCR) in their repatriation.*** He will be doing his fieldwork in Kigali. His research proposal has been accepted by the Faculty's Higher Degrees Committee and by the Ethics Committee. Mr Kabeera has committed to uphold all ethical requirements in conducting the research.

I will be most grateful if you would facilitate the research process for Mr Kabeera in whatever way possible. I am his University supervisor. Should you need further information you can contact me. My details are as follows:

Telephone: 27 – 31 – 2601241

Fax: 27 - 31 – 2602700

E-mail: Sewpaul@ukzn.ac.za

Thanking you in anticipation for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely

Professor Vishanthie Sewpaul (PhD)
Supervisor & Head of School

School of Social Work & Community Development

Postal Address: Durban 4041, South Africa

Telephone: +27 31 260 2891

Facsimile: +27 31 260 2700

Email: headrick@ukzn.ac.za

Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

Founding Campuses:

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Medical School

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