



# **PROFILE OF INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT : RWANDA**

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Norwegian Refugee Council/Global IDP Project  
Chemin Moïse Duboule, 59  
1209 Geneva - Switzerland  
Tel: + 41 22 788 80 85  
Fax: + 41 22 788 80 86  
E-mail : [idpsurvey@nrc.ch](mailto:idpsurvey@nrc.ch)

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## PROFILE SUMMARY

Seven years after the genocide, 66 percent of the Rwandan population remain under the poverty line and up to 1.5 million people live in inadequate shelters (WFP 4 December 2000 & OCHA 2 February 2001). Many were resettled in 1998-1999 by the Rwanda government in the context of the villagization process and there is a debate at the international level whether they should still be counted as internally displaced (OCHA 18 December 2000, draft).

Over the last decade, Rwanda has suffered repeated waves of displacement. In the wake of the genocide of 1994, up to two million people were displaced. Many stayed within the country but the majority fled to neighboring Zaire (now Democratic Republic of Congo), Burundi and Tanzania. In 1997 members of the army and militia that had fled in 1994 (ex-Far and Interhamwe) launched an insurgency against the Rwandan government in the northern prefectures of Ruhengeri and Gisenyi (HRW 2000). The conflict between insurgents and government forces led many inhabitants to flee their homes at the end of 1997. During 1998 the government moved hundreds of thousands of people into supervised camps in the northwest, as part of its effort to suppress the insurgency (HRW 2000). Later that year, it ordered the dismantlement of the camps and the relocation of the displaced into new villages (OCHA 31 August 2000). It also sent troops to DRC to destroy rebel bases. By late 1999, the Rwandan government had largely put down the insurgency in the northwest but continued to resettle people in new villages as late as mid-2000 (HRW December 2000). Today, Rwanda still maintains a military presence in DRC to prevent Interhamwe attacks into the northwest of Rwanda.

Despite the quelling of the insurgency by the Rwandan government, people have remained in the new villages. It has been claimed that this contravenes Principle 6 (3) of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, according to which displacement shall last no longer than required by the circumstances (WFP June 1999). There is reason to think that people would have wished to go back to their former homes, since a certain degree of coercion seems to have been applied during the villagization process (HRW 2000). Local authorities in several communes reportedly recognized in 1999 that more than half of the resettled population would have preferred to have gone back to their original homes as security improved, but that the army could not (or would not) guarantee their safety (WFP June 1999).

Opinions vary whether people resettled in villages should be viewed as internally displaced or not. USCR stated in June 2000 that the relocation process could be considered a new phase of displacement and gave the figure of 600,000 internally displaced persons, while the United Nations reported by the beginning of 2001 3,760 people as internally displaced, i.e. those recently displaced due to a sudden crisis (USCR 2000 & OCHA 2 February 2001):

- 1,540 IDPs are part of a group of over 40,000 old caseload refugees who were living in a forest in the Gysenyi Prefecture and who are now being resettled by the government. Among these old caseload refugees, the UN considers those resettled in temporary camps as internally displaced;
- 2,220 IDPs are squatting in schools and a health center.

The government first justified the villagization process by pointing out that traditional scattered settlements left people exposed to the action of rebel groups and hindered their access to services such as public education, health, electricity and water (CHR 8 February 1999). Many donors were reluctant however to support villagization programs during the resettlement process, since they remained unclear about the details and potential consequences of this process (IRIN 28 July 1999). International assistance during the resettlement process was not forthcoming beyond the emergency phase, and the internally displaced were resettled allegedly in an unplanned manner, without the required social infrastructure (UNHCR 2000).

There seems to be less criticism now that the process is complete, and villagization was not even mentioned in the UN-facilitated donor meeting by end-2000 (OCHA 20 December 2000). The situation of the resettled people remains difficult however, since villagization often deprived them of access to their land, without compensation (CHR 25 February 2000 & HRW 2000). In the second half of 2000, serious food shortages threatened populations in resettled villages (HRW December 2000).

International agencies and NGOs, like UNICEF, SCF-UK, Oxfam and IRC are now addressing the water and sanitation needs of the relocated people, though only a limited number of programs are in full operation. WFP has a project to encourage the long-term resettlement of refugees and internally displaced persons (WFP 4 December 2000). However, Rwanda no longer seems able to attract the level of financial support it received in the aftermath of the genocide, despite an immense need for shelter and infrastructure, especially in the resettlement sites. (CHR 25 February 2000 & OCHA 2 February 2001). A multi-agency pre-mission including UN, NGO and government representatives went to Rwanda in February 2001 to examine the conflict-related needs not fully addressed by humanitarian assistance, such as human settlement and access to land (OCHA 6 March 2001). The UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Rwanda has also expressed concerns that the reintegration needs of large numbers of Rwandans have not been sufficiently addressed and that there is a danger that people who are still in desperate needs will not be reached (CHR 21 March 2001).

(May 2001)

# CAUSES AND BACKGROUND OF DISPLACEMENT

## Background and History of the conflict

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### Ethnic background

- Population comprising 85% Hutu, 14% Tutsi and 1% Twa

"Rwanda is among the most densely populated countries in the world and also one of the poorest, with a predominantly agricultural economy, which even before the genocide could not sufficiently feed its population. Some have argued that the struggle for extremely scarce resources partly contributed to ethnic strife and genocide in Rwanda, and continues to undermine any prospect of reconciliation." (CHR 8 February 1999, para. 53)

"The population is divided into three groups: the Hutu, the Tutsi and the Twa. Rwandan society is characterized by a rigid Hutu-Tutsi cleavage. The Hutus (85%) constitute the vast majority of the population who are mainly peasants cultivating the soil; the Tutsis (14%) are mostly cattle-herders representing a different racial stock than the local peasants; and the Twas (1%) are pygmies who either lived as hunter-gatherers in the forested areas or served high-ranking personalities and the King in a variety of menial tasks. There is no clearly defined territory for either the Hutus or the Tutsis, thus creating a lack of territoriality." (UNHCR December 1998, para. 2.1)

### The influence of colonial powers to shape ethnicity (1860-1959)

- Tutsi dominated structure since the mid-nineteenth century
- German and later Belgian colonial powers reinforced Tutsi domination

"Clan hierarchies rather than ethnicity, however, characterized Rwanda's social structure until the mid-nineteenth century, when the Tutsi king, Kigeri Rwabugiri (1860-95), assumed the throne. It was he who molded Rwanda into a Tutsi dominated structure to consolidate his own power.

The fact that in both Rwanda and Burundi the Hutu represented the majority of the population did not deter German colonialists from perpetuating Tutsi domination when Germany established rule over the territory in 1899. On the contrary, Germany - as Belgium would do later from 1916 virtually to 1959 - fostered Tutsi dominance as a means of maintaining control." (Minear and Kent 1998, p.60)

"The patterns of domination/subordination between these two major ethnic groups were strengthened by the European perception with its corresponding belief in the natural



superiority of the Tutsis. As a result, this perception had at least three important impacts on the historical evolution of Rwanda. First, it conditioned the views and attitudes of the Europeans regarding Rwandan social groups. Second, it governed the decisions made by the German and Belgian colonial authorities. And, third, it had a profound impact on both ethnic groups in inflating the Tutsi cultural ego inordinately and insulting Hutu feelings until they coalesced into an aggressively resentful inferiority complex." (UNHCR December 1998, para. 2.1)

### **Following decolonization period, power to the Hutu majority (1959-1993)**

- 1959: massacres of hundreds of Tutsi and flight of tens of thousands more across the border
- 1963: establishment of the Republic of Rwanda
- 600'000 Tutsi sought refuge in neighbouring countries during 3 distinct crises (in 1959-61, 1963-64 and 1973)
- 1973: Coup d'etat of Juvenal Habyarimana
- 1990: creation of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) by Tutsi and incursions into Rwanda from Uganda
- 1993: Signing of Arusha peace Agreement between Rwandan government and RPF

### ***Events leading to Rwanda's independence***

"In the decolonizing atmosphere of the late 1950s, the Tutsi grip on the country began to erode and Belgium shifted its support to the increasingly vociferous Hutu majority. Nineteen fifty-nine was a catalytic year in the modern history of Rwanda. It was the year of the jacquerie, or 'peasants' revolts' of Hutu against Tutsi, and also the year that Belgium for all intents and purposes, adopted a pro-Hutu policy. That year and those events were also marked by another catalytic moment - the massacre of hundreds of Tutsi and the flight of tens of thousands more across the border." (Minear and Kent 1998, p.60)

"The period 1959-1961 was a period marked by violence and revolution leading to Rwanda's independence. Gregoire Kayibanda, a leading Hutu intellectual, was the chief editor of [...] the most widely read journal in Rwanda at the time. He created the Movement Social Muhutu (MSM) in June 1957. The MSM was instrumental in orchestrating the revolution against the colonial rule. [...] In the early 1960s, Kayibanda transformed his movement and the Rwandese Democratic Movement/Party of the Movement and of Hutu Emancipation (MDR-PARMEHUTU) was consequently born. [...] In 1961, MDR-PARMEHUTU, with the support of Belgium, toppled the monarchy in a coup d'etat. The party won legislative elections in 1963, establishing the Republic of Rwanda (UNHCR December 1998, para. 2.3)

"The years between 1959 and 1973 were punctuated by at least three distinct and bloody crises (in 1959-61, 1963-64 and 1973) during which approximately 600,000 Tutsi sought refuge in neighbouring countries. And although there was a discernible trend by the government of Rwanda to lay the foundation for some kind of accommodation between Tutsi (both within and outside the country) and the majority Hutu, government-

perpetuated exclusion and demographic reality gave the minority Tutsi little cause for relief." (Minear and Kent 1998, p.60)

### ***The coup d'Etat of 1973 and its aftermath***

"In 1973, Juvenal Habyarimana, the army Chief of Staff, a Hutu by origin, mounted a successful coup d'état against President Kayibanda. He then proclaimed a second republic and established a military administration under his presidency. He outlawed all political parties and in 1974 created his own political party: the National Revolutionary Movement for Development (MRND) with the army, Forces Armées Rwandaises (FAR). On 5 July 1991, the MRND transformed its party and became the National Revolutionary Movement for Development and Democracy (MRNDD)." (UNHCR December 1998, para. 2.3)

"The sense of Tutsi frustration and hopelessness was in no small part the result of the Rwandan government's lackluster efforts to deal with the issue of Tutsi roles and rights in Rwanda. This failure in turn explains to a significant extent the motivation that led eventually to the creation of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) and its military wing, the Rwandese Patriotic Army (RPA), as well as to the onset of civil war. Between 1990 and 1994, the RPF launched incursions into the country's northwestern and northeastern prefectures from Uganda in order to deal with what was called 'the refugee crisis' - that is, the determination of the Rwandan refugees to return to their homes." (Minear and Kent 1998, p.61)

"[The RPF] was first led by Major-General Fred Rwigyema who was killed in a battle in late 1990. Major-General Paul Kagame took the leadership of the RPF. In 1993, the RPF made its advance on Kigali but was stopped by the Rwandese army who received support from the French military advisers to the Government of Rwanda. The Habyarimana regime, with the support from France, struggled for survival. War and violence continued in Rwanda until August 1993 when the Arusha Peace Agreement was signed between the Government of Rwanda and the RPF." (UNHCR December 1998, para. 2.3)

### **Massive displacement in the wake of the Genocide of 1994**

- Killing of President Habyarimana in a plane crash on April 6, 1994
- 500'000 to 800'000 people killed by ordinary men and women, and by Hutu militia
- War re-started as the RPF resumed their military operations on 8 April 1994
- Following the proclamation of a new government, 1.2 to 1.5 million internally displaced fled to the zone turquoise established by the French government
- When Opération turquoise ended in August 1994, some 390,000 internally displaced remained in 33 camps

"[T]he [Arusha Peace] agreement was rejected by radical elements in both the government and rebel movement, and Rwanda became embroiled in an increasingly disruptive civil war [...]. The country was plunged further into crisis on 6 April 1994, when presidents Juvenal Habyarimana of Rwanda and Cyprien Ntaryamira of Burundi

were killed in a plane crash. Ironically, the two leaders were returning from a peace conference in the Tanzanian capital of Dar-es-Salaam, which had been convened to discuss the implementation of a power-sharing plan in both countries.

While the cause of the plane crash remains unknown, it is clear that detailed preparations had already been made in Rwanda for the massacre of the Tutsi population and moderate Hutus. In attacks of indescribable brutality, committed by ordinary men and women as well as Hutu militia, at least 500,000 people are believed to have been killed. Some commentators put the figure much higher." (UNHCR 1995).

"The Joint Evaluation Report [of Emergency Assistance] estimates that 500,000 to 800,000 people were killed. The historian G. Prunier provided a figure of 800,000 to 850,000 Tutsis, including 10,000 - 30,000 Hutus." (UNHCR December 1998, para. 2.4).

"[T]he non-governmental organization (NGO) Minority Rights Group International [...] estimates that 500,000 Tutsi had perished, and that the Twa minority had been victimized by both Hutus and Tutsi. It would thus appear that the proportion of Tutsi had fallen to under 5 per cent of the population and that the Twa minority had become still smaller than it had been." (UN HCHR 21 March 2000, para. 7)

"The organizers of the genocide consisted of the regime's political, military and economic elite who had decided through a mixture of ideological and material motivation to resist political change which they perceived as threatening after the death of President Habyarimana. [...] Although the vast majority of victims were people of Tutsi origin, the perpetrators of the violence also targeted moderate Hutu leaders - militants or sympathizers of the opposition, including journalists, professionals and academics. [...]

War re-started as the RPF resumed their military operations on 8 April 1994. The magnitude of the violence in Rwanda reached its peak when 250,000 Hutu refugees crossed the Kagera River between Rwanda and Tanzania [on 28 and 29 April] as the RPF moved into western Rwanda and army resistance collapsed. The organizers of the genocide organized a mass evacuation of the Hutu population. Around 1.75 million people - including members of the former regime and army - moved to the neighbouring countries of former Zaire, Tanzania and Burundi. As the Hutus were leaving, approximately 700,000 Tutsi refugees - including children who had been born in exile - returned to Rwanda. These are people who had been mostly in Uganda for many years and whose repatriation had been blocked by the Hutu regime in Kigali. The 1994 genocide also created many hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs) throughout Rwanda. The World Refugee Survey estimated that nearly a half million were internally displaced." (UNHCR December 1998, para. 2.4)

"By 4 July 1994, the French government created Opération turquoise - a 'safe humanitarian zone' in Rwanda's southwest corner, equivalent to about one-fifth of the national territory. At the RPF's proclamation of a new government in 19 July, roughly 1.2 to 1.5 million IDPs had fled to this zone, most of whom had escaped the advance of the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) in June and July. Many of these people subsequently fled

to their homes or dispersed elsewhere in the country. As the deadline for French withdrawal drew near, a collaborative effort between political, military and international humanitarian organizations successfully encouraged a significant number of displaced persons in the southwest to remain in Rwanda, rather than continue their flight abroad. When Opération turquoise ended on 21 August, some 390,000 IDPs remained in 33 camps." (Kleine-Ahlbrandt 1998, p.69)

"Assiduously encouraged by the retreating government, the exodus from Rwanda was in effect a calculated evacuation of the Hutu population. With a large proportion of the Tutsis already massacred, the victorious RPF was to be left in control of a state with a severely depleted population, as well as a hostile body of exiles, including the defeated army and militia, massed on the country's borders. Underlining the strategic nature of the movement, members of the ousted administration quickly asserted control over the refugee camps and established a dominant role in the distribution of aid." (UNHCR 1995)

*For more detailed information on internal displacement in Rwanda in 1994, please check the ["Report on Internally Displaced Persons: Note on the mission to Rwanda of the Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Francis Deng" 1995 \[Internet\]](#)*

*For more information on the UN response in 1994, see the ["December 1999 Report of the independent inquiry into the actions of the UN during the genocide" \[Internet\]](#)*

### **Insurgency in the northwest of Rwanda (1996-1998)**

- In 1996 and 1997, Rwanda supported an insurgency in DR Congo against the Mobutu government but split from the Kabila government in 1998 when DRC's President failed to expel Hutu militias
- Interahamwe soldiers returning from Congo in 1996 used Ruhengeri as a base to launch an insurgency against the Rwandan government in 1997
- In the first part of 1998, the RPA used brutal tactics and killed hundreds of civilians while fighting the insurgency
- In the second part of 1998, the Government cultivated the support of the population and hundreds of thousands of civilians consequently returned home
- Insurgents committed hundreds of killings in pursuit of their genocidal ideology and to undermine confidence in the government's ability to protect the population

"In 1996, Rwandan troops helped Zairean Tutsi overthrow the Zairean government in the first DRC war, in the process dispersing the camps, massacring tens of thousands of unarmed civilians, and killing thousands of soldiers and militia. Some 600,000 camp residents returned to Rwanda, where some of them launched an insurgency that posed a serious threat to the current government by mid-1997." (HRW 2000, para. 3)

**1997** - Rwandan- and Ugandan-backed rebels depose President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire; Laurent Kabila becomes president of Zaire, which is renamed the Democratic Republic of Congo.

**1998** - Rwanda switches allegiance to support rebel forces trying to depose Kabila in the wake of the Congolese president's failure to expel extremist Hutu militias." (BBC News 10 May 2001)

"Ruhengeri Prefecture, in the northwest of Rwanda, was the stronghold of the radical Hutu factions that created Interahamwe, responsible for carrying out the 1994 war and genocide. When refugees who had fled to the Democratic Republic of Congo (then Zaire) returned to Rwanda in 1996, large numbers of Interahamwe soldiers re-entered with them. Using Ruhengeri as a base, they renewed their campaign to destabilise Rwanda. Fighting between Interahamwe militia members and the Rwandan government in 1997-1998 caused extensive displacement of families in Ruhengeri who abandoned their homes and fields in large numbers." (SCF 19 May 1999, "Background")

"The post-genocide Rwandan government had long made it abundantly clear that it would not forever tolerate the camps of eastern Zaire being used as launching pads for the genocidaires' return." (OAU 7 July 2000, E.S.56)

"Killings were more frequent during the first half of the year [1998] when the RPA conducted massive operations in heavily infiltrated areas of Gisenyi, Ruhengeri, and Gitarama prefectures. The number of killings decreased during the second half of the year, as the RPA gained the upper hand against insurgents and undertook efforts to win the support of the local population. The RPA acknowledged that soldiers had difficulty distinguishing civilians from the insurgents, many of whom do not wear uniforms. [...]

Insurgent militias, which included members of the ex-FAR and Interahamwe gangs and some former refugees, committed hundreds of killings both for political reasons and in pursuit of their genocidal ideology. They also sought to create panic and undermine confidence in the Government's ability to protect the population." (U.S. DOS 26 February 1999)

"Some of the worst massacres have taken place in transit camps housing these refugees and returnees. Hutus who failed to support the insurgents' agenda have been deemed 'traitors' and murdered, particularly government officials. Rather than face head-on the militarily superior forces of the Rwandese Patriotic Army (RPA), the insurgents favour guerrilla-style hit-and-run tactics. They have created a regime of terror; the people of Ruhengeri and Gisenyi are living on the frontline.

The insurgents aim to prevent the government from functioning in the region by paralysing state institutions, spreading panic and causing loss of confidence in the state. [...] The insurgents' leaders are soldiers of the Rwandese Armed Forces (FAR) of the previous regime who also held important positions in the military structure set up in the refugee camps in the DRC. For weapons, financial assistance, political and diplomatic support, they rely on their close ties with leaders of the former government, now in exile." (African Rights 2000, "Regime of Terror")

## **Stabilization at the national level but continued intervention in DR Congo (1999-2001)**

- By late 1999, the Rwandan government had largely put down the insurgency in the northwest
- Election of new President in April 2000 and extension of transition period
- Few insurgent attacks in 2000
- United Nations Panel accused Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi of looting DRC's mineral wealth in April 2001, which was denied by the targeted parties

**1999** "The five-year transitional period for recovery from genocide expired on 19 July 1999. This was extended by the Government of Rwanda for another four years on the grounds that more time is needed to promote reconciliation and complete drafting of a new constitution." (CHR 25 February 2000, para.45)

**"2000 March** - Rwandan President Pasteur Bizimungu, a Hutu, resigns over differences regarding the composition of a new cabinet and after accusing parliament of targeting Hutu politicians in anti-corruption investigations.

**2000 April** - Ministers and members of parliament elect Vice-President Paul Kagame as Rwanda's new president.

**2000 November** - International donors, meeting in Kigali to discuss aid to Rwanda, urge the country to withdraw its troops from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

**2001 February** - President Kagame says Rwandan troops are ready to leave the DR Congo key border town of Pweto, but only on the condition that United Nations military observers moved in. " (BBC News 10 May 2001)

"By late 1999, the Rwandan government had largely put down an insurgency which had operated out of northwestern Rwanda and adjacent areas of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) for the past eighteen months. In doing so, its troops killed tens of thousands of people, many of them civilians, and forced hundreds of thousands of Rwandans to move into government-established 'villages.' The Rwandan government had invaded the DRC in mid-1998, purportedly to ensure its security, but after having destroyed rebel bases near the border, it sent troops hundreds of miles into Congolese territory. As Rwanda scrambled to control Congolese territory and resources, its troops clashed repeatedly with soldiers of its erst-while ally, Uganda." (HRW 2000, para. 1)

"[The decrease of the level of violence may also] partly be due to some preventive and punitive measures which the Government in Kigali has taken in some cases regarding crimes committed by the military. There is a Military Prosecutor's Office (Auditorat militaire) and it endeavours to act as a deterrent to those in the military who disregard authorized modes of conduct. These measures are being taken alongside sensitization programmes, investigation and prosecution of cases and the punishment of the culprits. The setting up of the National Human Rights Commission and the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission will further improve the situation." (CHR 8 February 1999, para. 19)

"The improvement in the security situation in the northwest led to a corresponding decline in alleged reprisals by the RPA; however, there were reports of incursions and murders by armed infiltrators in the northwest, some of whom were ex-FAR or Interahamwe." (U.S. DOS February 2001, Sect.1.a)

"The security situation has improved tremendously since last year [2000]. However, recent reports in the northwest indicate that on Sunday [20 May 2001] there was an attack in some sectors of districts of Buhoma and Kinigi, Mutobo of Ruhengeri Province. Earlier yesterday official public reports indicated that the number of attackers was about 70. [...] The ministry in charge of national security says the rebels have been contained." (Gatari 22 May 2001)

"Despite very improved security conditions within Rwanda, the Great Lakes Region remains one of potential insecurity and turbulence. The continued presence of *Interhamwe* and Rwandan Army groups in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has perpetuated conflicts which threaten Rwanda's internal security and western border. Similar but lesser threats are to be found along the border with Tanzania. Ongoing insecurity continues to pose threats of upheavals similar to those seen in Rwanda in 1994." (IFRC 15 January 2001)

***2001 April- United Nations Panel accuses Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi of looting DRC's mineral wealth***

"A report commissioned by U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan released this week said combatants' looting of the mineral wealth of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) had helped to fuel the many-sided war that began in 1998.

The Rwandan government said the report aimed to smear Rwanda's army and top leadership [...].

The panel called on the Security Council to impose bans on timber, diamond, gold and other exports from Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi, such as coltan, a mineral used in products including cell phones and nuclear reactors. It also called for suspension of aid to the three countries from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund." (Reuters 17 April 2001)

***Rwandan President Paul Kagame also stated in April that:*** "Rwanda will not withdraw from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) as long as its security is threatened." (PANA 9 April 2001)

***To view the UN SC condemnation of the illegal exploitation of DR Congo's natural resources, see [[External Link](#)]***

***To view the reaction of the government of Rwanda to the report of the panel of experts on the illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth of the DR Congo, see [[External Link](#)]***

## **Rwandan Government and International Tribunal are still prosecuting perpetrators of the 1994 genocide (2000-2001)**

- As a consequence of the genocide about 102,000 persons are still held in often overcrowded jails and cachots
- 400-500 minors were released from prison in December 2000
- A new system of community justice- Gataca- is being developed to speed up judicial procedure
- At the international level, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution creating the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in November 1994

### ***At the national level***

***According to the UN Special Representative on the human rights situation in Rwanda,*** "There are still some 92,000 detainees in prisons and 20,000 in cachots in Rwanda. Of these, some 3,400 are women and 3,500 minors (under the age of 18 at the time of allegedly committing the crime). According to UNICEF, approximately 106 children under the age of 3 are also with their detained mothers. It is clear that for a country as small as Rwanda, with limited resources, this presents an enormous challenge to the authorities and it is well known that the conditions in Rwanda's prisons and cachots need considerable improvement.

The Government has accelerated its efforts to release detainees without files, to regularize files, and to reduce the numbers held in communal cachots by transferring them to prisons. Therefore, whilst the overall figure for detainees in prisons has not changed compared with a year ago, the overall number in both prisons and cachots has been reduced considerably with the emptying of some cachots. Since December 1999 the number of detainees in cachots has fallen by approximately 10,000 and the number of cachots has been reduced from about 133 to 95. The Special Representative also notes with satisfaction that whereas over 5,000 detainees were released during 2000, there were only 2,500 new arrests. This is a positive evolution, and **the process of emptying the cachots must be a priority, to be supported by the international community.**

**Minors in detention.** The Special Representative was pleased to be informed by the Minister of Justice last October of the Government's decision to release all children under 14 at the time of allegedly committing crimes. Between 400 and 500 minors were consequently released in December. [...] The Special Representative was concerned to hear, however, that there are still a few hundred minors who were under 14 at the time of allegedly committing a crime still in detention owing to difficulties in determining their true age. During discussions with the Minister of Justice, the Special Representative was promised that every effort would be made to identify and release these outstanding cases. Another difficulty is that many of the minors in detention have incomplete files. **According to UNICEF, only approximately 35 per cent of minors in detention have complete files. The Special Representative urges the Government to treat this question as a matter of the highest priority.**



As for the estimated 3,500 minors who were between the ages of 14 and 18 at the time of allegedly committing crimes, the Minister stated that their cases will have priority. It is uncertain at this stage whether these cases will be tried under the classic system (where their sentences would be halved), or under gacaca (where the sentences would be halved and the minors would also be able to spend half their sentences performing community service). The latter scenario may be preferable, but obviously this would depend on the speed with which gacaca comes into effect." (CHR 21 March 2001, para. 27-30)

"Rwanda's Minister for Internal Affairs, Theobald Rwaka, has dismissed reports by a human rights group, LIPRODHOR, on the living conditions at Nstinda prison in Kibungo prefecture, southeastern Rwanda [...]. LIPRODHOR's report indicated that the prison was overcrowded, leading to inmates dying of suffocation and acute food shortages. It also said that men and women were being housed in the same facility and that there was poor sanitation." (IRIN 8 Feb 2001, "Rwanda: Minister...")

"Harsh prisons conditions contributed to the deaths of approximately 1,100 inmates during the year. Some deaths in custody were due to abuse by corrupt prison officials." (U.S. DOS February 2001, Sect.1.a)

#### ***Gacaca courts***

"The Rwandan government plans to create some 11,000 grassroots courts with between 250,000 and 300,000 elected judges when it launches the gacaca project, the independent Hirondele news agency reports. Gacaca courts are set to be based on traditional justice, whose revival and activation have been approved by Rwanda's parliament and constitutional court. The plan was published in the official gazette of 15 March, 2001, which meant that it had now come into force, Hirondele said. The government hopes that gacaca will help resolve Rwanda's chronic problem of prison overcrowding, promote national reconciliation and expedite trials. At the current rate of about 1,000 per year, dealing with all genocide and crimes against humanity cases would take more than a century." (IRIN 2 May 2001, "Rwanda: Logistics")

#### ***International level***

In November 8 1994, eighteen months after the international tribunal for the former Yugoslavia had been established [...], the Security Council adopted resolution 955 (1994) creating the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. In this resolution, it decided "to establish an international tribunal for the sole purpose of prosecuting persons responsible for genocide and other serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in the territory of Rwanda and Rwandan citizens responsible for genocide and other such violations committed in the territory of neighboring States". (UNHCHR 1995)

***Please visit the official website of the International Criminal tribunal for information on its establishment in 1994 and on the suspects brought to trial [\[Internet\]](#)***

## Causes of displacement

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### **Massive internal displacement due to armed conflict between insurgent and government forces in the northwest (1997-1998)**

- Intensification of armed conflict between insurgency and government forces caused significant internal displacement in the Ruhengeri and Gisenyi Prefectures in 1997
- Whole communities have gone missing following armed clashes between RPA soldiers and armed opposition groups
- By November 1998, violence in the northwest had caused the internal displacement of 630,000 persons
- Internal displacement in the north-west was not only due to insecurity, but was also the result of coercion and political strategy

"New patterns of internal displacement have occurred in Rwanda in 1997 totalling 180,000 IDPs. Significant displacement occurred at the end of the year in the northwest regions of Gisenyi and Ruhengeri, due to the intensification of armed conflict between members of armed groups comprised of certain members of the Rwandese armed forces (ex-FAR) and the Inerahamwe militia, and counterinsurgency operations by the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA). The local people have been caught in the middle of the conflict since both armies seek the support of the local population, making it difficult for civilians to remain neutral. While some attacks are indiscriminate, armed groups have targeted returnees, genocide survivors, local civilian authorities and persons considered to be collaborating with the RPA. These attacks are often followed by RPA counterinsurgency operations resulting in high numbers of civilian casualties. Much of the population is therefore disillusioned with the possibility of being protected by the RPA. Thousands of people have left rural areas and outlying sectors to seek safety closer to communal offices and urban locations. (Kleine-Ahlbrandt 1998, p.72)

"[A]n estimated several thousand people - sometimes whole communities - have gone missing following armed clashes between RPA soldiers and armed opposition groups, or attacks by either side. A number of villages in Gisenyi and Ruhengeri have been left uninhabited. Many of these people may have been displaced by the armed conflict, which is causing thousands to flee from their homes. Some flee in anticipation of likely attacks on their village; others escape in the midst of attacks or fighting. Some have probably 'disappeared'. However, given the widespread insecurity and difficulties of access, it is virtually impossible to ascertain whether and which of the inhabitants have been 'disappeared', killed - and if so, by whom -, arrested, or are in hiding. Others may have been taken hostage by armed groups." (AI 1998, "Introduction")

"WFP Kigali estimated in 1998 that between 100,000 and 250,000 persons were unaccounted for out of a population of some 1.5 million in the two prefectures of Gisenyi and Ruhengeri. What little evidence there is suggests that atrocities were carried out by both sides in the conflict."(WFP June 1999, pp.2-3)

"[...] Government authorities estimated in November that 630,000 people were internally displaced. A UN official stated that 'we have no reason to dispute [the government's] figures' within a 10 percent margin of error.

The rapid increase in displaced people surprised many observers. Rwandan government officials claimed that the displacement indicated that local residents in the northwest had turned against the insurgents and were seeking government protection. Some observers said that violence had disrupted farming activities, creating a food shortage that drove many people off their land." (USCR 1999, pp.81-82)

"Internal displacement in north-west Rwanda cannot be regarded simply as the spontaneous flight of people caught in conflict. In addition to fear and insecurity caused by the destruction of homes and crops, it is also the result of persuasion, coercion, intimidation and political strategy employed by one side or the other in a protracted war. One of the remarkable characteristics of Rwanda is the discipline - some would say passivity - of a population that continues to be exploited by the more powerful sections of society." (WFP June 1999, p.2)

#### **Internal Displacement caused by the resettlement policy of villagization (end 1998-1999)**

- As security improved, the government ordered the displaced to relocate to officially designated villages
- Villagization program appeared to be meant primarily to reduce likelihood of new insurgency
- Many aid workers claimed that massive displacement was due to the Government's efforts to depopulate the northwest countryside

"As security improved, government land-use policies became the primary cause of population displacement." (USCR 2000, "Uprooted Rwandans")

"The Government of Rwanda has been regrouping rural populations of the north-west in grouped settlements, as opposed to the traditional patterns of scattered settlements which leave the people exposed to the action of the rebel groups, while making difficult their access to services such as public education and health, electricity and water. Such a policy may be viewed as serving the strategic military interests of the Government and it is strongly reminiscent of the villagization and strategic hamlet policies which have been criticized in other countries, especially for their coercive character. At the same time, the Rwandan authorities maintain that such settlements are more conducive to development than the traditional patterns. There are reports of coercion to join these settlements, though others maintain that the people join of their own free will and that in any case they remain within their own communes. The reality is probably a mixture of the two." (CHR 8 February 1999, para.25)

"At the end of 1998, the government ordered the displaced to relocate once more, this time to officially designated 'villages.' Since 1995, the government had been resettling Rwandans returned from outside the country and the internally displaced in 'villages,'

refusing to allow them to live in the dispersed homes customary in Rwanda. They insisted that villagisation would promote economic development and improve delivery of services to the population. As applied in the northwest, however, the program appeared to be meant primarily to reduce the likelihood of a new insurgency. By late 1999, 94 percent of the population of Kibungo and 60 percent of the population of Mutara, both prefectures in the east, had been moved into villages, as had 40 percent of the population of the prefecture surrounding the capital of Kigali. In addition 94 percent of the people of the northwest who had been in camps had been moved into villages and others, still in their own homes, had been ordered to destroy them and move to the new sites, where they were obliged to live in temporary shelters, under plastic sheeting, while building new houses. Persons who resisted these orders were fined or imprisoned. Despite government promises, most sites offered no services (water, schools, clinics) and residents often had to walk much farther to cultivate their fields." (HRW 2000, "Human Rights Developments")

"Many aid workers attributed the massive displacement to the Rwandan government's efforts to depopulate the northwest countryside in order to deprive the insurgents of food and other support. Authorities deliberately moved many rural residents from their homes and relocated them to designated sites; some families moved to the sites voluntarily, others relocated involuntarily. Government authorities indicated that some relocation sites would become permanent new villages, moving people out of their traditional homes. [...] Occupants of displacement camps suffered food shortages and poor medical care, resulting in some deaths. [...] By year's end, thousands of displaced persons were returning home or slowly settling into new home sites. The pattern of population displacement in the northwest remained irregular, up to 85 percent of the residents in some localities reportedly remained uprooted, while in other localities most families remained at their homes." (USCR 1999, p.82)

# POPULATION PROFILE AND FIGURES

## Global Figures

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### Current estimates vary between 0 and 600,000 IDPs

- Since 2000, OCHA only counts as IDPs those recently displaced due to a sudden crisis
- UNHCR also views the relocation of IDPs in villages as permanent resettlement
- USCR viewed in 2000 the relocation process as a new phase of displacement

Estimated number of IDPs	Source
3,760 (as of Jan 2001)	(OCHA 2 February 2001)
0 (as of end of Dec 1999)	(UNHCR June 2000, p.100)
600,000 (as of end of Dec 1999)	(USCR "World Refugee Survey 2000", p.6)

### **OCHA**

*A draft report by OCHA stated in December 2000:* "In some regards, post-genocide Rwanda faces problems similar to the ones of a crisis of internal displacement. However, it would do no justice to the specific context if we were to categorise as Internally Displaced Persons the large number of Rwandans who have been uprooted in subsequent waves of external and internal displacement and are now resettling and reestablishing homes or places of habitual residence. While conditions of return and resettlement are often yet inadequate, governmental and international efforts to stabilize the situation through durable solutions have advanced beyond the threshold of what still could be called internal displacement." (OCHA 18 December 2000)

*In its January 2001 Humanitarian Report on Rwanda, OCHA stated that "are considered IDPs those who have been recently displaced due to a sudden crisis" and that the "other categories (e.g. former resettled but with temporary or no shelter, illegally occupying other people's houses, etc.) are classified as 'affected populations'." According to this definition, the following people are now categorized as internally displaced:*

*1,540 persons are part of a group of over 40,000 caseload refugees who were living in a forest in the Gysenyi Prefecture and who are now being resettled by the Government. Among these old caseload refugees, only those resettled in temporary camps are considered IDPs. The ones permanently resettled by the government are not counted as such;*

*2,220 IDPs were squatting schools and health center in Gisenyi (OCHA 2 February 2001).*

*OCHA also includes people displaced by drought, but the Global IDP Project focuses on people displaced by conflict.*

*At the end of 1999, OCHA still included 150,000 recently relocated people in its statistics of internally displaced and mentioned that these were the people receiving direct humanitarian assistance. (OCHA 24 December 1999, Rwanda). Because of OCHA's apparently more restrictive definition of internally displaced persons, newly relocated persons in 2000 can "no longer be considered as internally displaced since they have all been moved to their 'final location', either their old houses or the imidugudu sites." OCHA however still sees the need to distinguish the newly relocated from the rest of the population: "Nevertheless we [OCHA] still prefer to choose the term newly re-located instead of resettled since a number of sites are lacking basic infrastructure and a large number of families are under plastic sheeting." (OCHA 31 August 2000, pp.2-3)*

*OCHA also reports that "370'000 families - more than 1.5 million people are living in refugee like situation." (OCHA 10 October 2000, p.12) "[This figure] relates to those people who are still living in temporary shelters in conditions of poverty and includes those who have been relocated by the GoR to villages (or Imidugudu)." (OCHA 8 June 2000, Rwanda)*

"Today, the term used is 'people living in inadequate shelters' [instead of 'in refugee like situation] (OCHA 2 February 2001).

***In February 2000, a UN field mission observed the status of "newly displaced populations from Gishwati forest to the communes of Karago and Ciciye, Gisenyi Prefecture, N.W. Rwanda.***

Date of visit: 10.2.00.

Location of field visit:

IDP Camp 1 – GAKAMBA, Secteur Rubare, Commune Giciye.

IDP Camp 2 - KIRAZA, Secteur Rambura, Commune Karago.

Affected population:

Gakamba - 127 families x 5 (average household size) = 635 Estimated total population.

145 Estimated children under 5 years.

31 Estimated pregnant/lactating women.

Kiraza - 405 families x 5 (average household size) = 2,025 Estimated total population.

464 Estimated children under 5 years.

99 Estimated pregnant/lactating women"

(Joint UN/NGO Field Mission Situation Report, February 2000)

### ***UNHCR***

"[According to UNHCR], [t]hanks to improved security in the north-western prefectures, the Government managed to resettle all the IDPs. However, since international assistance was not forthcoming, this group was resettled in an unplanned manner, without the required social infrastructure." (UNHCR June 2000, p.100)

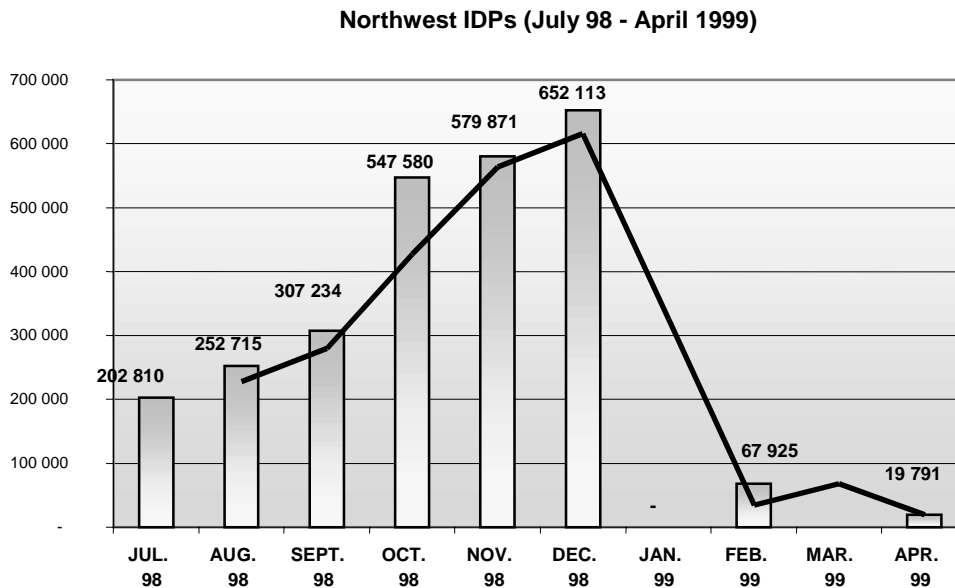
See *UNHCR's 1999 Statistical Overview*, showing that there were no more IDPs in Rwanda at the end of 1999: <http://www.unhcr.ch/statist/99oview/tab103.pdf>

### USCR

For USCR, as of December 31, 1999, there were "600,000 IDPs in Rwanda although a reliable estimate of the number of displaced persons is unavailable." (USCR 2000 "World Refugee Survey 2000", p.6)

### Two peaks of internal displacement in recent history: 1998 and 1994

- Peak of displacement in December 1998 due to conflict in the northwest
- New wave of displacement started in 1997
- Between 500,000 and 628,000 internally displaced persons by the end of 1998
- Immediately after the genocide, 2 million of internally displaced in mid-1994 but number decreased in 1995



(OCHA 31 August 2000, p.1)

"Some 50,000 to 100,000 persons already were internally displaced when 1998 began. Displaced families included Hutu and Tutsi pushed from their homes by violence in the northwest, and former Tutsi refugees who awaited new homes after repatriation. Some lived in camps, but most lived temporarily with relatives or friends until security conditions permitted them to re-occupy their property. [...] The number of displaced people in Northwest Rwanda increased dramatically in the final five months of the year. [...] Government authorities estimated in November that 630,000 people were internally displaced. A UN official stated that 'we have no reason to dispute [the government's] figures' within a 10 percent margin of error." (USCR 1999, pp.81-82)

"By the end of the year the IDP population in the north-west had risen to a massive 650,000, representing 44 percent of the total population (1.48 million) of the two prefectures. Although numbers were notoriously difficult to verify, approximately 450,000 were in 17 makeshift camps (11 in Ruhengeri, six in Gisenyi), with the remaining 200,000 living with friends or relatives or in public buildings." (WFP June 1999, p. 5)

Estimated number of IDPs end 97	Source
50,000	(USCR 1999, 1998 Country Report)

Estimated number of IDPs end 98	Source
500,000	(USCR 1999, p.6)
625,000	(UNHCR July 1999, p.8)
628,000	(OCHA, 8 November 1999)

***Immediately after the genocide, 2 million of internally displaced in mid-1994 but number decreased in 1995***

Year	Estimated number of IDPs	Source
End 1994	1,200,000	(USCR 1995, p.44)
End 1995	500,000	(USCR 1996, p.6)

***1994:***

"The effects of Rwanda's genocide and civil strife were staggering. Out of Rwanda's population of roughly 8 million at the beginning of the 1990s, some 2 million had become displaced within Rwanda's borders during the last eight months of 1994 and close to an additional 2 million had fled as new refugees to neighbouring countries. The displaced included Tutsi, some of whom had remained in Rwanda during the genocide and others of whom were among the 600,000 'old caseload' refugees who entered with the victorious RPF. The displaced also included Hutu, who, as the military and political tide turned, feared reprisals from the new Tutsi regime and army." (Minear and Kent 1998, p.63).

***1995:***

"An estimated one million or more persons were displaced within Rwanda at the start of 1995. Up to 400,000 lived in dozens of camps in the southwest region of the country, where they received assistance from international relief agencies. Rwandan authorities insisted in late 1994 and early 1995 that the camps should close and that camp occupants - virtually all Hutu - could safely return to their homes. [...] In early 1995, the UN and some NGOs attempted to close several camps by stopping food distributions. Some international observers estimated that as many as 40 percent of the individuals who returned home subsequently fled again. [...] In late April [1995], government forces



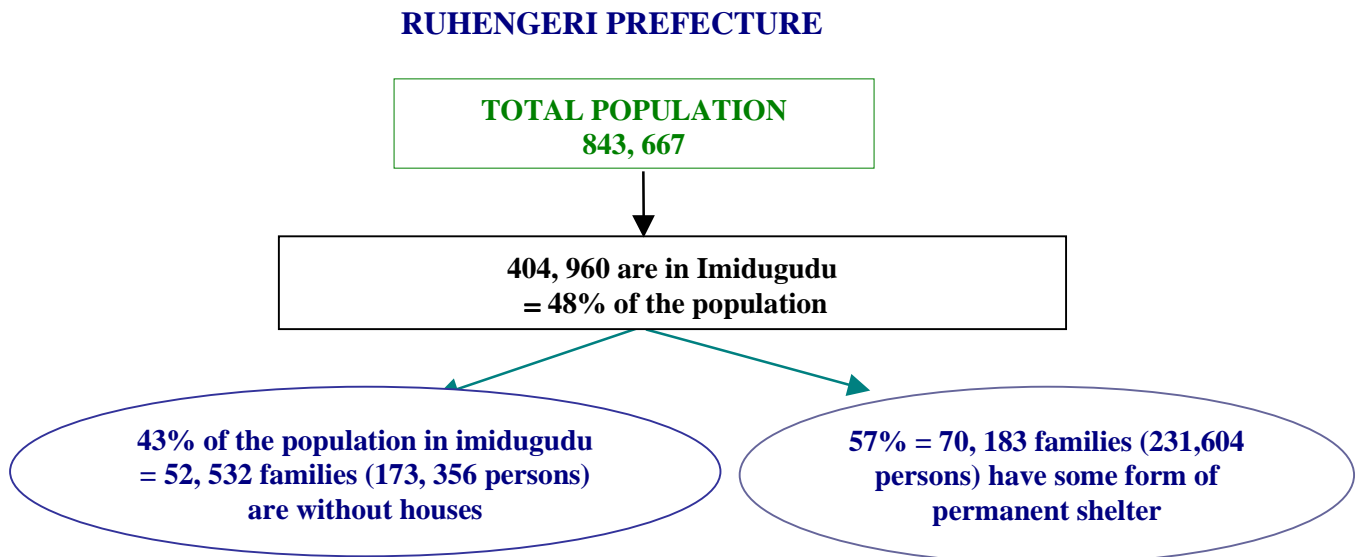
moved forcefully to close the largest remaining camp, Kibeho, which contained some 120,000 residents. The closure degenerated into massive violence. [...] UN Officials estimated 2000 dead. Other international investigators placed the death toll at about 700 persons. [...] The remaining camps for displaced persons officially closed by May 9. [...] Although no sizeable camps existed after May, an estimated 500,000 persons - primarily Tutsi as well as some Hutu - remained internally displaced at year's end." (USCR 1996, p.62)

## Geographical distribution

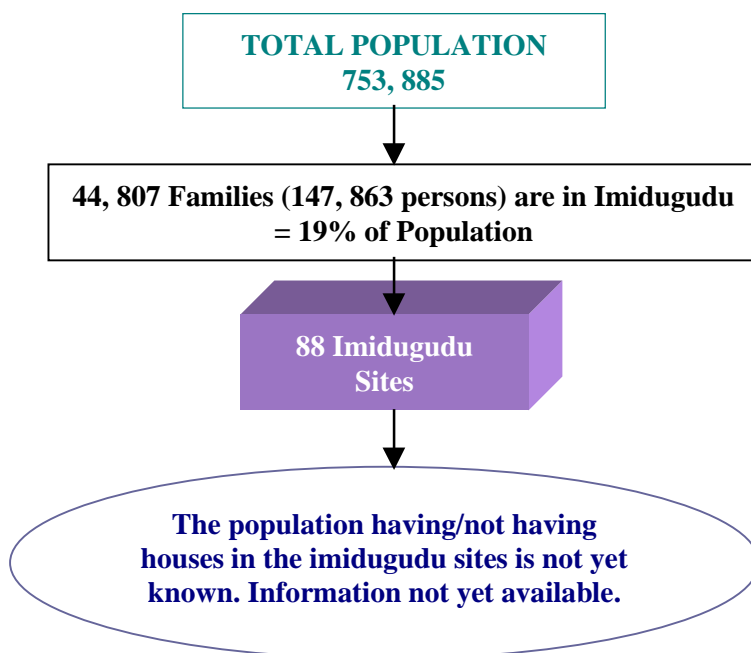
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### Resettlement in Ruhengeri and Gisenyi Prefectures by August 2000

*OCHA states that over 400,000 people had been resettled through the villagization process by August 2000*



### GISENYI PREFECTURE



(OCHA 31 August 2000, p.2)

*Over 365,000 internally displaced in Ruhengeri and 143,000 in Gisenyi resettled through villagization (April 1999)*

## **RUHENGERI**

Commune	IDPs in Camps Before Umudugudu	IDPs Not in Camps Before Umudugudu	Number of New Grouped Settlement Sites	IDPs Resettled Through Umudugudu	IDPs Still Requiring Resettlement
Butaro		898	N/A		
Cyabingo	8,797		15	8,797	
Cyeru	72,455		28	72,445	
Gatonde	43,830		9	43,830	
Kidaho		1,711	N/A		
Kigombe		7,000	N/A		
Kinigi	46,940		12	46,940	
Mukingo		5,533	N/A		
Ndusu	40,287		10	40,287	
Nkuli		12,100	N/A		
Nkumba		1,253	N/A		
Nyakinama		5,820	N/A		
Nyamugali	61,330		26	61,330	
Nyamutera	35,045		8	35,045	
Nyarutovu	56,730		12	56,730	

Ruhondo		10,536	N/A		
Total	365,414	44,851	120	365,414	0
Total Number of IDPs	410,265 (Total IDP Population for Ruhengeri & Gisenyi was 652,113 as of Dec. 1998)		365,414 (Total IDP Population for Ruhengeri & Gisenyi is now 508,526)		

## GISENYI

Commune	IDPs in Camps Before Umudugudu	IDPs Not in Camps Before Umudugudu	Number of New Grouped Settlement Sites	IDPs Resettled Through Umudugudu	IDPs Still Requiring Resettlement
Rwerere	57,779		19	57,779	
Kanama		80,000	9	5,803	
Rubavu	3,048	9,952	6	8,807	
Karago		7,500	N/A		
Mutura		14,840	3	9,050	
Giciye	16,700	31,120	8	34,532	
Kayove	3,900	4,258	4	14,360	
Gaseke		6,926	4	6,956	
Nyamyumba			N/A		
Ramba		5,825	1	5,825	
Satinsyi			N/A		
Kibilira			N/A		
Total	81,427	160,421	54	143,112	0
Total Number of IDPs	241,848 (Total IDP Population for Ruhengeri & Gisenyi was 652,113 as of December		143,112 (Total IDP Population for Ruhengeri & Gisenyi is now 508,526)		

	1998)				
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(OCHA 5 April 1999, "IDP Population Update")

# PATTERNS OF DISPLACEMENT

## General

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### Phases of Internal Displacement (1997-2000)

- In 1997, ten of thousands people fled to the Virunga forest in the northwest, hid in caves or fled to border areas controlled by the rebels
- In 1998, almost half a million internally displaced persons moved to poorly-equipped camps organized by the military and by the local government
- By end 1998, the displaced had to move into permanent settlements set up by the government
- According to Human Rights Watch, the government continued a program of forced "villagization" as late as mid-2000

"There have been successive layers of returnees and IDPs in the country since the 1994-war: IDPs during the war, returnees following the end of the war, massive return in late 1996, the Northwest crisis of 1998/1999, and the still-returning refugees. These movements, combined with the land issue in Rwanda, constitute the root causes of the major resettlement issue facing the country today." (OCHA 2 February 2001)

### *Initial Flight (1997)*

"Security began to deteriorate [in the northwest] in June 1997 when Armed People for the Liberation of Rwanda (PALIR) gunmen carried out attacks from across the border and from within Rwanda on commune offices, government employees and the local population. Tens of thousands fled to the Virunga forest area north of the Ruhengeri-Gisenyi road and 'disappeared' for months; others fled to border areas controlled by the rebels. Still others apparently hid in caves in the sloping valley approaching Goma (DR Congo). Large areas of the north-west were deserted and eight out of 16 communes in Ruhengeri were abandoned by the end of 1997. (WFP June 1999, p.2)

"Following the Kibeho incident [i.e. the killing of about 2000 internally displaced persons in the process of dismantling the Kibeho camp in 1995], the government of Rwanda remained opposed to the establishment of camps or concentrations of IDPs. While forced return has not reportedly been a problem, people are often encouraged by local officials to return to their home sectors. Many IDPs live 'on the move', sleeping in different locations and rarely returning to their homes." (Kleine-Ahlbrandt 1998, p.72)

*For more information, see "Killing of 2000 internally displaced persons in Kibeho camp (1995) [[Internal Link](#)]*

### *Camps (1997-1998)*

"[However d]uring 1998, as part of its effort to suppress the insurgency, the government moved hundreds of thousands of people in the two northwestern prefectures into supervised camps."(HRW 2000, "Human Rights Developments")

"The full extent of the IDP crisis [...] only became apparent when, in April 1998 (after several months of hardly any international access to the north-west), the Prefects of Gisenyi and Ruhengeri finally requested WFP emergency food aid assistance to IDPs - some 100,000 of whom had initially gathered in makeshift camps around commune offices. Many had 'returned' from the forest areas, being joined by an ever-increasing number recently displaced by fighting in both prefectures. The camps were not, however, spontaneous settlements. By the time international agencies were granted access, military and local government authorities had organized mass settlement in extremely crowded and ill-equipped centres. The first camps were created in Kinigi Prefecture in the far north in December 1997 [...] Camps were established in Gisenyi and Ruhengeri from April 1998 onwards." (WFP June 1999, p.3)

### ***Settled Villages (end 1998-1999)***

"Following an inter-agency and government joint mission to the north-west in August 1998 in which the full extent of the crisis was finally acknowledged by national authorities as well as donors, it became clear that the crowded camps presented major health and nutrition hazards. Malnutrition, particularly among young children, had reached alarming levels and inadequate water and sanitation was causing enormous problems for people crowded under plastic sheeting and branches on the (by now) completely bare hillsides. The government's response was to implement its *umudugudu* (grouped settlements or villagization) policy, initially in those communes where large camps had been created. The policy had already been under way in Gisenyi and Ruhengeri prior to the current crisis; it was now undertaken with increasing urgency.

The process was relatively straightforward and orderly, although it was accompanied by very little consultation with international agencies. Sector by sector, families were relocated to new sites where they were allocated housing plots, usually near an access road and in close proximity to the original plot of land of that particular farmer, or to land that was to be allocated for cultivation. As the security situation improved in 1999, many (but not all) farmers began walking back to the hills to work during the day, returning to the relative safety of the settlements in the evening. The logic was simple: clearing the hinterland gave the army unimpeded access to rebel hideouts while ensuring that the farming population was more secure in valley settlements. Scattered homes across inaccessible hills were conducive neither to protection, nor to the reintegration of a politically volatile population." (WFP June 1999, pp.5-6)

"The government continued a program of forced 'villagization'. Although enforced less harshly than in preceding years, as late as midyear [2000], authorities still required people to move against their will to government-designated settlements." (HRW December 2000)

#### **Four categories of displaced persons in 1994**

- People who remained in the zone turquoise established by the French forces
- Old caseload refugees who had returned in 1994 from Uganda, Burundi and Horn of Africa
- People without any possession, such as street children and people who lost everything during the genocide
- Tutsi survivors from the genocide who decided to remain in Rwanda but had to abandon their home

"[T]he internally displaced [in 1994] were generally members of one of four major groups. The first were those who decided to remain in the former Zone Turquoise in the southwestern part of the country after French forces withdrew in July. They were unable or unwilling to cross the border but did not feel able to return to their home communes. This group numbered approximately 350,000 in September 1994 and formed the population that crowded into some twenty IDP camps around three southwestern prefectures.

A second group represented a large but difficult-to-quantify portion of 'old caseload' refugees, principally from Uganda but also from Burundi and from areas in the Horn of Africa. A substantial number settled in north and southeastern Rwanda, the former bringing with them 400,000 to 600,000 heads of cattle that wreaked devastation in the parklands. The old caseload refugees posed a very complex problem. An embodiment of the discontent that led to the creation of the RPF and RPA and the new regime's loyal constituency, these returnees after so many years in exile had high expectations. Those among the 600,000 who lacked housing, employment and land - or whose homes and lands had been occupied in the interim - represented a potentially explosive political and emotional issue.

The third group of IDPs was more amorphous and difficult to quantify. They were the impoverished and dispossessed in one of the poorest countries in the world. They included innumerable street children, those traumatized by the war, and the destitute, all of whom had been uprooted and received no assistance from a barely functioning social safety net.

Finally a fourth group were 'rescapés', principally Tutsi who did not flee the genocide but chose to stay in the country even during the massacres. Ironically, these 'survivors' were objects of suspicion by Tutsi who feared that the survivors would pinpoint the 'génocidaires'. Often the only recourse for the rescapés was to abandon their homes and seek shelter in different prefectures. They, too, became part of Rwanda's displaced population." (Minear and Kent 1998, pp.63-64).

## PROTECTION CONCERNS

### Right to life and personal security

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#### **Local Defense Forces (LDF) first set up to assist soldiers against insurgents and then to protect new villages (1997-2000)**

- Government recruited young civilians to assist soldiers against insurgents' incursions and organized them into "Local Defense Forces" (1997-1998)
- In communities where most adult males have been killed or are absent, children as young as fourteen have been pressed into service
- LDF's responsibility is to guard each villagization site (1999)
- Local officials have ignored complaints by the population regarding abuses committed by the LDF (2000)

"The organization of citizens to protect their own communities dates back ten years to the period before the genocide when the Habyarimana government established groups of civilians to assist soldiers against incursions of the RPF. When the current government was established in 1994, there was initially no system of local police. To remedy this lack and to protect against remnants of the genocidal forces in several parts of the country, authorities created the Local Defense Force (LDF), a kind of citizens' militia. In 1995, the Minister of the Interior ordered these forces disbanded, both because regular communal police were working again and because some of the LDF members had themselves been guilty of abuses against other citizens.

With the insurgency of 1997-1998, the government once again organized the Local Defense Force, groups of young people (virtually all male) who received two or three months training by soldiers. In some communities, the young people recruited for these forces were 'friends of the soldiers', who had been spending their time at military posts, performing various services for the soldiers, such as fetching water or doing the laundry, in the absence of any more regular employment. Others had previously shunned contact with the RPA. They joined the LDF only under pressure or at the direct order of local administrative officials who themselves had been required to provide a certain number of recruits. Most of the LDF are between the ages of eighteen and thirty, but in some communities in the northwest where most adult males have been killed or are absent, children as young as fourteen have been pressed into service. They are often called 'the young ones' or even Kadogo, the local term for child soldier. In October 1999, some five thousand LDF members had been trained. Continuing programs have since added thousands more to the number. Communes in the northwest each have between 150 and 250 LDF members, the number varying with the size of the local population and the state of development of the program." (HRW April 2000, Local Defense Forces)



"Local defense forces (LDFs), consisting of ten people per sector, are envisaged as part of the programme of villagisation [...]. This team of ten men, made up of people from the area, will have the responsibility of guarding each site. They will include both former résistants [insurgents] and other civilians and will receive military training and weapons." (African Rights 29 January 1999, "Local Defense Forces")

"The LDF are organized under the authority of the Minister of Local Administration and Social Affairs. They are supposed to be under the orders of local civilian officials within the communes and subject to supervision by a military officer at the level of the prefecture. In some communities, the LDF who abuse their authority have been quickly called to account, usually following complaints by local people to the officials at sectoral or communal level. Some LDF have been disciplined by being taken to military posts for beatings, others have been dismissed from the force and, in the most serious cases, some have been arrested. [...] But where local officials unquestioningly support the LDF or are themselves intimidated by its members, they have ignored complaints by the population and the abuses continue. In some cases, local authorities claim that abuses committed by the LDF were actually the work of insurgents [...]." (HRW April 2000, "Local Defense Force")

#### **Government offers protection and material assistance to people in resettlement sites (1999-2000)**

- Decline of abuses by the Rwandan armed forces despite recent insurgent infiltration (2000)
- The Rwandan Patriotic Army exhorted the civilian population to move into settlements to be better protected from rebel incursions (1999)
- Rebel forces coming from the DRC attacked a village of displaced persons in Gisenyi (1999)

#### **2000**

"A rise in crime, politically-motivated murders and the resumption, albeit on a small-scale, of rebel activity in the Northwest has recently affected Rwanda." (OCHA 19 July 2000, "Intensification of conflict")

#### **1999**

"[The R]wandan Government has adopted a policy of attracting people away from rebel elements and gathering them in grouped settlements where they enjoy government protection from raids from extremist Interahamwe and infiltrators. These developments reflect a change in the Rwandan Patriotic Army's (RPA) approach. Indiscriminate firing on inhabitants and causing deaths of non-combatant civilians is being replaced by a policy of persuasion and the provision of material assistance in collective resettlement camps." (CHR 8 February 1999, para. 20)

"The overall improvement in security in the north-west has led to a corresponding decline in alleged abuses by the Rwandan armed forces. This was confirmed by the Special Representative's own mission last August [1999], which found the mood in Ruhengeri

and Gisenyi to be noticeable calmer than when he visited in January 1999." (CHR 25 February 2000, para. 30)

"The number of killings inside Rwanda decreased [in 1999] compared to 1998, but killings of unarmed civilians and 'disappearances' were still reported throughout 1999. [...] As government troops regained control of the northwest, the armed conflict abated and the level of violence decreased. However, the situation remained tense and the peace fragile." (AI 2000)

"The improvement in the security situation in the northwest led to a corresponding decline in alleged reprisals by the RPA. However, a human rights group reported that 49 persons, women and children, were killed by the army on May 4 and 5, after fleeing into Volcanoes National Park. [...]

[Also, o]n February 17, the RPA killed four insurgents in Ruhengeri. The body of one was put on display at the Nyarutovu internally displaced persons (IDP) camp for several hours, and the camp population was lined up to view the body. In Gisenyi prefecture on August 28, members of a local defence unit (LDU) shot and killed a woman inside the Nkamira transit camp at night. Apparently the woman was mentally unbalanced and was acting strangely when LDU members challenged her." (U.S. DOS 25 February 2000, "Respect for Human Rights")

"On 23 December 1999, at least 31 people were killed and eight others wounded in a rebel attack against a village of displaced people in Gisenyi. The attackers came from the Eastern region of the DRC. The attack was blamed on the former Rwandan Armed Forces (ex-FAR) and on Interahamwe militia." (UNHCR January 2000, p.2)

### **Killing of 2000 internally displaced persons in Kibeho camp (1995)**

"The new Rwandan government suspected that the IDP camps were providing sanctuary to persons implicated in the genocide and were being used for the formation of an anti-government militia. As neither the UN mandate for Opération Turquoise nor the objectives of the French government included disarming or arresting soldiers, criminal elements were able to consolidate in the camps. In addition, refugee populations surrounding Rwanda, which comprised both those responsible for the genocide as well as innocents under their authority, were re-arming and launching cross-border incursions, in spite of a UN arms embargo. [...]

[O]n 18 April the RPA had moved to close the camp at Kibeho by surrounding it and cutting off its food and water supply. For the next three days, the concentration of 80,000 persons on one hill and rapid deterioration of humanitarian conditions resulted in panic and casualties when soldiers met stone-throwing with machine gun fire. On the fourth day, a large group of IDPs tried to break the cordon. The RPA opened fire on the crowd, killing several hundred persons and causing a stampede which claimed more lives. The government put the death toll at 338 while the UN put the figure at 2,000. UNAMIR troops were present during the massacre but were ordered not intervene despite their

mandate to contribute to the security and protection of displaced persons." (Kleine-Ahlbrandt 1998, p.71)

## **Freedom of movement**

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### **Right to freedom of movement from the resettled population is not clear (December 2000)**

"In all evidence, the policy [of villagization] is not carried out rigidly (some displaced persons in the NW have returned to their homesteads; often people have installed themselves in 'Insisiro', or 'paysannat', schemes along roads, i.e. not in village agglomeration), and efforts by the Government to increase the sustainability of settlement are significant. There is no evidence today that it is implemented with a degree of compulsion which would warrant the label 'forced displacement'. Exceptions occurred at a local level, but the Government has taken remedial action (Kibungo) and has assured the international community that coercion would not longer be tolerated.

Nonetheless, doubts remain if sufficient mechanisms exist already to make sure that the resettlement policy will be followed by those concerned on an entirely voluntary basis. There seems to be no clear framework of principles as to the right of the population in terms of participation in decisions where and how to settle, access to land, freedom of movement and residence, administrative procedures. (OCHA 18 December 2000, draft)

### **Reports of coercion during encampment and villagization process (1998-1999)**

- Reports state that over half of resettled population would have preferred to have gone back to their original homes as security improved
- Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement require those grouped together for purposes of security to be allowed to return home when emergency is over
- As long as there was insecurity in the northwest, the internally displaced were in favor of villages
- Difficult for international agencies and NGOs to assess extent of enforced confinement (1998)

**According to WFP**, "Principle 6 (3) [of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement]: 'Displacement shall last no longer than required by the circumstances' was not respected during the villagization process. The *umudugudu* schemes were not instigated by common consent. They were conceived as a permanent solution to insecurity, population control and a limit to the accommodation of insurgents. In several communes, the authorities themselves admitted that more than half the resettled population would have preferred to have gone back to their original homes as security improved, but the army could not (or would not) guarantee their safety." (WFP June 1999, p.29).

*According to the Special Representative reporting to the UN commission on Human Rights*, "[t]here can be no dispute that, often for security considerations, some coercion has occurred. In this connection, the Special Representative would note that as security improves in Rwanda, security seems increasingly less relevant as a justification for villages. He would also recall that the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement require that those who are grouped together for purposes of security should be allowed to return home when the emergency is over. The Special Representative was relieved to hear from the Adviser to the President that no Rwandans will be forced into villages against their will. In recent weeks, this has begun to look more and more like formal government policy: ministers have warned that coercion will not be tolerated, and have made this clear at meetings with donors as well." (CHR 25 February 2000, para.214)

"From a security point of view, the residents of the displaced camps we [African Rights Delegation] visited, as well as those living outside the camps, spoke unanimously in favour of villagisation. They discussed the advantages and disadvantages, but felt that the security situation in the northwest made the advantages more apparent. Weary of war and a life of being on the move, impoverished by the insurgency and anxious to leave the camps and to rebuild their lives, the overriding priority of local people is the pursuit of peace. Security considerations, more than anything else, determine their views about villagisation, as with so much else in their lives. However, they also made it clear that certain conditions must be met if the programme is to satisfy their needs." (African Rights 29 Jan 1999, pp. 6-7)

"Neither WFP nor any other humanitarian agency was able to discover the extent of enforced confinement, especially at the peak of displacement in 1998. Certainly, the military authorities insisted on clearing many areas in order to isolate rebels; there was no question of IDPs spontaneously returning to their land. The innate discipline and tightly controlled political structure, right down to household level, also ensured that decisions were more often collective than individual. If the authorities persuaded local leaders of the necessity to remain within the camps, the population at large would adhere to this decision. This is precisely why food distribution centres were used also as 're-education' opportunities." (WFP June 1999, p.30)

## SUBSISTENCE NEEDS (HEALTH NUTRITION AND SHELTER)

### General

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#### Newly relocated persons have not received agricultural land and have limited access to water (2000)

- Two out of three of the new sites don't have any health center nearby

"To date, 795 families - around 3, 975 persons have been moved out of Gishwati forest into 3 sites: Karago, Gaseke and Giciye. Out of the total number moved, at least 700 families are living in Blindés (make shift huts with banana leaves, etc.).

According to the latest information drawn from several meetings with the Ministry of Lands, Human Resettlement and Environmental Protection (MINITERE), the 3 resettlement sites are the following:

- **Karago:** Temporary site for **195 families** (around 980 IDPs). Land allocation has been achieved but the plots of land have not yet been distributed to the population. According to Government sources, distribution should start next week.
- **Gaseke:** Temporary site for **300 families** (around 1, 500 IDPs). Land allocation has been achieved but the plots of land have not yet been distributed to the population.
- **Giciye:** Final site for **300 families** (around 1, 500 persons). They have been given residential plots (to build their houses) but only around 10-20% of the population have managed to build some sort of sustainable shelter (as opposed to the Blindés). No agricultural plots have yet been distributed. These will not be considered as IDPs. [...]

The situation in the 3 sites is quite precarious:

- **Food security:** Agricultural lands have not yet been distributed to the IDPs and this process could take one month or more. This would mean that they would only be able to harvest in 4 to 5 months. WFP has been distributing monthly food rations to the IDPs since March 2000.

WFP, together with the prefecture food aid committee have recommended food aid provision until the December/January 2001 harvest.

- **Water & sanitation:** The population is concentrated in 3 sites, with very limited access to water and almost no access to potable water. People have to walk long distances to fetch the water. IRC is carrying out a study for water supply/adduction to the sites.

- **Health & shelter:** On the other hand, in Karago and in Gaseke, no health center is available nearby the sites (as opposed to Giciye). Considering the coming rains and the extremely poor shelter situation of the IDPs, one could fear an outbreak of epidemics

within these concentrated groups. So far, SCF-UK has been distributing basic drugs through the health district of Kabaya. It has also been supporting a mobile clinic giving the population weekly access to a doctor.

The Rwandan Red Cross has also carried out a distribution of used clothes, blankets, plastic sheeting and milk (for children and the elderly)." (OCHA 10 October 2000, pp.4-5)

## **Shelter**

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### **Many returnees from Tanzania relocated into their commune of origin live in Blindés and plastic sheeting (2001)**

"A joint 2-day OCHA / MINITERE mission was carried out on 17-18 January 2001, to assess the housing and possible displacement situation in Rusumo commune, related to the return of Rwandan refugees from Tanzania (Ngara Camp) through the Rusumo bridge, Rusumo commune, directly bordering Tanzania.

Over the year 2000, UNHCR had repatriated 2,176 refugees from Tanzania and around 457 persons in January 2001.

There is no transit center in Rusumo and the returnees are directly driven, with the assistance of UNHCR to their original communes.

As for the IDP situation in Rusumo, findings showed that the returnees who were originating from Rusumo had already resettled in Rusumo and there are no IDPs.

The total number of Rusumo inhabitants is 25, 728 settled in 203 sites. They all have their residential and farming plots. Nevertheless, more than 50% of the population in Rusumo is still living in Blindés [makeshift huts made of banana leaves, etc.] or under plastic sheeting.

LWF, WFP and UNHCR are the main organisations providing assistance in Rusumo." (OCHA 2 February 2001)

### **Government provided basic construction materials for new villages, but not in sufficient quantities (1999-2001)**

- The Rwandan government provided some basic construction materials for the new villages
- According to OCHA, 30 % of the internally displaced still had sub-standard housing in August 1999
- OCHA estimated in February 2001 that over 1.5 million people lived in adequate shelter in Rwanda

"Repatriation has put an enormous strain on housing and land provision. More than a quarter of all housing was destroyed by the 1994 war. Despite declining aid budgets, shelter construction continues to be an important priority for the Government of Rwanda, along with agricultural rehabilitation and the provision of assistance such as seeds and tools.

The issue of shelter for IDPs in the north-west became critical during the initial displacement when tens of thousands of people camped under plastic sheeting and makeshift huts of branches and leaves. Some brought with them the plastic sheeting originally provided by UNHCR in the repatriation two years previously; others stripped the hills of all remaining foliage. Once the IDPs had settled in more permanent villages in the valleys (under the *umudugudu* process), the government provided some basic construction materials, including corrugated metal roofing. These villages are fairly regimented, with equal plot sizes and floor space. WFP and other agencies have begun to look at the possibility of brick making to replace the mud and wattle walls of most dwellings." (WFP June 1999, p.7)

"29.1% of the displaced population are still living in tents and 33% are relying on plastic sheeting for the wall construction of their houses. For 51.2% of the population, plastic sheeting is the principal material for roofing." (OCHA 3 August 1999, "Living conditions of the displaced")

"The last survey conducted in September 1999 by UNDP/MINITERE, had found that there were over 280,000 families living under plastic sheeting, over 65,000 living in seriously damaged shelters and nearly 63,000 in illegally acquired housing. These families live in both existing imidugudu and in unplanned squatter sites or "temporary" sites scattered throughout the country.

The figure that had been repeatedly mentioned as a rough estimate of people living in 'a refugee-like situation' was 370,000 families (More than 1.5 million people). Today the term used is 'people living in inadequate shelter'.

MINITERE has been carrying out since December 2000, an updated review of the shelter situation in Rwanda. Preliminary results show that the initial figure of 370,000 have decreased but no final statistics are yet available." (OCHA 2 February 2001)

## **Nutrition**

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### **General decline in malnutrition rates among recently relocated people (1999 - 2000)**

- Improvement in nutritional conditions of hundreds of thousands of displaced people recently relocated from camps to new grouped settlements
- End of 99: 60% of population of the northwestern prefectures was malnourished

- A nutrition survey, undertaken in Gisenyi in 1999 by the government and the UN finds severe malnutrition among children in Gisenyi and Ruhengeri

"Relief agencies working in the northwest have reported a 'significant improvement' in nutritional conditions among hundreds of thousands of displaced people recently relocated from camps to new grouped settlements, the latest monthly report [March 1999] from the Office of the UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Rwanda said. The report, received by IRIN, said malnutrition rates in the new settlement sites were declining, while the number of people at therapeutic and supplementary feeding centres had decreased in recent weeks. However, the nutritional situation remained fragile in some places, it added. The improvement was due mainly to the setting up of health and nutritional facilities, the increase in WFP food rations, and the distribution of farming tools. 'People are adjusting to the environments of the new resettlement sites and resuming agricultural activities,' the report said." (IRIN 20 May 1999)

"The northwest is [...] the traditional breadbasket of the country and projections for [...] the July-August [2000] harvest in the region are more favorable. The government is aware of the need to phase out free food distribution while retaining a nutritional support programme for the most vulnerable. Therapeutic wet feeding was almost entirely stopped by February 1999 as malnutrition rates dropped dramatically. NGOs running health programmes were keen to point out that micronutrient deficiency was by now more a result of traditional constraints such as poor starch-based diets and education rather than food supply." (WFP June 1999, p.8)

*However*, "By late 1999, [...] [a]bout 60 percent of the population of the northwestern prefectures was malnourished (compared with 40 percent elsewhere in the country) and more than half a million still depended on foreign food aid near the end of the year." (HRW 2000, "Human Rights Developments")

"A nutrition survey, undertaken in Gisenyi by the government and the UN, has been recently completed. It found that malnutrition among children aged 3-59 months tends to be most evident in the south-eastern communes of Gisenyi where insecurity was prolonged and humanitarian assistance was not provided. The prevalence of malnutrition in Gisenyi exceeds the national averages: global acute malnutrition in Gisenyi is 11%; severe acute malnutrition is 7.3%; chronic malnutrition affects 59.6% of those surveyed and underweight children make up 31.9% of the population." (OCHA 19 August 1999, "Rwanda Humanitarian Situation")

## Health

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### High prevalence to communicable diseases and limited health care in general (2001)

"Regarding health issues, Rwanda has:



Low levels of understanding about health issues; Lack of access to basic health care, including first aid.

Vulnerability to the common, often preventable, diseases and epidemics.

High rates of STDs and HIV infection with resultant impact on the socio-economic structures.

Limited and basic reproductive health care.

Shortage of qualified medical personnel and poor health system infrastructure.

Insufficient access to sufficient clean potable water.

Undeveloped sanitation infrastructure; public hygiene is basic and many people, especially the urban poor, live under conditions of squalor.

There is severe psychological trauma amongst much of the population brought about by the events of 1994.

As a result there is a high prevalence and vulnerability to communicable diseases such as malaria, meningitis, and high risk of cholera. Diarrhoeal diseases are common, as are pockets of malnutrition. Sexually transmitted diseases and HIV infection are a very major area of concern. Estimates as to HIV infection vary but the prevalence amongst adults in Rwanda is estimated at 11.21% as of the end of 1999." (IFRC 15 January 2001)

#### **Internally displaced have little access to health services and suffer from epidemic diseases (1998-2000)**

- Few health centres in Ruhengeri function (1999)
- Only 170 doctors in the whole country (1998)
- Up to 500,000 Rwandans are infected with the HIV virus (2000)
- Outbreak of epidemic diseases in IDP camps (1998-1999): measles, meningitis, cholera and malaria

#### ***Poor health services in the northwest***

"[I]n Ruhengeri there are four health districts that include two hospitals and thirty health centres. Three centres are, however, closed while seven are in need of substantial repairs. In Gisenyi, there are three health districts that include two hospitals and fifteen health centres." (OCHA 5 April 1999, Humanitarian Situation)

"[T]here are approximately 170 doctors (of whom 125 are in public hospitals and only 30 are female) and only 5 gynaecologists in the whole country. Most of the 34 hospitals and 300 health centres in Rwanda are managed by 'comprehensive nurses' and traditional birth attendants. The Special Rapporteur [on violence against women, its causes and consequences] considers the absence of gynaecologists a particularly severe problem in view of the any medical consequences affecting women victims of violence in the post-conflict period." (CHR 4 February 1998, para. 3)

#### ***Epidemic diseases***

"Up to 500,000 Rwandans are infected with the HIV virus, an estimated six percent of the total population of between 7 - 8 million, Health Minister Ezechias Rwabuhiri announced

on Tuesday. 'We are facing a silent and devastating epidemic which threatens national security,' the BBC quoted him as telling an AIDS conference in Kigali, attended by delegates from Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda. More than four out of every five deaths in Rwanda were AIDS related and the country's medical facilities were overwhelmed, he said. According to a Rwanda News Agency (RNA) report, 180,000 Rwandans have developed full blown AIDS, while 150,000 have already been killed by the disease." (IRIN 3 May 2000, "Rwanda")

"IDP camps were severely overcrowded and lacked health services and adequate water and sanitation. This led to several outbreaks of epidemic diseases: measles in November 1998 and an ongoing meningitis epidemic in February 1999." (SCF 19 May 1999, "Background")

"WHO says five people have died of cholera in the northwest prefecture of Ruhengeri, and a further 140 have been hospitalised. The epidemic, which broke out last month [October 99], has particularly affected the communes of Cyabingo, Nyakinama and Kigombe, but the situation is under control, a WHO information bulletin said." (IRIN 4 Nov 1999)

"Complementing findings from the recent nutrition survey in Gisenyi, the report on living conditions notes that of the most frequent illnesses, malaria affects 60.1% of the population. It only affected 52.8% in December 1998." (OCHA 3 August 1999, "Living Conditions of Displaced")

***According to a UNFPA/ONAPO survey***, "mortality among the IDP camp population was primarily caused by malaria (19.3%), diarrhea (18%), pneumonia (16.2%), kwashiorkor (10.5%), tonsillitis (8.4%) and measles (6.7%)." (OCHA 5 April 1999, "Humanitarian Situation")

## ACCESS TO EDUCATION

### General

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#### **Little access to education in Rwanda in general and in the northwest in particular (1999-2000)**

- No free public education system in Rwanda
- One teacher for 70 students in the northwest in 2000
- Little access to education in new villages in 1999-2000

"Rwanda would [...] benefit enormously from an effective system of free public education to develop the educated and enlightened society that it needs, and a free public health service to produce the requisite healthy manpower. At the moment, there is no free education system at either primary or secondary level, in contrast to most other countries in Africa and the rest of the world. This explains in part both the low level of literacy in the country (52.7 per cent overall, 51.6 per cent for men and 44.8 per cent for women) and perhaps also the much discussed ease with which the masses can be manipulated by their leaders." (CHR 8 February 1999, para.55)

"[At the national level, s]chools remained inadequate and understaffed: only 4 percent of the population had a secondary education, and northwest areas of the country reported a ratio of one teacher per 70 students". (USCR 2000, "Reintegration Conditions")

"The Government of Rwanda has been regrouping rural populations of the north-west in grouped settlements, as opposed to the traditional patterns of scattered settlements which leave the people exposed to the action of the rebel groups, while making difficult their access to services such as public education and health, electricity and water." (CHR 8 February 1999, para.25)

***School children in resettlement sites*** "have not been able to attend regular and 'normal' classes: Some of them are studying outside the schools and only if it is not raining (in open air), sheeting near the school, some have joined other schools (just a few) and finally others that have been vacated-at least during the day-by the 'squatters' [some schools were occupied by 800 families without a house]." (OCHA 20 December 2000)

## ISSUES OF SELF-RELIANCE AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

### **Access to Land and to Work**

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#### **Despite agricultural recovery in the northwest, resettled populations often have a reduced access to land (1999-2000)**

- Booming production of potatoes, vegetables, beans and significant increase in land under cultivation recorded in the Jan/Feb 2000 harvest season
- Difficulty in reaching fields and insecurity over land tenure resulting from villagization caused a decline in agricultural production, which was further cut by drought in 1999-2000
- Drought impacted on coping strategies of people in Imidugudu in 2000

"Gisenyi and Ruhengeri prefectures are once again poised to become the 'Breadbasket' of the country following a relative peace and security and a rapid agricultural recovery in 1999. Booming production of Irish potatoes, vegetables, beans and significant increase in land under cultivation was recorded in the harvest season of January/February 2000. However, prices of these commodities went below average and in deed below break-even prices due to over production. Poor rural access roads and lack of storage facilities contributed to the depressing prices of specially the potato crop. Nevertheless, household food security has considerably improved compared to the last two seasons in the Northwest." (OCHA February 2000, p.2)

"The crisis has now improved as a result of good harvests and improved security [...]. At the same time, OCHA warns that 90,000 people are lacking basic services in Ruhengeri and 60,000 in Gisenyi. There is some controversy over whether the policy of villagization is deepening their vulnerability by depriving them of access to land." (CHR 25 February 2000, para. 39)

"Although enforced less harshly than in preceding years, as late as mid-year [2000], authorities still required people to move against their will to government-designated settlements. Some homeowners were forced to destroy their houses before moving. Lacking the necessary resources to build new houses, hundreds of thousands of people lived in temporary shelters made of tree limbs, leaves, and pieces of plastic. Some cultivators were forced to cede their fields to serve as settlement sites. Many village residents had to walk miles further each day to reach their fields or sources of water and firewood than when they lived in their previous homes. Difficulty in reaching fields and insecurity over land tenure resulting from villagization caused a decline in agricultural production, which was further cut by drought. Toward the end of the year [2000], serious food shortages threatened regions where villagization was most advanced." (HRW December 2000)

"In this unfavorable agricultural and pastoral context [due to the drought], coping strategies evolve towards painful surviving strategies: people start selling metal roof sheeting of houses, selling cattle at low prices, and migration of whole families or school desertion are widely observed. In Imidugudu, which contains mainly the poorest households, the situation is especially bad. These populations do not always have access to arable land. When land plots were distributed to them, they were not yet able to start the cultivation of permanent crops. These crops could have guaranteed the production of a minimum staple food." (FAO 3 November 2000)

#### **Land allocation to resettled populations but restriction to work outside commune of residence (1999)**

"In the new *umudugudu* settlements most reallocated individual family plots are no more than 2 km from a person's home, thus limiting attacks on scattered farming areas. WFP's FFW [Food For Work] projects in, for example, communal latrines and seed multiplication schemes have further strengthened the benefits of common security by encouraging common ownership and decreasing dependency on cultivating distant and potentially dangerous areas." (WFP June 1999, p. 28)

"All of the IDPs formerly in camps have now been moved to new villages, imudugudu, in a massive resettlement programme. Due to security concerns, commune authorities have placed restrictions on residents wishing to provide agricultural and general labour outside their own commune. Such restrictions have a direct impact on well being as a substantial proportion of household income currently comes from paid labour. These restrictions should therefore be lifted wherever security allows, as a means to raising the standard of living of these families. There is also a need for further investigation of, and support for, alternative income generation activities for imudugudu residents who (for a variety of reasons) have no, or very limited, access to land for cultivation." (SCF 19 May 1999, Background)

#### **Food for Work Programs implemented to promote food security and self reliance of vulnerable groups (1998-1999)**

- As the security situation improves in the Northwest, WFP intends to expand its food-for-work programme and gradually phase out free food distributions
- WFP has collaborated with IRC and UNICEF to provide FFW water and sanitation programmes for some 32,000 recently relocated people (1999)
- IRC has some reservations over the use of FFW in a socio-political context where reconstruction and reconciliation depend upon the fostering of community responsibility

"Emergency Food For Work (FFW) has [...] been implemented with WFP assistance to promote the food security and self reliance of vulnerable groups. As the security situation improves in the north-west, WFP intends to expand its food-for-work programme and gradually phase out free food distributions. Food-for-work programmes are implemented

jointly with NGOs and include activities such as construction of shelters, agricultural rehabilitation and construction of fish ponds. [...]

During the acute emergency phase, FFW provided an essential incentive for 395 workers in 21 nutrition centres set up around the main IDP camps and commune centres. By March 1999 two relatively small FFW projects implemented by NGO partners were under way with IDPs in Gisenyi (Irish potato seed multiplication) and Ruhengeri (latrine construction). [...]

In the Rwerere Commune, Gisenyi Prefecture, WFP has collaborated with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and UNICEF on a FFW scheme. From January 1999, IRC provided a water and sanitation programme for some 32,000 recently settled IDPs. A central component of this was the construction of 38 individual drop hole latrines adjacent to the settlement and 200 family latrines (usually less permanent) near feeding centres. For the excavation of these, and for work crews at the feeding centres, UNICEF provided in-kind support of construction materials and WFP provided FFW rations.

Although the project itself was deemed essential considering the appalling conditions many people suffered in the previous camps, it was not implemented without problems. The relative roles played by IRC and the government (represented by the *Bourgemeistre*) were not clear and there was a degree of misunderstanding in the first few weeks over exactly who was the responsible authority for the placement and construction of latrines. In a more general sense, IRC has some reservations over the use of FFW in a socio-political context where reconstruction and reconciliation (where the two are linked) depends upon the fostering of community responsibility. The perception that 'government will provide' is underlined by WFP's use of food as payment for work which otherwise might (or should) have been an individual or community responsibility. Unless explicitly linked to measurable local food deficits, FFW may be developmentally regressive, particularly in a society where top-down government is the norm. (WFP June 1999, pp. 12, 19, 20)

### **Women surviving alone carry heavy burden of raising children and sustaining productive livelihood (1994-1999)**

- Many women, most of them Tutsi, were raped and contracted AIDS during the genocide
- Women face challenges of being main breadwinner, supporting own and orphaned children and coping with traumas
- 60% of the displaced population were women and children in 1999

### ***Rape and other forms of violence against women***

"During the Rwandan genocide, rape and other forms of violence were directed primarily against Tutsi women because of both their gender and their ethnicity. The extremist propaganda which exhorted Hutu to commit the genocide specifically identified the sexuality of Tutsi women as a means through which the Tutsi community sought to infiltrate and control the Hutu community. This propaganda fueled the sexual violence

perpetrated against Tutsi women as a means of dehumanizing and subjugating all Tutsi. Some Hutu women were also targeted with rape because they were affiliated with the political opposition, because they were married to Tutsi men or because they protected Tutsi. A number of women, Tutsi and Hutu, were targeted regardless of ethnicity or political affiliation. Young girls or those considered beautiful were particularly at the mercy of the militia groups, who were a law unto themselves and often raped indiscriminately.

As Rwandans begin the onerous task of rebuilding a country ravaged by bloodshed and genocide, the burden is falling heavily on Rwandan women. Rwanda has become a country of women. It is currently estimated that 70 percent of the population is female and that 50 percent of all households are headed by women. Regardless of their status - Tutsi, Hutu, displaced, returnees - all women face overwhelming problems because of the upheaval caused by the genocide, including social stigmatization, poor physical and psychological health, unwanted pregnancy and, increasingly, poverty." (HRW 1996, Introduction)

"During 1998, legislation was passed in the Rwandan Parliament enshrining rape as a crime against humanity within the constitution.[...] [This was] achieved in large part, through lobbying by women's associations and women parliamentarians." (IA 1999, p.5)

#### ***Displaced women and children***

"Women and children comprise 60 percent of the displaced population. Severe malnutrition for children under five was estimated at 53 percent in one camp in 1998. Women and children tend to suffer most from insecurity and poverty. Households headed by women account for one-third (34 percent) and those headed by children account for one-fourteenth (seven percent) of the total number of IDP households. This is a result of disproportionate male mortality during the conflict and a general increase in adult mortality due to HIV/AIDS. Many women face the multiple challenges of being the main breadwinner, supporting their own and orphaned children and coping with their own traumas of bereavement and sexual abuse." (WFP June 1999, p.7)

"[According to a] report released by the National Population Office (ONAPO) with support from UNFPA and UNDP, [...] men currently head 66,1% of households while women are in charge of 33.9%. These figures are largely unchanged from December 1998 except that the number of female-led households has almost doubled in Gisenyi. This means that more women surviving alone are now carrying an increased burden of raising their children and sustaining some sort of a productive livelihood." (OCHA 3 August 1999, "Living Conditions of Displaced")

***For more information on the living conditions and the organization of women in Rwanda, please see the Women's Commission Reports:***

***"Rebuilding Rwanda: A Struggle Men Can Not Do Alone"*(Winter 2000) [[External Link](#)]**

***"You Cannot Dance if You Cannot Stand: A Review of the Rwanda Women's Initiative and the UNHCR's Commitment to Gender Equality in Post-conflict Situations" (April 2001) [[External Link](#)]***



# DOCUMENTATION NEEDS AND CITIZENSHIP

## General

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### **Ethnic Labels on ID cards are removed (2000)**

- Ethnic labels on ID cards were removed to lessen ethnic tensions
- The internally displaced and other citizens used to be registered in their place of origin and had difficulty to obtain documents to travel

"The Special Representative [on the situation of human rights in Rwanda] wishes to commend the Government for its efforts to eradicate the ethnic tensions that have proved so destructive in the past. Ethnic labels have been removed from ID cards." (CHR 25 February 2000, para. 16)

### ***Before new law***

"Freedom of movement was restricted, with most Rwandans confined to their communes by a system of registration and identity cards. They were reportedly not allowed to move around the country or go abroad. While the Government might invoke security considerations to justify such restrictions, they were a violation of human rights, and they also resulted in a less flexible labour market and hampered economic development, as had been pointed out by the World Bank." (UN HCHR 21 March 2000, para. 14)

"To identify remaining IDPs in the country, an identity card system obligated Rwandan citizens to register with authorities in their places of origin." (Kleine-Ahlbrandt 1998, p.71)

"People are required to carry an identity card and also need to obtain a document from the authorities in their home region entitling them to travel to another region. In practice, such documents are often difficult to obtain and there are strict controls and restrictions on freedom of movement. Even those who carry the required documents are not protected from harassment." (AI 1998, Part II.2)

## PROPERTY ISSUES

### General

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#### **Land scarcity is a major problem, exacerbated by land ownership issues (2001)**

"Land tenure. This is a key issue, which needs to be resolved for reconciliation and sustainable development. Rwanda is the most densely populated country in Africa. With large numbers of returnees (new and old caseload), a rising population and many homeless and unsheltered people, the question of ownership and distribution of land is key." (CHR 21 March 2001, para.36)

"A ministry of lands survey indicates that Rwanda's population had increased from 1,594,400 people in 1934 to 7,7 million in 2000. [...]

According to the survey, available arable land for family farming activities averages around 0.6 hectare per household while the critical threshold under which farming cannot provide the basic nutritional needs is about 0.75 hectares.

An economically sustainable farm should at least extend over 0.90 hectare, according to the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation.

The 1994 civil war is also listed among the other factors contributing to the scarcity of land, experts in the ministry of lands say. Reconstruction and resettlement programs for destitute people, the over-exploitation of forestry resources for fuel (97 percent of households use wood as a source of fuel) increased the pressure on wood resources and the natural reserves of the country." (PANA 4 Nov 2000)

"Despite UNHCR's extensive shelter programmes over the past few years, the lack of individual housing continues to be a serious problem in Rwanda. [...] The ongoing repatriation of Rwandan refugees from the DRC and other African countries is expected to continue. This is likely to place even greater pressure on limited land, resources and infrastructure in Rwanda." (UNHCR 2001, p.63)

#### **New law on matrimonial property and succession entitles orphaned girls and widows to inherit property (2000)**

*The Commission on Human Rights* "[w]elcomes the new law on matrimonial property and succession, which ensures full real access by women to their husbands' and parents' property" (CHR 18 April 2000, para. 25)

"[...] [T]he Government has begun a nationwide information campaign to educate the population on the changes in women's inheritance rights. From September to December 2000, the women's umbrella organization Pro-Femmes has undertaken a sensitization campaign, working with local NGOs to reach local communities, and has met with some 120 men and women from local authorities in three regions." (CHR 21 March 2001 para.37)

"Previously, under Rwandan law and tradition, women and girls did not have the right to inherit land; instead, it was expected that they would enjoy the benefits of communal property, which was, in fact, owned by husbands or fathers.

The injustice of this gender discrimination became a dramatic issue following the 1994 genocide, when Rwanda was left with hundreds of thousands of orphans", [the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict], Mr. Otunnu, said. "There are an estimated 45,000 households headed by orphaned children, 90 per cent of them by girls who did not have access to land which is essential for the livelihood of their families." (UN 20 March 2000)

#### **Demands for compensation following land expropriation when camps and villages were created (1999)**

- Redistribution of land is based on inter-family negotiations
- By late 1999, many land claims from the relocation remained unresolved

"The redistribution of land is based on inter-family negotiations. Lowland fields were initially allocated by the commune leaders to those who had no access to original land (usually because of distance or recurring insecurity, but evidence of equitable distribution is not available to international observers)." (WFP June 1999, p.24)

"People were first alarmed by rumours that the objective of villagisation was to transfer ownership of the land to the State, and said they felt reassured only after they learned that they would continue to own their own fields. Now, their anxieties lie elsewhere. The principal concerns are:

- The programme should be discussed, planned and implemented in a manner that ensures clarity and uniformity for each commune and for the whole region. People are apprehensive about the security implications if the villages are not established simultaneously within the same commune;
- The villages should not be located far from the residents' fields;
- People whose land is to be used should be compensated without further delay." (African Rights January 1999, "Villagisation")

"By late 1999, many land claims from the relocation remained unresolved. Farmers in the northwestern prefecture of Ruhengeri were cultivating less than 60 percent of available arable land." (HRW 2000, "Human Rights Developments")

# PATTERNS OF RETURN AND RESETTLEMENT

## General

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### Debate on whether the displaced are permanently resettled (2001)

- Many observers claim that relocation to resettlement sites was not voluntary
- OCHA conducted a mission in Dec 2000 which concluded that, while Rwanda faced problems similar to the ones of a crisis of internal displacement, the resettled population in Rwanda should not be considered as IDPs (report is still at draft stage)

"Although the Government claimed that the move to villages was voluntary, some observers believe that many persons were compelled to move by government authorities; others may have relocated out of fear of government security forces or insurgents. The Government no longer compels these persons to remain in the villages; however, restrictions on where persons can build houses forces some to remain in the villages. One NGO estimates that over 90 percent of the population of Kibungo prefecture and 60 percent of Umutara prefecture were living in villages; however, other sources dispute those percentages." (U.S. DOS February 2001, Sect.1.d)

"Mr. Thomas Linde, Senior advisor on IDPs, OCHA-New York, visited Rwanda from 6 to 12 December 2000 in order to 'help clarify issues related to the number and categorization of displaced persons in the country and review the situation, possibly in preparation of a mission [by the Special Coordinator and the Inter-Agency Network on Internal Displacement]". (OCHA 2 February 2001)

#### *Mr. Linde's draft report's main conclusions are:*

" In some regards, post-genocide Rwanda faces problems similar to the ones of a crisis of internal displacement. However, it would do no justice to the specific context if we were to categorise as Internally Displaced Persons the large number of Rwandans who have been uprooted in subsequent waves of external and internal displacement and are now resettling and reestablishing homes or places of habitual residence. While conditions of return and resettlement are often yet inadequate, governmental and international efforts to stabilize the situation through durable solutions have advanced beyond the threshold of what still could be called internal displacement. [...]

The situation of relocated populations could relapse into one in which they would be compelled to move again in order to avoid economic and social pressure. Two issues need to be addressed in order to prevent this from happening: a) The lack of measures to ensure sustainable livelihoods, and b) the lack of a solid framework of rights to guide the resettlement policy. [...]

Continuous monitoring of the situation – in particular with regard to the above-mentioned issues of the sustainability of, and the rights framework for resettlement – will enable the UN Country Team led by the Resident Coordinator to identify requirements for external support in addressing problems that may arise in the future." (OCHA 18 December 2000-Draft)

### **Three categories of people resettled in villages in Ruhengeri (2001)**

#### ***According to Oxfam***

"There were three categories of people who have been settled in imidugudu in Ruhengeri:

- 1) There were those settled because their houses had been destroyed during the emergency;
- 2) those who did not have houses but were staying with relatives or living in very dilapidated houses (because of poverty);
- 3) those who were told to destroy their houses and move to the imidugudu sites.

With the improvement in the security situation, some families in the first and the last categories moved back to their former sites where they were allowed by the local authorities to build new houses. Others, whose houses were destroyed but did not have enough space to construct new ones (some land was redistributed for settlement), stayed in the imidugudu and they are going to stay there permanently. Those who did not have appropriate shelter and are now living in imidugudu are also going to stay there permanently... reason being that they are relatively better off than they were before they were given houses in midugudu." (Gatari 22 May 2001)

### **Former refugees who had settled in the Gishwati forest are in the process of being resettled (2001)**

- Government moved old caseload refugees out of forest where they had settled a few years earlier (November 1999)
- 1,540 persons moved out of the Gishwati forest had not been resettled as of January 2001
- UN Field Mission assessed status of the displaced (February 2000)

"Due to scarcity of land a large number of 1959 caseloads [refugees who had fled to neighboring countries in 1959] who returned after the war of 94 were settled in the sectors bordering the Gishwati forest of Gisenyi Prefecture. They were settled in Government designated areas such as Arusha in Mutura commune, Gatindori in Giciye, Kinihira in Kayove commune and Mubuga in Kanama commune which border the Gishwati forest and were given land to cultivate by local authorities. Others occupied people's houses in Gisenyi town and were moved out and resettled in Mbugangari and Byahi resettlement sites in Rubavu commune with small plots to cultivate. Over the years as more continued to arrive, they moved to Gishwati and cultivated larger areas and raised cattle sparking concern of the Government authorities on the environmental destruction. Nevertheless, some reports confirm that there was a need for the Government

to clear the area from infiltrators. The total number of families had reached 10,184 (a total of 42,913 persons).

Late November 1999, the Council of Ministers decided to move these populations out of the Gishwati forest and set the 31st Dec 99 as deadline for the operation.

In an attempt to resettle these people, the Government allocated in the year 2000, an additional 1,800 ha in 3 communes bordering Gishwati.

The Ministry of Land Resettlement and Environment Protection, MINITERE carried out mid- December 2000, a mission to Gisenyi in order to review the situation of land allocation for these populations.

**To date, 968 families are estimated to have moved out of Gishwati forest into 3 sites: Karago, Gaseke and Giciye.**

The latest data gathered shows:

**- Karago:** Final site for **239 families**.

Land allocation has been achieved for 215 families and residential plots (to build their houses) and agricultural land have been distributed to the population end of October. According to the latest information, only 195 families are actually resettled, **the remaining 44 families are awaiting to be resettled** according to the schedule put in place by the local "displaced committee".

**There are still 220 IDPs in Karago, waiting to be resettled.**

**- Gaseke:** Final site for **493 families**.

It is actually divided in 2 sites: Muhumyo and Karambi.

Land allocation has been achieved and the residential and agricultural plots of land have been distributed to 349 families.

**The remaining 144 families (720 persons) are still awaiting actual land distribution and are still considered IDPs.**

**- Giciye:** Final site for **380 families**. They have been given residential plots. The local authorities are identifying agricultural plots. The situation of these 380 families is not yet final, since an estimated 120 of them reportedly prefer to settle in other communes.

**- These 120 families (600 persons) will be listed as IDPs** since they have not yet been given land in the communes of their choice.

**- Total number of Gishwati IDPs = 1,540 persons"** (OCHA 2 February 2001)

**Families occupying schools and health centers in Gisenyi are being resettled (2001)**

"Around 11,752 families have been occupying other people's houses in Gisenyi for up to 6 years (right after the 1994 genocide). By mid-October, 962 families who had been instructed by the Government to vacate the houses, had occupied three primary schools and a health center in Gisenyi-ville.

As of end of November, a total of 518 families had moved to Rubavu commune, close to Gisenyi-ville. According to MINITERE, they chose to remain in the vicinity of the town

despite the fact that they were told they could not be given agricultural land in Rubavu, as opposed to other more remote communes in Gisenyi.

- The first 318 families (of the 518) had moved to Byahi site (Byahi sector, Rubavu commune) around mid-October, under the pressure of the prefecture authorities and fearing a possible “official” action by them.

- The other 200 families joined the group in Rubavu, at Gafuku site, bordering Rwerere commune, around end October, after they knew that they would be provided with assistance once at the site (plastic sheeting by UNHCR, etc.).

The remaining 444 families (are still awaiting final land allocation and distribution). According to MINITERE, they will be resettled in Kayove (244 should be resettled in Busenda site, Kayove commune) and in Kanama commune (planned to host the 244 remaining families). Both communes are bordering the Gishwati Forest.

#### Situation in the resettlement sites:

**Rubavu**, where **518 families have been given parcels to build their houses** and are trying to settle in difficult conditions: It is a completely virgin land, no water sources or system is available. The health center is 2 km away from the site but is currently occupied by squatter families. There is also a need to build a primary school. UNHCR has distributed plastic sheeting to the populations. People have not been able to build their houses, they reportedly still need wooden sticks, nails, metallic roofs etc. In addition, the soil can not be used for the traditional tile production. Some of them have constructed “Blindés” (makeshift houses with banana leaves, etc.) but it is a rather inappropriate shelter considering the current heavy rains in the Northwest. Some of the families still go back to the schools to sleep at night.

**Kayove** is also a virgin land with no access road (closest road is 6 km away from the site). It is planned to host **244 families** with residential and agricultural land each. Presently, there is no infrastructure: no school, no water system, only remote water sources. The government **is still in the process of parceling the land** and is envisaging the construction of an access path to the site.

**- 224 families x 5= 1,220 IDPs**

**Kanama**, Mubuga site, Kanombe sector, where the **200 remaining families** would be settled has slightly better infrastructure with an existing water system that needs to be rehabilitated and a small school in plastic sheeting which can only be used if it is not raining and can only host a limited number of classes, a number of children have to travel further in Kanama commune to reach the nearest school. There is also a need for rehabilitating the access road/path to the site and for the construction of a health center and a proper school. But the main problem for Mubuga site is that it is actually composed of other people’s fields and assuming they could share their land with the “new comers”, the latter group **still can not be settled** there before peasants have finished harvesting.

**- 200 families x 5= 1,000 IDPs" (OCHA 2 February 2001)**

### **Relocation of tens of thousands of families into new villages (Dec. 1998 - 1999)**

- Policy of villagization required tens of thousand of rural families to relocate into 180 new villages in the northwest
- Internally displaced were often resettled in an unplanned manner, without the required social infrastructure

"As security improved in the northwest, government authorities implemented a policy of villagization that required tens of thousands of rural families to relocate into 180 newly established village sites scattered throughout the northwest. Similar villagization policies were already underway in other parts of the country. The size of villagization sites ranged from 100 families to nearly 2,000. [...]

By late 1999, 94 percent of the population of Kibungo and 60 percent of the population of Mutara, both prefectures in the east, had been moved into villages, as had 40 percent of the population of the prefecture surrounding the capital of Kigali. In addition 94 percent of the people of the northwest who had been in camps had been moved into villages and others, still in their own homes, had been ordered to destroy them and move to the new sites, where they were obliged to live in temporary shelters, under plastic sheeting, while building new houses. Persons who resisted these orders were fined or imprisoned. Despite government promises, most sites offered no services (water, schools, clinics) and residents often had to walk much farther to cultivate their fields." (HRW 2000, "Human Rights Developments")

"By late 1999, the government had reportedly established more than 300 villagization sites in the northwest and indicated plans to resettle 370,000 more families into as many as 800 new sites nationwide." (USCR 2000, "Uprooted Rwandans")

"Thanks to improved security in the north-western prefectures, the Government managed to resettle all the IDPs. However, since international assistance beyond the emergency phase was not forthcoming, this group was resettled in an unplanned manner, without the required social infrastructure. This group remains in a precarious situation in terms of access to basic amenities." (UNHCR 2000, p.99)

"Many imidugudu are 'inhabited almost entirely by poor and vulnerable people', leading some NGOs to fear that the villages 'may become places where the old and sickly simply go to die'," (IRIN 13 October 1999)

### **Resettlement sites lack adequate services according to Special Rep of the Commission on Human Rights (February 2000)**

- Karambi (Gisenyi prefecture): no evidence of coercion to settle but poor infrastructure
- Rutara (Kibungo prefecture): in this village built by UNDP, there is no evidence of coercion to settle but no drinking water in the village
- Gihinga (Umutara prefecture): evidence of coercion and serious lack of services



"Karambi is the first of 19 villages planned for Gisenyi. All but two were selected by local leaders, indicating a considerable degree of local choice and participation. Karambi's 254 shelters/houses are situated on former farmland. The International Rescue Committee (IRC) has provided running water and built latrines for 200 houses, which are 10 minutes from the communal primary school and health centre. The settlers are only 500 meters from their fields, which can be easily reached. Most families are from the sector and so are living close to their original homes. The exceptions are 50 "old caseload" families who returned to Rwanda in 1994 but were forced to leave their temporary homes when the owners returned. There were no signs that their presence in Karambi was resented, and no hint of ethnic tensions.

There is no evident coercion in Karambi. Nor was there likely to be, given that the inhabitants were all displaced persons whose previous houses had been destroyed or who were otherwise extremely vulnerable. (No fewer than 136 heads of family were widows.) In the case of Karambi, the problem arises from a lack of resources rather than a lack of choice. All 254 houses are still made of temporary plastic sheeting, and only 5 are being built with brick. The health centre may be close - but it has no beds and almost no medicine. Karambi's settlers are regular visitors to the nutrition centre, because many of their infants are seriously underweight. Agricultural production is certainly feeble, but because settlers lack seeds and fertilizer, and most are single women.

The second village visited was Rutara in Kibungo prefecture. It comprises 100 houses built by UNDP on land that was previously occupied by just three houses, two of which were destroyed in the war. The third still stands. The population is mixed: 54 families are old caseload returnees, having no home. A school, market, and health centre are all close, as are fields. The main problem is water: there is a pump in the village but it is only available for settlers who make adobe bricks for latrines. Drinking water has to be purchased in the market, at a price. Coercion is not a problem in this village. All of the settlers opted to live here. In fact, the greatest problem is posed by 50 widows and other vulnerable families who wanted to live in the village for reasons of security, but could not qualify because they were unable to contribute to the construction of a house. These families have erected makeshift houses at the rear of the village which are plainly inadequate. One widow with four children said she had access to her family's land, but production had fallen because her husband was no longer there to farm.

The third site visited by the Special Representative's mission, Gihinga (Umutara prefecture), was the least satisfactory of the three. It comprises 150 houses that were constructed in 1997 by a consortium of donors. There is a serious lack of services. The nearest health centre is 5 kilometres away, the market is even further, and water supply is intermittent. There was also evidence of coercion: 20 of the 150 families had been told to destroy their original homes and move into the new village. Asked whether they had moved voluntarily, settlers told the Special Representative's mission they had had no choice, because laws had to be obeyed. [...]

It is [however] clear that many settlers have happily taken up the offer of a new house and land, and it is the Special Representative's firm belief that if settlers were assured of

proper services in advance, they would be clamoring for admission to villages. He therefore very much encourages the Government to establish a joint programme with its partners to improve services in existing villages. With respect to new villages, pilot sites could be established throughout the country, with the location left to the newly elected development councils. Services should be installed before settlers are sought. Findings of technical studies should be fully exploited for the improvement or establishment of such services and projects. Such a policy would certainly lay a firm foundation for a national policy of integrated rural development, which is essential for the wellbeing of the country. (CHR 25 February 2000, para. 210-215)

# HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

## General

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### Improved humanitarian access in 1999-2000 compared to 1997-1998

- The UN is still using military escorts to communes off the main roads in the northwest (2000)
- Lower insecurity allows international NGOs' return to the northwest (1999)
- The majority of international NGOs suspended activities in the northwest for security reasons in 1997-1998

#### ***1999-2000:***

"The security situation in Gisenyi and Ruhengeri is still good despite unconfirmed reports of Interahamwe infiltration during March. The military continue to patrol the main roads on foot and on armoured personnel carrier. Strategic spots on the main roads, such as bridges, sharp bends are guarded by armed soldiers. The UN is still using military escorts to the communes off the main roads in the Northwest. All UN personnel are required to get security clearance to go out of Kigali and to any prefecture." (OCHA March/April 2000, p.1)

"The overall improvement in security in the north-west has led to a corresponding decline in alleged abuses by the Rwandan armed forces. This was confirmed by the Special Representative's own mission last August [1999] [reporting to the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Rwanda], which found the mood in Ruhengeri and Gisenyi to be noticeable calmer than when he visited in January 1999. In another sign of improved security, delegates from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) travel virtually everywhere in the north-west without armed escort." (CHR 25 February 2000, para.30)

"In January 1999, the insecurity in the border region diminished and MSF finally managed to return to Ruhengeri where a team launched a nutritional programme." (MSF 20 October 1999)

#### ***1997-1998:***

"Although the fighting had abated and there were fewer attacks on civilians in the second half of the year [of 1998], insecurity remained high in the north-west. Relief agencies assisting displaced or resettled people had to use army escorts for their own security. Under such circumstances, the ICRC deemed that the conditions or independent action were not fulfilled and it was therefore not in a position to survey needs in the region or to take part in relief operations, which were essentially led by the UN and NGOs." (ICRC 1 June 1999).

"Following fatal attacks on several expatriates in northwest Rwanda in early 1997, the majority of international non-governmental organizations withdrew their personnel and suspended activities in the region. The UN Human Rights Field Operation, which recalled its staff from the region in early 1997, undertakes trips to these regions for one to several days at a time, but still does not have access to certain areas. Efforts by WFP to provide food to displaced people in the northwest have been severely frustrated by the precarious security situation, including attacks on its convoys in October-November 1997. This difficult access for humanitarian organizations and UN agencies to the northwest regions of Rwanda makes accurate numbers of IDPs difficult to obtain." (Kleine-Ahlbrandt 1998, pp.72-73)

### **Scope of WFP's program in the northwest limited by security constraints (1997-1999)**

- WFP's program was dominated by security and logistics
- Emergency food transported under armed escort

"WFP's approach to its emergency programme in the north-west has been almost entirely determined by security and logistics. The volatile security environment from 1997 onwards limited the organization's flexibility, research capability and actual time spent on the ground. The programme was dominated by logistics and distribution concerns, with the small number of staff, national and international, lacking the skills required to implement the broader recovery strategies which have become possible from early 1999 onwards. Logistic constraints - for example, a limited number of vehicles - meant that WFP's response and distribution capability was never determined by total needs, but rather by what the fleet could carry on any given day. This in turn was determined by safety considerations: a large and regular convoy is easy to attack but small irregular convoys depend on the availability and willingness of Rwandese armed units to accompany trucks in slow and difficult off-the-road terrain. Finally, and most importantly, security considerations also created obstacles for other UN and NGO agencies in providing a coherent inter-agency response to the crisis." (WFP June 1999, p.15)

"Transportation of emergency food is conducted by WFP convoys under armed escort. Distribution occurs at the delivery point, in order to avoid unnecessary delays in distribution to beneficiaries. Following requests from beneficiaries, rations were limited to a ten-day quantity, so as to reduce the risk of attacks by rebels in search of food for themselves." (WFP June 1999, p.11)

## NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES

### National Response

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#### Rwandan Government justifies villagization policy (1998-2000)

- Government defends policy of villagization despite international criticism (1998-2000)
- Government presents plan to assist relocated population to UN Agencies and NGOs (1999)

#### *The Rwandan Government stated in 1998 that:*

"Since the displaced people have always been victims of threats from the infiltration on the hills, most of their properties (farms, huts) have been destroyed by infiltrators' riots and looting. Abandonment of the places, war and infiltrators' confrontations with the army, have made the situation worse, there is not much left on the hills. Some Rwandese and even donors are very concerned about the Rwandese government policy on settlement and most of the people in Rwanda believe in it as a key factor for positive changes at all levels.

Bias against villagisation were developed during the emergency period when in some places both local authorities and international NGOs initiated the process without any prior sensitization. Better choice of location, people consultation and participation leading to the inoccupancy (sic) of some 'imidugudu'. The lack of resources for economic promotion in 'imidugudu' and the low quality of constructed houses did not encourage people to move easily to such imidugudu. But above all that there are very successful cases where imidugudu have become attractive and development oriented." (Republic of Rwanda November 1998)

#### *Statement by Rwandan Minister of Justice, Mr. Mucyo*

"All Rwandan citizens were entitled to return to their country and the refugees who had so wanted had been repatriated. The refugees' return had aggravated the problem of housing and the lack of cultivatable land. It was therefore quite legitimate to regroup the population in villages (imidugudu), thus facilitating access to basic infrastructures." (CHR 5 July 2000, para.45)

#### *Statement by Rwandan Secretary General in Ministry of lands, human resettlement and environmental protection*

"The policy [of the Rwandan government] is clear. In rural areas, every Rwandan is to move into a village for the purpose of proper land utilisation and the provision of basic services', said Patricia Hajabakiga, secretary-general in the ministry of lands, human resettlement and environmental protection (MINITERE), responsible for coordinating the villagisation initiative known locally as 'imidugudu'. 'It's the only alternative we have,' she said. The programme aims to develop diverse commercial activities and employment opportunities outside the agricultural sector, on which the vast majority of people

currently depend. 'We cannot continue to pretend that every Rwandan will be able to live off the land, because of its difficult hilly terrain,' Hajabakiga said. 'We need to create other jobs but there's no way of doing that when people are scattered.'" (IRIN 13 October 1999, para.2-3)

According to a December 2000 OCHA Report (draft stage): "[...] [T]he Government can claim in good faith that the policy is in the spirit of the 1993 Arusha Peace Accords\*, and that there is no other way to stabilize the demographic turmoil caused by successive displacements and returns since 1994. \*)The Protocol on Repatriation of Refugees and Re-integration of IDPs foresaw '*...housing scheme[s]...modeled on the 'village' grouped type of settlement to encourage the establishment of development centers in the rural area and break with the traditional scattered housing*'. One argument for a continuation and generalization of this policy, put forward by the Government after the genocide, is that a renewal of the tradition of scattered housing would not only recreate development obstacles but also lead to ethnicised resettlement, which would hinder the process of internal reconciliation." (OCHA 18 December 2000, Draft)

### ***Review of Government's plan for Northwest Area Rehabilitation & Development in 1999***

"On 16 June [1999] a meeting was held at the prefecture office in Ruhengeri to examine the latest Area Rehabilitation & Development Plan (ARDP) produced by the Government of Rwanda with assistance from the UN's Joint Reintegration Programming Unit (JRPU). Other representatives from UN Agencies and NGOs as well as various government staff were in attendance to receive and examine the document.

The document begins by highlighting the number of vulnerable persons in the Northwest by commune as well as their types of households, livelihoods and general population figures. [...] Many of the proposed projects focus on the building and rehabilitation of infrastructure. Others include seed and livestock production, promotion of educational programmes, health services and economic development. The government estimates that the total cost for development is approximately US\$70 million." (OCHA, 9 June 1999, "Northwest Area Rehabilitation")

## **International Response**

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### **Reintegration needs of the Rwandese are not sufficiently addressed (2000-2001)**

- UN Special Representative on the situation of human rights in Rwanda appealed to the international community to fill 'reintegration gap' (2001)
- A Multi-agency pre-mission including UN, NGO and Government representatives went to Rwanda in February 2001 to examine conflict-related needs not fully addressed by humanitarian assistance, such as human settlement and access to land
- Resettlement issue was not discussed during donor meeting in November 2000

**"The reintegration 'gap'.** Large numbers of the Rwandan population are still without shelter, living in extremely precarious circumstances. Although the 'emergency period' is deemed to be over by most actors in Rwanda and the displaced persons crisis in the north-west was successfully addressed by the Government with the support of the international community, it is apparent that the reintegration needs of large numbers of Rwandans have not been sufficiently addressed. With the United Nations Joint Reintegration Programming Unit (UNHCR/UNDP/WFP) having been dismantled, and with the current focus of most agencies and donors on "development", there is a danger that these people, who are still in desperate need of assistance, will not be reached. The Special Representative understands that a mission to Rwanda was recently undertaken in the context of the so-called Brookings process on the reintegration 'gap'. **The Special Representative would appeal to the international community to address this problem, and in particular would ask that the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) undertake an assessment to establish the outstanding reintegration needs and design a strategy for United Nations intervention.**" (CHR 21 March 2001 para.35)

"To date, millions of dollars have been channeled into the country for shelter reconstruction, increased access to clean water, provision of food, the establishment of health and nutrition programs, as well as resettlement activities. Thousands of metric tons of food have been distributed, yet there is still widespread malnutrition. While 500,000 have been resettled into homes and/or families, there are still more than 370,000 families averaging (5 people per family) living under either plastic sheeting or in makeshift dwellings. Since 1994, more Rwandans have access to clean water than ever before. However, in some communes water availability averages at eight litres per person per day which is below the universally accepted minimum of 15 litres per person per day. The poor have also a problem to access medical care and drugs." (ACT 10 April 2001)

*A multi-agency pre-mission including UN, NGO and Government representatives went to Rwanda in February 2001 to examine conflict-related needs and problems not fully addressed by humanitarian assistance and development cooperation in Rwanda. One of the issues viewed as a conflict-related need not adequately met by humanitarian and development assistance was the fact that up to 1.2 million Rwandans are living in inadequate shelter without durable solutions regarding access to land. (OCHA 6 March 2001)*

"A meeting was held between the Government of Rwanda and donor community in Kigali from 8-10 November 2000. The theme of the conference was: 'Forging partnership for Poverty Reduction'. It was organized by the Government of Rwanda, and counted with the participation of major bilateral and multilateral donors, all UN Agencies in Rwanda, civil society and private sector representatives. [...]

[...] [D]uring the donor meeting, the resettlement issue was not discussed not even mentioned at all. This is likely linked to the relative halt in the dialogue between Donors and the Government on this aspect. " (OCHA 21 December 2000)

In November 2000, the UN Special Representative on the situation of human rights in Rwanda, Michel Moussali, said that a "successful integration project developed by the UNDP, UNHCR and WFP had been interrupted due to lack of resources" [...].

The UNHCR has said that the international community was withholding funding in the belief that efforts should be directed towards development, Moussali said. However, the tension created by the situation was of concern, and the UNHCR acting representative in Rwanda was hoping to restart assistance [...]. (IRIN-CEA 3 November 2000, "Rwanda: UN Expert...")

### **UN OCHA suggests to reactivate dialogue with government on resettlement and villagization (2001)**

#### ***Recommendations:***

1. "Reactivate the dialogue between Government, donors and the UN, on the resettlement and villagisation issue. Suggested parties for dialogue with the Government are MINITERE, MINALOC and Mr. Joseph Nsengimana, Advisor to the President (and former Minister- MINITERE)

2. Designate a focal point for resettlement, within the UN system. This focal point could be the UN Resident Coordinator.

3. Set up a UN inter-agency task force (e.g. UNDP, WFP, UNHCR, FAO, UNICEF, OCHA), which would serve as a support team to the UN Resident Coordinator. The task force would also maintain close relationship with the UNDAF thematic group on transitional issues, resettlement being an important part of those issues.

4. The main themes the task force should work on, putting forward proposals to the UN country team, are the following, as recommended by Mr. Linde in his report:

- "To pursue efforts to come up with a consolidated UN platform on sustainability in resettlement, with a focus on practical guidance on how to address, on a durable basis, the basic needs of the population identified as most vulnerable."

- "To pursue efforts with the Government to establish a framework of rights concerning the participation of people in decisions where and how to settle, access to land, freedom of movement and residence, and administrative procedures."

5. Finally, the UN country team could seek any support from the Special Coordinator on Internal Displacement, Mr. Dennis McNamara, including a country visit. (OCHA 2 February 2001)

### **UN community adopted joint approach to assist Rwandan government in context of villagization (February 2000)**



- Rwandan government renewed efforts to explain policy of villagization to donors
- Document affirms UN commitment to support the Rwandan government in providing sustainable resettlement of displaced populations

"Recently the Rwandan Government renewed its efforts to explain the policy [of villagization] and to make its application more transparent and respectful of individual rights. The UN community responded by adopting a 'Framework for Assistance in the context of the Imidugudu Policy' which encourages the Government to continue to adopt a more participatory, rights-based approach and to resolve outstanding legal problems related to land and ownership and use." (UNHCR 2000, "Global Report 1999", p.97)

***Text of Framework for Assistance in the context of the Imidugudu Policy:***

"In accordance with the Arusha peace negotiations agreement signed in June 1993 and since 1994, the UN system in Rwanda has been engaged extensively in the financing and implementing of the resettlement programme. The Protocol on the repatriation of Rwandese refugees promoted grouped settlement as a means of providing shelter for returnees who no longer had a house or a land, with the view of pre-empting property related conflicts.

This programme has been supported by donors, the UN and NGOs and several grouped settlements or 'Imidugudu' have been constructed bringing an important contribution to the solution of the resettlement issue for millions of returnees. However, not all sites are sustainable in the long term and questions of land tenure, availability of services and utilities, and opportunities for sustainable livelihoods need to be addressed.

In the context of the Government decision, in 1996, to use the grouped settlement approach as a model for the entire country, it is important to state the following:

- We acknowledge and appreciate the improved constructive dialogue between Government, Donors, the UN and NGOs on the settlement policy, in the context of the long-term development of the country. We welcome the Thematic Consultation on Resettlement as an important mechanism for continuing this dialogue and developing a consensus amongst all development partners.
- We would like to point out the need for in-depth discussions over the sustainability of this policy and for a thorough review of the surveys and academic studies carried out in the field of villagisation in Rwanda (sociological analysis, lessons learned, impact of imidugudu on agricultural productivity, on environment, etc.)
- In the context of the definition of the strategy for this policy, we would like to recommend further elaboration on issues like the participatory approach, the chronology of relevant legislation such as use and ownership of land, etc.
- The need for a clear distinction between shelter for the homeless, rehabilitating damaged shelter and re-locating people who already have shelter and have to abandon it.

This also implies a necessary prioritisation of actions required in each case according to the national overall priorities established by the Government.

While reiterating its recommendation for a continuation of the useful and constructive dialogue already engaged between the Government and the international community, and for the particular attention to be given to the points listed above, the UN system is committed to support the Government, with whatever resources it can obtain in its efforts to provide a long-term sustainable and consensual solution to the issue of sustainable resettlement of displaced populations in Rwanda. Inter-agency mechanisms such as the JRPV can be used for that purpose." (Common UN Framework for Assistance in the context of the Imidugudu Policy February 2000)

### **International Ambivalence towards the Villagization Policy (1999-2000)**

- UN Commission on Human Rights asks Rwandan government to respect human rights principles when regrouping scattered rural populations
- Many donors sceptical about villagization
- UNHCR has helped to build just under 100,000 houses by February 2000, but 370,000 families still need housing
- Donors concerned that villagization may be coercive, and that it could further undermine Rwanda's agricultural productivity
- WFP reports that villagization addressed immediate needs of population

#### ***Caution regarding villagization***

***The UN Commission on Human Rights*** "[n]otes that the Government of Rwanda is regrouping scattered rural populations in the country, including in the north-west, and urges the Government of Rwanda to respect human rights principles and not to use any elements of coercion in the implementation of the resettlement programme." (CHR 18 April 2000, para.16)

#### ***Report of the Special Representative to the Commission on Human Rights***

"Rwanda is in the middle of a great debate on land and settlement. [...]. It is both understandable and prudent for the Government to be framing a national policy. Over the last five years, over 70 per cent of all Rwandans have left their homes. UNHCR has helped to build just under 100,000 houses, but according to the Government, 370,000 families still need housing.

This is linked to land. Few would dispute that pressure on land was one of the root causes of the war and genocide of 1990-1994, and Rwandan land has been progressively parcelled out through the generations, to the point where it is barely productive. Rwanda's population is expected to grow to 10 million by the year 2005 - putting even greater pressure on land.

The Government argues that regrouping Rwandans in village settlements will better facilitate their access to basic services like water, education and medical care, thereby

securing basic human rights. It would also make it easier to organize security for the population, particularly in the north-west. The Government's policy of resettlement has emerged directly from the insurgency in the north-west , [...], where 600,000 displaced persons have been grouped into villages.

Out of these different elements has come the ambitious policy of collective resettlements known as imidugudu, or villagization. The scope and ambition of imidugudu has alarmed many important partners of Rwanda. On 12 July 1999 the EU Council of Ministers urged Rwanda to ensure 'careful planning, prior impact studies and pilot projects in order to avoid villagization that brings about human rights violations'. This reflects the two chief concerns of donors: first, that villagization may be coercive, and second, that it could further undermine Rwanda's agricultural productivity and food security.

There is some evidence on both counts. In December 1998, 41 per cent of those questioned in a government survey of Gisenyi and Ruhengeri said that they wanted to remain in their own homes instead of moving to villages. As for food security, a recent survey by the Government and United Nations agencies suggests that the distance from fields is contributing to an alarming fall in food production. Only 53 per cent said they were able to farm their own land." (CHR 25 February 2000, para.203-208)

"[M]any donors remain sceptical about the programme, citing reports of 'coerced' relocations, disappointing experiences of villagisation in other countries, and a lack of population participation in the process. 'It's very much a top-down approach,' a diplomatic source told IRIN. 'The government is convinced it's good in the long-run but it can't be successful if you don't have the people with you.'

Critics also say that the government does not have the funds necessary to establish basic social services in the new villages and that many are located too far from farm land. A 1997 ministerial-level decree stated that all new houses in rural areas were to be constructed only in imidugudu, but the policy has not been ratified in parliament and its legal status remains unclear, observers say. [...]

While international agencies have supported planned settlement efforts in Rwanda on humanitarian grounds since the 1994 genocide, it is uncertain how much more assistance donors are willing to provide towards villagisation now that it has become less of an emergency issue, aid officials told IRIN.

UNHCR, which has been a major supporter of rural housing projects in Rwanda, said in its 1999 appeal that it was planning to phase out its reintegration activities in the country by the end of the year. The UN country team 'has been holding a number of inter-agency meetings on resettlement with a view to reflect on what its role should be,' a UN official told IRIN last week. (IRIN 13 October 1999)

***Positive appreciation of villagization by IFRC and WFP***

*According to IFRC*, "The 'villagisation' [...] process of the government in the north-west has been well accepted by the population, contributing greatly to restoring stability in the region and facilitating the development of the area." (IFRC 7 October 1999, "Context")

*WFP reports that the* "policy of *umudugudu* appears to have addressed at least the immediate needs of the newly settled IDPs. With houses clustered by administrative cells along access roads, common services are potentially within easy reach of settlers. Inevitably, Rwanda's highly ordered and visible political administration now exercises greater control over the population. Yet anecdotal evidence suggests that abuses of power are rare and in most of the worst-hit communes the *Bourgemeistres* (commune heads) have displayed a genuine interest in the rehabilitation of the traumatized population." (WFP June 1999, p.23)

### **WFP and NGOs try to improve the living conditions of the people in resettlement sites by the Gishwati forest (2001)**

- The situation in the 3 sites where people who used to live in the Gishwati forest have been resettled is quite precarious despite international support

"- **Food security:** Agricultural lands have just been distributed to part of the IDPs. This would mean that they would only be able to cultivate in March 2001 and harvest in June. They would need seeds and tools.

WFP continues to distribute monthly food rations to the IDPs since March 2000. WFP, together with the prefecture food aid committee had recommended food aid provision until January 2001 harvest.

- **Water & sanitation:** The population is concentrated in 3 sites, with very limited access to water and almost no access to potable water. People have to walk long distances to fetch the water. IRC started the actual rehabilitation of the water system in Gaseke the 3rd week of January, with food for work assistance from WFP.

- **Health & shelter:** On the other hand, in Karago and in Gaseke, no health center is available nearby the sites. In Karago, the nearest health center is 6 km. away from the site. Considering the current heavy rains and the extremely poor shelter situation of the IDPs, one could fear an outbreak of epidemics. SCF-UK has been distributing basic drugs through the health district of Kabaya. It has also been supporting a mobile clinic giving the population weekly access to a doctor." (OCHA 2 February 2001)

### **UN programs to internally displaced and resettled populations (1999-2000)**

- UNHCR and OCHA warn that diminished donor support could jeopardize progress made so far in Rwanda (2000)
- UNCHR phased out reintegration program in December 1999, after distributing blankets, jerry cans and plastic sheeting to the internally displaced
- WFP's program aims to encourage long-term resettlement of refugees and IDPs (2000)

- UNICEF plans to continue water and environmental sanitation activities in the northwest
- FAO, UNDP, UNFPA and WHO also had activities in favor of the displaced in 1999
- UN Appeal launched to address particular needs of the northwest in 1999

"Rwanda is no longer able to attract the level of financial support it received in the aftermath of the genocide, despite a huge need for shelter and infrastructure. If this situation is not addressed, it could lead to renewed conflict." (UNHCR 2000, "Global Report 1999", p. 97)

"Rwanda is now in a transitional phase where the emergency is over and the gap between humanitarian and development requires strengthened donor response. As mentioned by the World Bank Rwanda: 'diminished donor support will create a critical gap in the recovery of Rwanda. A failure to fill the gap risks jeopardizing the progress made so far and will undermine other efforts to reduce poverty and achieve national reconciliation and peace'. (OCHA 10 October 2000, p.12)

"Although there is no humanitarian crisis and no armed conflict in Rwanda, the UN country team has decided to bring up to date the preparedness plans in case of a major humanitarian crisis, viewing the latest reports on the developments in the Democratic Republic of Congo and in Burundi, and their possible impact on Rwanda and other neighbouring countries [...]

The Rwanda Country Team has evaluated the in-country response capacity to extend for a maximum period of one to two weeks in case of a substantial refugee influx from the DRC. In case of an additional influx of Burundian refugees or displaced people's movement, there is no capacity to respond immediately to even minimal needs. The staffing levels of all agencies are inadequate for any large-scale emergency. Nevertheless, infrastructure, transport and the current security set-up are adequate." (OCHA, 10 October 2000, p.3)

### ***UNHCR***

"In early 1999, UNHCR received an in-kind donation from the European Union through the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO). Included in the donation was 90,000 plastic sheeting pieces, 249,000 blankets, 235,000 jerrycans and 15,600 kitchen sets targeted for the displaced population in Northwest Rwanda. The value of the items along with funding received for international transportation totaled US\$4,052,577. Beginning on 12 March, flights began to deliver the goods to Kigali for subsequent distribution in Ruhengeri and Gisenyi.

UNHCR has undertaken the distribution of the plastic sheeting and non-food items in cooperation with the Government of Rwanda and various NGOs. By the third week of March [1999], efforts were underway in Ruhengeri as plastic sheeting was given to beneficiaries in Cyeru thanks to assistance from Christian Aid; in Nyamugali and Nyarutovu through Concern Worldwide; lastly, in Cyabingo, Kinigi and Nyamutera with the help of WorldVision. Communal authorities will work with UNHCR to distribute goods in Gatonde and Ndusu. Blankets were also provided to Save the Children (UK) for

their therapeutic feeding centres located in Gatonde, Nyamutera and Giciye Commune in Gisenyi. International Rescue Committee (IRC) and Food for the Hungry International (FHI) are expected to be implementing partners in other areas of Gisenyi.

In the coming days, the remaining pieces of plastic sheeting will be distributed as the other items are made available. Once the distribution is fully completed, most of the shelter and non-food item requirements of the displaced population in the Northwest will be met." (OCHA 5 April 1999, pp.4-5)

***UNHCR-Kigali confirmed that UNHCR has phased out its integration program in December 1999 and that it does not conduct any reintegration projects in the Northwest in 2000.*** (Ghelli, 26 September 2000)

#### ***WFP***

"WFP has maintained a major humanitarian presence in Rwanda since the genocide, providing emergency assistance to populations with immediate food aid needs, while supporting a framework for recovery and transition programmes. Despite significant gains to rebuild the country, Rwanda remains a desperately poor country, with 66 percent of the 8.1 million Rwandans living below the poverty line. [...] [Twp of] WFP's primary objectives in Rwanda are to:

- Help save lives and restore the livelihoods of people made vulnerable by civil conflict;
- Contribute to sustaining refugees and internally displaced persons and encourage long-term solutions such as repatriation and resettlement;" (WFP 4 December 2000)

#### ***UNICEF***

***UNICEF plans to continue to carry out in the third quarter of 2000 community-based water and environmental sanitation activities in selected communes in Ruhengeri and Gisenyi prefectures. UNICEF aims to work with NGOs which will be supervised by government staff. Possible partners are CARE for Ruhengeri and IRC in Gisenyi. UNICEF will provide materials for construction work.***

***Communes targeted in Ruhengeri: Ndusu, Gatonde, Nyamugali, Nyarutovu, Cyabingo. Communes targeted in Gisenyi: Kibilira, Satinsyi, Giciye, Karago.*** (Odediran, 21 September 2000)

#### ***Brief review of FAO, UNDP, UNFPA and WHO Activities in 1999***

"The distribution of seeds and tools was a major priority for new settlers and was undertaken by FAO and a number of NGO partners from January 1999. UNDP provided some funds to UN and government bodies to fill gaps in emergency response capacity. UNFPA conducted surveys of IDPs with the National Population Office, providing essential baseline information; WHO (with UNICEF) helped to bolster the capacity of local Ministry of Health offices." (WFP June 1999, p.32)

***UNDP-Rwandese Government Country Cooperation Framework (1998-2000) aims – among others – to reintegrate internally displaced persons:*** " Reintegration of returnees and formerly displaced persons will have a three-pronged approach: (a) ensure social and economic reintegration of returnees; (b) promote job creation and income opportunities

through the development of micro-enterprises and small- and medium-sized enterprises; and (c) promote poverty eradication and reduce environmental degradation. The actions to be carried out under this theme will address both the structural causes of poverty and the more recent causes of poverty originating from the genocide, civil disruption and massive population movements. Increasing income through job creation will be emphasized as will improving school attendance rates and raising living standards. The high percentage of female-headed households in Rwanda, who are particularly susceptible to poverty, will be taken into account in designing programmes to combat poverty." (UNDP 9 February 1998)

### ***UN 1999 Appeal for the Northwest***

"Rwanda was not included in the United Nations Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Countries of Great Lakes Region and Central Africa for 1999. Instead, a Donor Alert was launched in December [1998] in order to direct attention and channel funding to particular sectors of assistance and programmes. The funding target was set at US\$ 38 million." (OCHA 9 February 1999, "Donor Alert")

"As contributions continued until the end of June 1999, a total of US\$26.8 million was reached. Response was high in the areas of shelter as well as the distribution of food aid and domestic non-food items but there were a number of unmet needs in other sectors. Currently, humanitarian assistance is still required for the returnees from the DRC in addition to other people living in previously inaccessible areas. Those residing in south eastern Gisenyi seem to be particularly vulnerable as they suffered from a prolonged period of insecurity, were inaccessible to the international community and have been unable to resume productive livelihoods as has been done elsewhere.

Current humanitarian efforts will likely exist and overlap with other emerging rehabilitative and developmental requirements. Although the general situation in the Northwest has improved, substantial international support is necessary to provide a solid foundation for the growth of the region. In turn, its prosperity will have a stabilising effect for the rest of the country." (OCHA 3 August 1999, "Donor Alert")

### **Lessons learned following UN Agencies' responses to crisis in the northwest (1999)**

- Kigali OCHA office was instrumental in bringing northwest crisis to donors' and government's attention
- Stronger integration of relief and development assistance could have benefited to the internally displaced

"As the designated coordination mechanism, the Kigali OCHA office was instrumental in bringing the north-west crisis to the attention of donors and, indeed, to the government. The government's Inter-Ministerial Coordination Committee for the north-west, set up after the August 1998 mission to the IDP camps, complemented OCHA's more regular weekly inter-agency meetings. An acknowledged weakness was the fact that these meetings were held in Kigali, and only moved to Ruhengeri in March 1999.

OCHA's perceived role is to facilitate coordination and information exchange, providing not only general briefings and field-based knowledge, but also targeted advocacy. Formally, appeals and allocations are organized through the Humanitarian Coordinator, but OCHA's regional overview, including an international officer in Goma, for instance, is an essential resource." (WFP June 1999, pp.32-33)

"A stronger integration of relief and development assistance by all partners could have led to quicker resettlement and sustainable programmes for the internally displaced. This did not happen for two reasons: first, UN agencies apart from WFP were unwilling or unable to commit existing resources to the IDP crisis in the north-west; and second, donors have been slow in supporting and encouraging NGOs to work in the area. Given the immense needs of Rwanda as a whole, an already fully committed programme for most agencies and very little new money, it is hardly surprising that agencies were unwilling to respond quickly to an expensive and volatile emergency in the north-west. Some UN agencies cited Phase III insurance restrictions as preventing international field staff presence; others (e.g. UNICEF) admitted to poor contingency reserves. Some of these constraints could have been overcome through individual initiative and a more focused inter-agency effort." (WFP June 1999, p.18)

#### **How WFP Applied the Guiding Principles to Internal Displacement in Rwanda (1998-1999)**

- At height of emergency, WFP was in constant dialogue with Rwandan authorities to advocate improved conditions for the internally displaced
- WFP staff members and implementing NGO partners attended workshop on Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement in Rwanda in 1999

"Since their formulation and official release (March 1998), UN agencies have been asked to disseminate and comment on the application and relevance of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. All WFP Country Directors in 1998 received copies of these principles. In Rwanda, WFP has been reluctant to take a lead in advocacy of the principles for two main reasons. Firstly, the controversy over the mandate and reporting procedures of the UN Human Rights Field Operation resulted in its closure and ultimate expulsion in 1998, precisely at the time when the IDP crisis in the north-west was at its height. Secondly, the staff numbers, access and activities of WFP were closely monitored by government and military authorities, and any threat to this relationship would have compromised the humanitarian operation.

As one of the few international observers on the ground at the height of the 1998 emergency, WFP was in constant dialogue with local and national authorities over conditions in camps and was one of the first agencies to press for improved access to and facilities for IDPs. Yet most reported human rights violations - particularly those relating to army abuses or victimization of returnees - occurred prior to encampment from July 1997 to March 1998 when international witness (including WFP) was extremely limited. Since mid-1998, however, when populations have been at risk from incursions across the border, close liaison with commune leaders has given WFP privileged access to security



information, enabling WFP to come to the aid of beleaguered populations swiftly. This should not be under-emphasized: no other agency has been able to respond so quickly to needs on the ground.

In June 1999 some key staff members in Rwanda and implementing NGO partners attended a workshop introducing the Guiding Principles (conducted by this review team). With a few individual exceptions, it was noted that staff and NGOs had little prior knowledge of the principles. WFP field staff were unaware of the boundaries of their responsibilities with respect to protection issues, having received no guidance on the matter. Nevertheless, it was acknowledged that some very practical measures are being undertaken on a daily basis by field staff to ensure that IDP rights are assured and that abuses are minimized." (WFP June 1999, p.27)

## **NGOs Response**

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### **NGOs address water and sanitation needs of resettled population, despite limited funding (1999-2000)**

- International NGOs' presence increased in the northwest in 1999
- Only limited international funds available to resettled population, now that Rwanda is no longer undergoing a countrywide emergency
- NGOs address water, sanitation and health programs in the northwest: selected projects of Oxfam, SCF-UK, Trocaire

"The legacy of 1994-96, when NGOs in Bukavu and Goma were accused by Rwanda of treating refugees as victims rather than perpetrators of genocide, was to colour relations [between the Rwandan Government and international NGOs] for some years. In February 1997 the government decided no longer to use NGOs as intermediaries in the food chain, arguing that general distribution could be undertaken by commune authorities once the mass repatriation was complete. Supplementary and therapeutic feeding centres were, however, run by NGOs, notably by CONCERN in the early stages of the emergency. The number of NGOs on the ground increased tremendously in 1999. WFP's FFW partners in *umudugudu* settlements were IRC, Oxfam and Norwegian Church Aid, though the majority of NGOs were working in shelter provision and sanitation (many contracted through UNHCR)." (WFP June 1999, p.33)

"More organisations are now addressing water and sanitation needs in the northwest. In Gisenyi, International Rescue Committee delivers water, provides equipment, rehabilitates distribution networks and constructs latrines. In Ruhengeri, Norwegian Church Aid continues its rehabilitation and distribution efforts in Kidaho, Kigombe, Kinigi, Mukingo and Nkumba. SCF(UK) is now helping to supply water in Ndusu at the four sites of Kabingo, Kilinga, Mugunga and Rusoro. UNICEF has provided material support to organisations working in both prefectures.

Other noteworthy efforts include the work by SCF (UK) to assess water needs in Gatonde. Similarly, Oxfam GB is examining water rehabilitation needs in Cyeru and, in coordination with Concern Worldwide, is addressing requirements at Nemba Hospital in Nyarutovu.

While the response by the humanitarian community is gathering momentum in this sector, only a limited number of programmes are in full operation. As a result, many people in the northwest are still travelling significant distances to fetch water or may be paying unreasonable prices to obtain it from private sources." (OCHA 15 March 1999, "Water and sanitation")

"An essential precondition for NGO response to an emergency is the release of donor grants for specific projects. On average, two to three months can pass between an assessment and final release of donor funds. The larger NGOs such as CONCERN and IRC have small contingency funds to enable them to initiate projects prior to receiving funds, but with Rwanda no longer undergoing a countrywide emergency, these are limited. In the north-west, donor interest in the emergency did not translate into pledged funds until September-October 1998. In the case of IRC's water and sanitation programme, for example, this meant that the USAID Office for Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) funds were not actually received until February 1999." (WFP June 1999, p.33)

#### ***Oxfam GB Water Systems Rehabilitation Project (December 1998-April 2000)***

"The project [...] was begun in December 1998 to provide immediate potable water provision to people displaced in Northern Rwanda. [...] By April 1999 [...], the government began settling the IDPs into 'permanent' villages known as 'umudugudu'. Oxfam's interventions between April 1999-April 2000 then focused not on work with IDPs in camps, but rather, on rehabilitating water systems destroyed in the 1994 war and the later insurgency war in the Northwest between 1997-1998 in order to support the population that was being resettled throughout the two prefectures. The population served by Oxfam GB are no longer considered IDPs - they are now living in basically permanent settlements." (Sobol 15 September 2000)

***For more information on Oxfam-GB's activities in the Northwest, see ["Contributing to the sustainability of local water infrastructure"](#) [Internal Link]***

#### ***SCF Programs in Ruhengeri (1999)***

"SCF is responding to the immediate and longer-term needs of children in Ruhengeri by concentrating on nutrition, food security, health and sanitation. SCF works with other international NGOs, local and national government, and local partners.

Health: SCF has supported health services throughout Ruhengeri since late 1994. SCF continues to be one of the main providers of medical supplies into the area and supports epidemic disease control activities. SCF has also provided management support to the Ministry of Health in health information systems and developing standard protocols in

health and nutrition. SCF's health team in Ruhengeri consists of a project coordinator and two nurses.

SCF will continue to invest in the rehabilitation and re-equipping of health centres, which were rendered non-functional during the prolonged period of insecurity.

**Nutrition and Food Security (People's Access to Food):** In January [1999], SCF, in conjunction with the Ministry of Health, undertook a nutrition survey of those areas most severely affected by displacement. This survey indicated alarmingly high rates of malnutrition: approximately 7% of children under five years old were identified as suffering from severe malnutrition with an overall rate of malnutrition of 11%. In response to these findings, SCF, working with the Ministry of Health, established three therapeutic (food and medical care) feeding centres in the three worst affected areas of Ruhengeri. SCF is currently supporting therapeutic and supplementary feeding for approximately 1,400 children from a total caseload of 3,200. Recovery rates in all centres continue to improve and rations for pregnant and lactating women have been increased.

The poor quality of roads in this region means that many communities are inaccessible during the rainy season, which began recently. SCF delivered food to hard-to-reach villages in April [1999] in order to assist residents through this season of scarcity. SCF also paid for the improvement of an access road to the area.

In February [1999], SCF also carried out an analysis of food prospects in the Prefecture with the World Food Programme (WFP). SCF, along with other NGOs, successfully lobbied the WFP to increase food rations, to alert donors to the situation and to look at means of supporting people's ability to cultivate in the next growing season. [...]

**Non-food aid:** In addition to seeds and tools, SCF is distributing blankets, soap and clothing to families attending the supplementary feeding centres. SCF has also contributed substantially to the provision of jerry cans, used to carry and store water, to all former IDP households.

**Hygiene and Sanitation:** In conjunction with the Ruhengeri Region Sanitaire, SCF plans to run a sensibilisation programme on hygiene and sanitation in the imudugudu followed by distribution of plastic sheeting and tools needed for the construction of latrines. SCF also provides technical and financial support for rehabilitating water sources." (SCF 19 May 1999)

***Trocaire (1999): house rehabilitation and shelter program***

"Trocaire established a relief and rehabilitation programme in Rwanda during the course of the genocide and war of 1994. With the mass return of refugees in 1996, Trocaire increased its support to house rehabilitation and shelter programme (Gisenyi and Gikongoro).

With the recurrent insurgency of rebels, there were many IDPs in Gisenyi. At the request of the regional health authority, Trocaire started a capacity building programme with the

health staff and a mobile clinic was funded to provide health care to various camps in Gisenyi. That project was completed in November 1999 and the people have returned to their homes. Trocaire did not start any other work towards IDPs.

Since 1997, Trocaire started to phase down its direct operational activities by increasing its support to local partners. The strategy is to assist local development actors in their sustainable and viable development projects." (Craven 25 August 2000)

## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ARDP	Area Rehabilitation & Development Plan
DRC or DR Congo	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ECHO	European Community Humanitarian Office
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FAR	Rwandan Armed Forces
FFW	Food For Work
FHI	Food for the Hungry International
GoR	Government of Rwanda
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Network
JRPU	Joint Reintegration Programming Unit
LDF	Local Defense Forces
LDU	Local Defense Unit
MDR- PARMEHUTU	Rwandan Democratic Movement/Party of the Movement and of Hutu Emancipation
MINETERE	Ministry of Lands, Human Resettlement and Environmental Protection
MRND	National Revolutionary Movement for Development
MRNDD	National Revolutionary Movement for Development and Democracy
MSM	Movement Social Muhutu
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ONAPO	National Population Office
PALIR	Armed People for the Liberation of Rwanda
RISD	Rwanda Initiative for Sustainable Development
RNA	Rwanda News Agency
RNIS	Report on the Nutrition Situation of the Refugees and Displaced Populations
RPA	Rwandan Patriotic Army
RPF	Rwandan Patriotic Front
SCF-UK	Save the Children Fund-UK
UN	United Nations
UNAMIR	United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID-OFDA	USAID Office for Foreign Disaster Assistance
USCR	U.S. Committee for Refugees
WPA	World Food Program
WHO	World Health Organization

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